



# Tales from the Trails at Dunrovin

## CLICKING WITH MACKENZIE

Welcome back to week 3 of our donkey training experiment—or perhaps it's more of an assembly? If you've tuned in for our last two sessions, you'll recall we took a little time to see what these two wise-asses remembered and then quickly moved forward to novel assignments. At this point, you might be asking, "what's the point of all this assattery?" Last week, you may have picked up that our training sessions aren't simply assinine. In fact, I'm excited to see if this dashing DIVA duo might help us answer a question about the wider world.

Many people *assume* that only human animals can use language to communicate. But there has been mounting scientific evidence *assembled* over the last half-century to suggest that many other animals are capable of navigating the morass of language.

I'm hoping that our work with the Donkey DIVAS might shed a little more light on inter-species communication. My goal is to give these two the opportunity to use human words to *associate* with their human assistants. Whether they rise to the occasion, only future sessions will tell. Perhaps they will surpass our expectations. Wondering how we'll *assault* this conundrum? Read on *assiduous* viewer! And let me *assuage* your fears—I pledge not to *assail* you with puns any further.





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## A QUICK RECAP OF WEEK 2

One of my training goals throughout our time together is to reduce the DIVAS' bickering and Maude's mouthiness, or what we trainers call "frustration displacement." So how am I doing? The great thing about training on-camera at Dunrovin is that we can document this process. If you take the time to go back over the recordings of each session, you'll notice that the instances of Gertie's mouthiness and frustration were reduced this week compared to last. Will the trend continue? Keep watching to see!

Our second training session was wet! We were joined by Michal, a friend to equines everywhere. Having multiple handlers reinforce training is essential to helping animals progress. And with Michal's help, we were able to rocket our training forward, continuing to advance our basic behaviors and introducing a new concept—FOOT TARGETING.

Gertie picked up this behavior quickly, learning to stomp on an orange button in a matter of minutes. This bodes well for our foray into animal speak, as you will hopefully see in future sessions!

## CAN DONKEYS TALK?



### WEEK THREE GOALS

This week, we will keep going on with our manners and start introducing more buttons. But keep your ears and eyes peeled, because this time, the buttons will have something to say!

Be sure to check the calendar to catch us working together live! And drop a line in chat if you have any questions! Join us as our story continues.

**Broadcast Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_