

CLIPPITY CLIPS

A ride of a lifetime

By STACEY MASSEY

Looking for the adventure of a lifetime? Look no further than the boundaries of Nassagaweya, now home to Whinny Acres, Horse Vacations and Trail Rides.

The riding establishment is the only one of its kind in Ontario. It offers seven day rides staying at Bed & Breakfasts throughout Ontario, seven day camping in Algonquin Park or Ganaraska, two and one hour rides, the popular Hilton Falls weekend ride and more.

"Everyone that's done the weekend (Hilton Falls rider) ride have rebooked," Ms. Shannon says. "It's the best ride for your money."

"The ride is the next best thing to being out west," says Whinny Acres owner Marion Shannon.

"The Niagara Escarpment is beautiful and there's nothing like getting into it on horseback."

The weekend ride features two nights at the KOA Campground. The first day the group rides out to the Hilton Falls Conservation area and the second day they ride to Burns Lake Conservation.

"There aren't five minutes that you're not seeing something," Ms. Shannon says including wildlife, waterfalls and unique plant life.

As a Humber College graduate of their equine program and an avid horse enthusiast that has "been around animals my whole life," Ms. Shannon wants to use her operation to not only entertain but also to educate.

"When people leave I want

them to not only have learned about their horse, but the horse industry," Ms. Shannon says.

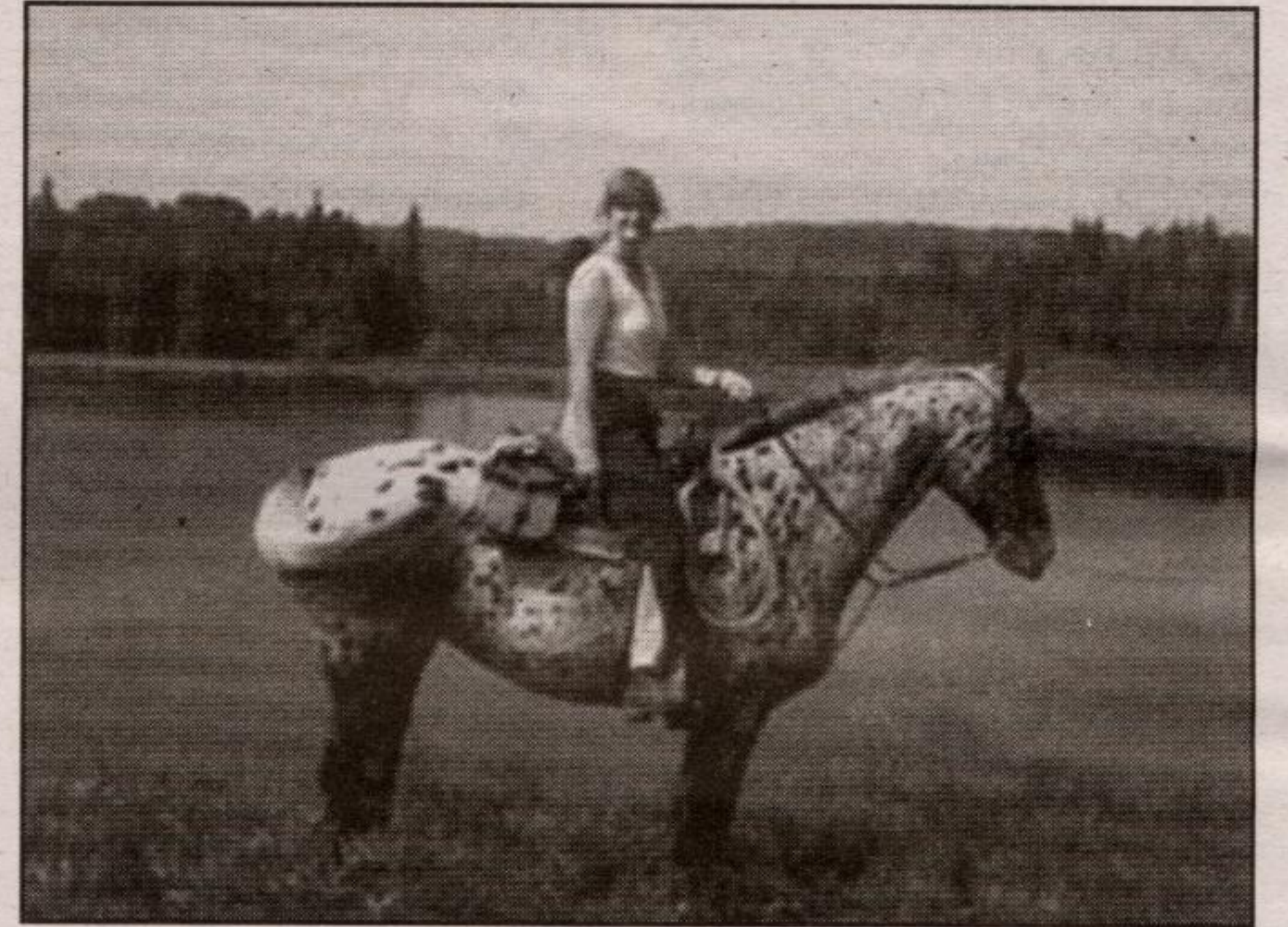
"My main purpose is to teach people to respect and appreciate horses and hopefully open up more parks with the government," she added.

Though Ontario is full of beautiful forests and trails for bikers and hikers, when it comes to horseback riding, the areas are limited. Ms. Shannon has worked with the Ontario Trail Riding Association and assisted in the development of more Ontario riding trails.

As she says, Whinny Acres has been eight years in the making.

Another important issue for Ms. Shannon is safety. As a member of both the Ontario Equestrian Federation and the Association of Riding Establishment for Ontario, Ms. Shannon is kept up to date on the latest safety requirements and precautionary steps to take to ensure the safest and most enjoyable ride.

"I'm doing everything to make it extra safe," she says. Everyone is required to wear a riding helmet and beginners have covered stir-



rup.

Every rider is also given a riding lesson prior to venturing out on the trails.

"I make sure they knew how to steer the horse, sit in the saddle properly and relax," Ms. Shannon says of the lesson.

Children under the age of 13 must provide verification of previous riding or the proper skills before they will be permitted on the rides.

Opened on May 1, Ms. Shannon has already received a great response.

"I'm busier than I thought I'd be," she says.


And her clientele is not limited to locals. She's had riders come from all over the world, from Toronto to Florida and even Japan, and she says they have all been thrilled with their experiences.

"It is so rewarding when you see people saying 'Ah, this is great' and taking pictures," she says. "Then you know they've enjoyed it."

For more information or to book a ride contact Marian Shannon at Whinny Acres, 519-823-4998 or visit the web site www.whinnyacres.com. The farm is located on R.R.#1 in Moffat.

Be sure to ask about their special event rides for Thanksgiving, Halloween and New Year's Day.





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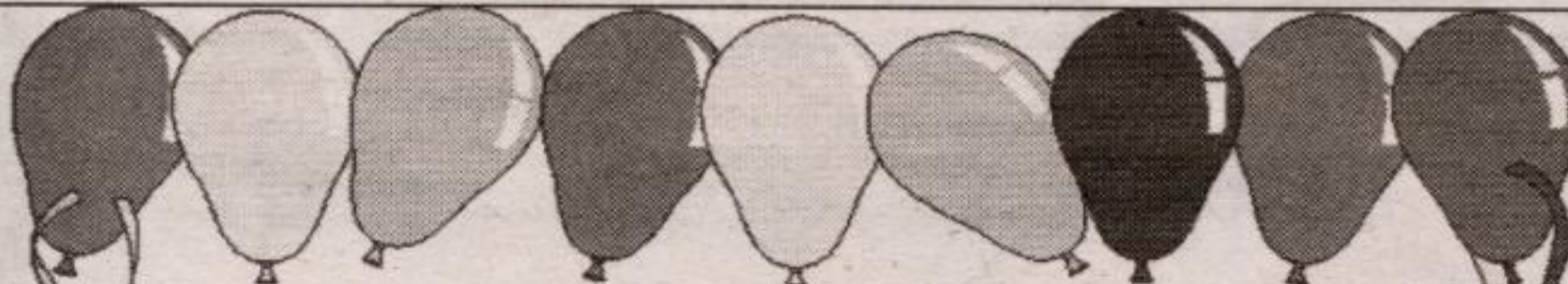
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