



Miracles in Motion

THERAPEUTIC EQUESTRIAN CENTER



Save the dates!

Boo at the Barn

Boo at the Barn returns to Miracles on Saturday, October 23rd from Noon to 3:30 p.m. It's a joyous celebration with decorated horse stalls – and horses in costumes! Our miniature horses will be decked out in new costumes, as will several of their larger friends. This is going to be a fun day, with games, food, and more. Join us as we celebrate Halloween – it will leave you glad you came!.

Mini Ambassadors on parade

If you are planning on coming to Oktoberfest in the Amnans on October 1st to 3rd, be sure to get there early enough to see the parade! All three Miracles in Motion's Mini Ambassadors will be appearing in the parade along with some of our students and volunteers. Mr. Sea, Lucky, and Little Guy will be dressed in their splendid new outfits ready to greet the crowds up close and personal.

Volunteer moment by Jasmine Miftahof

A wise man once compared life to a box of chocolates, and I would have to agree – every worthwhile endeavor in my life has manifested itself spontaneously. A few summers ago, my mom and I embarked on a road trip to Mount Rushmore. As we drove through the Black Hills, I spotted a road sign advertising trail rides. We were both excited and anxious, as it was our first time on horseback, but the ride through the fragrant pine forest – set against the vibrant blue sky and striking beauty of the black-rock mountains – was breathtaking. Back at the corral, I promised myself to learn about and develop a deep understanding of the powerful, yet gentle animal that is the horse.



Upon completing my freshman year at Columbia University this past spring, I knew what I wanted to do with my summer back home. After explaining my intentions to work with horses, my aunt dug up an old newspaper clipping advertising volunteer opportunities at Miracles. From then on, the rest was history. As I am studying mathematics on the pre-med track, my mind revolves around the classroom. Miracles, however, has taught me skills that cannot be conveyed in a textbook. Throughout the summer I have developed countless social and emotional connections with every one of our riders, volunteers, horses, and cats.

Working at the farm has also shown me that *who* you work with is just as important as the tasks you accomplish, and that a caring, enthusiastic team changes seemingly ordinary tasks into extraordinary ones. It is incredibly fulfilling to realize that once I step into the barn, my energy is devoted to a cause greater than the trivialities and stresses of everyday life. I will be forever grateful that the unpredictability of life has led me to Miracles, and I look forward to many more hours of volunteering at our farm.

Reflections from a distance by Karla Miller

I have been blessed to be a volunteer at Miracles in Motion for many years. About seven weeks ago, I had surgery on my ankle that will sideline me for a couple of months. That is the longest time I have been away from our beautiful herd for several years. The time spent away from Miracles has made me “horse sick” and missing “the boys” terribly. During this time, I have thought more deeply about what working with the horses at Miracles means to me and what it does for me.

I am a horse leader for classes, I do chores two or three times a week, serve on the board, and I work with the Mini Ambassador program. I also perform equine bodywork using Masterson Method techniques on the herd to reduce their pain and stiffness, which helps to improve their flexibility and performance. I often spend anywhere from 12 to 20 hours a week working with the horses and with other volunteers who care for them. I love every minute of it.

Each horse at Miracles bestows gifts: some in common with all horses and some unique. Blaze with his solid presence; gentle Jet with his “old soul” eyes; Shadow with his trusting, quiet demeanor; mischievous Raven and playful Brett; mighty Memphis, majestic Aspen and mustang Aussie; calm, steady and reliable Diamond; the darling, Don Pecos; Max, with his big eyes and a big body to match; Zip with his enduring patience and ability to heal many maladies; Little Guy, always up for a snack; sneaky snake Lucky trying to escape, and tiny Mr. Sea carefully navigating among the others. Two new horses, Bubba and Sunny, came in my absence and I’m hearing good things about them.

Much has been written about the spirits of horses and their connection to humans. Everyone from philosophers to cowboys to horsewomen to little girls can tell you the worth of horses and the lessons they impart. Horses have always made people better. As for me, everything from their smell, to their sounds, to their strength and gentleness makes me feel alive. I am among friends.

I can tell they are glad when I groom them, care for their feet, treat their wounds or apply techniques I’ve learned to help them release tension and ease pain. They tell me so in many ways: the look in their eyes, nudging or leaning against me, or walking contentedly beside me. Some come running when I whistle for them. I’m proud of that since others say they are envious and wish they could whistle for the horses like I do (I blush a bit to myself when I say that).

More than what I do for them, however, is what happens to me in their presence. I am calm and clear; focused and content or sometimes just dreamy. I feel strong and safe. I feel trusted and I trust. I allow myself, or they help me allow myself - to feel sheer joy and happiness without reservation. I know I am where I am supposed to be.

You might think that all this has been a revelation only during the time I have been away, but I’ve known it all along. Maybe not this vividly, and certainly not with such longing. It will be a short while longer before I rejoin them. I can’t wait to see them, to call them silly names, and wonder if they think I’m a goof of a human being. I know. I am a romantic: having an idealized view of reality. Or is it really just ideal?

From the desk of Deb Leichsenring, Director of Operations

On any day of the year one can witness so much goodness at Miracles, whether you are standing in the field and watching the interactions of the herd, or simply enjoying the sheer peacefulness of the pastures. There is a calmness you feel while grooming a horse. The silence of the farm or the loud exhilaration of the students arriving for class are each in their way a kind of music. The human-animal bond created during hippotherapy or adaptive riding are evidence that that bond enhances the quality of life for children and adults with differing abilities. Every day we see our volunteers provide a supportive environment for the students, the herd or other volunteers. I would encourage you to call to set time for a visit or sign up to volunteer. I guarantee it will be time well spent! Happy Fall!



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