



Spring 2020

PONY EXPRESS

Sunrise Therapeutic Riding & Learning Centre

COME GROW WITH US!



Sunrise Therapy/Memorial Forest

This Spring we planned to celebrate **EARTH DAY, APRIL 22nd** with a hands on community activity in our newly developing Forest, however, so much has happened in the last few months to change plans, not just in Canada, but around the world, and now we are in a time of social isolation.

One thing is certain though, our forest, pollinator beds and butterfly gardens will all come alive to greet the Spring as the earth wakes up for another year. It is heartening to know that this new project will grow and flourish in the years to come, for the enjoyment of all our many Sunrise children and adults, plus our donors and community supporters.



This new venture is part of a sustainability program, designed not only as an environmental initiative, but also to provide an alternative source of funding for the many programs offered under the Sunrise umbrella. The forest, along with additional initiatives still to be developed, will ensure the longevity of our programs well into the future.

These challenging times have seen an incredible commitment from so many, but especially from those in essential services, and in the medical field, many of whom have put their lives on hold working long hours to care for hospital patients and senior home residents.

When we emerge from this worldwide crisis we would like to see a section of the Sunrise forest dedicated as the "**COVID CIRCLE**", a suggestion from a long time Sunrise volunteer, where we will be able to honour the many people who have been caring for others. A neighbourhood group, extended family members or a Service Club may consider a tangible dedication of this kind, ensuring that future generations are aware of the many sacrifices made in support of others during this challenging pandemic.

For those who have never visited Sunrise, or are connected by one specific program only, allow us to introduce you to our year round schedule.

THERAPEUTIC RIDING — our core program, runs from January to June, and again from September to December, with appropriate break weeks for our horses and staff. The age range is from 3 years old to seniors with disabilities. Included in this program, are students from school Special Education classes who ride at Sunrise as part of their school curriculum, and all participants are taught by CanTRA certified instructors.

LITTLE BREECHES PROGRAM (4 to 7 yrs. old) — an introduction to horses and the farm, an inclusive 5 week program on Saturdays in Spring & Fall for two hour sessions each time.

SUMMER DAY CAMP is completely inclusive for 5 year olds to Teens +, and runs weekdays in July & August. This camp has a strong emphasis on horses, the farm environment and team building — and everyone loves the swimming pool!

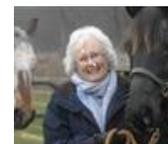
LIFE SKILLS DAY PROGRAM Adults in this program learn about horse care, stable management and horticulture. They enjoy guest speakers, field trips and numerous fun activities. All skills learned are transferable to every day living.

EQUINE-BASED UNMOUNTED PROGRAMS These focus on team building, communication, leadership and professional mental health counselling, while providing therapeutic benefits to, vulnerable youth, seniors and community groups.

Sunrise would not exist without our generous donors, dedicated staff, hundreds of valuable volunteers, community service clubs and so many local companies who provide donated services. And then there are the therapy horses! They are what makes the whole program possible. Read more about them in the following pages.



Lynne O'Brien
Lynne O'Brien
Executive Director



Ann Caine
Ann Caine
Board President

Sunrise Therapy Horses

The “Backbone of our Many Programs”

Sunrise, a nationally registered charity, has been providing therapeutic riding, with Canadian certified Instructors, for children and adults with a wide range of disabilities, in Guelph, Cambridge and the surrounding communities, since 1982. We started with a part time volunteer program using two donated ponies and a borrowed horse, working with five riders with developmental delay in a generously donated barn and riding space.

The program began to grow, and to accommodate this Sunrise moved to five different rented facilities in the following 14 years. In 1994 the decision was made to launch a capital campaign in order to purchase a permanent farm home. In 1996 Sunrise moved to the present 102 acre farm with a spacious indoor riding arena, in Puslinch Township.

The primary focus has always been on the selection of appropriate horses to work with our vulnerable rider population. In order to be suitable for a therapeutic riding program horses need to be healthy and sound, have a patient disposition, as well as a sturdy conformation.

Today Sunrise has 21 therapy riding horses, and a driving team of two miniature horses. These two horses are involved in summer day camp, and other Sunrise programs throughout the year, in addition to visiting seniors homes as therapy horses!

Our therapy horse herd now includes six younger horses with great potential, who are receiving extensive training by our experienced instructors. This is great news for the future of Sunrise programs!

During these challenging times of the pandemic, there are so many community needs. But, with a greatly reduced staff and no cash flow, we decided to launch the HAPPY HORSE Campaign, focussed entirely on care, feeding and retention of our therapy horses. We are so grateful for the community response.

At the time of going to press these incredible donors have raised \$26,239.00 with still more dollars pledged to come. Every dollar counts, and we so appreciate this generosity at such a difficult financial time for so many.

The infographic on this page captures how these donations are being used. In addition we hope this will serve as a huge message of appreciation to all Sunrise Therapy Horse supporters, some of whom remain anonymous, or for whom we have names with no contact information. If you know one of these donors—your friend, neighbour, co-worker or family member, please share this newsletter and our gratitude with them. All others will receive the infographic as a “Thank you”.

The majority of our participants are missing all their usual therapy supports right now, such as Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech Language, Aqua Fit, mental health counselling, but often the most challenging is not connecting with their therapy horse.

We realize these are tough times for everyone, and understand this is not the climate to be seeking funding support. IF you are able to, please consider a donation, however small to ensure we are able to continue to bring joy and a sense of freedom into the lives of vulnerable children in our local communities.

We need to keep up the training of our horses, especially the six younger horses of our therapy herd in order to be ready to support our vulnerable population of children and adults when all restrictions are lifted. For those who have already responded with donations, we extend sincere appreciation. Thank you!

HAPPY HORSES: THE HEART OF WHAT WE DO

What does this mean?

Each horse is checked daily to ensure health & safety

Feeding schedules are designed for the unique needs of each horse

Ongoing training and exercise are essential for their job

Each individual HORSE'S needs - mental and physical health - are our priority

CanTRA ACET
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EQUINE GUELPH

Proud partner, through CanTRA of Equine Guelph

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Horse Sponsorship

Quite apart from the present crisis, for many years Sunrise has had an annual horse sponsorship program. Horses can be sponsored or co-sponsored each year, and this may be by a one time payment, or by incremental payments. Sadly, due to the pandemic, our annual Celebrate Sunrise! June 14th fundraising event, had to be cancelled. This event is often where several horses receive sponsorships from generous donors.

WE NEED A SPONSOR!

CADBURY received this name because his previous owner was a devoted British chocolate lover! Born in 2016, Cadbury is a 16.2 hh, Bay Clydesdale/Hackney gelding. He has a gentle, calm and willing nature. Cadbury is presently in our training program for future therapeutic work and is showing great potential.



FIREFLY is a 16 hh Chestnut Clydesdale/Thoroughbred mare with a flaxen mane and tail. She got her name because when she was born one late Spring night in 2002, she was found resting in the field surrounded by fireflies! She arrived at Sunrise in the late Spring of 2018, and quickly became a part of the Summer day camp team. Firefly has proved to be easy going, calm and reliable, and has become a great favourite among riders, staff and volunteers.



CHANCE is a 15 hh, Liver Chestnut Quarter Horse x gelding. Chance is a gentle and patient horse, who had given many years of riding pleasure before arriving at Sunrise in the late Fall of 2018. He quickly settled in as a therapy team member and is very popular with all our students.

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LUKE is a 17.2 hh Bay Dutch Warmblood gelding, who arrived at Sunrise in the Spring of 2019. He is the tallest horse at Sunrise. This makes him a wonderful mount for our adult riders who love his beautiful

smooth trot. Luke is extremely gentle, eager to please, and loves to work.

Arena Construction

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) honoured Sunrise with a grant of \$138,300 which has facilitated the completion of a huge renovation project to upgrade our indoor riding arena. This funding has enabled the installation of four automatic windows and a large automatic door, in addition to insulating the roof space and installing a dropped ceiling.



This has had a positive impact on the year round comfort and accessibility of the indoor riding space for hundreds of children and adults with disabilities. It has brought the temperature to above freezing in the winter, and will ensure a more comfortable riding space in the warmer months of the year with the added roof insulation. This also acts as a sound barrier for snow and ice shifting on the roof, and for wind gusts that have frequently created a hazard in the past, often resulting in lesson cancellations.

We are delighted with the results of this partnership with the OTF, and the quality of work by Frey Building Contractors.



Thank You to...

In addition to those already mentioned, several more generous foundations and corporations have supported us in a variety of ways over the past 6 months. Special thanks to:

Cambridge Centre Honda, for choosing Sunrise as the recipient of their January 2020 Test Drive for Charity fundraiser. The proceeds help to sponsor therapy horse Riley.

Capital Paving Inc. for being our go-to partner for all surfacing projects (and we have a lot of surfacing at the farm!), whether it's driveway repairs, paddock improvements or concrete projects.

Ross-Shire Foundation, for their unwavering, ongoing, generous support of Sunrise programs throughout the year!

Rotary Club of Guelph South, for (once again!) donating proceeds to Sunrise from their Taste of Italy, Pasta Dinner.



This Rotary Club sponsored therapy horse, Rolex, and supported many Sunrise programs.

Sara Bailey, Sunrise parent and Puslinch Township Counsellor with daughter, Bronte, thanks Guelph South Rotary for their support.

Support from Sophia

Thank you to Sophia, a young rider and entrepreneur who started a company, **Products for Ponies**, and donated horse charms to help fundraise for the Sunrise Therapy Horses.



Thank you to the Farriers!

Our sincere thanks go out to an amazing group of farriers: **Cathy Lesperance, Tristan Miles, Paul Fischbach** and **Michele McCrae**, who have been coming to Sunrise regularly over the past 8 years on a voluntary basis, to ensure exemplary foot care for all our therapy horses.



Cathy brought this group together, and has now reached out to 3 new farriers, **Jessica Parsons, Sarah**

Vanderphol, and Eric O'Hara to continue this service to Sunrise, when the original farriers moved on due to increasing client needs. The "Founding Farriers" will always be remembered with great appreciation by everyone at Sunrise.

Sunrise Mission

"To develop the full potential of children and adults with special needs, guiding them closer to independence through therapy, education, horse riding, recreation and life skills programs, farm-related and social activities."

Sunrise Programs

THERAPY PROGRAMS

- **Therapeutic Riding** lessons for children & adults with special needs
- **Grooming** sessions for youth / adults with special needs
- **Equine-Facilitated Wellness** for children & youth facing mental health challenges

RECREATION PROGRAMS

- **Riding Day Camp** for ages 8 to 13+ (summer)*
- **Farm Discovery Day Camp** for ages 5 to 8 (summer)*
- **Leader-In-Training** for ages 13 to 16 (summer)*
- **"Little Breeches" Club**: an introduction to horses for ages 4 to 7 selected Saturdays (mornings or afternoons) Spring & Fall*

LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM

- **Life Skills Day Program**, for older teens and young adults (weekly)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- **Lesson volunteers needed!** Must be 14+ years old.
- **Student Instructors:** Residential training opportunities for Canadian and International students (3-12 months)

* These inclusive programs are open to children and youth with or without special needs. **All instructors are Canadian certified.**

Forest Dedication 2020
Sunday September 27,
2:00 pm

Salvation Army Band
Dedication Ceremony followed by
light refreshments

All Welcome

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Please email info@sunrise-therapeutic.ca, or call us, to receive your newsletter by email, to request this publication in a different format, or to be removed from our mailing list.

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Proud Partner, through CanTRA of Equine Guelph

Sunrise is a Member of:



Canadian Therapeutic Riding Association



Ontario Camps Association

- Ontario Equestrian
- Guelph Chamber of Commerce
- Cambridge Chamber of Commerce
- Volunteer Action Centre
- PIN (The People and Information Network)
- SKIC (Supporting Kids In Camp)