



Joann K. Long, President
2906 Wheeler Station Rd.
Bloomfield, N.Y. 14469
585-738-7477
www.GentleDoveFarm.com

Is Mounted Unit work for you? **By Joann Long, Gentle Dove Farm**

As we celebrate our 5th year of business, I am so grateful to the wonderful reception our training has received and the support you have given! As I look back, I thought it would be nice to pay tribute to the way we began. Our anniversary for Gentle Dove Farm Obstacle Training - Mounted Police Style - reflects great pride in our Mounted Unit experience; so let me take this opportunity to share more about it!

Do you want to enjoy your equestrian passion while contributing to your community? That thought was how my husband and I became actively involved in volunteer mounted patrol work. Our local Sheriff's department had a Mounted Unit and we could proudly serve with our own horses if we met the membership criteria.



There were several criteria to be met, including an initial interview and background check. Of course the horses had their own testing as well. Fortunately, we had quiet, well behaved horses that would be an asset to the unit. Each unit has their own testing criteria, but most include demonstrating equitation, obstacle maneuvers, public demeanor, and horsemanship skills. If the criterion were met, then a commitment would be made to participate in regular training and support Law enforcement and Search and Rescue activities.

Training consisted of formation riding, sensory and obstacle control, basic search and rescue techniques, crowd control, police equitation, arrest techniques, situation control, vehicle extrication, and fireworks and night maneuvers. Further, scenario training included simulated real life events such as containing protesters, search and rescue situations, and VIP escorts. Each member puts in numerous hours of individual training on their horse to prepare them for patrol.

Service and duties vary from patrol to patrol, but typically the Mounted Unit devotes many hours to traffic and crowd control, patrolling parks, concerts, fairs, festivals, and other public relation events, as well as participation in parades and park & pets (where the horse needs to stand calmly as children run around and sometimes crowd the horse to get their pets in).

In addition to the regular duties and community service, some mounted unit members participate in mounted police competitions held throughout each state and internationally. Competitions act as a form of training, networking with other Mounted Police Units, and a means of sharing strategies, methods and skills in the challenges of mounted work. The general equestrian public typically take trail rides through a park, but one of my favorite 'trail' rides was riding down the center of my town on my horse, looking for new

experiences and stopping to let the kids pet my horse. If you have a sense of 'oh that would be fun' then you'd be a great candidate for your local mounted patrol!

My husband and I were proud to serve our community. Most people were excited to pet our horses and talk to the mounted police – in contrast you don't normally see kids excited to walk up to a patrol car and try to pet it! Mounted units provide a great way to make a positive connection within the community. Personally, I'm privileged to have belonged to a Mounted Unit and enjoyed my passion for horseback riding while giving back to my community. You may still see me riding down the city streets of my town!

The mounted unit provides training from which every horseman could benefit. Their training was the framework towards developing our equine partnership. We had great success in police horse competitions and were frequently asked how we trained our horses. From those inquiries, Gentle Dove Farm Obstacle Training Mounted Police Style was born – to teach the general equestrian public mounted police style training. We encourage partnership, communication, and exceptional trust mounted police style!



Thank you for all your support as we celebrate our 5th year anniversary and we look forward to working with you for many years to come!

Happy and safe riding!

Joann K. Long
©Gentle Dove Farm