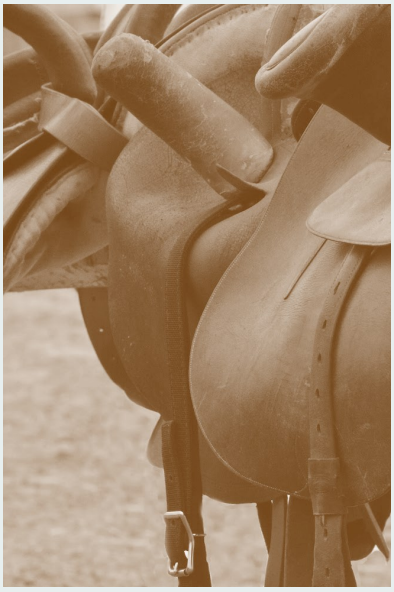
American Sidesaddle Association

Autumn 2021



THE PHOENIX

NEWSLETTER

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

BY GAEL ORR

Hey Everyone! Lately I've had a few people ask me why I've gotten more involved in the American Sidesaddle Association. I've simply found a place where I can invest some of my talents to benefit new friends; and I try to do so with an extra measure of positivity. Each year we get lots of new participants and members that come to clinics and enjoy themselves, but sometimes they are left on the peripheral. So my question to you is, are you reaching out to those new members and welcoming them? Are you showing people how they can be involved, and inviting them to special events? I've found that people, like horses, are herd animals. We like to belong to a community of like-minded enthusiasts. We enjoy spending time together and having a sense of belonging. Why not plan a small "wine and cheese" event for your chapter and invite your newest members? Or, how about just sending someone a quick text message or email, that they are on your mind? It takes all of us to grow the sidesaddle community, and I'm inviting you to please consider letting it begin with you.

You may email content to: Gael Orr gaeljorr@gmail.com

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From the President's Desk

By Maggie Herlensky

ASA has had a busy summer and fall looks to be just as fun-filled. There have been shows, parades, expos, demonstrations, and both virtual and in-person meetings. I look forward to enjoying more events in cooler weather. Yes, I'm a fall person. Bring on the pumpkin spice and apple cider.

Before I go on and on about how much fun I'm having, I want to fill you in on a little bit of the business behind your organization. Gael Orr has volunteered her marketing expertise to help make ASA more financially solvent. It will result in higher fees for some events, but will hopefully provide lots more for your money. Expect lots of changes!

In July, American Sidesaddle Association members participated in Breyerfest. The theme was Horse of a Different Color. This year's event, like last year's, was virtual. However, live performers were filmed in the Covered Arena at the Kentucky Horse Park and broadcast live. Riders wore costumes in various colors accompanied by mane and tail bows of rainbow ribbon. The highlight of the day for me was racing Samantha Reeves around the arena. I was on Red Fern, the one-eyed wonder horse, and Sam was on Pixie Dust, the flying sport pony. I was very proud of myself for finally going faster than a trot or carefully controlled canter for the first time in many years. It was going pretty well until Sam and Pixie passed us. Fern decided there was no point in continuing a race she was losing and slammed on the brakes. I stayed on! I missed seeing the cheering crowds, great food, and shopping, but as we were loading the trailer it occurred to me that we only had to suffer in Kentucky July heat for one day.

In August, Bryan and I headed out with our trusty travel cat, Squeak, and our new-to-us camper to travel cross-country. We got to visit Crest Ridge Saddlery in Lowry City, Missouri, and pick up my new sidesaddle. It's gorgeous! Also, they have an offside tree ready to build a new saddle for those of you who had expressed interest. After that, we met up with Ellen Noll in Topeka, Kansas, to pick up some old sidesaddles she had gotten to restore, but never got around to it. We had a nice visit. The weather was perfect for a campground meetup.

Down the road we went headed to Denver, Colorado, to have a mini clinic with Fabian Rodriquez and his group of sidesaddle riders, some driving from several hours away in Nebraska. All was going well until the roof blew off of the camper. Fitting that we were in Kansas. We got it repaired enough to go on, but we were not going to make the clinic. At least it was early enough to get most everyone turned around. I'll get back out there next year. We did get to visit with Fabian and his awesome Fjord horse, Cisco. Congratulations on your new sidesaddle, Fabian!
Of course, it rained that night. Drip, drip, drip….
The drive through the Rockies was as spectacular as the drive through Utah was boring. We did get to see antelope and wild burros in Utah.

Southern California was beautiful. We camped in our clinic hostess' driveway. Many thanks for the hospitality, Ann Riggs. Squeak loved getting to play in your yard. The clinic was awesome. We had a half dozen riders on beautiful horses. Lunch was amazing. I can't wait to see everyone, again. Congratulations on your new sidesaddle, Ann!

From the President's Desk continued from previous page...

Before the next leg of our trip, we took a couple of days for vacation. We went to the San Diego Zoo with Anita Reisinger and walked our little feet off! The next day, we dropped her at the airport and headed to Disneyland. Bryan had said if I sold a saddle, we could go. I sold two, so I should get a return trip, right?

The drive to the Grand Canyon was long and hot, but pretty amazing. I lost count of how many National Parks we went through. It was dark when we got to the Grand Canyon, so we set up camp and went to bed. Squeak had slept most of the drive, so she bounced around the camper half the night. Gotta love kittens.

I had to work the next morning, so I got up at some horrible hour that was 8am back home and took my laptop outside to watch the sun rise. An elk walked right past me and stopped to have his picture taken! Later, we walked the canyon rim a bit and realized that heat and elevation were a convincing reason to come back in the spring. It was beautiful, but neither of us were in shape for any kind of exercise. Squeak got to chase a lizard until she got to the end of her leash. After that, she wanted carried. I don't blame her. I did, too.

On our next leg, we stopped at Meteor Crater (very windy) and then stood on a corner in Winslow, Arizona. If you don't get the reference, you're too young. We got to the beautiful Aspen Lodge in Alpine, Arizona, in time to meet some great people, including the Robinsons of Robinson Ranch. They run camps for kids and adults who wouldn't get a chance to ride horses, otherwise. They bought a sidesaddle since they had nearly every other type of saddle. (That's three, Bryan!)

Clinic day was great. I lost count of how many riders we had. Marguerite Tan brought her lovely mule. The ranch also provided a mule for the clinic. Mules can be hard to fit, but we had two antiques with us that worked perfectly. Rain was predicted for afternoon, so we hurried through saddle fit and riding and did history and lunch inside the lodge by the fireplace. We had quite a few antique saddles spread out around the room. Several stayed behind to become barstools for the lodge. Oh, and congratulations on your new sidesaddle, Marguerite! (that's four for anyone counting)

Dinner was great. Everyone loved Wild Bill, the ranch hand. A genuine cowboy. He was in an issue of GQ once. He made the whole trip. I got to meet Tina Louie, who has ridden her horse sidesaddle from one rim of the Grand Canyon to the other and back! And in period costume! Amazing lady. She did her canyon ride in a Crest Ridge, but was interested in seeing what an English sidesaddle felt like. Congratulations on your new sidesaddle, Tina! (that's five, Bryan!)

We ended our Arizona stay with a trail ride into the White Mountains. It was breathtaking. I can't wait to go back. Maybe after my five day stay at Disney World. Oh, I nearly forgot. A lady was interested in a saddle at the clinic, but hadn't decided by the time we needed to go. It has since been shipped. Congratulations on your new sidesaddle, Celia!

The rest of the trip was fun, but non-horsey except for the Budweiser Clydesdales in St. Louis.

We barely had time to recover before the Delaware All Horse Parade in Delaware, Ohio. The All Horse is the kickoff for the county fair and The Little Brown Jug, harness racing's version of the Kentucky Derby. Nine riders paraded in silver studded parade gear, two of us riding aside. It was great to be back in front of a crowd.

Next up is a parade in Milton, West Virginia; clinics in Ohio, New York, and New Jersey; parades in Bainbridge, Ohio, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, Chicago, Illinois, Dayton, Ohio, and Lexington, Kentucky; and Equine Affaire in Massachusetts.

See y'all down the trail!

A Day…. Month… ummm… Almost a Year in the Life of a Saddler

By Maggie Herlensky, ASA President

Our story started in October 2020. Nothing in 2020 went well, so we should have just stopped right there. Life in a saddle repair shop doesn't always go as planned. We got this sidesaddle in for new billets, balance strap billet, and replace the seat webbing. Billets aren't very difficult, but can mean a partial teardown of the saddle. Replacing seat webbing is a near total teardown. Lots of labor involved in both taking her apart and putting her back together. We specialize in sidesaddles, so we were confident that this wouldn't be a difficult job, just time-consuming.

Yep. We were wrong about that.

Please reference the first photo. Red duct tape. Probably a bad sign. The cloth covering the seat padding was polyester double-knit. I had nursing uniforms made of this stuff in the 80s and it was considered old-fashioned then.

The next four photos show some fiberglass and a metal bracket with a few screws into the tree and some wood putty. Interesting. It looks like the tree had broken and been repaired. There was a dee for removable balance strap. It was held on with a single tack.

Halloween, 2020

New billets were prepped and installed. The old balance strap dee was removed to be replaced with a permanent billet. Seat webbing was ok, just needed tightened. As the gullet liner and seat were being tacked into the gullet, it started to come away in pieces. The poor old lady had had so much cosmetic work done in the past that her bones couldn't take it. Halloween is a scary time, indeed. We let her have some rest while we caught up some other projects.

December, 2020

After a few months, she had another appointment with the surgeon-- I mean saddler. The broken bits were removed from the gullet and a plan started to form. We discussed replacing the broken piece with a wooden dowel, but discarded the idea. We didn't think a dowel would be strong enough.

It was trash day and the garbage truck was picking up the great big trash can and dumping it into its welcoming maw. No. We didn't throw her to the landfill. The handle of the trash can must be incredibly sturdy. It holds the entire weight of over 100 gallons of trash on just that little piece of fiberglass.

A Day…. Month… ummm… Almost a Year in the Life of a Saddler

Continued from previous page… The brave and daring saddler took a handle he had in his stash of useless stuff from his days working for the trash company and shaped it to fit into the space vacated by the broken tree bits. Very sturdy indeed. He drilled holes for the webbing to screw into. She was starting to look like a sidesaddle again. Except that the seat had to come off again to make sure it would attach to the new piece correctly. At this point, please also note that somewhere in her past the ends of her points had been sawed off. Egads. Poor thing. She was given another recuperative rest period.

Valentine's Day, 2021

A crack was noted in the cantle. Too many tacks and too many years. A steel plate had to be fabricated to fit, and her skeleton was then safely reinforced. But since the seat webbing was old, we replaced it, just to be on the safe side. (We'll never get paid for the hours in this poor thing, so we may as well do it right.)

Everything came off and her tree is got all of the many tack holes filled using a process called "toothpicking". The old fiberglass came off in one piece like a jello mold. Sigh. One more thing to add to the list. At this point, we also discovered that the tree wasn't broken, it had been sawed in half and shortened!! (Insert curse words of your choice here.) She got some new fiberglass, but this time it went all the way around the tree instead of just on the surface. She was sanded and cleaned up. Happy Valentine's Day old girl.

New webbing was installed and the business of putting the seat back together began. A nice cushy layer of gel was installed under the polyester double-knit. The polyester was ugly, but it worked, and it already fit the saddle, so why mess with it. Besides, we were getting tired of looking at her. The bolsters, or bellies in saddler's terms, just didn't want to line up right, so wool was placed strategically to fill in where fluffy stuff fell out in one of the eighty-seven times the seat had been removed.

The leather and suede outside was stubbornly refusing to go back on right, so she sat in a corner for a few more months. We stared at her. She stared back.

July 2021

An apprentice showed up and wanted to know what the inside of a sidesaddle looks like. Here, kid, let me show you. As our fascinated apprentice watched, all the pieces miraculously went together as they were intended. Her billets were sewn onto webbing and firmly attached to the tree. If they need replaced in the future, the saddler won't have to take anything apart. Just hand sew the new ones in place. Since this saddle has exposed billets on the offside, leather was made to cover the webbing and was dyed to match the billets. And then….Voila!!

She is finished. Figuring our hourly rate, she is now worth roughly as much as the national debt. We get paid $300 and the owner's eternal soul. It's a good thing we like you, Mere.

M McAllister Saddlery

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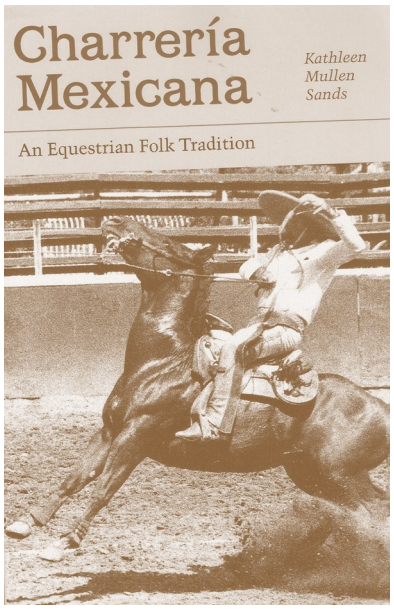
Hours by appointment

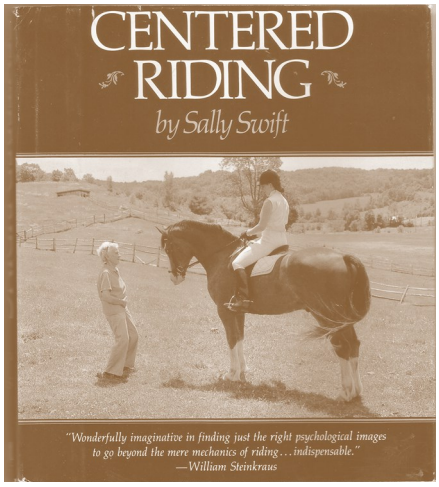


BOOKS ON LOAN

Charreria-Overview

By Vickie Pritchard

This 1993 book by Kathleen Mullen Sands portrays the complex tradition of parades, competitions, costumes, and events that celebrate Mexican horsemanship. La Escaramuza and the traditional role of women in Charreria. These women ride aside and display their well-honed riding skills and bravery. Traditional Adelita costuming and the charro type sidesaddle is explained for competition teams. The author of the book displays some unnecessary sexism/ anti-sidesaddle in her writing, but overall, the book is very helpful.



Centered– Overview

By Vickie Pritchard

This book by Sally Swift, written in 1985, is still a must read for the serious rider. Body awareness and balance are taught by the use of creative imagery. Perhaps someone needs to use Sally's philosophy for the creation of a similar book for sidesaddle riders.

Questions to Maggie Herlensky

Question: Maggie, how can someone tell what year a saddle is made?

Answer From Maggie: Often people take their best educated guess from the shape of the saddle horns. If the saddle has a serial number, that can help too. Sometimes there will be a label on the tree underneath the panels.

Maggie Herlensky, President American Sidesaddle Association

Black Diamond Designs amyjomagee@yahoo.com

As many of you know, I LOVE educating people on the required appointments for the USEF ladies sidesaddle appointments classes. Today I am going to discuss gloves. Here is the exact wording from HU148:

> "Gloves: Plain; heavy wash leather or brown leather gloves.
> Rain Gloves: White or light colored rain gloves. Should be carried on off (right) side under billets and just showing in front of saddle flap. Fingers forward, thumbs in."

I'm not sure who assisted with the wording when the rules were rewritten a few years ago, but they weren't as careful as they should have been. While the use of an offside saddle is rare- they are used, and the wording doesn't take them into consideration. Anyway- like many others, I was taught your gloves should be brown. And I wore brown gloves in my early days. After learning more about the history and correctness of the attire over the years did I realize that the brown gloves you often see aren't truly correct. But they aren't wrong either . They are brown. The most correct and formal gloves are the chamois or wash leather gloves as pictured below.

To be truly accurate, the gloves should be chamois with buttons and no elastic or Velcro. But those are hard to find, and let me tell you from experience that even though they are lovely, they shed white fuzz all over your dark Melton wool apron. Don't do it! It took me hours to clean my habit after I showed at one of the big shows with my actual vintage chamois gloves. I have found a few modern-makes that are VERY close in color and look the part without making a mess and are super simple to keep clean. I use the light leather chamois looking gloves when wearing formal attire, and wear the darker tans for my informal attire. I have pictured the darker chocolate brown color as a reference. The problem with these gloves is they look black from a distance and black is for mourning only so they wouldn't have been worn and are not correct per the rules. But, these darker brown gloves are allowed per the rule book and are preferred by several of the ladies as your hands aren't as noticeable when wearing darker gloves.

The other gloves you need to be aware of are your rain gloves. These are the knit string gloves typically worn in wet weather to help aid with grip on wet leather. They are referred to as rain gloves for this reason. On a near-sided sidesaddle they are carried on the offside under the billets to keep them safe and easily accessible by the rider. Many times in pictures from the offside you can see the fingers of the gloves peeking out from the offside flap of the saddle. These are either white or ecru (which is a yellowish tan color, or unbleached linen color). These gloves aren't actually worn so size isn't as critical. I like to carry the small size under my regular flap saddles and the XS or XXS on my show flap saddles. They seem to fit the best If anyone needs a pair of the rain gloves feel free to reach out to me. I do stock them since they are getting increasingly harder to find at a reasonable cost. As always please ask questions! Always happy to help.

https://www.facebook.com/sidesaddletack

Black Diamond Designs is a small custom leather and cloth sewing hobby shop that specializes in tack and attire for sidesaddle riders

TIPS AND TRICKS!

Side-Saddle's Greatest Ideas, by Rhonda Watts-Hettinger, N.H.

Keeping your hat on: Don't laugh at this! It really works for adjusting a too-big hat! Panty Liners! Line the hat's sweat-band with them. I cut off the ends so it doesn't look like panty liners. The best part is that the liners absorb heat and can be easily replaced. I use them on my western show hat (Deanne Mueller).

There is weather stripping, sold in rolls, that is foam on one side, and sticky stuff on the other if you peel off the white tape. It is grey spongy stuff about one inch or so wide. We use a lot of it, cutting as much as we need, and putting it under the sweatbands of the hats for the kids (Bird McGyver, Hawai'i).

Old reiner's trick: just spray the inside of the hat, the hatband with Freez-It, the hair spray you can get at Walmart in the yellow can or atomizer. Just watch that you don't take your forehead off when you remove the hat (Bird McGyver, HI).

WNY Sidesaddle Chapter

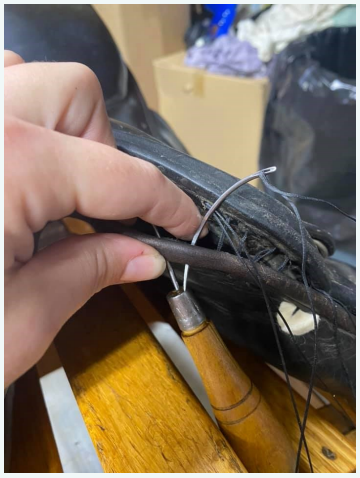
Genesee Country Museum
October 2-3, 2021
By Gael Orr

Our ladies had the joy of setting up at the Agricultural Fair at the Genesee Country Village and Museum. Liz Morrow and Audrey Sears both rode their horses each day. Tiffiany Waters, Chrissy Gibson, Tina Burrage and I all handed out promotional materials for the American Sidesaddle Association. We also allowed for visitors to sit in a vintage sidesaddle that was strapped onto a wooden saddle rack. Visitors had lots of amazing questions and it gave all of us the opportunity to share sidesaddle history to educate the public. The first day we were absolutely slammed with visitors and we had literally hundreds of people stop by our table all day long. The second day was also well attended but not quite as busy due to a rainy day. Big shout out of thanks to all the ladies who attended and helped out.

Charlotte Crosses the Rainbow Bridge

By Wendy Deini

Wendy Deini and Raise a Glass Ranch regret to report the passing of a wonderful sidesaddle mount. This week our matriarch Belgian mare Charlotte let us know that her body was failing and her spirit was tired. She was freed from her pain on September 27 and laid to rest on the home ranch. This kind, sweet mare was so good to her owners, CA Aside members, and every human that she met. She carried a myriad of brands and scars, but the beauty of her heart shone brighter than any physical attribute. Charlotte was an easygoing mare, and we could confidently put anyone on her, even special needs children in a local therapy program. She represented California Aside in the California State fair Cavalcade arena, ridden by Wendy Deini, Megan Titus and Danielle (Texler) Benson alternatively; was a living saddle stand and demonstration horse for multiple CA Aside clinics, and was ridden by Anita Reisinger in the Elk Grove Western Festival parade. She was also a gentle, nurturing broodmare, giving us two fillies in her late years. We will miss Charlotte's regal, calming presence, and loving nature. We ask that all join us in raising a glass to Charlotte and all of the "All-around amazing" sidesaddle horses with whom we've been blessed.



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INTERVIEW WITH BOARD MEMBER, RHONDA WATTS-HETTINGER

Meet Rhonda Watts-Hettinger, ASA Member at Large- Board of Directors

What chapter are you currently a member of? North East Women Sidesaddle and participant of Southern Ohio Ladies Aside

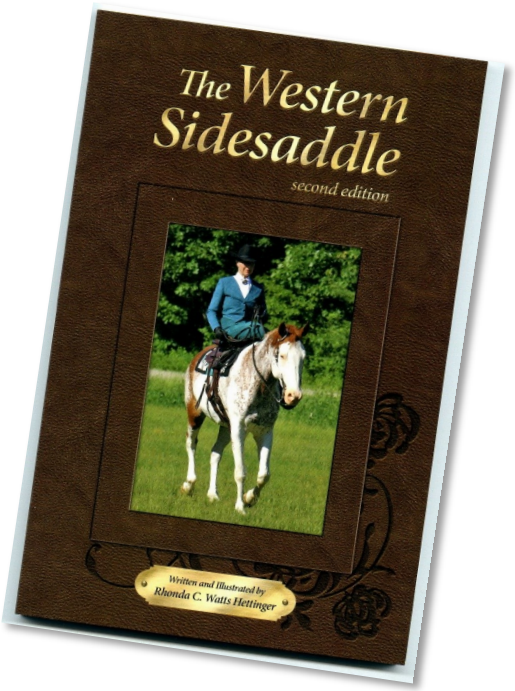
What got you interested in riding aside? Doing costume classes (the usual last class of all 4-H shows back when I started!) After my parents got me a little sidesaddle for those costume classes, I began experimenting. My third childhood mount (who put on shoes to turn "horse" for adult classes!) had been mis-handled, and sidesaddle apparently had fewer of the bad associations--so she spent the rest of her life aside, and her son followed suit.

Tell us about your favorite horse or horses? Oh dear. "Which child is your favorite?" Isaac--Der Freischutz--was certainly the star. He did everything aside, all seats; loved big crowds and applause; had a very definite empathy to help a rider, or another horse. He could change in moments from a dead-quiet beginner lesson horse, to a very up-headed, light, mind-reading upper-level horse--so he was as good as an assistant, or rather, a co-instructor! And he'd do anything, anywhere, in the hunt field. Simms' Tower, my thoroughbred, would have been a gypsy come-home horse--he had to have me sleep in or just outside his stall at away shows. But he returned that care by being willing to jump the gates of Hell, if I'd asked him. My two Crickets--Isaac's mother, and his niece, named after her--were both tough, strong mares with an opinion, and a never-quit attitude. "Little" Cricket #2 (Supremamente Lucida) was also an excellent staff horse out hunting. "Little" Cricket's two foals also stole my heart. Dandy died suddenly at 2, so I never rode her--but the one time I put a saddle on her, it was a sidesaddle. Brother has now started under saddle, and reminds me so much of his great-uncle Isaac!

Who was the horse or person who taught you the most? I usually credit my first three. Practical Joker, my Shetland (given to me as a weanling for my 7th birthday!), taught me a seat like glue. Diamond O' Galway, the Blind Connemara, taught me the finesse of dressage (and was my first sidesaddle mount). Lucky Lady Lindy was my first problem horse to retrain, and taught me perseverance and patience. She was also a fabulous sidesaddle mount, which distracted judges from her small size and conformation. There have been so many wonderful teachers... Topping the list would be Dr. H.L.M. van Schaik, from whom I learned classical dressage (turns out he had schooled his mother's horses aside!) and of course Roger Philpot, Mr. Sidesaddle himself!

What is your teaching philosophy and what sets you apart? Horses, like school-children and riding students, all have different way of learning--so it's good to have a huge variety of methods to help each one along. Any learning experience must build on what comes before--skipping steps or taking short-cuts, for any reason, will weaken the foundation (and the collapse is never at a convenient moment). Also, cross-training prevents boredom--usually improves other skills--and it's fun!

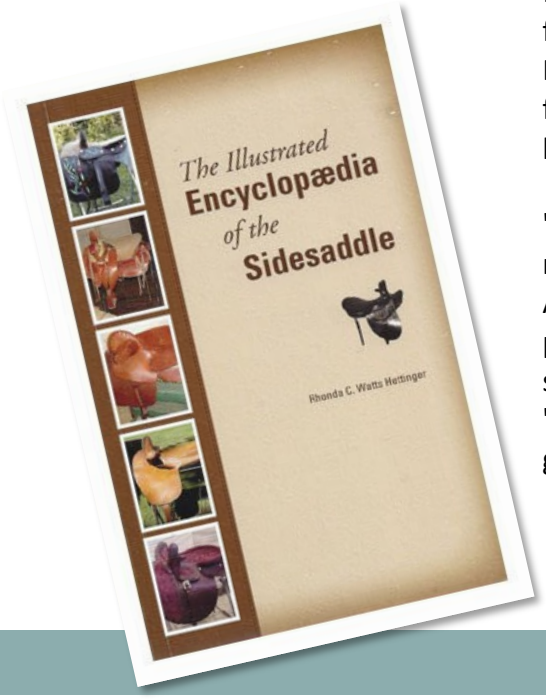
Tell us a fun fact about yourself (examples could be, a favorite movie/TV show, a hobby or interest, music genre, etc.) I'm a classical singer--opera, "art" songs, and especially Gilbert and Sullivan!



What kind of sidesaddle do you ride in or have you always wanted to own? My usual one over the years has been a Mayhew--it's suited quite a number of horses. My favorite jumping saddle, hands down, is a nameless Owen copy. My favorite western is my "Lillian" (made by the late Lillian Chaudhary).

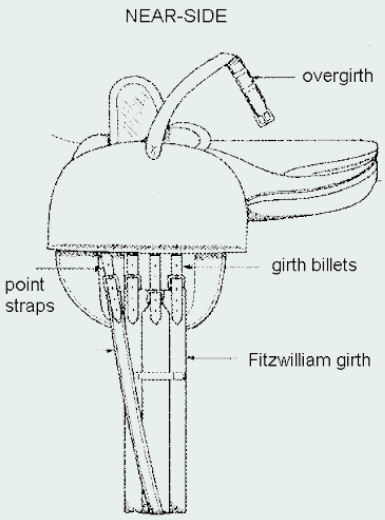
If someone wanted to reach you for riding lessons, how should they contact you? Phone or e-mail usually work best--however, I'm presently unable to teach, due to my husband's state of health. Hoping to arrange for some home-care so my riding, etc., can start up again; we're on a wait-list...

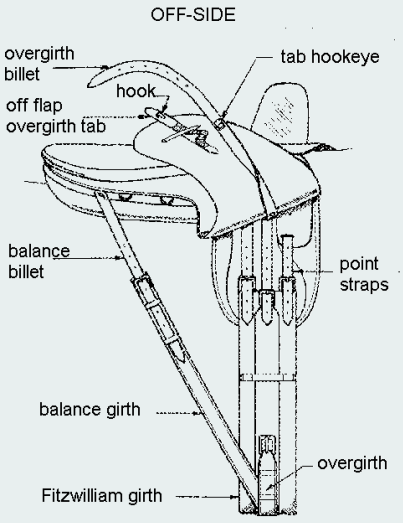
What should we have asked you but didn't? Tell us more about you: I was a school-teacher for 30-odd years, as well as running a 4-H livestock camp for 15 summers. Currently a whipper-in for the Old North Bridge Hounds (temporarily wheel-whipping or on foot until the above situation is resolved!) I've written 2 books on sidesaddle ("The Western Sidesaddle" and



"The Encyclopedia of the Sidesaddle"), with at least 2 more in the works--one on saddle seat aside, one on American hunt seat aside. Saddle seat riders, I need photos! I also have to admit I can no longer ride sidesaddle much, following a knee injury. I can only "take" it for a few minutes at a time. Sometime I'm going to try out an offside to see if that might work...

Chrissy Gibson, riding her Arabian horse Darq Sultan's Tuxedo (Tucker), Photo credit: Maggie Herlensky





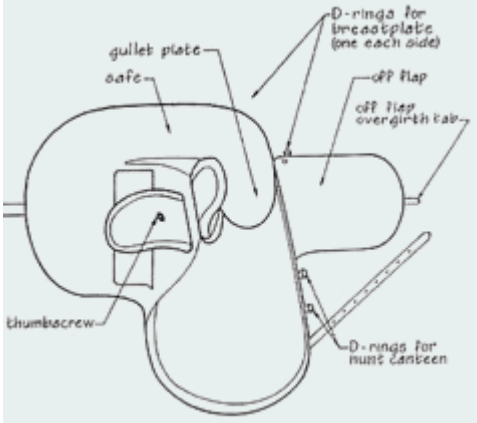
SAVE THE DATES!

EVENTS FOR 2021

- November 11-14, West Springfield MA, Equine Affaire
- November 20, Gettysburg PA, Remembrance Day Parade
- November 25, Chicago Thanksgiving Parade
- November 26, Dayton OH, Children's Parade

CLINICS FOR 2021

- October 16, Clinic Salem OH contact Kristen Wade at Pure Gold Horse Stables
- October 31st, Shamong NJ, Contact Deborah Lyons-Greer
- November 7th, Conesus NY, Sweetwater Equestrian Center please Register Here



Arkansas Ladies Aside First Event

By Mare Simonar-Dykes

On Sunday, 26 September, Arkansas Ladies Aside enjoyed an amazing clinic hosted by Jessica Saucier, president, and ASA clinician extraordinaire, Maggie Pritchard Herlensky. While temperatures were pretty warm, the event was an absolutely enjoyable and educational day. We had several rider participants and a few auditors. Everyone's shared knowledge, encouragement, and individual goals for attending, made for great conversations with acquaintances, and friends.

For me especially, it was a long awaited return to riding and the chance to have some one-on-one discussions about adaptive modifications to my own saddle for my particular disability. Thank you Jessica (as well as Carl, Gwenyth , and friends for the food) and to Maggie for making it all possible.

WV Pumpkin Festival

by Linda Klein

It's that time of year, fall is upon us. Cooler temperatures are here, leaves are changing color and the WV Pumpkin Festival in Milton WV has returned. Its kickoff is the Pumpkin Festival parade, this year held on Sunday October 3. Stepped off by the Cabell Midland High School marching band and an antique fire truck (as well as most of the fire trucks in eastern Cabell County WV). This year it was joined for the first time by the ASA, outfitted in autumn/ pumpkin attire. We were complimented by the other equestrian groups, particularly on the horses' orange glittered hooves. Thanks to Maggie Herlensky, Bryan McAllister, Kathryn McAllister and Linda Klein and of course, Fern, Wyatt, Blush and Crimson for participating.

The longtime festival celebrating autumn's iconic fruit was designed to help farmers with the raising and selling of pumpkins. It has been an annual occurrence since 1986. With last year's being a "reverse" parade due to COVID-19, organizers were happy to welcome everyone back to this year's parade in person. We've been invited back for next year-one more conquest for sidesaddle.

A Brief History of Sidesaddle Riding: A Connection to Female Advancement

By Vicki Pritchard

Throughout much of history, societal success has depended upon our companion animal, the horse. Nearly all modern commerce and progress are owed to this faithful animal, whose speed and strength have led to urbanization and industrialization. For a long time, women were not a great part of this developing progress. They were not mobile and were not habituated to the engines of commerce, horses. Women did not work the animals and did not ride them. It was prudishly not considered proper for women, who were not wearing trousers, to ride astride, like a man.

With the invention and gradual improvements in sidesaddle design however, women gained a great deal of freedom. Despite their cumbersome clothing, they were at last able to sit front-facing and have control of the horse. Roads that were nearly impassable for most of the year to coach or buggy at last opened up to women. They could travel nearly as freely as did men, and so, there are perhaps valuable lessons to be learned about the sidesaddle's relationship to female collaboration and the beginning of female advancement.

Early sidesaddles were used by women during the American Revolutionary War, but these saddles were insecure and often dangerous, although they did provide nearly front-facing seating and fast transportation. Usually these early saddles had hooks secured onto the off side so as to allow the carrying of bags of grain or other staples. Thanks to these early saddles, two American women were war heroines.

Sybil Ludington, daughter of Col. Henry Ludington, made history for her famous night ride in April, 1777. In order to muster her father's troops, she started riding at night, through very difficult terrain with Royalists, highwaymen, and looters along the way. Sybil rode until dawn, using a stick to prod the horse and to knock on doors. She rode twice as far as had Paul Revere, but unlike him, she completed her ride! Today her statue can be seen on the shore of Lake Gleneida in Carmel, New York, her likeness mounted aside on horseback.

In May, 1781, young patriotic Emily Geiger, from what is now South Carolina, volunteered to take her elderly father's place as a civilian messenger for General Greene. Because General Greene's troops were exhausted and weak from malnutrition, a civilian was the logical choice. Emily completed most of the treacherous 70-mile ride before being captured by the Tories and imprisoned briefly at Fort Granby. With capture imminent, Emily destroyed the complicated written message regarding troops and troop movements. She had committed the message to memory, and after her release, she slipped away and rode on to deliver it to General Sumter. This is a story nearly lost. There is only a poor stone marker at her grave.

As time moved on, there were many other examples of women who used the sidesaddle to free themselves for travel and work. One was Mary Ramsey Lemons Wood, the Queen Mother of Oregon. Born on a farm near Knoxville, Tennessee, she became an American pioneer when she immigrated to the Oregon Territory in 1852. Aboard her horse, Martha Washington, she traveled the perilous trails. Mary was an essential member of the party because of her skills as an accomplished midwife.

MARY ANN (MOLLY) GOODNIGHT
(1839-1926)

Molly Dyer Goodnight, born in 1839, also led an exciting life. Her husband, Charles Goodnight, was an early pioneer cattleman near Pueblo, Colorado, and later in the Palo Duro in Texas. In 1870, he commissioned for his new bride, a new type of sidesaddle, built to his specifications, and constructed locally in Pueblo. A variety of makers soon adopted the design for what came to be known as the Goodnight Saddle. Based on a working ranch saddle of the time with western bars, it had a more forgiving fit than any sidesaddle in use at the time because it could be used on almost any horse on the ranch. It also accommodated more rear movement of the horse. The leaping head, which curved over the rider's left leg and secured her in the seat, was innovative. Also, the seat in the Goodnight allowed a bit more movement for the rider, as was needed on the trail. For a long time, Molly was the only white woman in the Palo Duro. Her many adventures included working cattle alongside the ranch hands, braving contacts with hostile Comanche, and finally, a friendship of sorts, with Quanah Parker, Chief of all the Commanche.

The leaping head feature, which allowed the rider to face fully forward, was a great advantage to balance and to the comfort of the horse. Suddenly, women of means could go for rides in the parks and along the roads to visit friends. They could participate in formal hunts with their husbands, even taking jumps. Working class women could travel safely to the general store, to the feed mill, for work as teachers, for midwifery, or simply to visit family and friends.

Just a few years ago, elderly Appalachian women often told stories of how they used their sidesaddles, carrying their baby in front and an older child behind. They could tie cloth bags of feed or groceries on the off-side of the saddle. The Sears and Montgomery Ward companies sold affordable sidesaddles in their catalogs for both wealthy and common women.

Today, horses are the machines of commerce in only a few isolated areas of the country, but there have never been more horses alive in this country than there are today. Sidesaddle use is once again increasing, as women return to the safety and elegance of the riding style. They have learned that they can compete on equal footing with astride riders. The sidesaddle riders hunt, event, jump, and participate in competitive trail riding. They are in horse shows, parades, and western games. Sidesaddle units are yearly participants in the McDonald's Thanksgiving Day Parade in Chicago and the Louisville Kentucky Derby Pegasus Parade. They are on hand at many state equine shows and in local events throughout the country. Watch for the members of the Southern Ohio Ladies Aside (SOLA) in local parades and festivities. Contact them through the President of the club, Maggie Herlensky, at Maggie.herlensky@gmail.com

Knowledge Sharing During CA Lockdown

By Karol Kafka, CA_Aside

Due to California's strict Covid precautions, the State Fair as well as many horse shows and parades have been canceled statewide for the second year. Wendy Deini, CA_Aside officer and co-founder, has typically competed and performed sidesaddle demos at many of these venues throughout the year. As a result of event cancellations, however, she has been unable to gather enough people together to qualify for ASA point submissions. So she was delighted when an opportunity arose to help two new sidesaddle enthusiasts get started in the right direction.

One of the riders, Paulette, is a member of Red Rock Hounds, a hunt based in Reno, Nevada. Paulette invited Wendy and another friend, Jenny, to ride in a training session with the hunt. Wendy jumped at the chance and even became a member of Red Rock Hounds since the former CA-based hunt, Los Altos Hounds, disbanded some years ago. Wendy trailered over to Reno with her 18.1 Clydesdale stallion, Liam. This would be Liam's first introduction to hunting, so Wendy planned to ride astride. But knowing that Paulette had recently acquired two sidesaddles, Wendy took along her UK-made Melody sidesaddle.

When the three women reconvened the morning after the hunt, it was Paulette's first opportunity to have a knowledgeable sidesaddle rider look at her saddles and assess the fit. About a year ago, Paulette bought an older sidesaddle and began reading/researching in an effort to teach herself how to use it. Her interest increased and she next bought a new Pakistani-made sidesaddle. Wendy examined the Pakistani saddle and discovered it had the problems typical of many low-cost imports: gullet too wide, leaping head in the wrong position and uneven flocking. The older classic-style saddle looked to be 1910-1920 vintage, was well made and a much better fit for both Paulette and her horse.

Continued from previous page… Wendy guessed the vintage saddle must have been built for use in a warm, humid climate because it had extra venting to prevent moisture from building up—a useful feature to help keep the horse cool when hunting. The saddle also had accessible offside girthing, another convenience that allows the rider to tighten her own girth while hunting.

As they tacked up, Wendy conducted an informal sidesaddle lesson covering the basics of saddle fitting to both horse and rider and the correct use of padding. Paulette needed a queen, so they went into her workshop where fortunately she had some felt on hand; Wendy showed them how to make a queen. Then they mounted up, Wendy with her Melody on Liam and Paulette with her classic sidesaddle on her own horse. Wendy demonstrated how to post, showed the correct position for jumping and described suitable appointments for hunting. Paulette initially rode her own horse and then took a couple trial turns around the arena with Wendy's Melody on Liam.

Paulette plans to hunt aside and has already ridden out once with her sidesaddle. She stayed out just briefly to familiarize herself and her horse to the experience without riding so long as to cause soreness. The Red Rock Hounds hunt terrain tends to be low rolling hills and few jumps. Since jumping is not required, steel reinforcement of the saddle tree is not needed. Red Rock Hounds is sidesaddle-friendly and very welcoming to member of other hunts. Membership and capping fees are kept affordable to encourage new members.

Jenny was previously introduced to riding aside when Wendy invited friends to her ranch for a casual 'have a go' sidesaddle day. There, Jenny had a chance to try a sidesaddle on one of Wendy's draft horses. Jenny was interested enough that she plans to start her own Mustang pony under sidesaddle, not necessarily for competition but simply for parades and other fun activities.

CA is such a large state that a new Southern CA chapter of ASA has been approved. The existing CA_Aside may lose some of its southern members to the new group but is likely to compensate by expansion into NV in the north. To that end, CA_Aside is contemplating a sidesaddle clinic in the Reno area for the spring of 2022.

Sidesaddle Classes at Nashoba Carriage Classic

By Pam Anderson

The Nashoba Carriage Classic has graciously included sidesaddle in their annual carriage show. The show has been nestled outside of Memphis, TN for 21 years and currently uses the Germantown Charity Horse Show grounds which is a quiet venue with multiple all-weather rings and wooded areas to hack in. 2021 was the fourth year for the carriage show to include sidesaddle. Many of the members of the Mid-South Sidesaddle Association are also carriage drivers, and from the beginning, it seemed very natural to put two vintage equestrian disciplines together in one show.

The Nashoba Carriage Classic has two divisions for riders, Walk- Trot and Walk-Trot Canter. Based on the prize list, even gaited horses can show in either division, even if they don't canter. In other words, the gaited horse has the option to either canter or just gait faster during the canter portion. Western riders are also welcome! The idea of the organizers is to make the classes as inclusive as possible.

Kayla Benson on Corville Z won sidesaddle high point as well as Concours d'elegance .

The Walk-Trot division includes an equitation class, a working class, and a command class. The command class participants enter the ring all together. The judge calls out random requests. Past requests have been: Halt-rein back three steps-halt; twenty meter circle; ten meter circle; turn on haunches; turn on fore; leg yield from center line to right rail; leg yield from center line to left rail; four steps of posting trot; etc.

Kayla Benson and Z are in good spirts despite the sudden rain shower.

Kayla Benson winning the hunter hack class as the Nashoba Carriage Classic riding Corville Z

Taylor Thomas on her horse Barney won the walk-trot division at the 2021 Nashoba Carriage Classic

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The point is the rider doesn't know what will be requested of them. One by one, the riders are eliminated until there is a winner.

The Walk-Trot-Canter Division has an equitation class, a working class, and a hunter hack. The hunter hack class involves a simple jump line from a cross rail to a small vertical. The judge may also ask for a hand gallop to a halt or another small test.

Sunday morning ends with a ride or drive through the woods to a mimosa station where the judge takes note of the horses' manners and turnout details. Sidesaddle ladies may also have a "gentleman outrider" accompany them on this ride, called the "Magnolia Drive."

First through sixth place ribbons are given in each class with elaborate division rosettes. The carriage group and the sidesaddle group each receive a special prize given to the best turnout in that group. This beautiful rosette is the Concours d'Elegance award and it is highly coveted.

The Nashoba Carriage Classic is one of the few pleasure carriage shows left in the country. It's also one of the only shows in the south with entire divisions dedicated to sidesaddle. This show is dedicated to preserving a slower, more elegant way of life. Anyone wanting more information, please contact Mid-South Sidesaddle Association at www.midsouthsidesaddle.org or message us through facebook. We would love to see you next year!

Catherine Adams and Touch the Sky.

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Mid-South Equine Photographer

Horse above named, Rebel, shown winning the command class. Photo by Brooke Ballenger- MSSA Secretary

Carriage Classic by Pam Anderson

Photo was taken at the 2019 Nashoba Carriage Classic during the sidesaddle command class. In this class the judge calls out random requests. Those not able to do the command are one by one eliminated. Here is Rebel doing a leg yield to the right. Later, he won the class doing a leg yield to the left. He was the last horse left on the rail and the only one able to do that. This was his last show.

Big Horse, Big Heart

By Pam Anderson

On September 5, 2021, my horse Rebel received his angel wings. Rebel was around 33 and age was catching up to him as it will with all of us. He would occasionally get down and need assistance getting up. This was the day when there was no longer any "try" left in him, despite being surrounded by many friends trying to help him. We physically tried to prop him up with hay bales to allow him to regain the strength to rise, but not this day. His body was tired, and his spirit finally agreed.

Despite getting his wings on this day, we all know that he has always been an angel here on Earth. He has touched many lives with his versatility and his quirky sense of humor. He had developed quite a fan club over the years and people often asked about him. Rebel started out life as an Amish horse in middle Tennessee. When he was purchased by a small commercial carriage company, owned by a friend's family, I was invited to become one of their drivers. I rarely got to drive him at that time as I was a "newbie" and I had low seniority in the company.

Since he was the best horse in the company, he was always in demand. His compact, powerful build made him ideal for city work and his work ethic was always appreciated. My husband and I were given the opportunity to take over the company after the owner passed, and we spent the next several years bonding with Rebel. As an ambassador for the City of Memphis, he showed many visiting families the historical sites and river views downtown.

From left to right– ringmaster Ross Herrin, Catherine Adams on Touch the Sky, Kayla Benson on Corville Z, Judge Ruthie Graves and Taylor Thomas on Barnie.

Big Horse, Big Heart

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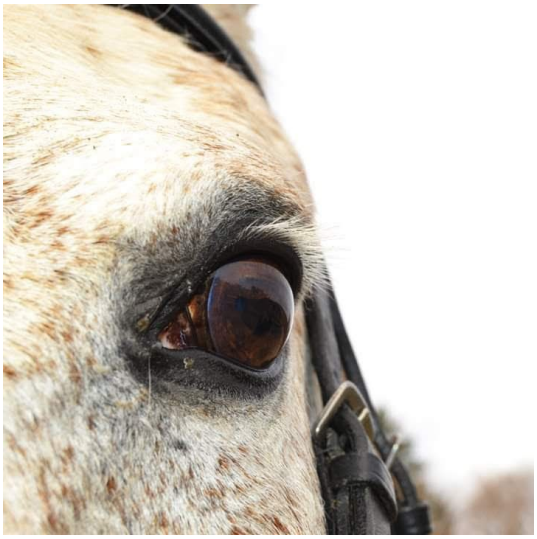
Our wedding reservations were always given to him since he was a sought-after gray, and he looked beautiful pulling our white and black carriage. He was never fazed by massive city fireworks. He was also a favorite of little girls who wanted to pet the giant unicorn. Sometimes his regular driver would painted his hooves with glitter polish, pink and silver, or red and green for holiday season. I decided to give up our downtown driving life and he was retired and began his life as a pleasure horse. I was always curious about the pleasure driving that I saw at the Germantown Charity Horse Show. I remember being impressed by the ponies that Dr. Ruth Wilburn drove there.

When I decided I wanted to start showing again, we joined the Nashoba Carriage Association. Rebel's favorite class was timed obstacles, as he was quite fast for a big horse. During this time I was heavily volunteering with the carriage group and, being the show manager, I was unable to show. Rebel provided a solution: teaching several people to drive, and one of them, Aaron Jones, showed him in the 2016 Nashoba Carriage Classic. At my wedding, I decided that I wanted a grand entrance and I thought, "Let's do it side-saddle."

In typical Rebel fashion, he tolerated my insanity and he got me there safely. Plus, he was quite photogenic with his beautiful flea-bitten gray coat and he even made the cover of the December 2013 *Mid-South Horse Review*. In an unexpected twist, this received so much attention that it led to the founding of the Mid-South Side Saddle Association. We later rode aside in several opening hunts with the Longreen Foxhounds, and in parades and expos. Rebel was proud to volunteer with Warhorses For Heroes, where he was the big, sturdy horse that the veterans could always depend on.



He also taught two veterans to drive. One of them, Tim Lester, got to compete in a driving derby at Rebel's last show in 2019. To open the show that night, Rebel got to carry the flag in. His previous owner, Lt. Dan Kaltreider, USMC, veteran of the Vietnam era, would have been very proud. The last year or so he has been allowed to roam "free range" over Kimberlin Farms in Olive Branch, Miss., originally with his best friend, Cloudy, and recently, a little lonelier, by himself. He has greeted guests staying at the Horse Farm Hideaway Airbnb, has made friends with the chickens and pigs, and has always been a character ready to say hello and ready for his next snack. Today Rebel and Cloudy are together again under their favorite shade tree behind the barn at Kimberlin Farms. Take this opportunity to kiss your old horses, give them their favorite treat, and tell them how much you love them.

A Summer to Remember

By Kristi Lytle

This past summer has been a summer to remember. An article writer I am not, but here goes. This past summer, my husband and I were working very hard on moving back home. After thirty-one years of teaching elementary music, I decided it was time to retire, sell our little ranch of thirty-one years, and move back to my childhood home. Needless to say, horsey time was almost a wash due to the packing and the many hauls of all our possessions, five hours to the north. The heat this summer was at an all time high, so riding would not have been pleasant anyway. That's what I kept telling myself as I packed box after box and horse panel after horse panel. But, I did somehow manage to get in a little sidesaddle time. I did some trail rides aside, a demo at an old-time mining town, a parade, and a trail course challenge. What I loved most among these, was my ride with my Dad in the parade near where I grew up. Dad's family started using forest service land back in the 1940's, and they did many cattle drives up into the mountains, rain or snow. As a kid, I got to be a part of all that. There was a town we would ride through on the way, called Clearwater, Idaho, and we'd ride over the old Elk City Wagon Rd. Now-a-days, there are no cattle drives going up there and no freight wagons headed for the Elk City mining area.

There is, however, an event that honors those days. In fact, my Dad and Mom were chosen as the Grand Marshalls of the parade. Dad rode in the parade beside me on Gunnar, and I rode aside on Chivas, who is 28 years young and still looking good. They are both Tennessee Walkers. Also this summer, Gunnar and I tried trail riding in my western sidesaddle. It was amazing, like sitting on the couch all day, but being able to take in the great outdoors. At age 60, it's nice to have such comfort, and Gunnar handled it like a champ. Later in the summer, the Owyhee Museum put on an event in Murphy, Idaho, called Outpost Days. My husband and Gunnar escorted me and Chivas as I rode the grounds and shared the art of aside riding with interested spectators. It was a fun-filled day and made me feel close to the famous Queen of Idaho, Kittie Wilkins, who rode aside. Over the 4th of July holiday, my youngest child was home from the Navy, and he accompanied me in the Middleton parade, the town in which he grew up and where I taught school. It was such fun seeing so many friends, neighbors, students, and his classmates. People love to see the sidesaddle and the historic riding habits that I wear. It's an honor to represent such a special time period for women on horseback. Last, but not least, I took Chivas and Gunnar to a trail challenge at the Kooskia Saddlers riding arena in Kooskia, Idaho. This town was my old high school stomping grounds for playdays and royalty duties. The course was amazing with over 30 obstacles, and was complete with bridge crossing, mailbox, log drag, turns in the box, gate, water carry, backing through logs, side pass, and more. Chivas had done a few of these courses in his life but Gunnar had not. I rode them both sidesaddle in these and they both did very well. I am so proud of my boys! Dad and my faithful husband were there to help out and keep me rolling. Two of the pictures here were in the local newspapers. How cool was that? So, this summer was not filled with our usual pack trips to the peaceful mountains, but I did manage to get in a few quality sidesaddle events, and I am very thankful for that. Thank you, ASA, for all the amazing things you do for sidesaddle. I don't know what I'd do without your help and information. I used to feel alone in this discipline, for over 15 years, but not now.

Steele or Crestridge Saddle Covers

By Vicki Pritchard

Would you like a polar fleece sidesaddle cover? They are for sale!

We have these three and are making more. The covers are large enough to fit a Steele or a Crestridge and will thus fit most all sidesaddles. We choose the polar fleece print unless you send your own fleece to us. Let us know if you want our special cute fox, cute horse, John Deere, or hearts fleece (as long as we can maintain stock), otherwise we buy fleece on sale. If you want to send us your own polar fleece, be sure there is at least one and one-half yards of wide fabric.

Send $70 ($50 with your own fabric) to: Vicki Pritchard, 355 Sunset Drive, Chillicothe, Ohio, 45601 (Paypal cvp1193@twc.com)

Part of the money goes to ASA and the rest to fund the materials, mailing, and the seamstress.

Want an American Side Saddle (ASA) T-shirt

Do you want an American Sidesaddle Association t-shirt? Did you know you can buy them on Amazon?

Price: $15.00

Buy now!

CLUB PINS– WEAR THEM PROUDLY!

BY VICKI PRITCHARD

Exciting news ladies! We have the American Sidesaddle Association's club pins ready to order! These pins are super cute and quite colorful, and let's face it, they help support a great cause, our Association! If you'd like one, we are ready to distribute them to members. It's simple to get one really, just send us $15.00 to defray the cost of the pin, packaging, and mailing. Please send us your donation via PayPal to: Amsidesaddletreasurer@gmail.com. Remember to write the comment "club pin" in the comments section when you send your $15.00.

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