**BECKY SHEPARD**

I was born in 1971, and grew up on a ranch outside of Lander, Wyoming. I was always very active in 4-H in my youth. I loved learning new crafts and experimenting with my own ideas. In 1988 I met and married Doug Shepard. As life often has a way of doing, I had to put the creative side on the back burner for a while, as I was busy raising my three children. As they grew up, I started getting back into the crafty stuff.

In January of 2010 I discovered that the Lander Art Center was offering a class in horsehair hitching, to be taught by Richard Gould. My daughter and I spent eight weeks learning the basics of hitching. We both took to it like fish to water, so to speak, well maybe not quite that well. We probably drove the instructor nuts because we were always “thinking outside the box” and experimenting with ideas in between classes. The first project was a very lumpy, bumpy keychain. I was afraid that I didn’t have much talent for this craft but I was going to stick with it. The next key chain that we did in class, was a bit better but there was a very crooked diamond on it. Finally it was time to tackle the “big” project, a headstall. “Jump in with both feet,” has always been my motto, so that’s what I did. Got the first cheek piece and it looked great only to discover it was on backwards. OOPS!

Thankfully I’ve come along ways from those first three projects. Today I am proud to say that I am no longer lumpy, bumpy, crooked or backwards, in my hitching at least! I’ve sold work all over the United States and even sent one headstall to Canada and displayed my work at many local trade shows. This last year, I was invited to exhibit at the Wyoming Women in Ag expo in Casper.

Horsehair hitching has been a great way to combine two things I dearly love, horses and creativity.