



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

“The Real Deal” by Joann Long, Gentle Dove Farm

It was a privilege and honor to present the Gentle Dove Farm (GDF) Obstacle Training to the Bethlehem Mounted Police in June in PA! Generally, GDF presents



mounted police style training to the general equestrian public.



However, we were delighted to be asked to deliver a two-day obstacle and sensory clinic to the actual folks

who serve and protect us out on the streets from horseback!



Back in October 2014 we were contacted by an Officer from the City of Bethlehem Police Department Mounted Patrol Unit requesting our training services as a new experience opportunity for their program. After several conversations and Police Department approvals we settled on a two-day training for their five officers. We arranged to travel to them in June 2015.

The Clinic was a huge success with all five officers gaining new experiences and confidence with their mounts while learning the appropriate approach to difficult situations. With the small group we were able to work individually and in detail on:

- Formation Riding,
- Basic & Complex Ground Obstacles,
- Through and past Obstacles,
- Drags,
- Pickups,
- Sensory Obstacles,
- Movement,
- Precision & Control,
- Advanced Level Maneuvers, and
- Partner’s Competition



We had fun with things like flying a kite from horseback in an indoor arena, tossing the pig (pigs can really fly), and picking up the life size dummy in a partner's relay. Our Gentle Dove Farm horse, Shamrock, delighted the crew with his impressive demonstrations. Every officer worked each obstacle that had been demonstrated. Because the officers became accustomed to the progressive maneuvers, the advanced portion with things like smoke, flares, and gunshots were bumped up a level. Several of the officers successfully shot from horseback our revolver with ½ load powder that packed quite the powerful blast. These dedicated individuals were eager, enthusiastic, attentive, and receptive to learning from our instruction. It was such a pleasure to present to them the Gentle Dove Farm training strategies and methods and we were honored to give back to our mounted police roots.



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Held at the gorgeous Toland Farms in Ledgewood, PA, the use of this outstanding farm was donated for the weekend by our gracious host Geoff Whaling, Toland Farms co-owner with his wife Trisha Hessinger. We were warmly welcomed to an on-location apartment complete with served breakfast of home baked organic gluten free baked goods (TolandFarmWholesomeGoods.com) and our horse, Shamrock, was comfortable in one of the 11 beautiful appointed wood paneled stalls. The gorgeous barn had two heated tack rooms, kitchen area, fully featured office area, spacious dressage level indoor arena, and a palates exercise area to match any gym. The outdoors featured spacious wood fenced turnouts, an Olympic size outdoor arena, gardens and sculptures to rival any historic park. Yes, we were impressed with both the facility and the warm generosity of our hosts! We were even escorted around the farm by the enchanting farm dog "Devon", a delightful Rottweiler that made us miss our own dog.

The trip was a great success and personally gratifying for me. I'll cherish the memories of working with the Bethlehem Mounted Police! My sincere thanks to them, our hosts, the dedicated volunteers, and the supportive Bethlehem Police Department. I'm truly honored.





If you would like to experience individual success with your horse mounted police style, come join us!

We provide Clinics, Workshops, Lessons, Lectures, and Demonstrations. Hope you can join us!

Happy and safe riding!

Joann K. Long

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