



NEWSLETTER

October 2005

Volume I Issue I

Michigan Equine Partnership
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 a 501(c)6 Non-Profit Organization

MICHIGAN EQUINE PARTNERSHIP RESPONDS TO NEEDS OF THE MICHIGAN EQUINE INDUSTRY

The Michigan Equine Partnership (MEP) appointed a 16 member (interim) Board of Directors in June 2005. The board is structured to represent the many different equine interests across the entire industry and state.

The Executive Board consists of: Cady Ness-Smith (Eagle, MI), President, is a member of the Michigan Horse Council, American Donkey and Mule Society, and several other equine associations; Aaron Rice (Battle Creek, MI), Vice-President, is a member of Michigan Great Lakes International, Inc., and other draft horse associations; Claudia Cary (Pinckney, MI), Secretary, is on the board of the Michigan Harness Horseman's Association; Ronald W. Hitzler (Williamston, MI), Treasurer, is an attorney specializing in equine law. Included on the board are: Carrie Barr, Jerry Campbell, Carl Field, Kim Fricke, Hank Vaupel, Patricia Hooker, Kris Duflo, Dan Rakieten, Tom Tyler, Karen Waite, Dr. John Shelle and Gary Wilmore. Also, Linda Curtis is serving as Development Director and Val Vail-Shirey is the Executive Director.

MEP also consists of the following committees: Finance, Development, Legislative, Outreach, Membership, and Nomination. In addition to the board, MEP plans to appoint 83 County Ambassadors to further promote and educate Michigan residents on the value of the equine industry.

It is important to know that the board is required to "exercise their powers in the interest of MEP and not in their own interests or the interests of another entity or person." This assures that the vision and goals of MEP will always be protected and that there is some measure of "checks and balances."

President Cady Ness-Smith says "With such a diverse membership the entire industry is represented, bringing interest in the Michigan equine industry to a new level. The future depends on all aspects of the industry being represented, including retail sales, corporations and other entities that interact with the equine industry. All equine organizations can work in harmony with the Michigan Equine Partnership. We will be most effective if we come together as the collective voice on behalf of the equine industry. By increasing public awareness and support, influencing public policy, and heightening recognition of economic opportunities, the Michigan Equine Partnership will contribute to the economy through continued job growth in agriculture,"

"This is a big umbrella group wanting to hear from everyone. Regardless of the issue, if it impacts the equine industry, we want to hear from you." says Executive Director Val Vail-Shirey.

Our Mission

Through an energized, broad based, grassroots coalition representing all facets of the equine industry, the Michigan Equine Partnership (MEP) is committed to increasing public awareness and support, influencing public policy to strengthen the industry, and heightening recognition of the economic opportunities and value of the Michigan equine industry.

Our Vision

To be a leader, a partner, and the voice of the Michigan equine industry.

Our Philosophy

Providing leadership through commitment, empowerment, and accountability. Building partnerships with respect, trust, cooperation. Responding to the needs of the equine industry with information, assessment, innovation, communication, and coordination of services.

Our Values

We are a proud non-profit organization of advocacy through integrity, collaboration and member-driven cooperative spirit.

Calendar of Events

Oct. 13-15 Michigan Great Lakes International Draft Horse Event MSU Pavilion East Lansing, MI.	Nov. 9-10 North American Horse Spectacular Novi, MI.	January 2006 Michigan Equine Partnership Online/Phone Stallion Service Auction	Spring 2006 MEP Annual Membership Meeting and Dinner East Lansing, MI
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Founding Members: C.A.N.T.E.R., Equine World Insurance, International Draft Horse Association, M.T.O.B.A., Jerry and Lisa Campbell, Tom Cole, Larry Julian, Henry Mast, Val Vail-Shirey.

Stallion Service Auction

January 2006

- Michigan Equine Partnership will host its first annual Stallion Service Auction during the first week of January 2006. This auction will offer a variety of breeds and take place with both online and telephone bidding.
- All are welcome to bid, members and non-members.
- Stallions will meet select criteria and contracts will be issued.
- All proceeds will benefit Michigan Equine Partnership, a 501(c)-6 Non-Profit Organization.

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*If you have a stallion that you would like to donate his services to this auction,
Please contact Val at (517) 372-1500 or cell: (517) 204-3591 as soon as possible.*

Legislative Watch

HJR B Rep. Hildebrand
HB 4366 Rep. Caul
HB 4072 Rep. Hildebrand
HB 4073 Rep. Hildebrand
HB 4352 Rep. Hildebrand
HB 4290 Rep. Hummel
HB 4271 Rep. Hune
HB 4260 Rep. Hune
HB 4492 Rep. Hune
HB 4376 Rep. Whitmer
SB 0624 Sen. Toy

The Legislative Watch is a list of equine related legislation for you to be aware of. At appropriate times you may want to contact your legislators to inform them of your opinion on particular bill numbers. You can access the complete history and current status of the listed legislation by going to the Michigan Equine Partnership website at www.miequine.com

HJR = House Joint Resolution	HB = House Bill	SB = Senate Bill
Senator	Representative	
P.O. Box 30036	P.O. Box 30014	
Lansing, MI 48909	Lansing, MI 48909	

Children and the Law

Ronald W. Hitzler, Jr., PLLC

*225 E. Grand River Avenue, Suite 203 * Brighton, MI 48116*

810-227-6466

1. **Contracts.** While there are exceptions, minors (persons under the age of 18) generally do not have the capacity to contract for goods or services. Where a minor has a horse that he or she desires to board or have trained at your facility, consider having the minor's parent(s) or guardian(s) sign the agreement. In the event there is of a breach of your agreement, you may file suit against the parent(s) or guardian(s) to recoup your damages. If your agreement was signed by the minor and then breached by the minor, your legal claim against the minor would likely fail.

** This is not intended to be legal advice and should not be relied upon as such.
If you have questions, contact your attorney.*

2. **Personal Injury Claims.** Generally, the statute or period of limitations for a cause of action to recover damages for the death or injury to a person is three (3) years after the date of the death or injury. However, where the death or injury involves a minor (persons under the age of 18), the person or those claiming under the person shall have one year after the person turns the age of 18 or dies to bring a cause of action although the statute or period of limitations has run. When an accident occurs at your facility, document what occurred and when; then keep those records in a safe location. It is a good practice to insist that those persons utilizing your facility have adequate medical insurance and for them to provide you with proof of insurance. Hopefully, the Equine Activity Liability Act (MCL 691.1661 et seq.) will protect you under these circumstances; however, the Act will only protect you from the success of a claim if you adhere to its requirements. I encourage all horsemen to read this statute.

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WEST NILE VIRUS UPDATE

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The two recent human deaths in Wayne County from West Nile Encephalitis bring this highly communicable disease back into public awareness after a relatively outbreak-free year. There has also been a horse diagnosed with the disease in the Livingston County area. These cases, though few in number, show that the disease is still prevalent in the state and that protecting the horse population is an important and ongoing concern. There are a number of reasons that West Nile Encephalitis cases are fewer this year than in recent years.

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The disease is carried in the wild bird population and spread to other susceptible species by mosquitoes biting infected birds and then biting other susceptible (horses, humans, etc.) species. Because of the very dry conditions this year there have been fewer mosquitoes to spread the disease. However, the decreased number of mosquitoes this year is only part of the reason for fewer clinical cases. Many communities have also taken steps such as spraying to limit the number of mosquitoes and have awareness programs so that people limit their exposure to mosquitoes.

The disease follows the migratory bird flyways across the country and because the spread of the disease depends on the number of infected birds and the mosquitoes present to spread the virus, the exposure rates will not be the same from year to year in each part of the country.

With a very effective vaccine available for horses, most horses have been vaccinated and have immunity to the disease. Immunity from vaccine does not last forever and it is recommended to vaccinate all horses twice a year (spring and late summer) for West Nile Encephalitis.

It is also extremely important to limit exposure to mosquitoes whenever possible. Practical steps that can be taken are to eliminate mosquito breeding areas such as old tires, water troughs, areas of standing water, and unused containers that accumulate water. Limiting pasture time at peak mosquito times, using fly sprays and fly sheets are also helpful.

The disease is still with us and will be for the foreseeable future. It is still extremely important to protect our equine population through vaccination and practical farm and stable management whenever and however we can.

Henry M. Vaupel, D.V.M. Kern Road Veterinary Clinic, PLLC 105 Fowlerville Road Fowlerville, MI 48836 (517)223-9618

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MANAGING RISK FOR EQUESTRIANS

Owning and working with horses fulfills the brightest dream for many people. If you have realized this dream, you are aware that along with the most delightful aspects of horses comes unpredictability. Have you considered the risk, responsibility and liability surrounding your involvement with horses? Here are some important questions to think about if you own a horse, work with horses, or operate a commercial establishment involving horses:

- a. What happens if your horse injures a client or visitor to your property ? (for example, kicks, bites, or steps on a person)?
- b. What happens if your horse gets loose and causes an accident or damages neighboring property?
- c. What happens if you are giving riding lessons and a client falls off your horse?

Are you fully aware of the risks and your liability in these situations?

Do you know how to protect yourself and your assets from a potential lawsuit?

Call MEP Board member, Kim Fricke, President of Equine World Insurance for assistance. She can be reached Toll Free at 866.954.0555 or by email: kfricke@equineworldins.com

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Carrie Barr	Ron Hitzler Jr.	Jerry Campbell	Tom Tyler	Cady Ness-Smith
Patricia Hooker	Claudia Cary	Kris Duflo	Aaron Rice	Gary Wilmore
Dan Rakieten	Carl Field	Kim Fricke	Karen Waite	Hank Vaupel



Click here to join today!