



# Miracles in Motion

THERAPEUTIC EQUESTRIAN CENTER

May 2021 – From the Director's Desk

Each spring brings new beginnings! It warms everyone's heart as they pull up the lane at Miracles in Motion to see which trees are budding or what flowers are blooming. It is rejuvenating to take in the fresh air and feel the warmth of the sun, especially after the winter we all experienced.

With Spring comes a time of plans, projects, and long-awaited classes.

The last few weeks we have had two work groups here at Miracles. The University of Iowa physical therapy students returned for their second work day. They helped build the fence that we needed in the pasture around the new septic system. The next group was headed up by Jessica Musil, our parent representative and board member, with her family members and other Miracles volunteers. This group rebuilt the wooden bridge that is part of our Sensory Trail and was damaged during Derecho. For these larger projects, it is extremely helpful to have more hands to help get these big jobs done. As on any farm, the property projects are endless! We are grateful to these work groups and our band of dedicated volunteers! We are also grateful to Thrivent for their grant money to assist in derecho recovery. The physical therapy students went above and beyond by also collecting money for Miracles!

We are now starting our second month of classes. They say it takes a village and that certainly goes for Miracles when it comes to ensuring we have the horses ready for classes, the arena leveled and watered, the volunteers trained and prepared to work in the barn or arena during classes, the instructors have prepared their lesson plans, and much more. This level of preparation and execution is needed each day of classes. The team at Miracles has done this for 33 years. When you witness a class, it is so rewarding when that student is mounted on the horse and the connection begins. Then you know why we are all here working hard to make sure the mission of Miracles is upheld in everything we do.

Thank you to all that make Miracles happen each day!

Deb Leichsenring, Director of Operations



PT students help out with fencing

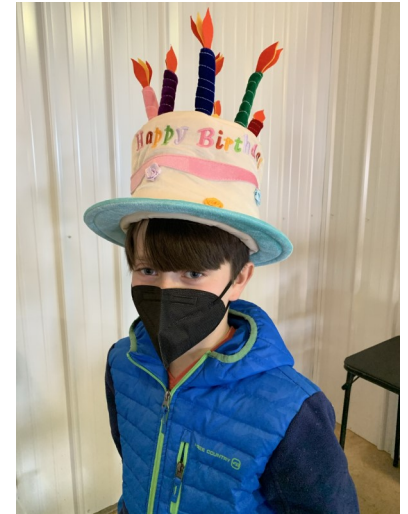


The new bridge looks great!

## Thanks to Pam Purington for adopting Brett

When Pam Purington, a new volunteer, adopted Brett, we were of course thrilled! In sharing some background information with Pam about Brett, we discovered that Brett's birthday is the same day as the birthday of her twin grandsons, only five years earlier. It seemed only fitting that the kids come to the farm to celebrate their birthday with Brett!

Brett, born April 20th, 2005, is a registered Pleasure Saddle Horse. His registered name is Brett "The Hitman" Hart. The Pleasure Saddle Horse Registry registers any gaited horse and was established so that breeders could cross different gaited breeds. His sire was Al Capone, a KMH, which we believe stands for Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horse, and the dam was Threat's Princess Bellair, a Tennessee Walking Horse. He was donated around the same time as Raven our flashy black and white paint. Brett had been a trail horse and when he first came to Miracles in October of 2014, he had evidently foundered and was overweight. (He's not exactly skinny now!) It was thought that if he could recover from that, he would be a great horse for the Miracles program – which he is!



There is a lot of information online about all the gaited horse breeds, including the Tennessee Walking Horse and the Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horse if you would like to know more.

## Shedding time at Miracles!

### T-shirt link is live!

Would you like to order a Miracles t-shirt? Here is a link that will be live until May 19<sup>th</sup>. The t-shirt can be sent to your home for a charge or delivered to Miracles free of charge for your pick up at the farm.

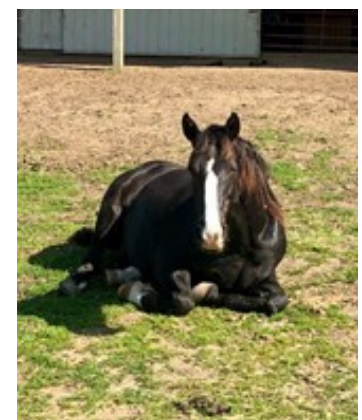
<https://bit.ly/3eziljM>



Aussie, Cinco & Shadow

### A Beautiful Morning Lazing in the Sunshine by Karla Miller

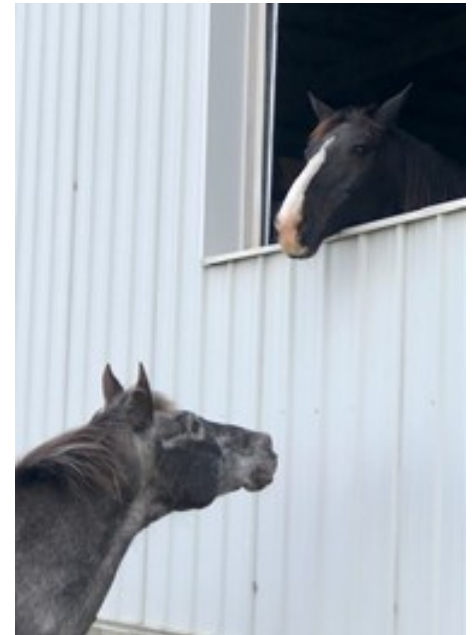
This morning, after chores and breakfast, I came out of the arena only to see a morning routine that looked pretty enticing.



Memphis

## Horse Communication by Karla Miller

Recently, we came upon Shadow communicating with Memphis who was in the arena. The conversation seemed to go on quite a while. It was fascinating to watch.



## Did You Know . . . by Karla Miller

There are so many things to know about horses. One of our readers told me recently that one of the things she likes about reading Miracles' newsletter is when she learns something about horses. Knowing that she is not the only reader who feels that way, we want to share with you some of the interesting facts about these magnificent animals.

**Amazing Horse Facts and Trivia** by Gary Mullen (Copyrighted 2008, Reprinted 2016) is a book that is a collection of facts. For instance, did you know:

Buying a horse or receiving one as a donation is the easy part. Ownership involves regular expenditures on boarding, training, lessons farrier care every six to eight weeks, veterinary care, tack, and supplies, as well as countless hours of responsibility. A wise saying is, "It's not the cost of the horse that is the concern. It's the upkeep." This certainly rings true for us at Miracles.

We rely on donations from individuals, businesses, and grants from foundations to pay the bills for our herd of 16. Additionally, because of the nature of our program, we couldn't provide the services we do without volunteers who collectively work thousands of hours feeding; exercising and training; leading and side walking; doing their laundry (saddle blankets, pads, helmet liners), and managing all the things it takes to keep our boys ready to go.

The term "equestrian" refers to someone who rides horses. That why the term is included in our name, Miracles in Motion Therapeutic Equestrian Center. Miracles teaches kids and adults with disabilities and challenges to ride horses.

Horses can be encouraged to move or stop by using verbal cues, such as "walk," "trot," "canter," or "whoa," or clicking sounds. Harsh sounds are intimidating, and soft tones can be relaxing. If you want to appear knowledgeable, do not say "giddy up" when asking a horse to move forward. This term is seldom used by serious riders.

At Miracles in Motion, our students use verbal cues such as "walk on," "trot," and "whoa." In addition to these, the Miracles exercise riders use the cue, "canter."

No doubt, you'll be seeing more fun facts about horses and how they relate to our Miraculous Herd in future newsletters.

# YOU can be part of the Miracles Volunteer Team

Saturday, June 26<sup>th</sup>

Everyone -- both new and returning volunteers -- needs to go through the training if you are interested in working with horses.

Side-walkers will only need to be there for the morning session, 8:30 a.m. until lunch break. Horse leads and barn assistants will need to attend both the morning and afternoon session which lasts until 4 p.m. Lunch will be provided.

Email Maggie Elliott, Volunteer Coordinator, if you will attend and indicate if you will be staying for the afternoon to [volunteermiraclesinmotion@gmail.com](mailto:volunteermiraclesinmotion@gmail.com).

## Why Volunteer at Miracles?

*Volunteering at Miracles in Motion has provided me with a wonderful opportunity to interact with and help care for the therapy horses, as well as to get to know my fellow volunteers. It is gratifying to be part of the team that supports the therapeutic therapy sessions, which greatly benefit a wide range of children and adult patients. Judith Pim*

*Volunteering at Miracles makes me feel like I'm making a difference. I enjoy working with the horses, the riders and all the wonderful people. Lauren Crippes*

*Thank you! Volunteers make Miracles happen!*



Todd doing quality check on chores

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