



Turtle Tracks

Official Newsletter of the Maah Daah Hey Trail Association



Volume 13, Issue 1

President's Message

I just finished a long telephone conversation with Diane Hypes. Diane is a photo journalist whom I have talked to several times in the last few years about her interest in riding the Maah Daah Hey. She is a horse person, now mule person, from Virginia, which is an adventure in itself just to make the trip to North Dakota with her animals. She has traveled around the world, ridden in many countries, and numerous trails throughout the United States. Finally in September she made the trip to North Dakota, along with her friend Zoe, and their mules Rosie and Zenie. They rode the Maah Daah Hey, from the CCC Camp, in the north, to Sully Creek, in the south, with what supplies each could carry on their mules. The rest of this story are notes I made while talking to her about that experience (as close to her quotes as I could jot down in my special shorthand).

- My friends could not believe we were going to North Dakota to ride a trail, there is no such thing as a great trail in North Dakota.
- Breathtaking views from every prospective.
- Pictures cannot show the true

beauty.

- Impossible to describe it to others, they just cannot understand how wonderful it is.
- Tough, extremely challenging!
- I understand Teddy Roosevelt's love of this place.
- I know why he said "the Badlands taught me the importance of make quick decisions."
- The best trail I have ever ridden.
- Cannot wait to come back.
- The trail continually changes, never boring.
- You must be capable of dealing with very difficult situations and not fearful of heights.
- For me, the challenges made the experience better.
- Quiet, remote, beautiful, gorgeous, phenomenal, spectacular, wonderful, breathtaking.

My Note.....Most of the above were used multiple times in our conversation. She assures me that an article will be written shortly. I am looking forward to reading and sharing her story.

Don Mayer, President

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Special points of interest:

- *There are now 11 Life Members of the MDHTA*
- *MDHT is 146 miles long*
- *Eight developed campgrounds with water.*
- *Eight water cache boxes will be placed along the MDHT. Grant funds have been received to place the first.*
- *MDHT Grand Opening June 7-14, 2014*

Maah Daah Hey Trail Grand Opening, June 7-14, 2014

A Maah Daah Hey Trail Grand Opening is tentatively scheduled for June 7-14, 2014. The completion of the Deuce/MDHTII will provide an opportunity to celebrate the entire Maah Daah Hey Trail system. Being discussed is a ribbon cutting and ceremony on the 7th along with a variety of activities. Under consideration are some family day events, a photo contest, hikes, perhaps some competitive bike and run events, a BBQ, some educational speakers, work projects, etc.

Events will begin on Saturday, June 7, 2014, probably at Sully Creek State Park, take place throughout that week on various areas of the Maah Daah Hey Trail and end with the Medora Flag Day parade. All MDHT founders, MDHT Association life members, Association members, past MDHTA officers and all trail users and

enthusiasts are invited. Further details will be forthcoming.



New Life Member

In July, Dale and Jennifer Heglund, of Bismarck became Life Members of the Maah Daah Hey Trail Association. They were founding members of the Association in 1999 with Dale serving on the board of directors and first treasurer from 1999—2005. Through their Life Mem-

bership they sponsored a gate and milepost at the Burning Coal Vein Campground, the southern terminus of the Maah Daah Hey Trail. MDHTA is working with the Heglunds to get the signage made and posted.

MDHTA appreciates the continued commitment of the Heglunds to the trail. They found the trail to be of such importance and having impact on their lives they continued their commitment to share the trail experience with the public.

Inside the MDHTA

Memberships, gifts and merchandise sales cover operating expenses for the MDHTA. Operating expenses include the cost of printing and mailing newsletters, maintaining the organization's identity and business (copyright, licensing fees, etc.), trail promotion, as well as a limited amount of trail work.

The board is made up of five members elected to volunteer their time to serve on the board. Board members are actively pursuing additional funding through grants. This year we have had some success in acquiring grants but many grants require a match to meet the requirements for receiving the

grant.

During the holiday season consider making a donation, a memorial gift, purchase MDHTA branded merchandise or upping your membership level. Your generous support will improve the Maah Daah Hey Trail experience for all.

Update from Forest Service - November 2013

The trail program on the Dakota Prairie Grasslands had a good year even if no temporary help could be picked up for the season.

After a real wet spring and summer in Western North Dakota, the trailheads and the access roads at Magpie, Bully Pulpit, CCC, Bennett, and Sather Dam were repaired, sinkholes filled, and then the damaged areas re-surfaced with gravel.

Numerous slumps on the Cottonwood loop were fixed and three new low water crossings were installed at west Knutson, Roosevelt and Wannagon creeks on the MDH. About 1.5 miles of new trail was constructed to re-route around oil wells in the

Elkhorn camp area.

Coal creek camp now has picnic tables, and the camp is substantially complete, this camp is located about in the middle of the Deuce trail between Bully Pulpit and Burning Coal Vein Camp.

Approximately 4 miles of MDHII (The Deuce) trail is under contract to be surfaced with gravel and over 3 miles of trail surfacing contract carried over from 2012 was finished this year, all with Recreation Trail Program (RTP) funds. The FS was successful in acquiring another RTP grant for 2014 to surface around 4 miles of the Deuce south of the Bear creek area.

Some other good news, the FS

constructed over 4 miles of new surfaced trail (Oak Leaf) on our Sheyenne Ranger District on the east end of the nation's longest trail, the North Country Trail (NCT). Also the FS contracted for a new campground on the Sheyenne District just north of the existing east trailhead on the NCT; the camp will have toilets, well, spurs, living areas with picnic tables and fire rings. It is under construction as we speak.

Kudos and many thanks go to Nick Yberra and his folks for volunteering to mow the MDH before the "The MDH 100" ride; it is much appreciated by the FS and the walking and riding public.

Good News for the Maah Daah Hey!

The North Dakota Department of Tourism notified MDHTA that we will be receiving a grant for \$2500 to help with the Grand Opening Celebration for the Maah Daah Hey Trail June 7-14, 2014. The MDHTA had to match this grant. The board of directors is very appreciative of the ND Department of Tourism for their generous support in promoting the Maah Daah Hey Trail.

Roughrider Electric Cooperative, through their Operation RoundUp Charitable Foundation has provided two grants to

MDHTA. The first grant of \$500 provided decals to promote the trail. The second grant, also \$500, is for the purchase and installation of the first water cache box for the trail. The Association hopes to have the first of eight water cache boxes installed before the first of the year. Each water cache box will cost about \$1000, so the board will be applying for additional funding from various sources for this project. The next time you

are visiting with a representative of Roughrider Electric please thank them for their generous support. Better yet send them a thank you at PO Box 1038, Dickinson, ND 58602-1038.



Maah Daah Hey Trail Association

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We're on the Web!
mdhta.com



**MAAH DAAH HEY TRAIL ASSOCIATION
Officers and Board of Directors**

President—Don Mayer

Secretary—Randy Snyder

Treasurer—Roger Ashley

Bruce Bishop

Rod Mitzel

The Maah Daah Hey Trail Association is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing and maintaining a linear, non-motorized, sustainable, recreational trail system in southwest North Dakota, through voluntary and public involvement, and in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service.

Membership Application

Yes! I want to join the

Maah Daah Hey Trail Association

\$25 Individual/Family Member

\$70 Individual/Family Member for 3 years

\$75 Founding Member

\$200 Trail Boss Member

\$500 Mile Marker Member

\$750 Gatekeeper Member

\$1000 Life Member

Make checks payable to:

MDHTA, P. O., Box 156, Bismarck, ND 58502

MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE 100% TAX DEDUCTIBLE!

Date: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____