

ON THE TRAIL WITH KAREN



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Dear Friends,

Living on the road is the ideal way to bring clinics to folks all over the country, but it's *not* ideal for producing, printing and mailing a current newsletter! Now that I've accepted this rather than just waiting for the time to do the newsletter 'right', I hope you enjoy the new electronic format delivered with more frequency rather than being left to wonder... 'What happened to Karen & Gherkin?' There are many things I want to share with you... let's get started! – Karen & Gherkin (♥)



New Advertising Message ~ “Get Help *BEFORE* You Get Hurt!”

When do most people finally get help with their horse? Asking each group of participants at every clinic, the most common reason is they or someone dear to them got hurt. And not just a little bit hurt, I mean hospitalized or worse.

This is so common that people stop me in grocery stores or on the street to tell me their story of disaster or loss. (It must be my hat!) Each time I express sympathy and ask simply what the person's education with horses was before this happened? We all know the answer, don't we?

Please know this is not a criticism as I've done the same. If you've read my background, you know I bought my first horse in my early twenties under all the wrong conditions. “Sanka” was four, ridden six times, never off the property. Was that a problem for me? Nope... she was pretty, inexpensive, and my dream since a little girl.

It didn't take long to realize my love of horses did not equal my skill with horses! Several close calls made me realize that if I didn't get help that I was

likely to be seriously hurt or become fearful enough that I'd have to give up horses... sad, but true!

I enrolled in evening college equine courses and surprisingly, learning about horses became one of the most enjoyable things about this hobby. My passion for learning grew as I completed a formal degree in Equine Science, attending every educational seminar and clinic I could get in to, glean knowledge from every experience available.

After two decades of personal study and 15 years teaching, *Horsemanship for Women* addresses what I feel is the greatest need in the horse industry. It's the same need I had all those years ago... knowing horses are not big puppy dogs and that bonding with a horse has to do with our qualities as their leader and not just how 'nice' we are to them!

It's a simple concept with a lifetime of enjoyable study in a supportive atmosphere. If you're a woman that loves horses beyond reason but knows deep down that something's missing, please heed my advice... get help *BEFORE* you get hurt! (♥)

Horse Fairs & Expos

Where else can you see hundreds of horses, more than a dozen educators, booths with every horse product under the sun, and then rest your feet while enjoying an evening variety show with our favorite performers... the horses!

These events are the trade show for the horse industry, and are the ultimate gathering place where barriers no longer exist between English and Western, drafts and saddle horses, gaited or not... where knowledge is openly shared, as it should be!



Being a presenter at so many expos this year, it's difficult to express my extent of appreciation for the incredibly hard work every organizer puts in to provide their special event year after year.

Berg and Deb are always the entertaining demo duo, but I especially enjoy handling a 'problem'

New Security Strap

Every so often I come across something in a tack store or booth at an expo that *stops me in my tracks...* and this is one of them!

The Security Strap was designed by a saddlemaker who knows that when things go wrong, you never seem to have time to fish for and get a hold of the nightlatch in time to do any good.

His unique design keeps the Security Strap always

horse because the behavior seems to transform in front of your eyes. There's nothing mystical, just basic communication a horse can understand and respond to. My greatest satisfaction comes when the owner joins us and in a short time adopts a new approach to resolve the 'problem' at home.

Midwest Horse Fair, WI
Holiday Horse Market, WI
Equine Affaire, OH, MA & CA
Mid-Michigan Horse Expo, MI
Northern IL Horse Fest, IL
Hoosier Horse Fair, IN
Four States Ag Expo, CO
Rocky Mountain Horse Expos, CO
CO Cowboy Heritage Festival, CO
Arizona Horse Festival & Expo, AZ

Hopefully I've met you at one of these events and look forward to seeing you at the next one! Keep an eye on the web calendar for upcoming horse expos and fairs in your area!

In 2008 Hoosier Horse Fair celebrated 30 years and Midwest 29 years! Your continued support will ensure the ongoing education for your children and grandchildren with horses. (♥)

in an open position to easily get a hold of quickly.

See for yourself on my home page where I explain the details in a short video.



A picture is worth a thousand words, so see the difference and decide for yourself! (♥)

Horse Club for Women!

“Horse Club for Women” is a new show scheduled to air next month on RFD-TV. The hosts of the show are Diane Killen and Cara Lynn, two very entertaining ladies, highly skilled at drawing out a person’s story!

You can imagine the conversation we had about the format of my program, Horsemanship for Women!

It’s an exciting idea to have a show addressing women’s involvement in the horse industry. I’ve always been curious why interests like horses, cooking and hairdressing have men as the leading ‘experts’. I have a theory on that... but that’s a different article!

The complexion of the horse industry has changed as

Lexington Mounted Police Visit

There are very few ‘real’ jobs with horses, but this mounted unit lives it every day. With everything from traffic violations to drunks from the Kentucky Derby infield, they understand the importance of preparing a horse for unexpected situations.

Stopping in for a late spring visit, we had some time to address challenges both with individual horses and full formation ‘riot’ drills.



I’m always impressed with the progress of the entire unit and their horses every year. Even the new horse made incredible progress under this unit’s excellent training program, and began active patrol within a short time.



television and radio programming continues to expand. The average enthusiast can watch stories about horses and people from all over the world without ever leaving their living room!

Watch for new networks emerging such as Nicker Network and Horse TV... who knows what you’ll be able to ‘turn on’ to next! (♥)

Riot drills are quite impressive when all eight horses are guided in formation as one unit. Most of the horses are draft crossed with Thoroughbred, so their massive size and pounding hooves really take your breath away when they go into motion!

It’s important for a police horse to learn when to push into something that feels solid at first to simulate moving a crowd of people. One of their new obstacles is a tall padded cart with rollers made of 55-gallon drums. On dirt, it takes a pretty good lean from a horse to start it moving. One side is tall and is pushed sideways by the horse, while the other side is lower and is pushed by the chest of the horse.

Riding Bergante into this amount of pressure was very different for him, and it was a great feeling as he got the idea gave me such an amazing effort to push that big heavy cart!

Try putting some obstacles together and task your horse with something imaginative and different!

Go ahead... have fun being a ‘police horse’! (♥)

Can't Get to a Clinic?!

Don't let anyone give you the big guilt trip... even yourself! Demands on our time and finances can make it necessary to prioritize and attending a clinic with your horse may just have to wait for now.

Even if this is the situation, don't let your horsemanship become stagnant. We all know that's not safe for you or fair to your horse! Luckily, there are other ways to continue your study with horses!

Observe a clinic – not just a day, but the whole clinic. My three-day clinics can be best described as watching a movie. If you miss the beginning, it's hard to figure out really what's going on when you get there, and if you miss the end, you don't see where the whole plot ends up!

Study by Video – Folks short on the time to observe an entire clinic can get the concepts, techniques and even feedback by video. That's right, if you're studying my videos and need a little help, you can send a video of you with your horse and I'll give you the feedback you'd get at a clinic! It's the next best thing to being there!



If you've ever been disappointed after watching someone's instructional video, I've had the same disappointment and have worked very hard to explain and show techniques in such a way that you'll have the results you're expecting when you order the videos.

Folks tell me they see and hear something a little different every time they watch, and enjoy watching the videos over and over.

Don't let missing a clinic inhibit your progress with your horse. When the desire is high enough, we'll find the way. Sometimes we just need some new ideas how to get there! (♥)



*"Live as if you were to die tomorrow.
Learn as if you were to live forever."*

- Mahatma Gandhi

Berg & Deb Get the Cover!

A new magazine emerges with two very handsome grays... what hunks! *Horses of the Rockies* is a regional magazine using my article, "Spring Training" for Your Horse!

When they wanted a shot for their cover, a very nice woman at the Indiana clinic offered her gorgeous magnolia tree in full bloom for this special portrait! The huge canopy of blossoms was stunning!

Thanks, Nancy! (♥)

"Enjoy your journey!" ~ Karen & Gherkin