



Miracles in Motion

THERAPEUTIC EQUESTRIAN CENTER

May 2022

Kristin's Miracles Moment

When I signed up for volunteer training at Miracles, I don't think I knew what I was getting into and I didn't really know what Miracles was all about. I retired from teaching in 2019 and didn't have time to figure out my next move before the pandemic started. I took riding lessons as a child but hadn't really done much with horses after that. Then someone mentioned that Miracles was looking for volunteers. It was fate and I am completely hooked. If anyone asks me about my volunteering I can go on at length about the wonders of Miracles.

I started as a side walker, and that's truly what I love the most. Watching the riders gain confidence and skills always sends me home in a good mood and I look forward to every time I "work."

Last winter I had the opportunity to work with some of the newer horses to help them get ready to be used in class. Doing groundwork helped me gain confidence in barn work and leading and I learned more about the personalities of the herd. I'm still a novice at horse care, but I love working with "the boys" and the riders.



From the Desk of Deb Leichsenring...

This month we had both Crystal Group and Rinderknecht Construction at Miracles. It is amazing what dedicated groups of volunteers can get done. (Having specific skills does help!!)

Rinderknecht built two horse shelters – not only building the shelters, but also adding wood inside and using magnets to clear the area. The weather was less than ideal with last week building in the rain and then this week building in the heat. The shelters are now ready for their new residents! Both look great and we will not need to paint them in the future as they are clad in metal! These two horse shelters were built by the kindness of Rinderknecht Construction. Kudos to them! Our appreciation also goes out to Farmers Savings Bank and the Greater Cedar Rapids Housing and Building Association that donated money for the materials.

An army of volunteers from Crystal Group showed up for the United Way Day of Caring on May 12. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate them coming out to Miracles each year. So much was accomplished despite 3 of the tasks not going as expected. First up was replacing the lighting in the Upmier Arena. The project started with one scissor lift having a dead battery and the second scissor lift getting stuck in the arena sand. (Nick was able to pull it out with the tractor.) That team proceeded to take down the old lighting and install/repositioned the new lights. The new 10 lights (replacing 8) look fantastic and really make the space brighter. Next was the team removing the past-its-prime tack shed. We all thought the tack shed would come down with a couple sled hammer hits, well not so much! All in all, it is down, in the dumpster and a temporary fence up until a new waterer is installed. Next up was scrapping the Don Pecos horse shed and the garage to be ready for paint at a later date. Another team prepped and painted two coats on the porch of the house. All of this was done in 90-95 degree heat with conversation, smiles and enjoyment of being at Miracles. In addition to their time, Crystal Group paid for the scissor lifts, the arena lights and lunch. We cannot thank them enough!

We are grateful that both of these companies truly lead with their heart.



Thanks to The Crystal Group for helping Miracles during the United Way Day of Caring.



Liver Chestnut

That seemed to be the favorite horse color of the students who attended the Adaptive Horsemanship classes in April and May. Now that some of our students know the colors of the horses in the Miracles herd, perhaps they will teach the horse leaders and side walkers. One of the students asked at his last adaptive riding class what color Jet is. (He is a liver chestnut.)

The horsemanship students can point to a horse's crest, barrel, croup, and knee, as well as more obvious parts like eye, ear, nostril, and tail. They had tell you things that are different and similar between horses and people (both can wear shoes; horses sleep with their shoes on). In the last class we learned how to approach a horse safely and how to quietly work around a horse; then the lucky 3 horses got groomed. The horses were dirty and shedding and the students loosened and brushed out lots of dust and fur.

Adaptive Horsemanship classes start again in May. These classes give students a different way to understand and interact with horses, and can increase their knowledge and comfort with the Miracles herd.



You helped Miracles grow!



Our thanks to ChildServe for helping with crafts; Culvers Garden Center & Greenhouse for their help in securing and planting trees; and Sponsors Watts Group and Kings Material Inc.