



Miracles in Motion

THERAPEUTIC EQUESTRIAN CENTER

December 2022

Miracles Moment for Ann Weber-Holdgrafer and Dennis Holdgrafer

I (Ann) came to Miracles by a different path than most. Having grown up in and around Chicago, I'm not a horse person, but I'm a therapy person. I worked as a PTA (Physical Therapist Assistant) for 16 years. During that time, I worked with a PT who worked with Miracles. She explained what HIPPO therapy was and what Miracles was all about. I was hooked! So, when I semi-retired in 2016, Miracles in Motion was one of the first places I looked into to volunteer. When Miracles started back up in 2021 after the shut down, I asked my husband (Dennis) if he wanted to volunteer too.

We have enjoyed every minute! I'm able to use some of my PT skills and have seen firsthand how HIPPO therapy enhances the progress made in clinic. But what really keeps us coming back are the kids! The little girl who wanted to gallop every time she got on a horse and couldn't stop laughing. And the little girl who wanted to know if Dennis was a grampa. When he told her he was not, she wanted to know why! The boy who started every season saying how scared he was of falling off the horse until we were able to convince him we would never let that happen! And the little girl who was so quiet when she talked, we could hardly hear her the first season, only to be told by the therapist the next session we had to be at all her sessions because we had broken through the "shy barrier"! IT'S ALL ABOUT THE KIDS!



Jake's second career as a therapy horse

Our newest therapy horse is no stranger to the arena – but not as a therapy horse, as a reining horse. Jake, aka Bit of Whizkey, is a small, but athletic, horse used to competition. Unfortunately, life in a stall didn't agree with him and he developed chronic breathing/lung problems. He was offered to our program, and we took him on a trial basis, hoping that life in a pasture would be a better environment for him. He is quickly learning to be part of a herd and his coughing is infrequent. To learn more about Jake and see him in action, head over to our website!

<https://miraclesinmotion.com/pages/news-events>

From the Desk of the Director of Operations

Looking back over 2022 at Miracles, each year is unique, yet some things stay the same: our mission of providing diverse equestrian riding and activities with therapeutic benefits for persons with differing needs.

We were able to offer classes 5 days a week thanks to our instructors, Diana Harris and Carrie Drum, along with our dedicated volunteers. Without them we could not have provided the classes with such strong safety standards in place and individual riding patterns to keep our riders engaged and making improvements.

An equine ground crew here at Miracles works with newer horses. Thanks to their diligent activities with these horses we were able to add Bubba and Sunny to the Adaptive Riding classes. Late this Fall a much-needed smaller horse was donated to Miracles, Jake. This team will be working with Jake to ensure he is ready for the 2023 season.

If you have a horse that is looking for a great second career, remember Miracles.

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From the Desk of the Director of Operations *(continued)*

Miracles hosted three events again this year. At Grow with Miracles, 14 trees were donated to provide shade to the herd in the years to come. Thank you to the work groups who came out to create fencing around the trees to protect them and give them time to stabilize. Then came Boo At The Barn, which has been so successful! Thank you to all the donors who make it possible for Miracles to offer this as a free community event. Last is Cocoa, Cookies & Carols, our holiday event, which is a thank-you to all involved with Miracles.

Maintaining our 76-acre farm and center is not an easy task. Nick Andeway, our property manager, cannot do it alone. With the help of our board, volunteers, and work groups, the center keeps up with what is needed. A shout-out this year to Rinderknecht and Merit, which built two horse shelters for our herd; Crystal Group, which re-lamped the indoor arena with LED lighting; and many more that gave either time or money to ensure that this property is well taken care of.

I have to thank the true cornerstone of this center, our herd. Without our horses we would not be able to provide the energy, therapy, and spirit of the horse to our riders. This center and its herd does that for all of us that who are a part of Miracles besides our riders. You feel it the minute you step out of your vehicle.

To everyone, I thank you for your enthusiasm and generosity, for choosing to give your time, money, or a horse to Miracles. Your support is invaluable--you make it possible to meet our daily needs and more.

Happy Holidays to you and your loved ones!

--Deb Leichsenring



“Walk on!”

Early donations to Miracles in Motion “Walk on” appeal will be matched! Two board members will match up to \$17,500 in year-end donations. Don’t miss this opportunity to double the impact of your donation to support our programs. We have had such a great season – so much progress on the part of our students like the twins, Charles and Rosalie. They brought smiles to our faces when they showed up to ride. Rosalie often brings along her personal hobby horse and will be glad to ride around the arena when given the chance! Charles is more reserved, but no less engaged when riding his therapy horse. You can see Rosalie and Charles in these short videos of their adaptive riding classes:

Adaptive riding video link <https://vimeo.com/755690604>

Whoa video link <https://vimeo.com/755690474>

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