



Stacy (Stockard) Moncibaiz  
Years Rode: 2004-2005  
Horse: Midnight Matador



Perry Church  
Years Rode: 1982-1983  
Horse: Happy VI-II



Christi Chadwell  
Years Rode: 2010-2011  
Horse: Midnight Matador

PHOTOS COURTESY OF TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

# Changin' Masks

## Where are our Masked Riders now?

Perry Church seemed uncomfortable in the 50s-themed diner where the “kids hang out.” His cowboy hat and Carhartt jacket slightly clashed with the sparkling-clean laminate table and salvaged records. As he began sharing memories of his time as the Masked Rider at Texas Tech University, he leaned back into the corner of the red, plastic booth with a comfortable smile appearing beneath his moustache. Suddenly, he fit in among the students.

Many fans and students forget that long after the mask is removed, and the reins are transferred, our favorite Masked Riders continue on with their lives, anonymously living among us.

Church graduated from Texas Tech with a degree in agricultural economics in 1983. He has since worked for Cargill, the American Quarter Horse Association, and Diamond V. He said being the Masked Rider helped him make contacts throughout his life.

He said the experience teaches responsibility, how to be socially interactive, and how to present yourself. Church said he believes being the Masked

Rider helps one set goals and standards, things he hopes to pass on to his sons.

Christi Chadwell, Masked Rider from 2010-2011, has an office across the street from the agricultural communications classrooms that she attended at Texas Tech University only a few years ago. Chadwell was the face of the university as the Masked Rider, but is now a face of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Department of Plant and Soil Sciences.

Chadwell is currently the communications and recruiting coordinator for the department. Her job description includes answering phone calls and emails from prospective students, visiting local clubs and programs, and giving tours to visitors. In other words, if you are interested in studying PSS at Texas Tech, you have probably talked to Chadwell.

“The Masked Rider position isn’t something you can make a career out of,” Chadwell said. “It’s a one year term that I was honored to have.”

On the other side of campus, another former Masked Rider, Stacy Moncibaiz – previously Stacy

Stockard – works in an administrative department of the university. Moncibaiz applies knowledge from her three degrees from Texas Tech to her work as the marketing coordinator for Texas Tech’s Transportation and Parking Services.

Moncibaiz was the Masked Rider from 2004-2005. Despite all of the responsibilities and time commitments that come with being the position, she graduated summa cum laude with a degree in agricultural communications in 2005. She then decided to pursue a master’s degree in agricultural education within the same department.

Moncibaiz began her ultimate goal of attending law school in August 2006, one week after graduating with her masters.

Eventually, Moncibaiz became a licensed lawyer, but has never practiced law. She was editing a 30-page article for the Administrative Law Journal during her last year of law school when she said she realized her true calling was in communications. After graduating from law school, she began her career within the Department of External Relations in the Texas Tech University School of Law.

Moncibaiz recently adopted Midnight Matador, the horse that she and Chadwell rode during their years as Masked Riders. She said Midnight still loves people and always tries to visit with those who walk past his paddock.

Moncibaiz recalled that Midnight would get extremely excited right before a run during football games. He knew when he was supposed to run by the placement of different people and objects and the timing of the game.

“He’d get really excited for his run. He would run, and we would get to his place on the sidelines,” Moncibaiz chuckled, “and he would take a nap.”

Moncibaiz said Midnight still gets just as excited during his retired life; it is just for feeding time.

*“The Masked Rider position isn’t something you can make a career out of.”*

Perry Church, the Masked Rider from 1982-1983, said he believes that the experience today is very different than when he wore the mask and rode Happy VI-II, the Masked Rider’s horse from 1980-1987.

He said the public knew livestock better when he was the rider and understood equine safety better than the current population of Texas Tech. Now, fans just want to pet and touch the horse. He knows it takes a special animal to be the Masked Rider’s horse today and helped find Fearless Champion, the current Masked Rider horse.

Sam Jackson, Ph. D., is a professor in the Department of Animal and Food Sciences and is also responsible for areas related to the Masked Rider horse, has known Church since high school. He said Church was helping brand cattle at a ranch when he called Jackson.

“We called Dr. Jackson and said, ‘Hey, we think you need to come look at this black horse,’” Church said.

Church is still involved in the equine community: he owns four horses, participates in Will Rogers Range Riders, and supports his two sons in their team roping competitions.

All of the former Masked Riders are in different stages of their lives, but they continue to wear a mask for Texas Tech; however, it is not the same one they donned during their years as Masked Riders.

“The opportunity to represent Tech in that capacity is very flattering,” Church said while gazing out of the diner window, “and with that opportunity, comes a great deal of responsibility.”

**Kelsi Hancock**

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Moncibaiz and her husband with Midnight Matador



Church (third from left) with his wife, Lisa, and sons



Chadwell helps a potential PSS student

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