

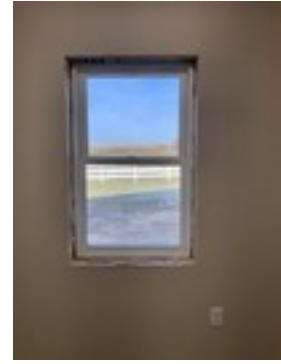
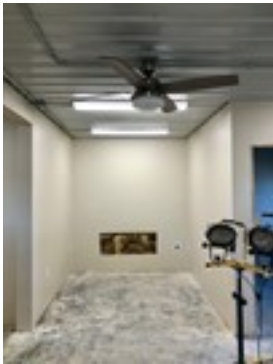


# Miracles in Motion

THERAPEUTIC EQUESTRIAN CENTER

March 2021

## Arena addition nears completion



## Gearing up for a new season at Miracles

Finally! Have you heard? We're going back to work! Miracles and our partners developed COVID safety plans and are preparing to start classes again using this strict safety protocol. Everything seems to be falling into place.

Volunteers have been preparing, training, and conditioning the herd for the last few months but now the pace has been kicked into a gallop. Exercise riders, instructors, and equine body staff are working with the herd. Barn workers are preparing tack and grooming, grooming, grooming. Corporate and community volunteer groups are joining Miracles' staff and volunteers for workdays to complete our preparations.

Starting the first week in April, Adaptive Riding (formerly called Therapeutic Riding) will be on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Saturdays. Hippotherapy (HPOT) will also start the first week in April and continue at least through mid-summer.

**Volunteer Training:** With this schedule in mind, we will hold two training sessions for volunteers. One will be on March 20th and the second will be held on March 27th. Prior to the in-person training, volunteers will view videos to illustrate each part of the training. Diana Harris, PATH-certified instructor, and the Horse Committee have been producing those videos. All volunteers, old and new, are trained annually. Volunteers fill the roles of horse leaders, side walkers and barn assistants.

**Instructors:** We have two certified instructors and three instructors-in-training. Each instructor-in-training will need a total of 25 hours (with a maximum of 12 hours being private lessons) to meet the qualifications, plus an online workshop, videos of teaching and riding, and a transition to CTRI (Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor) by June 30th. Each instructor is required to pass rigorous testing by the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship (PATH), the oversight organization that certifies Miracles as a Premier Therapeutic Riding Center. This organization sets strict guidelines for all activities.

**Facilities:** We can't wait to greet our students and their families soon! We've made many improvements and a couple new additions and renovations to the property, most significant, the Arena and the Pavilion. We're sprucing up the music stations on the Sensory Trail and rebuilding the noodle attraction we lost during the Derecho. We also have some super new additions to our herd. We can't wait to show them off! The Arena addition will be ready for the start of classes and sessions! We're completing the installation of fixtures, finishing the painting, and cleaning up. We know you're going to love it!

Looking forward to seeing you at the farm! Karla Miller

## John Hartley's Miracles Moment

I am a special education teacher. I joined Miracle in Motion as a side walker to return to the original reason I became a special education teacher - working with kids with disabilities. It was a refreshing change to be able to just work with students again. When asked to take on some extra responsibility by helping with chores around the farm, I jumped at the chance. I grew up with horses and this was a great opportunity to do one of the things I love most. Working and riding the horses during the pandemic gave me a place where I could forget about the world for a while. I look forward to the day when the students can come ride again.



## Miracles Manure Management

Spring has (almost) sprung and it's time to think about getting those plants in the ground. But first, you need to prepare the soil. Let our miraculous herd help you out. While COVID put a stop to most of Miracles' activities, our horses kept up manure production at impressive rates.



In addition to class duties (which, of course, have been suspended for a year), all the horses work full time filling our bins. All four bins are nearing capacity. It's high-quality stuff. Good feed going in, good fertilizer coming out. Whether it's a bucket, a barrel, or a truck load, give us a call and for a donation to the program, you can haul it away and start the garden of your dreams. We'll even help you load it. Just call Deb at Miracles to schedule a time.

## From the Director's Desk

It is said that the longer you wait for something the more you appreciate it when it comes. All of us at Miracles have been waiting more than a year for classes to resume. Well, come April 5th, classes are back!

You can feel a rising a level of anticipation and excitement here at Miracles, along with a mix of enthusiasm, motivation, and a touch of creativity as the warmer weather arrives and spring is just around the corner.

I am not sure who is more excited, the herd, the instructors, the volunteers, or the students. The students I am sure! So much has changed here at Miracles with five new horses for the classes, a new addition for the students, instructors, and volunteers to walk into, and our newly enclosed pavilion. What has not changed, as it has not for 33 years, is Miracles' approach of integrating horses into therapy to improve the lives of those facing challenges.

Our cornerstone program, Adaptive Riding, teaches children and adults with special needs to learn how to ride a horse to the best of their ability. Parents and caregivers often see positive changes in demeanor, language skills, strength, and flexibility when kids and adults interact with our therapy horses, other students, and volunteers. We also contract with ChildServe and the University of Iowa Center for Disabilities and Development for physical, occupational, and speech therapists to bring their clients to Miracles to conduct a therapy session on the back of a horse.

More programs will begin as the year goes on. For more information on classes or how to volunteer call, 319.857.4141 or go to our website: <https://miraclesinmotion.com/>

Deb Leichsenring