



Miracles in Motion

THERAPEUTIC EQUESTRIAN CENTER

August 10th Derecho

We all learned a new word this week” **derecho**! And we learned how to manage without power, which resulted in no fresh water. Our volunteers helped clean up the shingles, branches and other detritus that the winds deposited in pastures and around the house. On Thursday Camryn and Kira filled a 350-gallon water tank at the Swisher Fire Department and then filled a couple of water tanks for our thirsty horses. The power was restored Thursday. We lost one huge tree in hill pasture and Joe had a crew make a very large pile of firewood! We also lost the structure on the sensory trail that we hang pool noodles for riders to touch as they ride underneath. We’ll get to replacing that when time and money allow! But for now, know the horses, staff and volunteers are all safe and enjoying a couple of quiet, cool days! Thanks to all who reached out and/or helped with the clean up and getting water to our horses.



Learn about one of our newest therapy horses – Shadow

Anyone that has met Shadow has been so impressed with his calm demeanor and willingness to please. He is small in stature, but big in “heart” and we know he will be a great addition to our herd. Shadow has already been “adopted” by Dawn Oliver Wiand and Jerry Wiand. Dawn was a bit timid after some less than ideal experience with horses, but Shadow won her over! Learn more about our Adopt a Horse Program on our website: www.miraclesinmotion.com

Check out this video of Shadow’s first few days at Miracles!
<https://vimeo.com/446238560>



Our August Volunteer Moment comes from Jackie Wallace, a volunteer at Miracles for over 30 years!

Miracles in Motion hosted the 1998 NARHA Region 7 Conference. The conference theme that year was *You Can't Just Walk Away*. I had volunteered for Miracles in Motion for 10 years at that time and the conference theme and where I was in my commitment coincided closely. I wrote the following to be read at the conference:

Can't Just Walk Away

Almost everyone who has worked in a volunteer program has experienced the problem of volunteer turnover. Volunteers come and go for many reasons, some perfectly legitimate and understandable and others somewhat arbitrary or casual. For a volunteer in a therapeutic riding program, here is some food for thought.

In any volunteer program you will find that there are times when you wonder if you should quit. Maybe volunteering takes too much time; maybe the work is hard and it takes real physical or mental effort to accomplish it. Maybe they don't do things the way *you* want to or maybe you wonder if anyone cares if you are there or not.

One evening while I was waiting my turn to lead a horse to the mounting ramp I was thinking those thoughts. I am a strong believer in the value of therapeutic riding, but on the other hand, I could certainly use the extra time to do other things I enjoy. I definitely would not miss the stress of responsibility. Yes, I thought there were plenty of reasons I could justify leaving the program. Then I watched the next rider approach the ramp.

I watched how hard he worked to move one foot ahead of the other, to lift a leg up each step on the mounting ramp, to lift a foot and place it in the stirrup, and then to lift the other leg over the horse. How agonizingly slow it seemed as I waited in the center of the arena! I thought about how different my life would be if every move I made or every task I had to perform took a Herculean effort and total concentration. How much real leisure time would I have if it took that much time and strength to complete basic tasks? I remembered how Paul's mother had talked about his anger and frustration at being confined to a wheelchair. Suddenly it became very clear to me. Just *wanting* to put something behind you and move on isn't always easy or even possible. Paul couldn't just wake up one morning and say, "I'm tired of this wheelchair business and I won't do it anymore!" And just like Paul can't walk away, neither can I. And, now, 20+ years later, I haven't.



Reading to Diamond

Join our Director of Operations, Deb Leichsenring, as she reads Molly the Pony to Diamond.

<https://vimeo.com/446241161>

Thank you to Greater Cedar Rapids Housing & Building Association

We are grateful to receive a grant from the GCRH&B Building Our Community fund to assist with installing two automatic waterers that had been donated to Miracles a few years ago. Our appreciation also goes to Rob Hajek from the Home Repair Team in North Liberty who encouraged us to apply for this grant money. This will make taking care of our herd just that much easier – especially on those cold winter mornings!



Diana Harris, Chair of the Horse Committee, and Deb Leichsenring, Director of Operations, accept the check on behalf of Miracles.