

Motor City Horse Force FAQ's

Q. What's the difference between the Motor City Horse Force and the Restore the Horse Foundation?

A. The Motor City Horse Force is the “face” of the Restore the Horse Foundation, launched in July 2007 with the Web site (www.motorcityhorseforce.org) that encourages people to join the Force and support a horse, and the mounted police in our area. The Restore the Horse Foundation is the official registered name for the non-profit organization conceived by people interested in bringing mounted units back to the Metropolitan Detroit area to increase public safety and enhance the image of the community.

Q. Which Mounted Police Units does the Motor City Horse Force support?

A. Currently, the Wayne County Sheriff's Dept Mounted Unit is the only one in the area, so that's where the support of the Motor City Horse Force goes. The Motor City Horse Force is not exclusively dedicated to raising money for the Wayne County unit, but it is committed to partnering with it until its stated intention of expanding the operation and endowing the unit with funds to assure their perpetuity is met.

Q. What happened to the Detroit Police Dept.'s Mounted Unit?

A. The Detroit unit was disbanded for budget reasons in 2005.

Q. Are Wayne County Sheriff's Dept. Mounted Police currently patrolling the streets of the city of Detroit?

A. Yes, but to a lesser degree than we'd like, simply because of the expanse of the area the unit serves — all of Wayne County. The MCHF aims to raise funds for the Wayne County

Mounted Police Unit to increase its presence in the city, and in other parts of SE Michigan, to help compensate for the loss of Detroit's unit.

Q. Where are the Wayne County Sheriff's Dept.'s horses kept?

A. The horses are kept at the stable in Hines Park, at Newburgh Road and Hines Park Drive in Livonia, Michigan.

Q. Is the Motor City Horse Force funded by Wayne County?

A. No. The funds come entirely from private or corporate donations.

Q. What are the advantages of a Mounted Unit?

A. Beyond community relations and public image enhancement, mounted units serve many practical police-related purposes, such as crowd control, traffic management, search-and-rescue and park and street patrol. From atop a horse, an officer can see — and be seen — much better, and that type of superior visibility is a great advantage, whether on routine patrol or at largely attended events — and all situations in between.

Q. Do the horses have to go through special training? How long does the training take?

A. Yes. Because these horses typically will be utilized in very crowded, potentially volatile situations, they have to undergo extensive “desensitization” training so they will not be surprised by any jarring sights or sounds and can remain calm and focused on their task. To achieve this, horses are subjected to several stimuli, such as gunshots, firecrackers, police sirens, flares and more, to simulate what they might experience in a real situation. The horses also have to be trained in various types of tactical movements (such as controlling or dispersing a large crowd) to help them navigate in these difficult situations. As with any officer, this type of training is ongoing.