



## Newsletter March/April 2019

3656 Clements Road Plum, PA 15239  
[www.stonybrooksaddleclub.com](http://www.stonybrooksaddleclub.com)

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**President:** Jean Crofutt  
**Vice President:** Christine Cafazzo  
**Treasurer:** Pat Morris  
**Corresponding Secretary:** Donna Smith  
**Recording Secretary:** Lorie McCann  
**Board of Directors:** Becky Guenther,  
Glen Plouchard, Mary Lynn Fentress,  
Patty Valasek, Al Cafazzo  
**Alternate:** Chuck Morris

Next General and Board Meeting  
Monday May 6, 2019 @ 6PM  
Stonybrook Saddle  
Clubhouse

### Happy Easter

#### He is Risen

Death could not hold Him  
Rejoice in the resurrection of  
Jesus Christ.

Hello All,  
Our first event of the year is June 9th. We need all hands on deck for CLEAN UP DAYS at the club grounds. We have three dates Saturday May 11th, 25th and June 8th @10am. Please bring weed eaters, lawn mowers, tools etc. If it rains please bring cleaning supplies to clean the inside of the club house. Also our May meeting is at the clubhouse if possible come early, we can get a head start on cleaning the clubhouse.

The club is in need of some donated items for the coming show season. The items are kitchen and bath cleaning supplies, push and kitchen brooms, pop, water, paper towels, paper plates, napkins, plastic silverware and bee/wasp spray. Also for show days please contact Patty Valasek for what food donations we may need.

Fund Raisers: SSC ask every member to bring in a sponsor. It could be as simple as a business card for \$25.00 or a banner for \$100.00 and up. You could be creative with a banner wishing your loved one a Fun and Safe show season, or what ever your creative mind may think up.

Please contact Jean Crofutt for SSC gun raffle tickets as there are still some to be sold. Also the Rada Cutlery fundraiser is still going on (think mothers day present). And if you feed any of the Southern State, Legends or ProElite please save proof of purchase. Hand them into Mary Lynn Fentress as SSC will receive .25 cents for each proof of purchase.

This article was written by DeAnn Sloan one of SSC past president. Food for thought.

Over the past few months I've noticed an upsurge in my equine-related mail – it happens every year at this time. In addition to the magazine subscriptions and emails from my vet, the membership renewals to various clubs and organizations have also started to arrive. These are the yearly reminders that the non-profits and local saddle clubs are seeking my support and participation once again.

Every year I look at the membership renewal forms and weigh the costs against the benefits of joining. What do I stand to gain from joining the local clubs, with their fifty-cent ribbons and aging arenas? Will I really have the time and inclination to show and volunteer when there are so many other events that call to me as organizations post their plans for the year? Of course, the larger question looms: is there really a place for these small, aging clubs when so many of us are focused on the next bigger and better thing?

Local saddle clubs are struggling. Participation and memberships are dropping, funds are diminishing, and infrastructure is deteriorating. When people do come to show, they notice the flagging fences and poor footing, word gets out, and the pattern repeats itself. Interest is declining and fewer people are willing to volunteer their time and energies to ensure the success of these small clubs. Riders move on to bigger shows in order to earn points and checks (or maybe just a bigger ribbon), certain they have outgrown their local show roots.

However, the problem for local saddle clubs goes beyond waning interests and higher aspirations. Some riders turn up their noses at local saddle clubs because they sometimes are seen as breeding grounds for poor horsemanship and misinformation. The more casual atmosphere invites the more casual rider. However, this is where the small saddle club can find its niche – not in poor horsemanship and misinformation, but in providing a venue for more casual and/or beginning riders to improve their horsemanship and increase their knowledge. For many of us, this is how we got our starts in showing.

Most of us can close our eyes and, if we try, smell the hotdogs and overcooked hamburgers. We can see the people who made up our early days of showing. There's the woman running the entry booth; she's cranky and hasn't been on a horse in over twenty years. She may still have one, she may not. There's the preteen's father who was wrangled into heading up the ring and grounds crew because he once carried a jump standard. There are the flustered women in the kitchen, taking orders and trying to prod the surly teenagers into being useful, even though they're just there to earn enough volunteer hours to qualify for a year-end ribbon or trophy. There's the significant other of a competitor, looking bored and holding a leash attached to a heeler of some sort. There are the peewees trotting their ponies and the 15-year-old who can't get her horse into the arena, but is certain she'll be running in the 1D next year. There's the trainer talking her nervous student through his first show. The food is mediocre. The ground is questionable. Trailers are parked haphazardly around the grounds.

These are the places where we got our show legs, where we learned to memorize a pattern, or realized that we were really bad at doing so. These saddle clubs taught us about the types of riders we wanted to become or, in some cases, about the kind of riders we did not want to become. Seeing the downfall of the smaller saddle clubs in my area is discouraging; it's the sounding of the knell for the venues that are necessary not only at the beginning, but also at various points throughout of our riding journeys.

These small clubs are where we develop our determination and learn perseverance. They are where we gain the confidence to go on to larger arenas. They are what we come back to when we need to season a horse or fix an issue with a seasoned horse. These clubs can be places for education and opportunity. They are platforms for vets, clinicians, farriers, dentists, and other equine professionals to host workshops and demonstrations that otherwise may be inaccessible to the casual horseperson. They provide access to those who may not have it. They are places for the green horse person to gain the initial sense of community and camaraderie that so many of us have been fortunate enough to experience.

My plea for the local saddle clubs is not to let them disappear, becoming the sites of housing developments and parking lots. Let them remain the sites of learning how to park your trailer and keep your head and your horse's head when the horse next to you is having a temper tantrum or running loose around the park. I hope that those in charge of these small organizations can realize and maintain their niches within their equestrian communities. I hope they can keep their clubs afloat so that burgeoning equestrians can hone their skills, earn their fifty-cent ribbons, and make their first mistakes in the supportive environments that allow them to build their confidence and develop their horsemanship.

These are the places that prepared many of us to go on to bigger arenas, where we could make larger mistakes, move past them, and get a taste of the feelings of accomplishment that accompany working and developing a partnership with our mounts. They are necessary for building and maintaining an equestrian community, for providing entry points for those looking to become part of that community.

I need to do my part in ensuring the survival of local saddle clubs, so I will mail in my forms, participate when I can, and promote the events even if I can't attend. It's the least I can do.

DeAnn Sloan is a former English teacher who has been searching for a way to channel her love and judgement of all things literary into her passion for horses. DeAnn rode casually throughout her childhood and adolescence, but did not ride with any regularity or own her own horse until well into adulthood. Since jumping into horse ownership, she has tried to immerse herself in the equestrian world as much as possible. She is a certified equine massage therapist and is a page promoter for OTTB Western.

**Are Stonybrook Saddle Club's days over??? Without the help of all the members to volunteer in someway, probably.**

Have you joined a committee yet? If not please do so, the information is included in this newsletter.

# COMMITTEES

Please call, text or email the head of the Committees listed below to **VOLUNTEER:**  
(calling or texting is best as email can be overlooked)

## **Fundraiser/Sponsorship**

Becky Guenther 724/472-2458  
flashybeck@comcast.net

## **Advertising/Marketing**

Alexa Caldwell 724/570-9680  
mabi6615@gmail.com

## **Clinics**

Chrissy Cafazzo 412/953-0051  
cafazzoc@aol.com

## **Shows**

Jean Crofutt 724/845-6636  
jeancrofutt@gmail.com

## **Events**

Patty Morris (JPTR) 724/882-1842  
morris823@comcast.net

## **Entry Booth**

Sherry Wince 724/387-3032(no text)  
Sherry0804@comcast.net

Email

## **Grounds**

Glen Plouchard 412/298-1641(no text)

## **Kitchen**

Patty Valasek 724/226-1822(no text)  
Call after 3:30 pm

## **Judges**

Jean Crofutt 724/845-6636  
jeancrofutt@gmail.com

## **Points**

Lorie McCann 724/763-9369(no text)  
mccannfamily@windstream.net

## Event Dates

### Tack Swap

March 16, 2019

### SOS

June 9, 2019  
July 21, 2019  
August 10, 2019

### JPTR

June 15, 2019

### Pleasure/Fun Shows

June 29, 2019  
July 27, 2019  
August 17, 2019  
September 21, 2019

### October Ride TBA

For more info on these events please  
go to:

[www.stonybrooksaddleclub.com](http://www.stonybrooksaddleclub.com)