

Sue Ann Rathjen Reichert 2004

Sue's love of horses began at an early age on the family farm where she grew up. There were always horses present, even a mule or two at times. Although her first pony (Champ) like to take her back to the barn before she was ready to go there, her determination and perserverance won out. Her first riding off of the farm was trail rides and fun shows with the Ladora Saddle Club beginning around age four. It wasn't long until she was showing a pony (Silver Lady) that was out of her big sister (Judy Gauger)'s pony Twinkle. Her parents (Mike and Kaye Rathjen) soon bought her a real show pony (Thunderbird) and it was off to the big time. Back then, when you were eight years old, the National Cattle Congress in Waterloo was a big deal, and winning it the first time there was even a greater thrill. Thunderbird was in a trailer mishap and his show career was ended, so on to Fancy Pants. He was a western pleasure pony who won many state awards and was also the International POA champion for three years. Sue showed him at Iowa Stock Horse (where she is still a director), Iowa Horse Show Association shows and in 4-H. Parade ponies then made their appearance and Sue showed two of the best, Moonlight Gambler and Stardust. At the western shows it was on to Pistol Pete in the big pony class, Fiddle Anne in youth pleasure and horsemanship, and Junior and Little Bueno Joe in Barrel Racing and the Rescue Race (rescuing her future husband Ron). She was invited to run at the American Royal in Kansas City in the Invitational Girls Barrel Racing, and showed in Missouri and Kentucky in Match Barrel Races with the Iowa Girls Barrel Association which she also won state championships and was a former president of the organization. She has showed at the Iowa State Fair for over forty years. She was the Iowa State Fair Cowgirl Queen in 1970, and has since judged it a couple of times. Her daughter Stacy won both the Junior and Senior divisions (being the first to do so) and Sue and Stacy are the only mother-daughter duo to win this honor. Besides the western pleasure and parade ponies, she showed in parade horse classes, appaloosa classes, roadster pony, pair classes with her sister, and in tandem bareback with sister Judy, daughter Terry and daughter Stacy, including this year's fair. Daughter Stacy's first class at the fair was pony lead in led by Sue. Sue currently shows mostly registered quarter horse shows in which she is qualified for the AQHA Select World Show in Amarillo this year. She is a past officer of the IQHA and currently shows in halter, showmanship, pleasure, horsemanship and trail. She is showing off spring of her old youth mare Dominga's Susita. Through the years, this has meant daughters, grand daughters and great grand daughters. She has a great great grand daughter in training at the current time to be her next show horse. Sue has a teaching degree from the Univeristy of Iowa. She taught upper elementary for several years and substituted in many different districts, but has now been employed at Elwood Implement (a Massey Ferguson and McCormick dealer) for over 16 years. Her whole family is still very horse oriented: standing several AQHA stallions (Zippo Pine Chex, A Touch of Sudden, Suddenly Famous, Chipin); Belle Plaine Western Exchange (monthly horse sales and tack shop); and the Reichert Pleasure Celebration where this year one class winner will be guaranteed \$100,000.00 in prize money. Sue is honored to be inducted into the Iowa Horseman's Hall of Fame and wishes to thank all who made the award possible.