



# The Riding Centre News

THE RIDING CENTRE • 1117 E. HYDE RD., YELLOW SPRINGS, OH 45387 • WWW.RIDINGCENTRE.ORG • SPRING 2021



Our morning staff, from left, Rowan Coburn-Griffis, Jody Garrett, Yana Garing, Carolyn Bailey, Elise Laskowski, Adriene Kramer, Regina Brecha. Front and center, our beloved Honey Pepper! PHOTOS: DAVID WILLIAMSON

The great cover-up—

## Riding Centre during the pandemic

By Carolyn Bailey

When Governor Dewine closed the state of Ohio down mid March, The Riding Centre had just completed two weeks of our 12-week lesson series. Our horses thought this unexpected break was grand! Green grass, no students, life was good! No riding lessons, however, does not mean no work at a barn. We still had twice daily feedings, stalls to be cleaned, buildings and grounds to be maintained, farrier and veterinarian appointments to keep.

Our wonderful staff didn't miss a beat. Without hesitation they showed up as essential workers to ensure horses, buildings, and grounds received the same excellent care as always. Their dedication to The Riding Centre and the horses they love was unwavering and always a priority for each of them.

Along with our wonderful, hardworking, sweet, sometimes naughty school horses, the staff at the Riding Centre is the heart of this beloved organization. I am honored to work with every one of them. Along with our regular crew, we had many others working behind the scenes, writing grants, applying for PPP loans, planning fundraisers—anything to keep our heads above water during this unprecedented time.

As the state started to open up and we needed to think about how we could safely



Our evening staff, from left: Susie Nickels and Jen Lawson. PHOTOS: REGINA BRECHA

get our students on horses again, we made one of the hardest and saddest decisions

we've had to make in a long time—for the first time in over 50 years, we would not be holding summer camps, one of our most beloved programs. Instead of summer camps, we started in mid June with smaller groups in 45-minute lessons.

Another big change was that students no longer tacked up their horses. To limit their time at the barn, the instructors and assistants got the horses ready. This was also an unhappy change for all because I really feel the kids like this time with their horse friends almost as much as they do riding. We continued with this schedule through the fall.

Although we had fewer riders, especially in our therapeutic program since all schools and adult programs we serve were unable to send students, we provided a safe environment for students, staff, and boarders.

Being outside has given us an advantage over indoor sports, as well as the fact that riding is naturally a socially distant sport. With everyone in masks, plenty of hand sanitizer, and tack cleaning after every rider, a year that at one point seemed like a total loss was partially recovered.

The silver lining is that we've had so many people voice how much they appreciate the time and effort we went through to allow a bit of normalcy on the back of a horse. 🌍

## Ride-A-Thon 2020 — Virtually all there

By Carolyn Bailey

As with so many things in this unprecedented year, The Riding Centre's annual Ride-a-Thon had a first — it became virtual! Usually, we offer an obstacle course that students navigate during their weekly lesson. They can raise money by getting sponsors for each obstacle they complete. However, in an effort to keep the touching of objects to a minimum, going virtual seemed the safest route. Ride-A-thon participants were able to sign up online and choose a horse to "ride," and sponsors were able to donate to their favorites with the click of a button.

The Ride-a-Thon has always been one of our largest fundraisers. This year, the extended Riding Centre family stepped up big time, making this our most successful Ride-a-Thon in history! We raised over \$11,000!

Many thanks to our virtual riders: **Kurtis Backs, Katherine Berg, Emily Bradley, Clara Rose Burke, Mary Ciavarro, Abby & Becca Conover, Lari Graver, Vivian Grushon, Heather Hammond, Corey Hume, Adriene Kramer, Renee Laskowski, Kate & Scarlet Mattinson, Sylvie Peirson, Sara Shults, Yvonne Vadeboncoeur, Stephanie Welch, Tania Welch, David Williamson, and Lily Woods.** And to the horses past and present honored: **Badger, Beau, Berwick, Calvin, Doc, Honey Pepper, Lenny, Sparky, Tali Hi, and Tank.**

## The Riding Centre

**STAFF MEMBERS:** Carolyn Bailey (Manager and Head Instructor), Adriene Kramer (Assistant Manager and Instructor), Regina Brecha (Instructor), Marsha Casdorff, Rowan Coburn-Griffis, Greg Fry, Yana Garing, Jody Garrett, Elise Laskowski, Jennifer Lawson, Sophia Lawson, Janetta Lewis-Jennings, and Susie Nickels

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES:** Janetta Lewis-Jennings (President), Marsha Casdorff (Secretary), Sylvia Ellison, Colleen Iungerman, Stephanie Lawson, Jill O'Banion, Carol Van Ausdal

**NEWSLETTER:** Editors: Marsha Casdorff and Jill O'Banion; **CONTRIBUTORS:** Carolyn Bailey, Marsha Casdorff, Janetta Lewis-Jennings

**DESIGN & PRODUCTION:** Matt Minde

# Lenny's Big Adventure

By Marsha Casdorff

Just when 2020 could not bring more difficulties, one of our school horses became very ill in May. Lenny, a handsome tall bay gelding, had only been in the lesson program for a few months, but he was already a favorite of students, with great potential to be a versatile all-around school horse. His symptoms presented like a typical colic, which is basically a horse belly ache. However, when he did not respond to the typical treatments for colic that can include walking the horse, banamine for pain, and administration of mineral oil and water to ease gas, our wonderful veterinarian Dr. Brett Ellis recommended that Lenny go to Ohio State University Equine Hospital for evaluation and possible surgery.

As with human medicine, there have been great advances in the treatment of horse ailments in the past several years. We are so lucky to live an hour from a premier equine research and treatment facility. Sending a horse for more advanced diagnostics is not something we do lightly because of all the factors involved, including the expense, but especially whether the horse can tolerate possible surgical intervention. Since Lenny had proven to be so valuable to our program, we rolled the dice and took him to Ohio State.

Lenny went in for colic surgery, but was found to have several lipomas entwined around his intestines. The three-hour surgery to remove them went well, and Lenny stayed at Ohio State for 12 days. Unfortunately, he tested positive for salmonella, a highly contagious bacterial infection, which complicated things. He had to be quarantined, and the quarantine would have to be continued upon his return to The Riding Centre.

When we heard "quarantine," we imme-



Lenny leaves OSU Equine Hospital after recovering from surgery.

PHOTO: CAROLYN BAILEY



A healthy Lenny poses for a Christmas portrait.

PHOTO: CAIT BOBLITT

diately laid out a plan for Lenny's return from the hospital. He would have to be kept from contact with the other horses for six weeks. That would not be too hard, since he would be on stall rest for several weeks anyway. It was decided that one person would take over his care during that time. Since salmonella can be transmitted through contact with manure and urine, the person would have to be fastidious about hand washing, sanitizing areas, and using designated tools, wheelbarrows, and shoes only in Lenny's stall. Sounds familiar now, right? We even set up a grassy area with yellow caution tape where only Lenny could be hand-grazed when the doctor okayed it.

Finally, after his quarantine, Lenny tested negative for salmonella. By that time, he could be hand-grazed for an hour or more twice a day, and

he could be hand-walked for twenty minutes or more twice a day. Lenny's person would come out twice a day to clean his stall, hand-graze him, and hand-walk him. He was a wonderful patient who recovered well. By the end of summer, the doctor said he could start back to being ridden slowly. At first, he was just walked under saddle. By September, he was back in the lesson program, walking, trotting, cantering, and jumping, and being used in one lesson per day. He was back to normal, and he is now ready for lessons this spring!

We are so grateful to Dr. Brett, who always gives great care to our horses, the doctors at Ohio State for saving Lenny's life, our wonderful staff for taking care of him and all our horses with lots of TLC, and Lenny's former owner, who generously payed for half his surgical bill. 🐾



# Fundraising, 2020 Style

By Janetta Lewis-Jennings

We've all heard the saying "Where there's a will, there's a way." For The Riding Centre in 2020, the will was in place, but the way took a lot of hard work, consideration, and imagination.

How would we put on horse shows and clinics, our fundraising "bread and butter," during a pandemic? Using input from staff, The Riding Centre Board of Trustees came up with a list of safety guidelines for dealing with COVID-19. Our wonderful staff and volunteers managed to implement them and host three clinics, one by **Lori Miller** and two by **Jim Nealon**. Safe and successful clinics gave us confidence to move ahead with shows. By researching methods others had used to keep participants and workers safe and adding some innovative ideas of our own, The Riding Centre managed to pull off two Dressage shows and a Hunter show on two consecutive weekends. Kudos to our exhausted staff and volunteers, who succeeded in making them happen smoothly and safely.

Apparel and calendar sales did not require much adjustment. A Riding Centre mask sale was met with limited success. On the other hand, the annual Ride-a-Thon, usually our biggest fundraiser, seemed like an impossibility, since it required the participation of our students, and lessons were very limited. We decided to try a virtual Ride-a-Thon, but, quite honestly, we were not expecting much of a return. Well, abracadabra! **David Williamson** worked his magic and conjured up a virtual Ride-a-Thon. Watching your favorite horse and rider's progress on-line was so much fun. It turned out to be our most successful Ride-a-Thon ever! \$11,000 raised – who knew? Thank you, David. (See the article and list of riders on the previous page.)

With so many worthy charities struggling to survive this year, it was uncertain how our grant requests would measure up to past years. We were so fortunate that our dedicated community partners (along with volunteer **Cindy Minton-Piatt's** grant writing and reporting) sustained our therapeutic riding mission with vital grants from The Springfield Foundation, The Community Health Foundation, The

Union Club, The Network for Good, The Della Selsor Foundation, and Your Cause, LLC. Thanks to Vikki Hazelbaker for bringing in the Springfield Rotary Club. The Yellow Springs Community Foundation hosted two Giving Tuesday fundraisers due to the increased need.

We greatly missed the group of volunteers that Liberty Mutual/Fidelity Charitable brings out every year. They always arrived with such enthusiasm, energy, and willingness to do whatever was asked of them. The pandemic made it unsafe for them to come, but we appreciate the donation that was sent instead.

If you haven't done so already, shop through Amazon Smiles and request The Riding Centre as your charity. Also, register your Kroger Plus card at [www.krogercommunityrewards.com](http://www.krogercommunityrewards.com). Our NPO number is 43599.

A special thanks goes to **Ellen Foley**, former owner of our wonderful school horse Lenny, who helped pay for his emergency surgery. Thanks to a lot of TLC from Riding Centre staff, he is now fully recovered.

Thank you to all our Riding Centre supporters, who dug deep in these trying times to help keep us above water. Thank you to the Glen Helen Association for keeping the Glen, our home, alive. Finally, there are no words to express the gratitude we owe to our outstanding staff and volunteers. They have willingly met every challenge and shouldered every burden that this year has presented. You are what makes The Riding Centre great! 🌟

## Did You Re-Member?

Have you renewed your membership for 2021? For insurance purposes, no one outside the lesson program is allowed to ride on Riding Centre property unless they are a current member. This includes guests. A guest membership can be purchased for \$10 a day.

Riding Centre property includes the McCally Barn and arena, the hunt field, the woods beside the hunt field, and the commons area. **A helmet must be worn at all times while mounted on Riding Centre property.**

## Our List of Contributors...

...and how you can join it!

Adopt a Horse (yearly) .....	\$1,200
Donate towards: Endowment, Buildings, Special Projects, General Fund .....	(Any amount)
Become a Member (yearly)	
Family.....	\$100
Individual.....	\$75

**Special thanks to:** Dr. Brett Ellis and Elisha Wilson of Veterinary Associates, and Dr. Kathleen Lennon and Dr. Brad Luckenbill of Pony Express Veterinary Hospital for keeping our horses healthy and sound; Cedarville University for providing students for the hundreds of hours of volunteering for our therapeutic riding program; David Acton, Diane Dubose, Dave Kianka, Sean Oberschlake, and Chad Wilt for the hay they provide (*our horses thank you too!*).

### THANK YOU TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS:

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LIST CONTINUES ON PAGE FOUR

Praise on high—

# 2019 tornado roof damage is fixed!

by Carolyn Bailey

On a dark and stormy night in May 2019, the Miami Valley was hit by several tornados. With much widespread damage to many homes and buildings, The Riding Centre was not spared. Every sky light in our indoor arena was full of holes, punched out by hail. Our insurance quickly agreed to a new roof, since the skylights, originals from the early 1960s, were no longer manufactured, meaning the metal would not line up correctly and every one of them would leak.

Unfortunately, everyone in the construction business was swamped. We spent the first several months post-tornado with 20 water tubs under the leaks to catch the rain water. Our students got very adept at dodging in and out of them. In July, Minna Construction was able to cover the skylights, and now the indoor arena became like a dark cave.

In late December, it was our turn for a new roof. First, the old roof, 18-foot sheets of metal, had to be pried off the rafters and lowered to the ground. Thousands of nails had to be kept track of, as nails and hoofs can be deadly. The crew only removed as much metal as they could replace in a day, keeping the footing in the ring safe, all while enduring winter in Ohio. Finally,



Minna Construction replaced the tornado damaged roof of the Riding Centre's indoor aren in late December, braving Ohio winter and working with the needs of both riders and horses PHOTO: CAROLYN BAILEY

in early 2020, the roof was finished, and what a great improvement it is. With more skylights that are larger than before, we hardly ever need to turn on the electric lights. I cannot thank Marty Minna and his crew enough for our new roof.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

April 17	Lori Miller Jumping Clinic
May 15	Dressage Show
September 19	Dressage Show
20	Hunter Show
October 9	Jim Nealon Jumping Clinic
November 13	Riding Centre 5k Fundraiser

For more information, check [www.ridingcentre.org](http://www.ridingcentre.org) and our Facebook page.

### THE RIDING CENTRE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE SUPPORT OF THE FOLLOWING FOUNDATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS:

Yellow Springs Community Foundation, Springfield Foundation, Springfield Rotary Club, Della Selsor Trust, Glen Helen Ecology Institute, Morgan Family Foundation, The Dayton Foundation, Community Health Foundation, The Union Club, and Antioch College.



### OUR CONTRIBUTORS (From Page Three)

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|--|--|
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