

# H O F P R I N T S

## MACKINAC HORSEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Mackinac Island, Michigan

November 2015

## 2015: What a Season it Was!

Summer horse camp, the 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Horse Show, carriage-driving classes, a new 4-H Club, more lessons and boarders were all part of the Mackinac Horsemen's Association's big 2015 season.

The first-ever summer kids' camp, developed by MHA Education Director Lisa Eckhardt, hosted 2 weeklong camp sessions. Kids learned the basics of grooming, saddling and parts of the horses and tack. They had individualized riding lessons along with playing Horse Jeopardy and Polo-Cross, and even had a horse beauty contest. More camps are planned for 2016 so watch for details at [www.mackinachorses.org](http://www.mackinachorses.org) and reserve your spot!

"I liked every part of horse camp, said Nora Bailey. Dawson Wapner McPeck said he liked playing games, especially Polo-Cross.

"When one of the kids told me it was the best time he's ever had, not only did it make my day—it made my summer," said Lisa Eckhardt.

Another new item was a carriage driving clinic conducted by Don Eckhardt. Eight men and women learned the parts of a carriage, how to harness a horse, and the basics of carriage driving.

"It was something I'd never tried before and wasn't sure I ever would, but this workshop gave me the confidence that with practice I can handle the horses," said participant Don Hinman.

The season kicked off May 30th with a Youth and 4H Horse Expo, followed by the Horses, Hoofbeats and Hors D'oeuvres fundraiser in June, during which American Legion Post 299 dedicated the new flagpole installed at the stable.

To support the local Mackinac Island Community, free riding lessons and family nights were provided weekly to all Mackinac

Island Public School Students by Mackinac Horsemen's Association. Additionally, an Equine Education Scholarship of \$500 has been created for MIPS current and previous graduates pursuing equine based fields of study.

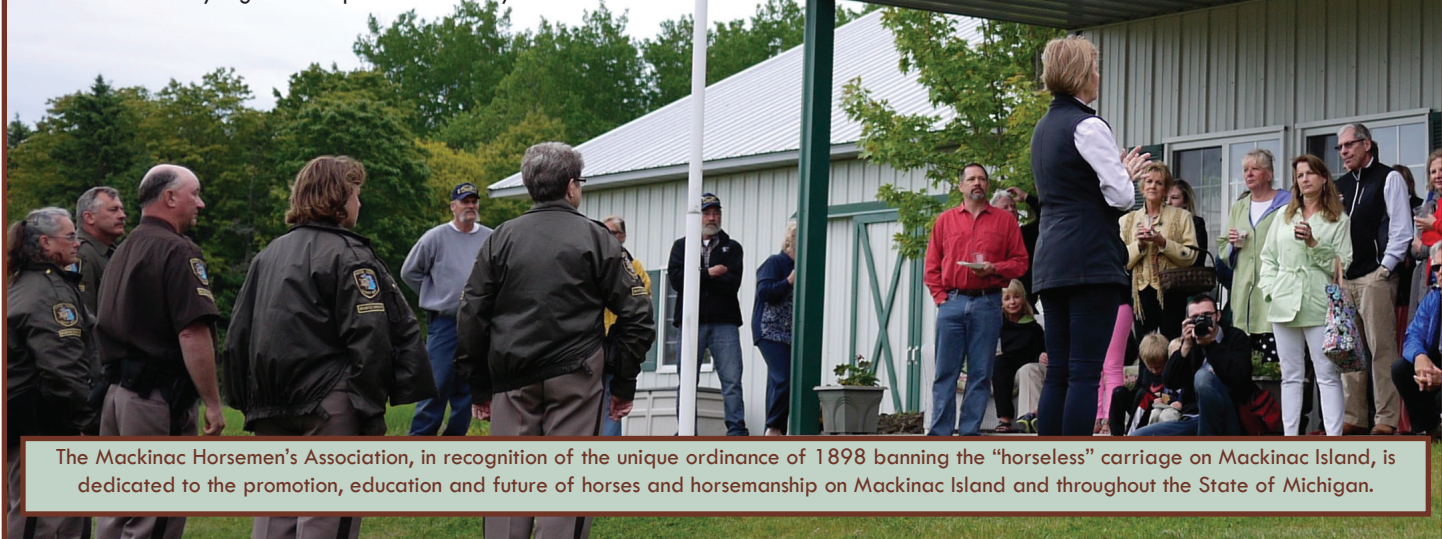
Samantha Simmons, Stable Manager for the past two years, led the Mackinac Trailblazers 4-H Club. She and Assistant Stable Manager Michelle Modafferi assisted with riding lessons and helped Trainer, Anna Perkins conduct more than 300 lessons improving our lesson revenues by over 43 percent. This team will all return for Summer 2016!

Twenty-five riders, including seven from off-island, participated in the Annual Horse Show in 32 events. Overall 2015 champions were Opal Fomish, Youth; Matilda Musser, Junior; and Samantha Simmons, Adult.

In addition, boarding was up with several more long-term horses and a number of temporary trail riders.

Rounding out the season was a successful Festival of the Horse. This year's breed show had the highest attendance ever.

All in all, it was a season to remember.



The Mackinac Horsemen's Association, in recognition of the unique ordinance of 1898 banning the "horseless" carriage on Mackinac Island, is dedicated to the promotion, education and future of horses and horsemanship on Mackinac Island and throughout the State of Michigan.

## FEATURED HORSE: *Blaze*

At age 25, little Blaze, MHA's most popular pony, is still going strong.

"He's one of a kind," says Jodi Barna, who donated the use of him to the 4H program 18 years ago. "He's a jack of all trades and gives his best in all he does," she added. "Many a child has learned to ride on him."

With his chestnut coat, flaxen mane and white blaze running down his face, Blaze is a fine example of the Haflinger breed. The name "Haflinger" comes from the village of Hafling, which today is in northern Italy. Blaze stands 13.2 hands high.



Jodi bought Blaze in 1997 from a horse farm in Paw Paw, MI, then kept him on a farm in Plainwell where she learned to drive him.

A wonderful feature of Blaze is his versatility: you can both drive or ride him. This offers children a first-time driving experience.

Blaze will continue to help kids hone their riding and driving skills as long as this sturdy little fellow can do it.



Photo credit for two photos above:  
Jennifer Wohletz

SEE BLAZE AND ALL HIS FRIENDS AT THE  
MACKINAC COMMUNITY EQUESTRIAN CENTER  
VISITORS WELCOME!



## Over the Rainbow Bridge: *Indie*

Many of you may remember a sweet Welsh pony named Indie (Welshaven Indian Summer). He passed away at Hiawatha Hawk Ranch in Mackinaw City on Oct. 17 at age 25. Ranch owner Joe Ostman, who has lovingly cared for many MHA horses over the years, reported Indie had quite a bad case of colic caused by a twist in his gut. The vet was called and examined him, but even with surgery he had a very slim chance of coming out of it. He was in a lot of pain so the decision to put him down was made.

"I will see the little fellow in my mind's eye carrying a kid over a jump with a gleam in his eye," said MHA President Lisa Brock. "I am proud that we are an organization that takes care of our horses as they age."

When Indie joined the MHA riding program in 2013, he was a very welcome and capable addition. Indie made many children smile and fulfilled many dreams before he was retired at the end of the 2014 season.

Earlier, he spent many years in the show ring both in 4-H and open shows. Indie was used in the CMU Equestrian Team for smaller riders. His first owner sold Indie to the Krepostman family. Former MHA Trustee Sue Bellinger, was the family's trainer, so when Natalia Krepostman outgrew him, Sue paved the way for the family to donate Indie to MHA.

Farewell sweet Indie. Canter on.



Indy with his previous owner, Natalia.



## From May to September a Time to Remember!



MHA horses enjoying the space of the new paddock on the site of a reused capped landfill. Support for repurposing this site came from the Mackinac State Historic Parks, Mackinac Island Community Foundation, Dept. of Public Works, and various private donations.



MHA horse Marco patiently awaits the judge's decision on the accuracy of his team in naming horse parts at a day camp this summer.



Mackinac Trailblazers 4H club take a break from their community service project cleaning up Swamp Trail. Tools to accomplish this were donated by Mackinac State Historic Parks.



Anna Perkins, MHA's riding instructor, helps a student prepare for a lesson. Anna lives in St. Ignace and Kentucky. She has a teaching degree, is a Certified Emergency Veterinary Technician, and owned her own riding school in Washington before returning to St. Ignace to help run her family's business.



Eaton County Mounted Unit teaching a group of students drill team moves at a free clinic offered at the MCEC this summer.



Sarah Growney assists a younger student with her horse. Sarah spent a large part of her time helping at MCEC this summer.



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AND ALL WHO SUPPORTED  
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THANK YOU!



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were able  
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purchase a much needed Kubota. This contributed greatly  
to our efficiency and to our ability to provide more  
activities and boarding options for residents and visitors.

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