

# The Art of Riding: Clinic Sponsor's Guide

Thank you for volunteering to sponsor a clinic with Karen Musson. The clinic sponsor has an essential role in the success of the clinic. I hope these notes will bring clarity about what to do and when.

My clinics help people improve their relationship with their horse (and every horse they will meet) by developing their skill in working with the horse through feel. Students learn to leave out the pressure that causes brace and resistance, and connect with the horse's mind and feet through release, with feel. I teach a state of being with horses that will cause your partnerships to thrive, regardless of whether you go trail riding together, gallop around cross country event courses, or work with horses on the ground. It's about feeling of the horse, so that he can feel of you, and discovering that when this reciprocal feel is working, it releases the horse to offer his very best, because he is safe and understands what you want in his own terms.

## Your Role as Clinic Sponsor

### Getting Started

**Confirm dates** with Karen and hosts

**Book venue and confirm**

**Prepare directions and map**, and a listing of local restaurants and hotels. Please forward this doc to Karen via email, so it can be posted on her Web site.

### Beginning 60-90 days out:

**Coordinating and seeking opportunities for rider and auditor registrations:**

**Advertise the clinic with posters provided**, by posting at local stables and on boards found in local fuel stations, food, hardware stores, coffee shops, selected restaurants and bars, bakeries, bookstores etc. You will know where the posters will do most good in your location. Please be sure to ask permission before posting. **Call local newspapers** and ask for the event to be listed in their calendar of events – some of these list events months out, some only a week, so please time the request as needed.

**Seek rider and auditor registrations**, by connecting with those who you believe may be interested. Please be mindful that it needs to be a person's (unpressured) personal decision to come in order to really benefit, because working through feel requires our full presence and an open mind for best results. If someone asks if they can bring a horse that is not under saddle, please contact me first to assess safety and whether the handler and horse will benefit from this style of clinic. No stallions or mares with foals alongside please.

#### **Notes relating to riders who question being “qualified to ride” or “overqualified to ride”**

This clinic offers a path towards mutual understanding and a foundation through feel on the ground first, which transfers to the saddle as students develop their feel through release while riding.

No one will be asked to ride a horse they do not feel safe riding: if this situation occurs (for example if a rider has come to the clinic seeking to regain lost confidence and needs a little more time, or the horse is unsure and needs more time), I will coach them on the ground, doing the equivalent exercises to those who are mounted - this in itself will build confidence as the horse gains a better understanding, and the handler gains insight about how the foundation on the ground transfers to the saddle.

If an advanced rider is very confident in the saddle, has been working with feel already, or is just able to progress very quickly, I will support that student's ongoing development with more advanced concepts to develop quality and lightness in their feel and in their horse's performance.

In other words, supporting very different coaching needs works out very well in a clinic like this: there are parallels between work on the ground and under saddle, and many levels in the depth of understanding of a given concept, depending on the rider's prior studies and experience with horses.

**Registration.** Riders and auditors can register and pay their deposit or fees on-line (via Paypal) at [www.TheArtOfRiding.com](http://www.TheArtOfRiding.com), or by check payable to Karen Musson. **Please ask riders** to email Karen (via Web site) when they register with some information that will help Karen prepare for the clinic:

- A brief description of your horse handling and riding experience to date
- A brief description of the horse you will bring: age, breed, personality
- What do you hope to get from the clinic?
- What is working great with your horse today?

**Maintain a list of riders and auditors** interested, with name, phone, email and mailing address.

### **30 days out**

**All rider deposits received** if at all possible for planning purposes.

**Send liability releases to riders** by email or by mail, requesting completion and return to Karen.

### **7 days out:**

**Ask/remind riders to pay balance due** (via Paypal on-line or check payable to Karen Musson) and send completed liability release to Karen.

**Prepare labels** for pre-paid riders and auditors (hand-written names on sticky labels is fine).

### **The Clinic!**

You will need **a volunteer** present to work a modest registration desk: hand out name labels to pre-paid participants and record their arrival on registration sheet, collect and record payment from "walk-in" auditors and issue name labels. *This volunteer has an important responsibility and I will bring an official's complimentary auditor badge for that person.*

**Please bring:** Cash box with float of \$5 bills, sticky labels, clear plastic sleeves to protect papers in case of rain, clip board, **copy** of list of participants, blank registration forms, spare copies of releases, masking tape, duct tape, thumb tacks and waterproof pens.

**Questions:** please feel free to contact me about any questions or concerns that may come up!

**Thank you for your important role  
in the success of our clinic**