



RIVER VALLEY RIDERS REVIEW



RIVER VALLEY RIDERS
EQUINE-ASSISTED SERVICES

WINTER 2021-2022

Message from Cheryl Holt, RVR Executive Director

Hello All, I am excited to write to you about our incredible year of 2021! This year was definitely closer to normal. Programming started in April of 2021 and it was so wonderful to bring our mission to life again. We did need to start out slowly, but we were in full programming by end of July! No major hiccups!



We had a couple firsts for RVR in 2021. First, we reestablished a north metro site at a new location at the home of Geary and Gail Olsen in May Township. A special thank you to the Olsens. Secondly, RVR formed a partnership with Unbridled Abilities to offer Hippotherapy for the first time. Thank you to Madeline Boe, owner of Unbridled Abilities. She is a Speech-Language Pathologist and PATH Intl. Certified Instructor. Madeline's program is focused on speech with the aid of the horse.

In 2021, RVR was able to double the size of our long-term savings account "Sustain our Mission," thanks to a generous matching gift and many kind donors. This fund was established in 2020.

Remember back in March of 2020, River Valley Riders was awarded a \$300,000 matching grant from the FS Foundation. The FS Foundation's mission is to foster independence, self-reliance, pride of craftsmanship, sense of purpose, and increased access to alternative learning styles for under-resourced adults. They are a private family foundation and RVR shares their values. We were given three years to raise the matching funds, and with the help of many generous donors we finished the \$300,000 match in 2021! We reached our 2021 Fund the Vision goal, which completed our matching grant! Thank you to all who have supported RVR!! I am humbled by your strong commitment to RVR.

This brings us a step closer to realizing the next build phase for the facility and closer to fulfilling our dream. RVR's dream is to provide more services to more riders. We will do this by building an entire facility, fully staffed and have our own horses on site.



However, we always remember that what happens in the buildings is far more important than the buildings themselves! There is no greater disability in society than the inability to see a person as more. Many of our participants do not come to RVR to learn to ride a horse, but to grab the reins on their life and show it who's boss!

Here are some comments directly from our 2021 participants' families:

- Built up my daughter's self-esteem, pride, confidence and improved her communication. She feels calm and joy on riding days.
- The confidence built at RVR has fully spilled over into school, improving his reading and math skills. Improved communication skills as he can talk about HIS activity of horseback riding.

I look forward to 2022 with anticipation of a normal programming year! Sending wishes for health, happiness and love this Holiday Season!

Warm regards,
Cheryl