To call Mary Glazier an animal-lover might be something of an understatement. She owns four horses, four cats, four chickens and two dogs.

“When it comes to horses, I guess you might say I’m obsessed,” admits the chair of Millersville University’s sociology/anthropology department. “I love to ride!”

When she was younger—and braver—she competed in jumping “over fences” classes, but these days she shows equitation, dressage and reining.

“I like different styles of riding, both English and Western,” says Glazier. “A good horse is just a pleasure to be around. You have to interact with them on their terms and that makes them quite interesting. Plus, they are so beautiful.”

It’s not really that unusual to find that a professor who studies the interaction of people as a society is also very interested in how people interact with their animals. At one time, Glazier planned to become a veterinarian. But then a college professor suggested that she consider a career as a professor.

“I’m glad I did. It was the perfect choice for me,” says Glazier.

“Education is all about learning about those things you never thought you would be interested in. It shouldn’t just be a route to a job. It should surprise you.”

Glazier has been at Millersville since 1988, but she also taught at the University for several years back in the 1970s.

Now that she is chair of the department, much of her time is spent doing administrative work. She relishes every opportunity to interact directly with students, seeing them blossom in their careers.

“Many of my former students now work in the criminal justice system or have other great careers. In some respects, it’s like having a large, extended family,” says Glazier. “I love running into them and hearing about their accomplishments.”

Glazier believes it is important to serve the community. She was a member of the research committee of the Lancaster City Crime Commission, and now serves as facilitator of the Lancaster Public Safety Research Institute.

“Juvenile delinquency is a favorite course,” explains Glazier, adding that she also enjoyed teaching a course on criminal courts during which she and her students attend criminal trials from start to finish, focusing on the issues that are raised during the trials.

“We are all volunteers, we have accomplished a lot in terms of completing a wide variety of research reports,” says Glazier. “It’s fun to work collaboratively with people from various backgrounds.”

Glazier helps to raise funds for Lancaster’s mounted police unit and also serves on the Manor Township Planning Commission.

Glazier believes that sociology provides a framework for asking and answering questions about crime. It helps in understanding the reasons crime exists, how the members of society respond to criminal behavior and provides guidance in developing strategies to prevent crime.

Though her work, community service and personal life, Glazier shows her fascination with people and animals.