

Linda Cooper Emphasizes Sportsmanship & Teamwork

by **LYNDA PALMER**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

For close to 20 years, Linda Cooper has been training horses and riders of all ages and skill levels in the Rolling Hills area through her full-service riding academy, Maverick Farms. What differentiates Maverick Farms from other barns is the emphasis on riding skills along with a strong focus on some of the softer skills that come with being an accomplished equestrian.

Cooper believes that skills learned as an equestrian transcend beyond the show ring and incorporates life lessons into her coaching:

Equestrians in our program learn responsibility, respect, manners and discipline. This is also a valuable life lesson. I encourage my seasoned riders to help with the younger riders and I teach them how to be good role models. This helps them hone their horsemanship skills while learning patience and building life skills. I also coach my students on how to handle success and mistakes. It's easy when all goes well, but what separates the successful riders (or anyone for that matter), is how they handle mistakes.

In riding, you are dealing with a 1,000 plus pound animal that does not speak English, so mistakes happen. Coaching my riders through this makes them not only successful riders but successful people.

Keeping it Local


Cooper grew up in the Rolling Hills area and began riding at age four. A successful competitor, she won many championships and medal finals, including Onondarka, Rosewood Junior Medals, and the OCHSA Adult Medals.

Cooper completed a bachelor's degree in education and taught Kindergarten at Point Vicente Elementary School while teaching riding part-time at the public arenas in Rolling Hills. Cooper's passion and enthusiasm attracted numerous clients. Combining her



(ABOVE) COURTESY: LINDA COOPER, ((RIGHT) CREDIT: LEXI PALMER
(Above) Happy pony campers, (Right) Linda on Cavalli.





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love of teaching with her passion for horses, Cooper formed Maverick Farms Riding Academy, which has been operating out of Peter Weber Equestrian Center since 2003. She learned various facets of the equestrian business by working with many prominent riding professionals, including Julie Smith, Rob Gage, and Jim Hagman.

Strong Supporter of the Local Riding Community

Cooper started her competitive career through the local ETI Corral #8, Las Amigas, and Portuguese Bend Horse Shows. As such, she remains an avid supporter of local community shows through generous donations and encouraging students and their parents to support the horse shows. Cooper strongly supports the local schooling shows sponsored by the Peninsula Equestrian Circuit, serves on the board of directors for the LAHJA, and is a contributor to the Portuguese Bend National Horse Show supporting

RUTH V. SOBECK, DVM
EQUINE
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P.O. Box 4080
Palos Verdes
California 90274

Tel. 310.530.8194
Fax. 310.326.9683
www.ruthsobek.com

the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles.

Cooper also serves as a strong role model for many children on the hill. Running a division of the Peter Weber Equestrian Center, Pony Camp, Cooper interacts with close to 400 new riders every summer, teaching them about not only good horsemanship, but also responsibility, respect, manners, and discipline that go hand-in-hand with learning about horses. Cooper encourages Maverick Farm's advanced riders to give back to the community by helping out at Pony Camp and being role models to the younger set.

Top Honors for Maverick Farms

Whether competing at the local Peninsula Equestrian Circuit Horse Show or in national medal finals, Maverick Farm's riders consistently bring home top honors. Recent student achievements include medal final champions in the Rosewood,



CPHA, and LAHJA medal finals.

Cooper has also received many accolades as a trainer. Most recent awards include high point trainer award for highest scoring equitation rider in the LAHJA Medal Finals (2015), overall high point trainer for Gold Coast Outreach Division (2017), and the Trainer Sportsmanship Award at the 2018 Portuguese Bend National Horse Show.

About Maverick Farms

Maverick Farms. is a full service riding academy and training barn that provides programs for riders—from as young as three through a pony camp program all the way to the Maverick Farms Advanced Show Team which competes on the A circuit. With a stable of safe and show ready school horses as well as a proven full-service training program, Maverick Farms can accommodate riders and horses of all level and coach them to their desired level.

Maximizing the Potential of Each Horse and Rider Team

Cooper and her team focus on more than just riding skills—working on developing all facets of the horse and rider as a team. This includes not only skill work but also the mental elements needed to maximize each horse and rider's athletic potential achieved through individualized training programs that inspire, challenge and empower the team. "Great riders are as disciplined with their mind as they are with their bodies", says Cooper.

Stressing safety, discipline, responsibility, and classic horsemanship, Maverick Farms also encourages camaraderie, good sportsmanship, and nurturing the bond between horse and rider. Adhering to the highest standards of excellence is what makes Maverick Farms riders stand out from the crowd.

If you are interested in learning more, check out Maverickfarms.net or connect with them on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter @Maverick.Farms.



COURTESY: LINDA COOPER

Linda Cooper with a happy Maverick Farms pony camper.

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