

RIDING LESSONS & HORSEMANSHIP

Skills are taught starting with where the rider is at in their riding journey. A beginner will start with 1 on 1 training and ground exercises to build riding muscles. Beginners and up are taught through 1 on 1, ground, group lessons, rider fitness, bare back riding, drills, games, trails..... in order to build mind and muscle memory while keeping riding enjoyable.

Horsemanship:

Basic horse care and ground handling. A rider should be able to independently handle their own horse, understand horse behaviors, identify horse and tack parts i.e. be able to talk the lingo, tack up, care for the horse's needs, load on a trailer, tie, safety issues for self and others, practice leadership, etc.

Riding:

Balanced seat. Balanced centered position. This has a basis in Dressage training and is the basis for English and Western riding. This will require skills and drills. As a trainer I also give riders fitness exercises they can work on to improve balance and strength in the "riding muscles". The goal is the rider can confidently ride their horse through a spook or jig without overdependence on the saddle and reins.

Drills and exercises are utilized get this in a place of muscle memory. Once this is in place then the rider can move on to more advances positioning and control including leg positions to learn yields of shoulder and haunches. And then adding reins to do shoulder/haunches in/out, rollbacks etc

The mastery of the balanced seat will also allow the rider to have "quiet legs and hands" and not bang around the horses body or mouth and confuse the horse.

This balanced seat is moved through the: walk, sitting trot, posting trot, etc. Posting trot (even with Western Riding), which is at a working trot for the horse, will be a valuable skill as the trot is a quickened pace but very controllable. (Similar to walking fast for a person but not breaking into a run.) Posting will save the rider from slamming on the horses' back which is uncomfortable for rider and horse. It does take some muscle control and muscle memory.

We will start out with Direct Reining and once quiet hands are established we can add (western) Neck Reining.

Concepts of Pressure/Release:

Horses move away from "pressure". This is a natural behavior in the herd. We use this concept on the ground or saddle this leads to: Concept of moving off the leg first. Reins 2nd. As opposed to leaning on the reins or leading a horse around by the nose. The rider should also understand and be confident about communicating the level of pressure needed to get the desired results.

ADVANCED OPTIONS:

Trails: Onsite and offsite excursions enjoying nature on horseback.

Endurance: Offsite competition while enjoying nature on horseback. This involves conditioning. See AERC.org

Urban Riding ~ Junior Mounted Patrol: Obstacles and games. cowboy curtain, gates, back up in tight spaces and patterns, variety of ground conditions, noises, night training, Drill Team. etc etc.

Drill Team Formations: moving through patterns as a team. Whether that is a team of 2 or 20. This requires the above riding skills along with team communication skills.

OTHER SERVICES:

Equine Assisted Learning and Therapy: (EAL/EAT) Thunderhorse Hearts & Heroes

Horse Board: Top care stall board available for your athlete. Limited Availability.

Mounted Patrol: The director, Lisa Docter, is a Reserve Officer and trainer for a Mounted Patrol Unit. We do consider recruits.

Kiger Mustang Breeding: standing stallion: Mesteno's Doc Romeo. See <https://www.facebook.com/ThunderhorseKigers>

