

The Saddler

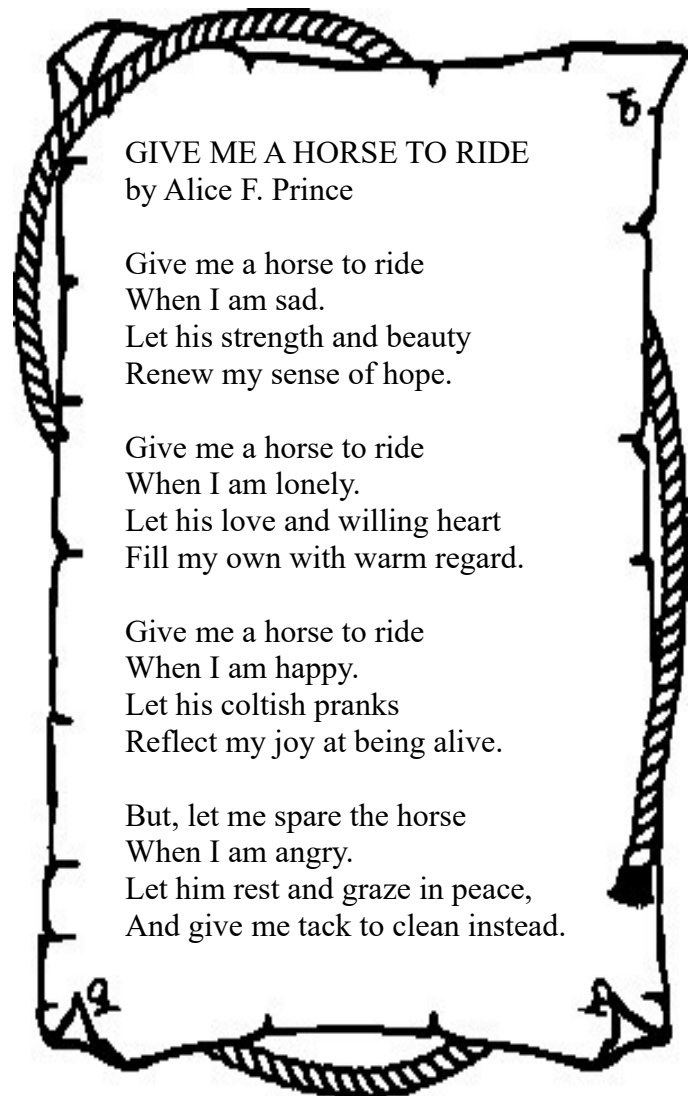
February 2023



On November 5th the LWSC hosted our annual banquet. This year the theme was Lucky 77, celebrating the club's 77th year of existence. We celebrated another wonderful year and recognized several exceptional members:

Service Award - **Maggie Phillips**
Senior Sportsmanship - **Lex Novak**
Junior Sportsmanship - **Ella Gary**
Horse of the Year - **Stewie**
Trainer of the Year - **Anna Steinle**
Mother of the Year - **Heather Tiszai**
Father of the Year - **John Henderson**

The Alice Prince 'Friend of Bridle Trails' Award went to **Jennifer Duncan**. Jennifer is a current board member of the LWSC and was president for many years. She is a regular park user and spends countless hours supporting the LWSC, Bridle Trails State Park, and the people of Bridle Trails. Congratulations Jennifer and thank you for all of your hard work!



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In November 2022 the Bridle Trails area lost two of its strongest long time equestrian supporters when we lost both Jane Plut and Pat Cornay.



Jane Plut developed a love of horses as a little girl riding draft horses on the family farm in the Skagit Valley. She later she became a show mom when her daughter, Anne, rode with Bob Woodington. Jane hauled their hunter, Clyde, to shows all around the area. Many long time horse residents around Bridle Trails will remember Clyde. He was a 16.3 grey, Arab/draft cross with a very short stubby tail. When Clyde and Anne retired from showing, Jane and Anne shared riding Clyde around the trails in the Park. In 2011 Jane and her husband, Harry, purchased horse property in Bridlewood Circle where Jane lived with Harry and their horses up until the time of her death. Lately, people around the Park will see her current mare, Vinnie, being ridden on the trails and her rescue pony, Billy, out for a hand walk on the trails.



Pat Cornay was a long time resident of over 45 years in the Bridle Trails area having a horse property with her husband on 132nd Avenue Northeast at the northeast corner of Bridle Trails Park. Again, if you have been around for a long, long time you will remember Pat and her daughter, Lisa, being active in the horse community and riding in the Park. Pat was a long time member of the Lake Washington Saddle Club and King County Executive Horse Council. In recent years she was slowed down by lupus and hasn't been as visible as she was when she was before she developed the disease.



Both Jane and Pat will be missed very much as long time, strong supporters of horses and the equestrian lifestyle around Bridle Trails.

The Eastside's Gallop'n Gerties

BY MARGARET LALIBERTE, EASTSIDE HERITAGE CENTER VOLUNTEER

Mid-twentieth century America is commonly known as the era of the automobile. On Seattle's Eastside growth exploded thanks to the Lake Washington Floating Bridge, which opened in 1940. But the area was also known as a fine area for enjoying life with a horse. According to one source, at one time there may have been approximately 3,500 horses in the Greater Bellevue area. In the early 1930s a portion of public lands between Bellevue and Kirkland was designated for the use of local horse riders (and eventually became Bridle Trails State Park). The Lake Washington Saddle Club was founded in 1945. North of downtown Bellevue the community of Diamond S was developed for families with horses. On 15 acres on Clyde Hill A. Draper and Lida Coale raised show horses from 1950 to the early 1980s. A few months after Clyde Hill incorporated as a 4th class municipality in 1953, the Coales's Tarry-Longer stable hosted a horse show to raise money for the new city's empty coffers. As the headline of an article about the Eastside in the Seattle Sunday Times in 1951 declared, "Days of Dobbin Are Not Done."



Gerties around table at lunch in their clubroom (2000.015)

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Certainly one of the most colorful—and long enduring—groups of Eastside horsewomen (as they were then known) were the Gallop’n Gerties. An offshoot of the Lake Washington Saddle Club, the Gerties gleefully resisted formal organization over the years. Without bylaws, officers or dues, one member said simply there was “no club anywhere more loose-jointed and such fun.” Though many members lived in the Bridle Trails area, one came from Mercer Island and another rode north from Wilburton Hill. For years a third member who lived on Clyde Hill taught local kids to ride. When one of her horses, Tony, died, he had been so beloved in the community that the Bellevue American newspaper gave him a two-column obituary.



The Gertie’s original drill team, complete with groups’ pennant at left, probably on 104th Ave NE in Bellevue (2000.015)

The group gathered every Thursday morning for a ride, followed by lunch hosted by one of the group. Eventually they got a clubroom—the “Tack Room”—in member Mel O’Farrell’s barn. There was always a Christmas party to which spouses were invited, and the group’s drill team participated in Eastside summer events. They were part of Bellevue’s Seafair Parade in 1951, where the girls (as the news reporter called them) “exhibited fancy drills and wheeled their mounts along the parade route.” Members participated individually and as a group in the Saddle Club’s gymkhanas.

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The three-day trail ride was a high spot of many summers. Over the years the group rode up the Teanaway River near Cle Elum; in the Methow Valley; the Capitol Forest near Olympia; and along the Pacific Crest Trail from Deep Creek to White Pass.



Gerties on summer pack trip on Pacific Crest Trail, 1968 (2000.015)

The Gerties maintained a robust membership of about 25 women over several decades. The hostess roster for 1980 listed 22 different lunch hostesses over the year. Inevitably though, the group's scrapbook began to include obituaries along with the celebrations. But as recently as 1998 there were still ten Gerties living in the Bridle Trails area, and four or five of them met on Thursdays, if no longer to ride still to enjoy each other's company and recall their years in the saddle together.

Sources:

Seattle Times, Jan. 21, 1951, Aug. 12, 1951; Jan. 29, 1963

Kirkland Courier, Feb. 1, 1998

Gallop'n Gerties scrapbook (2000.015), EHC collection

Thank you to Margaret Laliberte and the Eastside Heritage Center for allowing us to reprint these wonderful photos and article.

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The LWSC is already hard at work planning the 2023 show season. Stay tuned for more details.

April

22 BTPF/LWSC Stewardship Day

May

13-14 LWSC Hunter/Jumper Clinic (Maya Black)

27 LWSC English/Western Fun Show

28 LWSC Dressage Schooling Show



June

2 LWSC Members only jumper schooling (5pm)

3-4 LWSC Hunter/Jumper Schooling Show

10 LWSC Hunter/Jumper Clinic (Sally Collins)

11 LWSC Hunter/Jumper Academy Schooling Show

17 LWSC Trail Obstacle Training Day

25 LWSC Summer Prize Ride



July

1 BTPF "Ponies In The Park"

14 LWSC Members only jumper schooling (5pm)

15-16 LWSC Hunter/Jumper Schooling Show

22 LWSC English/Western Fun Show

23 LWSC Hunter/Jumper Academy Schooling Show

29 LWSC Dressage Clinic

30 LWSC Dressage Schooling Show

August

5 LWSC Trail Obstacle Training Day

12 LWSC Equine & Vines Prize Ride

19 LWSC English/Western Fun Show

20 LWSC Academy Hunter Jumper Schooling Show

25 LWSC Members only jumper schooling (5pm)

26-27 LWSC Hunter/Jumper Schooling Show



September

10 LWSC Dressage Schooling Show

22 LWSC Members only jumper schooling (5pm)

23-24 LWSC Hunter/Jumper Schooling Show

October

7 BTPF/LWSC Stewardship Day

18-22 LWSC Horsemanship Clinic with Julie Carpenter

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I Love Bridle Trails State Park in the Winter