

Freedom Rider Tack Shop

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About Freedom Rider

Freedom Rider was started in 1996 by [Victoria Surr](#), a horsewoman with over 35 years of riding and driving experience. She was encouraged by a close friend who is disabled and shows her own horse in open shows. "I saw my friend having such a hard time finding things that could be adapted to her special needs," said Ms. Surr. "I realized that there are many other people out there who would like to be able to find these kinds of things all in one catalog."

Ms. Surr had the honor of speaking at a [North American Riding for the Handicapped Association \(NARHA\)](#) national conference. She spoke about how Freedom Rider began. Here is the speech she gave at the conference.

"Good evening. It is such a pleasure to be here tonight. I have been coming to the NARHA Conferences for many years now, and always enjoy being here.

"Every year I get to meet you, the people I talk to on the phone, and I love being able to put faces to your names and voices. Over the past few days I have been asked about the origin of Freedom Rider. I thought I would share that with you tonight.

"I came to this from a horse background. I have had horses since I was a kid, and when I didn't have a horse of my own, I was usually fortunate enough to find someone who would let me ride theirs.

"About seven years ago I was between horses. At the barn where I had kept my previous horses, there was a disabled woman who had a Morgan gelding named Freedom. This woman, Linda, was looking for someone to help her with some of the physical aspects of caring for her horse, especially at the carriage driving events that she participated in. So in exchange for riding Freedom, I started going to carriage driving shows with Linda.

"Linda and I became friends. I acted as her able bodied whip while she drove in carriage dressage and pleasure driving classes.

"It was through a conversation with Linda that I had the brainstorm of an idea that became Freedom Rider.

"I had just started researching equipment and products when the unthinkable happened. Freedom died. It was very sudden, the vet said it was most likely an aneurism. It was very devastating to Linda and me, but especially to Linda. At Linda's suggestion, I named my fledgling business Freedom

Rider, after the horse that had meant so much to her.

"Together we found another horse for Linda, a nice Morgan mare named UC Rianna. We continued to drive and show, and I rode Rianna. Freedom Rider became a real catalog and time went by.

"Then, about three years ago, for a variety of reasons, Linda decided to no longer continue with carriage driving and decided to sell Rianna. I bought her without hesitation.

"Last year I bred Rianna to a Morgan stallion named Townshend Top Hat, and on April 5th, 2002, she had a colt. I named him [FR Freedom First](#) in recognition of my friend Linda's Freedom and all that he had done.

"And that is the story of Freedom Rider."

Ms. Surr continues to search out products that are easy to use, emphasize safety, and enable equestrians to do more with horses, both on the ground and while riding or driving. She has consulted with disabled people who ride and drive, interviewed therapeutic riding instructors and observed their programs. Ms. Surr has also developed new products specifically for equestrians with disabilities that are available through the Freedom Rider catalog.

To Receive Mailings from Freedom Rider

The entire Freedom Rider Catalog can be seen on this website. [A complete print version of the Freedom Rider catalog is available in PDF format. \(click here.\)](#) For a mailed copy (allow 6-8 weeks) of Freedom Rider's catalog of equipment for the challenged equestrian, [contact us by email](#) or call toll-free 1-888-253-8811. From outside the United States, call 1-603-645-1811. Printed catalogs will usually be sent within 6-8 weeks from time of request.

Freedom Rider can be reached by mail at: PO Box 4187, Manchester, NH 03108-4187 USA.