

# eQuester

Wisconsin Dressage & Combined Training's Monthly Newsletter

## Riding with Karen O'Connor

By Cathrine Wunderlich

Every riding session starts out with safety for the rider AND the horse. The stirrup length must be right, the reins should have a knot (so as not to rely on the buckle if things get ugly), and the rider's skill must always consider the horse's well-being.

That was the basis on the first day of the two-day September clinic with Karen O'Connor at Jigsaw Farm, located in Woodstock, IL. The day focused primarily on stadium jumping, so Karen could get a feel for both the rider and the horse's skill level...before the going gets tough. Karen knows "tough": she is a five-time eventing Olympian, competing and placing in the top 10 at numerous international competitions.

Karen stressed that the rider needs to ALLOW the horse to use its body to move naturally, yet be in control. For myself, I find I get tense and "lock up," and my horse (the saint that he is) reacts to the restriction I impose on him. Each stride needs to be fluid in the arms, elbows, shoulders and hips—they all need to follow the motion. Restriction causes resistance, which snowballs into tension. Karen often uses the phrase, "Row the Boat," which means to allow but yet feel the contact. It is amazing how differently a horse will use its body with the same amount of tension that allows versus restricts.

Jager, my seven-year-old Off-the-Track-Thoroughbred, gets pogo stick-like (and angry) when I restrict versus allow. If I don't follow through with my arms and shoulders, the energy becomes more "vertical" and he acts like Tigger from Winnie the Poo.

Continued on next page





### Karen O'Connor continued

It definitely takes a confident rider to be comfortable with allowing his or her horse to make the decisions, and merely set them up for success by “giving” when the time is right. (If you are a Type A personality, that’s even harder.)

The more a rider allows, the more the horse will use its body properly. And, surprise- it feels amazing! If your horse is jumping hollow, it’s most likely because you are riding “backwards” the last few strides. You need to set your horse up properly as many as 4-8 strides in advance, so you can ride positively to each of the fences.

The second day usually is a cross-country day, as long as the weather conditions permit. By this time, you have learned what Karen’s expectations are...and to move your entire body like you are made of Jello. Karen will select combinations that challenge both you and your horse’s cooperation, and you will do them as many times as it takes to do it safely, quietly, and completely in control. Your horse needs to respect your signal to add as many strides as needed and move as quietly and collected as need, so there is not EVER a concern for safety. Too many rotational falls happen in eventing, and these falls need to be prevented through education and under-



standing. As a rider, the expectation is that the horse is set up for success— and is allowed to use his head and neck as needed. With drop fences, the horse needs the reins and the rider to have his weight back. With combinations, the horse needs to have its weight back to navigate the striding and the complexity. At the end of the day, the horse’s hind end needs to be the driving force and the rider needs to manage it.

As a result of previous injuries between myself or my horse, I’ve never had the opportunity to ride with Karen. But, having previously audited her clinics, I knew what to expect. Riding with her was absolutely a pivotal point in my riding career, and I’m very thankful for the opportunity that I was presented to ride and learn from her. I can credit my two subsequent, successful first-place winnings to Karen’s expertise. I rode like a “well-oiled tin man,” as she would say.



## Caryn Vesperman Editor

All advertisements, articles and photographs (with photo release) should be submitted by the 15th of the preceding month of publication, unless you make prior arrangements for additional time.

Calendar of events will appear in both the eQuester and on the WDCTA website.

Payment for advertisements should be submitted via PayPal through the WDCTA website ([wdcta.org](http://wdcta.org)) or mailed with a check made out to WDCTA and mailed to the editor.

**CONTACT INFO**  
(608) 695-9914  
W1619 King Road  
Brooklyn, WI 53521



## Preparing for 2022

While the US Dressage Finals are about to start, we're moving into a time period when one thinks about goals, training, clinics and shows for next year.

### **Awards**

But first, some housekeeping: If you signed up for WDCTA awards, you have until **Nov. 30, 2021** to submit your scores. So far, only two members have submitted their paperwork. I speak from experience! I missed sending in my scores at Grand Prix on one of my favorite horses I've ever owned, and guess what? I didn't get a WDCTA award. You can bet I won't forget that again!

Along this same subject and to keep in mind for next year's awards season: we had several members try to submit scores and their awards application at the same time this fall. Please, please read the rules. You **MUST** submit your awards application before the first show you attend. The state board hates to say no, but to be fair to all members and make sure we generate enough income for our awards program, send in your awards application early—and BEFORE you go to your first show. If members only sent in scores once they thought they earned good scores and had a better chance of winning an award, we would not get as many application dollars, which consequently would mean a smaller awards budget. WDCTA has always worked to provide really nice and substantial year-end awards, and we want to keep providing them.

### **Contribute**

As we ramp up for 2022, please remember to send me your contributions to the newsletter: a horse-keeping tip, a training tip, a fun or funny experience, photos from a clinic or a fall or snowy trail ride. This is your newsletter, not mine, and I get really tired of seeing *my* words in *your* newsletter!

Stay safe, stay warm, stay on and push on!

*Caryn*



# 2021 Jennifer Kotylo Body Awareness Clinics

November 5 - 7

At Lindinhof Equine Sports Zentrum  
4246 Schneider Drive, Oregon, WI 53575

In order to ride well we must endeavor to create in ourselves, what we want in our horses – mental relaxation, strength, flexibility and balance. Many of these traits depend on a muscularly symmetrical body. Body imbalances and asymmetries develop over time, based on your own particular physiology, posture and lifestyle. How you move when not riding, your other forms of exercise, and the amount of time and the quality of how you sit at work all effect the way you ride. Asymmetries influence your movement, alignment and flexibility, which greatly affect your effectiveness as a rider. Learn how to apply basic Body Awareness Techniques to improve your riding and overall well-being that will help you obtain long muscles, fluid movement, independent leg and arm mobility, relaxed mental state, and proper alignment. Discover how to keep yourself still without blocking your horse, connect your half-halts to your core, hold without pulling and keep your lower legs from wobbling. For further info on Jennifer, please visit [www.JenniferKotylo.com](http://www.JenniferKotylo.com)

**Rider/Auditor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Horse's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Breed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Sex:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Level Training:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Level Showing:** \_\_\_\_\_  
*Please include copy of current negative Coggins and vaccine sheet with your registration.*

### Rider Fees:

- \$450 Friday Evening - Sunday (May)       \$25 per day or night for stabling  
 \$450 Friday Evening - Sunday (November)       \$25 per day or night for stabling

**Auditor Fees:** *(Please bring your own lunch and comfortable chair)*

- \$40/person/day preregistered       \$50/person/day at the door

### Schedule

- Friday: 2-hour Workshop/Floor session. ALL RIDERS are required to attend Floor Session.
- Sat & Sun: Group 1 hour Warm-up Floor Session
- Sat & Sun: 45 min Private Lessons

Rider Fees: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Stabling: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Auditor Fees: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: **Lindinhof, LLC**  
 Mail: Lindinhof, LLC, 4246 Schneider Drive, Oregon, WI 53575  
 Questions: 608.445.8531 or [lindinhofllc@gmail.com](mailto:lindinhofllc@gmail.com)

*Please include copy of current negative Coggins and vaccine sheet with your registration.*



## Dressage Horse Boarding Eagle, WI



Tailwind Farm, a premier dressage facility in Eagle, WI has one opening beginning March 1, 2021.

Heated barn and tack room. 12x12 matted stalls with automatic waterers. Grain AM and PM, hay fed 4 times daily. Daily turnout in spacious dry lots and attached pastures are used weather permitting.

Warm 60'x150' indoor arena with well maintained footing. 2 outdoor arenas, one sand and one grass standard dressage arena.

This 30 acre farm has trails surrounding the property and hay field, also with in a short distance of the Kettle Moraine trail system.

Training and lessons provided by Andrea Schten. Andrea is a USDF Gold, Silver and Bronze medalist on self-trained horses. Multiple students have also obtained their USDF medals under her tutelage.

Please contact Andrea Schten for more information. Call or text 262-470-4557, email: [aschten@hotmail.com](mailto:aschten@hotmail.com)

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**Lindinhof**  
Equestrian Sports Specialist  
MADISON, WI

### Sport Horse Therapeutic

#### Services

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**Lori Anderson**

For more info:  
[www.SportHorseTherapeutics.com](http://www.SportHorseTherapeutics.com)

### Abby Onsgard Dressage

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Madison, WI 53714  
[abbyonsgarddressage@gmail.com](mailto:abbyonsgarddressage@gmail.com)  
(608) 8439552



### PEN BRYN FARM

**Valerie Ahl**  
4321 State Road 138  
Oregon, WI 53575  
(608) 698-7924  
[veahl@wisc.edu](mailto:veahl@wisc.edu)

*Stabling, breeding top bloodlines.*

### Tailwind Farm

Andrea & Dean Achtenhagen, owners

W350 S6890 Ulrickson Road  
Eagle, WI 53119  
(262) 470-4557  
[aschten@hotmail.com](mailto:aschten@hotmail.com)  
[andreaschten.com](http://andreaschten.com)



# Calendar of Events

Stay Tuned for the  
2022 Events!

## Renew Today!

Time to renew your membership  
*and*  
your stable, instructor, business and  
breeder listings.

The cost is so reasonable!

# Stable, Instructor, Breeder and Business Listing Form

For only \$10 per category or \$35 for all four, you can have your stable, instructor, breeder or business listing appear in the eQuester newsletter and on the WDCTA website. This advertising is for WDCTA members only. Must be a WDCTA member to be listed.

**(Please limit your information to 35 words per category.)**

**CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:** STABLE  INSTRUCTOR  BREEDER  BUSINESS

MEMBER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

STABLE/BUSINESS NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

**STABLE FACILITY FEATURES:** (OUTDOOR/INDOOR ARENA, TURNOUT, LOUNGE, WASH STALL, TRAILS, LESSONS AVAILABLE)

**BREEDER INFORMATION:** (STANDING STALLIONS, BLOODLINES, BREEDS, ETC.)

**BUSINESS INFORMATION:** (TYPE OF BUSINESS, DAYS OPEN, HOURS, LOCATION, ETC.)

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:** (COMPLETE BELOW)

EQUESTRIAN EDUCATION BACKGROUND: (DO NOT INCLUDE NAMES UNLESS PROVIDING WRITTEN PROOF OF PERMISSION)

YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE: \_\_\_\_\_

LEVELS WILL TEACH: \_\_\_\_\_

LEVEL OF RIDING EXPERIENCE: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL HORSES AVAILABLE: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

WILL TRAVEL: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

AWARDS EARNED: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: \_\_\_\_\_

*Only WDCTA members can be listed.  
One name per instructor listing.*



**COMPLETE FORM AND  
SEND PAYMENT TO:**

Diane Brault  
5184 Co. Rd. HH  
Barneveld, WI 53507  
608-455-1037  
[membership@wdcta.org](mailto:membership@wdcta.org)

## **Instructor/Trainer Profile**

*For WDCTA Members Only*

*These questions are only to get the ideas for your profile started. Use as many of them as you want, and add others as needed. Email or mail this sheet and additional pages. The editor will follow up with any additional questions or clarifications.*

**Please submit some photos of yourself, facility, horses, etc. to:**

Caryn Vesperman, newsletter editor  
W1619 King Road, Brooklyn, WI 53521  
[newsletter@wdcta.org](mailto:newsletter@wdcta.org)



**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **City** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Phone(s):** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Website:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teach dressage, jumping, both:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Riding Since Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Background History:**

**Current and Past Instructors/Mentors:**

**Horses -- Past and Current:**

**Your Showing/Riding Accomplishments:**

**Students' Accomplishments:**

**If you own your facility, describe:**

**Dream or What Inspires/Motivates You:**

**Interesting or Amusing Personal Story:**

**Riding/Training Philosophy or "Motto" or Belief You Try to Pass to Students:**

**Anything Else?**



# eQuester Advertising Rates

### Mechanicals:

Ad size below. Photos should be submitted as jpegs. Or, mail to editor for scanning. Include self-addressed, stamped envelope for its return.

### Deadline:

All calendar submissions, ads and payment must be received by the 15th of the month prior to publication. Make checks out to WDCTA.

**WDCTA members receive special rate (in **ORANGE**).**  
**See calendar information at bottom of page.**

### Editor Contact Info:

Caryn Vesperman  
[newsletter@wdcta.org](mailto:newsletter@wdcta.org)  
W1619 King Road  
Brooklyn, WI 53521

Description	1 x	6 x	12 x
<b>Business Card</b> 3.5 x 2": In <i>eQuester</i> newsletter with link to email OR website.	\$10 ( <b>\$9</b> )	\$50 ( <b>\$45</b> )	\$100 ( <b>\$90</b> )
<b>Classified Ad</b> Up to 50 words. In <i>eQuester</i> newsletter with link to email OR website.	\$5 ( <b>\$4</b> )	\$25 ( <b>\$20</b> )	\$50 ( <b>\$45</b> )
<b>Quarter Page</b> 3.5 x 5": In <i>eQuester</i> newsletter with links to email OR website.	\$15 ( <b>\$12</b> )	\$85 ( <b>\$70</b> )	\$150 ( <b>\$135</b> )
<b>Half Page</b> 7.5 x 5" or 3.75 x 10": In <i>eQuester</i> newsletter with links to email AND website.	\$20 ( <b>\$15</b> )	\$100 ( <b>\$90</b> )	\$195 ( <b>\$175</b> )
<b>Full Page</b> 7.5 x 10": In <i>eQuester</i> newsletter with links to email AND website.	\$40 ( <b>\$35</b> )	\$150 ( <b>\$175</b> )	\$300 ( <b>\$350</b> )
<b>Website Banner Ad</b> 180x150 pixels, and can be a .jpg, .gif or .png	N/A	\$200 ( <b>\$150</b> )	\$400 ( <b>\$300</b> )

### eQuester and Website Calendar of Events Submissions: *For WDCTA members only. (Up to 20 words).*

INCLUDE THIS: Date > Event > Location > Contact (Name/Phone/Email) > WDCTA-Sponsored Event (Yes/No)

**WDCTA Event:** Link to organizer's email and registration form, if applicable

**NON-WDCTA-Sponsored Event:** Link to organizer's email only.

Member-hosted private riding clinics cannot be advertised in the newsletter at this time.