



Lake Washington Saddler

September 2019

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EVERY TIME, EVERY RIDE

It happened in an instant. We all hear that. Anybody around horses knows that things can go wrong in a split second. And as to whether things go bad, or everything ends up fine, can balance on a knife edge.

I've been involved with horses since I was 10. At my age, that's pretty much all my life. I've ridden mostly nonstop since I started. I've shown, I've trained, I've taught, I've judged, and most of all, I still just enjoy hanging out with horses. But I can't say I've ever been a brave rider. I'd much rather go for an amble in the woods than go galloping through, jumping everything in sight. I've always been more careful than carefree, preferring to jump off at the first real sign of trouble than ride rough n' ready through it. Usually that tendency keeps me safe. Sometimes it just doesn't matter.

This particular sunny late June Saturday, I'd finished working in the indoor arena, and had headed out to ride in the trails around the barn. 'Trails' is a loose term. The barn on the backside of Redmond Ridge, and we're talking bridle paths here. Any self respecting trail rider would burst out laughing to call these trails. The horse I lease, Kasino, and I had been ambling around by the ravine, and I decided to cross the bridge and go up the hill to the top of the driveway, and maybe over to the Pegasus Rehab Center gates, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile away. This was a nice gravel driveway up the hill, then turn on to the road, and over to the gates. It was a ride I'd done several times, just not with Kasino, but I knew he had been up and down the road often. Add to the fact that he is pretty bombproof, and honestly, somewhat lazy. He's been in parades, shows, exhibitions, you name it. My point is, that this was nothing unusual, unexpected, or unknown. Just a post work, cool down.

We headed up the road on a loose rein, both enjoying the day. As we neared the top of the hill, Kasino suddenly stopped dead and lifted his head. Not a good feeling on a gravel road with a serious slope. He tensed up, and I could feel his heart pounding between my knees. I looked where he was looking, and saw . . . Two black baby calves. They were standing in their field about 25 feet from us, just looking back at us. Cows. Just baby cows.

Kasino was breathing hard, and his heart was pounding. I let him stand there and just look. The calves looked back. It took a long time before Kasino took a breath. He looked away, then looked back. I petted his neck and talked to him, and just let him look. He sat down like he wanted to rear, thought about spinning, then just looked some more. Honestly, had I thought there would be an issue, I'd have gotten off. But he's a pretty sensible horse, so I wasn't particularly worried. I just let him look.

We stood there for awhile, and I could feel him begin to relax. I decided that I wasn't ready for a battle, and there was no point in trying to provoke a fight by going past them. We were out to relax, so we would just turn around and go home. I turned him to head back down the hill, and that was where things went south. Kasino decided that if we were going to go home, he wanted to get there NOW, not later. He turned the reverse into a quick spin, and tried to take off, but I instinctively turned him into the spin, and faced him back up the hill. Where one of the calves, now curious as to why this horse was losing his marbles, and had begun to walk towards us. And that was it. Kasino just lost it. The rest just devolved into spinning, running, more spinning, and me half falling, half bailing out.

So that's how I found myself on the ground, scarified to the cow-monsters, in order for Kasino to save himself. I landed hard, on my rear and lower back. I could hear Kasino flying down the hill, and knew as soon as he got down the ½ mile hill, I'd hear my trainer coming up in the car. I caught my breath, sat up, evaluated everything, and knew I was okay. But due to a back injury in my 20s (riding, of course – what else?), I knew I'd need help to get up, and that my back would probably spasm for about 24 hours. Sure enough, after a few minutes of silence, I heard a car start up, and come up the hill at about the same pace that Kasino went down. When my trainer got there, I was waving at him from my seated position on the road, with the two cows now next to me, on the other side of the fence, curious as to why I was sitting down in the road. I was fine. The horse was fine. End of story.

But it wasn't. When I went back to work on Tuesday, I was so sore after three days that I was practically crippled. No great surprise, and it would wear off. My boss asked me if I hit my head. I said no, I hadn't. But I had, and I didn't even know it.

It wasn't until later that I realized that I had landed flat, and my head had snapped back and hit the road. I don't even remember that. My neck was sore, like a mild whiplash, and the back of

my helmet has gravel marks on it. And not the dirt that wipes off. But scratches and dents. I'll be buying a new helmet.

As I look back on the events of that afternoon, I realize how incredibly lucky I had been. This could have been one of those situations where I got Kasino under control, rode back to the barn, and got a good laugh about the fact that my horse was scared of cows. But it wasn't. Why did I choose to ride him in a snaffle that day? I always rode him in a double bridle. He has a very good mouth, light and sensitive. Had I had a double on him, I'm pretty sure that in the chaos of the spinning and running, and me losing my balance, I would have pulled him over on him. No doubt in my mind, actually. And who knew he was terrified of cows?

As it is, I'm getting lots of ribbing, and people are mooing at me. We're all having fun with it. All because my horse turned out to be petrified of cows. But it could have been bad. Terribly bad.

This is a 'why I wear a helmet story'. We are all hearing more and more of these stories these days. But we also all have the I survived even though I didn't wear a helmet. Times are changing, and like the days 50 years ago when everybody smoked, and now people are ostracized because they smoke, wearing helmets will be the same. So why wait? Why aren't you wearing a helmet? Because it isn't accepted in your discipline? Why don't you be the first to set the trend?

My point is that this kind of accident can happen anytime. For me, I just had a mild headache for a week. It could have been so much worse. But it wasn't. Because I was wearing a helmet.

We on the Board of the Lake Washington Saddle Club wish to encourage everybody to wear a helmet.

Every time.

Every ride.



Kasino's tracks running home.
Still in the road a week later.



The Culprits. Frightening, aren't they?

National Public Lands Day Saturday September 28th Give Back to Bridle Trails State Park!

Lake Washington Saddle Club is teaming up with the Bridle Trails Park Foundation and Park Ranger Matt Birkliid for an autumn morning work party to help maintain the Park.

Stewardship projects will include horse arena maintenance, the removal of invasive plants and weeds in and around event areas, barns, trail tidying and trimming, etc.



Bring work gloves, hand pruners, steel rakes and hoes. Extra tools and work gloves will be available, and event volunteers can earn service hours.

Volunteers of all ages will meet in the main event area of the park for a welcome and orientation before heading out to specific sites within the park. Groups are welcome and encouraged. So consider getting together with your barn mates and trainers to give back a small portion of all that the Park provides us. Water, snacks, and lunch will be provided for all participants.

Washington State Parks has declared National Public Lands Day a State Park Free Day. A Discover Pass is not required in the parking lot on Saturday, September 28th.

Park entrance is at 5300 116th Ave NE, Kirkland, WA 98033.

[Please RSVP so that we have enough refreshments for everyone.](#)

If more information is needed, please contact Jennifer Duncan at president@lakewashingtonsaddleclub.org or Jim Erckmann at: btpf@bridletrails.org

IT'S PARTY TIME AGAIN - SAVE THE DATE!

The Lake Washington Saddle Club banquet is November 9th. The banquet committee is full of great ideas, and it sounds like it's going to be an amazing time. The theme this year is 'Treasure your Treasure'. We have a lot to treasure. Having an incredible place like the Bridle Trails State Park to use, horses we love and cherish, and great friends. We also are celebrating a great

summer season at the park, with shows, prize rides, and learning opportunities. [For more information go to the web site.](#) Tickets will be available to purchase soon.



The banquet will once again feature a limited edition run of Glassybabies. This year they are a fire red, with the logo and year in gold. The run is limited to 30, and these will be for sale only at the banquet unless there happens to be some left over.

SILENT AUCTION – PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR AUCTION ITEMS

Please start considering items you would like to donate to the silent auction. The Lake Washington Saddle Club website has a [form for donations](#). We ask that you fill this out completely as it will allow for easy tracking for our banquet committee.

If you plan to help solicit auction items from businesses, etc., we have a [Donation Request Letter](#) you can use to provide LWSC information to potential donors and gather donation information. If you are hesitant to ask for donations, we have provided a brief information sheet on [How to Request Auction Donations](#) to give you an idea of who to talk to, and what to do. It gets easier with practice and can be a rewarding experience. Try it!

Come celebrate with us!

Dressage Clinic with Alexandria Lampe-Wilson

October 18, 19 & 20, 2019

Bridle Trails State Park



This is an extremely rare opportunity to improve your riding skills!

Lake Washington Saddle Club and Snohomish Co-Op have joined forces to provide what is hoped to be the first of a series of clinics with Alexandria Wilson Dressage.

Alexandria Wilson (Lampe) has ridden and trained 11 horses to Grand Prix level, was reserve for the Canadian Olympic team in 2000, has her German riding badge in Gold (the highest you can get) for success in Grand Prix.

She has trained with Rudolf Zeilinger, Christof und Jürgen Köshel, Steffen Peters, Johannes Augustin and Norbert van Laak.

When: October 18, 19 & 20

Where: Bridle Trails State Park,
5300 116th Ave NE Kirkland, WA 98033.



- Clinic will be held at the outdoor main arena—rain or shine. Stalls are available for day use rental.
- The clinic will be organized into five 1 hour individual sessions. Participants can purchase one or more sessions.
- Sessions will begin at 10:00am with the last one ending around 4:30 pm.
- Cost is \$250.00 per session or three sessions (one each day) for \$600.00. Sessions must be paid in full, in advance to hold a spot. Waitlist will be maintained. Session fees are non-refundable unless the spot can be filled or the clinic is cancelled.
- Auditors are welcome for a fee of \$25.00 a day. LWSC members audit for free.
- To register, or for more information, please contact Indra Krastins, DressageEntry@LakeWashingtonSaddleClub.org or Jennifer Duncan, president@lakewashingtonsaddleclub.org