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Can my horse do that?

by Joann Long, Gentle Dove Farm

How do police horses stand so quietly with chaos going on all around them? After 12 years in the mounted police Joann Long strives to help others understand the answer to that question. The Gentle Dove Farm Mounted Police Style Obstacle Clinics provide a unique, educational, and FUN opportunity for the general equestrian public to learn how police horses are trained and apply those techniques towards their own partnership with their horse.

Recently, a fellow mounted police friend posted on Facebook her perspective on training. It represents the typical attitude of officers in the mounted police and we thought we'd share her story. The following is written by Trooper Mary Elena Moran and reprinted by permission.



Mounted Police Training Perspective - by Trooper Mary Elena Moran

"Young riders: never pass up an opportunity for training. Allowing your horse to figure out how to negotiate obstacles, handle traffic, and accept "scary" sights should be part of your daily training routine.

You are creating a more confident horse who will be calm under pressure and get you out of trouble. We all know the moment at a show when our horse sees that flapping garbage bag, hears the drop of a machine boom, or gets stuck too close to the spraying water truck. These encounters don't need to frazzle your horse if you are doing your job at home. Small doses of exposure! Seize every opportunity you can to teach your horse to focus on your aids as you navigate them close to these "attention getters." I am thankful for every loud truck that comes down my driveway, every pile of construction materials, and every opportunity for building my horse's confidence. It could save you both from injury in the future. Build confidence through groundwork and well round your partner by taking clinics/lessons in other disciplines such as participating in obstacle challenges.



Getting in the ring and simply riding your horse at the walk, trot, canter in both directions IS NOT TRAINING. You can have a better, braver horse! I hope someone is inspired by this post.”



Thanks Trooper Moran for a first hand glimpse of capturing the ‘mounted police perspective on training’. One of the key concepts she mentions is to look for challenges while teaching your horse to focus on your aids. We hope this inspires more people to welcome new opportunities to gain confidence and maybe attend one of

our upcoming clinics to learn first hand how we train! Come ride or watch one of our Gentle Dove Farm obstacle training events Mounted Police Style!

Happy and safe riding!

Joann K. Long
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