

# Clicker Training Workshop

## FINAL REPORT

A "Clicker Training for Horses" Workshop, organized by Northern Lights College, was held on September 24-26, 1999, Friday 6-9pm, Saturday and Sunday, 9am-5pm. The instructor was Alexandra Kurland, from Delaware, New York, USA. The workshop was held at the Dawson Creek Fairgrounds with the assistance of our new Mobile Training Classroom.

### Budget

Attached

### Enrolment:

A total of 23 students were enrolled,	
Students participating with a horse	10 (Full)
Students participating without a horse	6
Spectators	7

### Course Content:

Tailor-made specifically for the students enrolled, the workshop included both theory and hands-on practical. I have included a copy of the questionnaire that was distributed to the students prior to the workshop.

Many resource materials were provided for the students' use during the workshop. Alexandra has donated two resource books our Northern Lights College library for future use by students and community borrowers. As well, we are looking at purchasing additional video resources.

### Course Publicity:

Advertising went out to The Mirror, Northern Horizon, Horse Action International, Equus, Horses All, Equine Research Center, and Peace River Block news. Enclosed, please find a copy of most of the press-releases and advertisements that were done for this workshop.

**Comments:**

As you will note from a copy of the course comment forms attached, the workshop was very well received by the students. Many students indicated an interest in scheduling a return workshop with Alexandra.

The focus of any future workshops with Alexandra would be an advanced Clicker Training Workshop, with special emphasis on participants being able to transfer their knowledge to other interested horse trainers.

Submitted by:

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**CLICKER TRAINING WORKSHOP**  
September 24-26, 1999

**FINAL BUDGET**

INCOME:

Northern Lights College Foundation Donation		\$500.00
Tuition Revenue:		
Full Participants (10)	\$1100.00	
Partial Participants (6)	\$ 330.00	
Spectators (7)	\$ 280.00	
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	\$1710.00	\$1710.00
		<hr/>
Total Income		\$2210.00

EXPENSES:

Contracted Goods & Services		
- Instructional Costs		\$2242.50
Materials, Books, Supplies		
- Books, Photocopying, Misc.		\$ 326.09
Wages, Benefits, Travel, Training Skill Deveopment		
- Airfare, Hotel, Meals, Taxi		\$1551.15
Rent or Lease of Facilities/Equipment		
- Mobile Training Classroom	\$ 500.00	
- Arena Rental	\$ 200.00	
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	\$ 700.00	\$ 700.00
Administration Fee (20%)		\$ 963.94
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Total Expenses		\$5783.68

## Clinic Format

A non-stop, intensive two day clinic using lectures, videos, demonstrations, and hands-on training to teach the basic principles and techniques of clicker training.

Topics include:

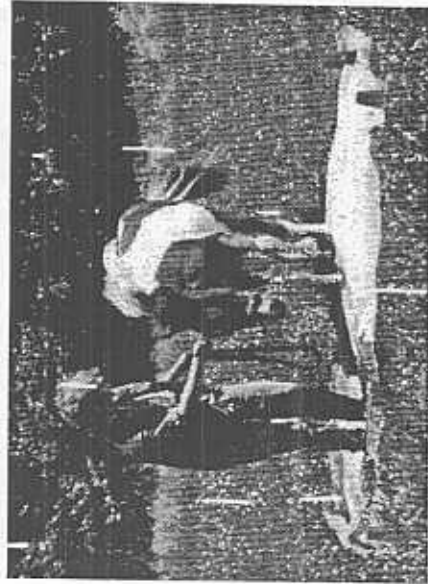
- \* The origin of clicker training.
- \* Shaping behavior with the clicker
- \* How to introduce a horse to the clicker
- \* Targeting
- \* Variable Reinforcement Schedules and how to use them in training
- \* The role of negative reinforcement in clicker training
- \* Basic ground manners: using the clicker to teach head lowering, backing, a go forward cue
- \* Adding the clicker to your existing training program
- \* Lateral work
- \* Liberty training
- \* Riding with the clicker
- \* Problem solving with the clicker
- \* Developing an upper level performance horse
- \* Punishment and its alternatives
- \* Trick training

Everyone who attends is a participant. Participants may bring a horse if they wish. Please do not bring aggressive or dangerous horses because they limit the scope of the clinic. The number of horses will be limited.

Horses who illustrate most clearly the topics covered will be chosen for demonstration. For example, when learning how to use the clicker to teach basic ground manners, the instructor will choose from the group a pushy horse who crowds into his owner's space. For head lowering, the instructor will look for a horse

# Clicker Training for your Horse

*A radically new equine  
training method spreading  
like wildfire across North  
America!*



CLINIC -

September 25 & 26

Saturday and Sunday, 9 am - 5 pm  
\$110 plus GST

Instructor: Alexandra Kurland

who has his nose in the rafters, not a quiet fellow who snoozes through the lectures. But for other segments, the nervous, uptight or pushy horses might not be the best candidate; for demonstration. The instructor may instead chose the quiet fellow who's really caught onto the clicker game and can show participants some interesting training.

The horses attending will dictate in part the type of training covered. If they are primarily young, unbroke horses, the focus will be on ground work; if they are working under saddle, riding issues will be covered.

Please note: This clinic is designed to give hands-on experience with clicker training. The lessons in this clinic are not intended as one-on-one problem solving lessons. The instructor might not work directly with your horse.

Each lecture and demonstration will be followed by an opportunity for participants to work their own horse. People will work in teams, so participants who do not bring a horse will still have plenty of opportunity to do hands-on clicker training. During all of these segments the instructor will answer questions and help individually with training problems as they arise.

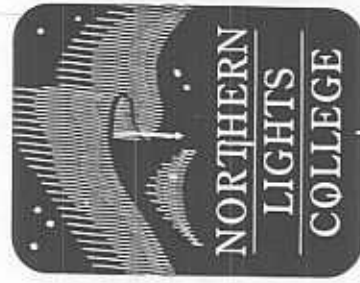
## For more information

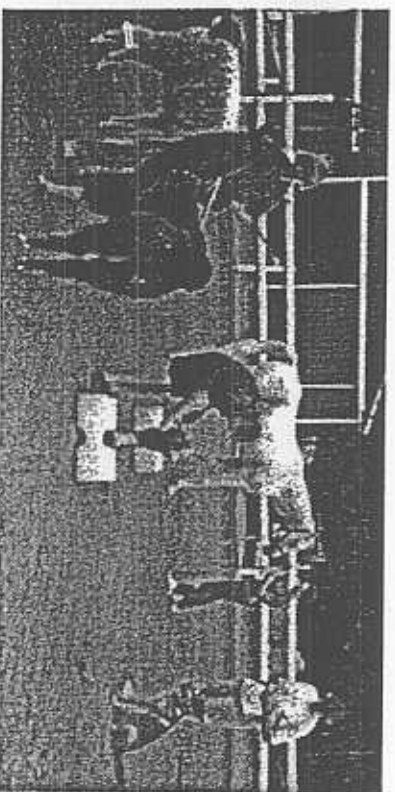
Please contact:

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Clicker training can be used on a wide variety of species.

## Instructor Profile

Alexandra Kurland is the author of *Clicker Training for your Horse*. She earned her B.S. degree from Cornell University where she specialized in animal behavior. She has been teaching and training horses since the mid 1980's.

In the 1980's Kurland studied with Linda Tellington-Jones and became a TTEAM Practitioner. The other major influence on her riding at that time came from the high school dressage trainer, Bettina Drummond. In the early 1990's she added John Lyons' training into the mix and developed her own teaching program, *Riding In A State Of Excellence*. In 1993 she learned about clicker training and began to apply its principles to the horses she was training.

In 1996 Kurland was offered an opportunity to share clicker training with an even wider audience. Karen Pryor, one of the early pioneers of clicker training, and author of *Don't Shoot The Dog*, the standard reference for all clicker training, asked her to write a book for her company, Sunshine Books. *Clicker Training For Your Horse* is the result. It has been recently published, and already it is reaching a world-wide audience.

Kurland lives in Delmar, New York, U.S.A. For more information on clicker training, please see her website at [www.ctsny.org/users/kurlanda](http://www.ctsny.org/users/kurlanda).



## What is Clicker Training?

Clicker training refers to a new method of teaching behavior using a "yes" signal or conditioned reinforcer, to tell the animal precisely when it has done something right. It is a style of training which was originally developed by marine mammal trainers to work with dolphins. Clicker training gets its name from the toy clickers many people use to signal a "yes" answer to their animal. To the animal the "click" in clicker training means it has just done something that will earn it a reward.

Clicker training began with marine mammal trainers, but it is rapidly spreading to dog and horse owners. Here are just a few clicker success stories:

- \* Fig was an aggressive Thoroughbred mare who used to attack her owners. Traditional training methods had only made her more aggressive. Horses like this often have to be destroyed, but instead her owners tried clicker training. Today, Fig is a useful riding horse. More than that, she's become the family pet her owners originally thought they were buying.

- \* Magnat is a twenty year old Arabian. Five years ago people were doing emergency dismounts off of him. His previous owners gave him away because they were afraid to ride him. He's now owned by a blind rider who is learning high school dressage with him. If you want an upper level performance horse, clicker training can get you there.

- \* Crackers is a big, beautiful appaloosa who has learned to line dance and do tricks via the clicker. Do you want to go one-on-one shooting basketball hoops with a horse? Crackers can.

These and many other horses have all benefited from this radical new approach to training. Clicker training began with dolphin trainers and then spread to zoos. Clicker training gave the keepers a way to handle and medicate even aggressive animals without restraints or tranquilizers. Because it reduces the level of stress the animals experience in handling, it is playing a major role in the day-to-day care of many endangered species.

In the early 1990's clicker training spread into the dog training community where it rapidly took hold. And now from the dog trainers, horse owners are beginning to learn about clicker training. Thanks to the internet, it is spreading like wildfire.