



## SARI's Year at a Glance – 2021

### Program Highlights

- Through two lockdowns, we slowly navigated our way through continued restrictions; at times the farm was quiet without the buzz of programming, other times we operated at only 50% capacity.
- We found new ways to connect with our participants with closure activities (i.e. colouring, puzzles, trivia) and live-stream meet-and-greets with each of the SARI horses.
- After a televised plea to our community, 160 volunteers were recruited and trained in the final weeks of summer in order for us to return to 100% capacity come September!
- Three staff instructors completed their certification with the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.).
- Six riders found a new way to showcase their skills through a unique video competition.
- We hosted a dozen development opportunities for instructors and volunteers, and staff attended the two-day PATH Intl Region 4 Virtual Conference.



*SARI participant Madi was thrilled to be reunited with her favourite friend, Peaches, this summer!*



*2021 SARI Ambassador Freddie finds a quiet moment to connect with his trusted mount, Wyatt.*

- We continued annual measurement of rider progress, which included these two big stats:  
**84%** of participants showed improvements in their physical ability including: balance, postural control, coordination, range of motion, cardiovascular stamina, strength, flexibility and/or fine and gross motor skills!

**76%** of participants showed increased social connections, including improvement in social skills, eye contact, following direction, recognizing the feelings of others, showing a willingness to engage in new activities and more!

## Community Connections

- We played host to several educational placements including five Occupational Therapy students at Western University and a high school student with the LDCSB.
- Equine experiences and interactive tours were shared with groups including (but not limited to) Brownies, Girl Guides, The Alzheimer Society, Mount Hope Centre for Long Term Care, Manor Village, The London-Middlesex Civitan Club and the Byron Optimists!
- Valuable partnerships continued with the United Way Elgin Middlesex, the King's Disability Advisory Council, Thames Valley Children's Centre, and more!
- We supported the provincial and regional initiatives with the PATH Intl. Representative for Ontario on staff.
- We were featured in several publications and promotions including two spots on CTV, one of which highlighted important research findings conducted out of SARI through Brescia University College.
- We have a growing waitlist of volunteers, ready to start horsin' around with us as soon as they are called to action!
- We welcomed friends at CharterAbility out of Oakville to provide accessible pontoon boat rides to our participants and their families in the Port Stanley Harbor – a different kind of horse power!



***Paul and Ann of The Beckett Project presented SARI with funds raised from their Mother's Day "comfort box" initiative.***



***CharterAbility brought a pontoon boat and a team of remarkable volunteers all the way from Oakville to the Port Stanley Harbor in order to offer a full day of accessible rides to our participants!***

## Four-Legged Friends

- After 11 years of service, we proudly retired our Morgan x Standardbred mare Glory from the program in July at 23 years young.
- Our miniature horses Tinker and Belle reached a milestone anniversary of a decade of service – only surpassed by Ben who has been carrying precious cargo since 2010.
- Barn cats Charlie (age 17) and Medway (14) were laid to rest together, but the purrs of Calvin, Hobbes, Tommy and Goblin helped to heal our hearts.
- We purchased M&M – a 16-year-old Quarter Horse x Trakehner mare standing 15hh high. She will debut in lessons in January!
- We celebrated a successful Adopt-a-Pony campaign under which all SARI horses are currently adopted!



***Program Instructors Alyssa, Breanna and Tianna successfully completed their PATH Intl. CTRI certifications.***



*Glory retired to a forever home after serving the program for a remarkable 11 years – she left big shoes to fill!*



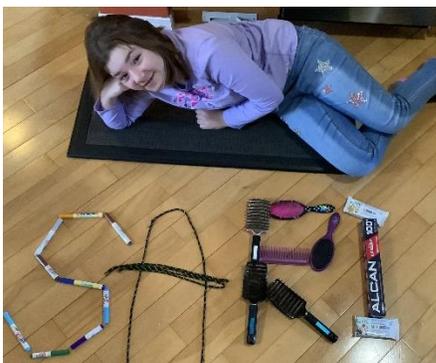
*Charlie (age 17) and Medway (14) are sincerely missed by staff and volunteers.*



*Matt Treacy, General Manager of Toyota on the Park in North York, grooms their newest addition to the horsepower family after “adopting” Lewis!*

## Events

- Bowling for Ponies adapted to a stay-at-home event dubbed the “March Challenge”, featuring BINGO cards themed around wellness, family fun and equestrian tasks and awarding prizes for completed cards.
- Our Day at the Derby featured southern-inspired hot meals from our friends at Youth Opportunities Unlimited. Food was delivered across the city by caring SARI volunteers so supporters could stream the Kentucky Derby from the comfort and safety of their living rooms.
- 100 golfers enjoyed a gorgeous sunny day on the links at RiverBend for the SARI Golf Tournament!
- Ride-a-Thon was once again planned to be hosted at the beautiful Belvoir Estate but Mother Nature refused to cooperate; over the course of four weeks our location was flooded and deemed unsafe to host the ride. Our equestrian community showed us great support in our decision-making and we look forward to hosting an incredible ride in 2022.
- 94 items were up for bidding in this year’s Artisan Auction. While most of the action took place online, we hosted a small invitation-only events for volunteers and donors on the farm as restrictions lightened. Twinkly lights, charcuterie and warm apple cider made this one feel a little bit like a return to “normal”.



*(Above) SARI rider Holly completed many of our March Challenges, including this one to spell out SARI using objects at home. (Right) We look forward to seeing what this particular foursome will wear to the Golf Tournament each year!*



## Strategic Plan

- A silver lining to repeated closures is that it allowed the staff and Board to finalize the development of our governance and operational policy manual – a 140-page document that both governs our practices and aligns us with PATH Intl Standards as we prepare to enter the final stages of accreditation.
- We reviewed and edited our long-standing by-laws to be current and in compliance with new government legislature for charities.
- We harnessed the power of a new database specifically designed for management of therapeutic riding centres!
- We engaged a consultant to perform a stakeholder evaluation, including donor, participant family and volunteer interviews and two half day focus groups. This will inform our new direction as we plan to launch a fresh Strategic Plan in the new year!

## Fun Around the Farm



*SARI Volunteer Deborah dresses up Tinker for a costume party in the grooming program.*



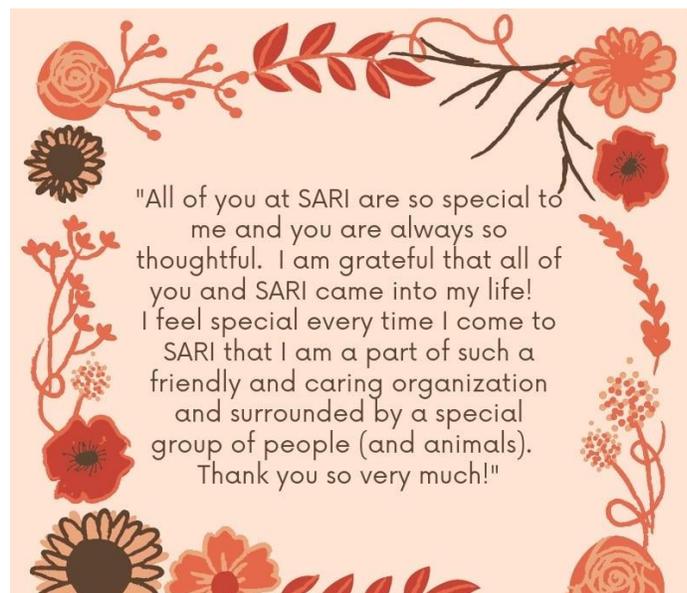
*Kitten Tommy was "hired" to be our resident exterminator but instead fancies himself an office cat. He is most often found cuddling rider parents or purring away on staff keyboards.*



*Program Manager Olivia found it hard to resist snuggling with a sleepy Peaches.*



*On April Fool's Day the SARI staff dressed up like Farm Manager Kenny, complete with ear flap hats, tube socks, plaid, gloves, thermos and bologna sandwiches!*



*We love receiving touching messages like this one from a SARI volunteer.*