



Miracles in Motion

THERAPEUTIC EQUESTRIAN CENTER

June 2022

From the Desk of the Director of Operations

We are in the season of heat going from one extreme to another. Our challenge at Miracles is to adapt and find the best way to keep everyone is safe, both animals and people. We make sure we have shade and access to clean water for the herd. To help create a cool breeze we set up large free-standing fans in the indoor arena and give the herd access. A couple of horses need special attention. Blaze, our Belgium/Haflinger mix is stocky and has a thick coat. We pay close attention to make sure he is handling the heat as best he can. We also don't use him in classes when the heat index is over 75. Another horse, Memphis, has a deep black coat, which seems to really absorb heat. These two come into the arena first. Then we allow the rest of herd to make their way in. Interestingly many seem to prefer to stay out in the pastures, as they have shade trees, shelters, forage and the freedom to roam - all things that our herd loves!

It was Bath Time at Miracles last week. Everyone seemed to enjoy getting that deep clean that grooming just does not do. Well, all except Lucky...not sure why he fights a bath, he never wins and ends up having to stand there. When Lucky is dried off, he looks stunning with his pinto markings, he is one of our three minis.

Check out the photos of Zip – you can see why he is a registered paint and pinto when he is wet! The photo from his registration papers shows a more distinct coloring. As Zip has gotten older, his hair has lightened, but his skin color has remained brown and white.

Hope everyone is enjoying their summer. Stay safe. Deb Leichsenring



Wet Zip, Baby Zip and Dry Zip!



It's flymask and fan season at Miracles



Irvin Rodriguez's Miracle Moment

I'm a Southeast Iowa Native (Conesville specifically) who has lived in the Iowa City area for close to a decade. I've been involved in the community as a former volunteer coordinator at Shelter House in Iowa City. Currently, I am an Oncology Social Worker at UIHC. I had been looking for different ways to get involved in our local area when I met the previous volunteer coordinator, Mildred, during my grad school experience at the U of I. Since then, Miracles in Motion has been an organization that has piqued my interest, but I never had the time to commit to volunteering. Finally, being out of grad school and getting settled in my current work role, I decided to take the leap and begin volunteering at Miracles beginning with the Boo at the Barn event last Fall. Since then, I've gotten involved as a Side Walker and have enjoyed every moment with my fellow volunteers and the students we work with.

I experience many emotional events in my Oncology work and Miracles has been an outlet where I can experience a different aspect of everyday life. It's been my honor to be involved in these classes and witnessing firsthand the change students experience during their classes. The happiness and joy that can be visibly seen is contagious. Volunteering on Monday nights are always a great way to start my week. Although I have yet to break a year of service with Miracles, it's been an experience unlike any other!



Meet our Hippotherapy Partner, ChildServe

The first question people ask is “what is Hippotherapy” and why is it called that! It goes back to ancient Greece! “Hippo” means “horse” and therapy is, well, therapy – in our case, speech, physical or occupational therapy. So, putting it all together, hippotherapy is therapy not in a clinic setting, but in an arena riding a horse.

And who is ChildServe? Well at a recent Launch and Learn, I really did learn more about this amazing organization. I was familiar with their therapists meeting clients at Miracles and leading a 30-minute session with one of our therapy horses – and not just physical therapists, but also speech and occupational therapists. But what ChildServe offers clients is so much more.

ChildServe knows kids and specialty healthcare. When parents have questions about their child's health and development, ChildServe is there with answers and support for the whole family. ChildServe's team of experts helps identify and meet the unique needs of children with developmental delays, disabilities, injuries and other special healthcare needs to help them live a *great* life.

ChildServe partners with families to provide much-needed healthcare services and support for children and teens from birth to age 21. They currently offer more than 30 services, including pediatric rehabilitation, physical, occupational and speech therapy, behavioral health and autism, and a variety of community services to meet the needs of more than 5,200 children across the state each year.

At Miracles, hippotherapy sessions are held for 10 weeks in the spring and 10 weeks in the fall on Tuesday and Thursdays. Children as young as 2 years old can participate. For those of us volunteering at the sessions, the rewards are significant. Watching the improvement over the course of the 10 weeks is why we spend our time helping out at Miracles.

For more information on ChildServe, visit <https://www.childserve.org/>

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