



SARI THERAPEUTIC RIDING 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



SARI's 2021 SARI Ambassador Freddie Van Bakel is shown here with his favourite pony, Wyatt. Freddie's Mom shares, *"For a disabled kid like Freddie, there are systemic challenges which create barriers to participation in activities that are easy for others. At SARI, these barriers are removed. To have the opportunity to come to a place like SARI has been a gift to Freddie and our family. I hope that, like Freddie, many more kids can have their turn in the barn, the love of a horse, and the support of the incredible people at SARI."* SARI extends our sincere thanks to Freddie and his family for their service throughout the year.

SARI's Mission

We provide opportunities for people with special needs to move towards greater independence and freedom through their connection with horses.

SARI's Values

SARI is a caring community of volunteers, donors, board members, parents, staff and horses working interdependently to serve people with special needs and others. We provide a supportive atmosphere conducive to networking, sharing and learning. We value and celebrate the wonderful diversity represented in this community and through our actions, words and representations we promote the fundamental dignity of all. We seek to create and maintain a stimulating environment and foster the distinct contributions of all individuals within the SARI community.

Executive Director's Message

Despite navigating our way through the second year of a pandemic and its ever-changing restrictions, this year brought to us a renewed energy as we eagerly grew back to capacity. When the farm was quiet without the typical buzz of full programming, our team was busy at work:

- ◇ We found new ways to virtually engage with our participants and community through live-stream meet-and-greets with the horses, giving presentations and attending conferences, and offered virtual farm tours for retirement homes and service clubs.
- ◇ We wrapped up our 2018 Strategic Plan through thoughtful changes to the organizational structure, review of 57 policies, updates to our by-laws to ensure compliance with new legislation for charities, and finalized a 140-page document that governs our practices and aligns us with PATH International Standards.
- ◇ We engaged a consultant to undertake an important stakeholder interview process that sought out the opinions of 70 individuals including donors, participants, parents, and volunteers who collaboratively set the tone for our entry into the next phase of planning.
- ◇ We kept our herd of 20 horses in tip-top training – no small feat considering they are each conditioned up to 10 rides per week! We honoured Glory with a much deserved retirement after 11 years of loyal service, and welcomed M&M and Winston to the team.

When we got the green light to fully re-open in September, a televised plea to the community reached 160 new volunteers who were trained over a marathon of orientations. Together with our staff they welcomed back 130 ecstatic participants and their families! It felt good to be back in the saddle again.

Our fundraising committees celebrated as each surpassed their goals once again in the face of unforeseen challenges. Bowling for Ponies and Day at the Derby remained stay-at-home events. Our 34th annual Golf Tournament proceeded safely outdoors but without its famous dinner reception. Mother Nature refused to cooperate with Ride-a-Thon leaving the course flooded and cancelling the event. Artisan Auction was back in-person with a unique event hosted here at the farm under twinkly lights. I applaud our event committees for their creativity and flexibility, and thank our community for rallying your much-needed support.

Through it all, the SARI Staff team remained strong. They are a wealth of expertise and passion, brought together under one roof for a cause that drives each and every one of them. They are an optimistic, energetic and encouraging team. They are often caught between classes having a laugh together – bowling in the barn alley, dressing like Farm Manager Kenny for April Fool's Day, going on scavenger hunts to enjoy a sunny day stretch, or decorating their doors for the holidays. It is a fun-loving and bright team that is leading SARI into the next chapter of our history book.

I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to departing Board President Emily Assini. Through six years of service and thousands of hours, Emily's steadfast leadership has mapped the course for our success. Notably, Emily has Chaired several standing and fundraising event committees at once, been instrumental in streamlining our governance process and documents, and has dutifully led us through the challenging first two years of the pandemic. Thank you, Emily, for your dedication to SARI.

It is with excitement that I welcome this next chapter upon us - with a rejuvenated volunteer base, eager participants, an engaged community of supporters, a passionate staff team and an exciting new Strategic Plan poised for launch, SARI is ready to bloom once again in 2022 and beyond.



Janine Langley

Executive Director

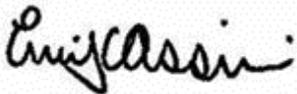
President's Message

I started off my message at last year's AGM with a similar sentiment – despite the challenges of 2021, thanks to the unwavering support of our community, this year has again been one to celebrate at SARI. Under the exceptional guidance of our dedicated staff, SARI has overcome every challenge that 2021 has posed. Importantly, through the support of our steadfast volunteers and our gracious donors, SARI has been able to keep our program moving ahead (when safe to do so) and has been able to keep our herd happy and healthy. All of SARI's accomplishments are detailed in this report and are a testament to the unfaltering support we have from the community.

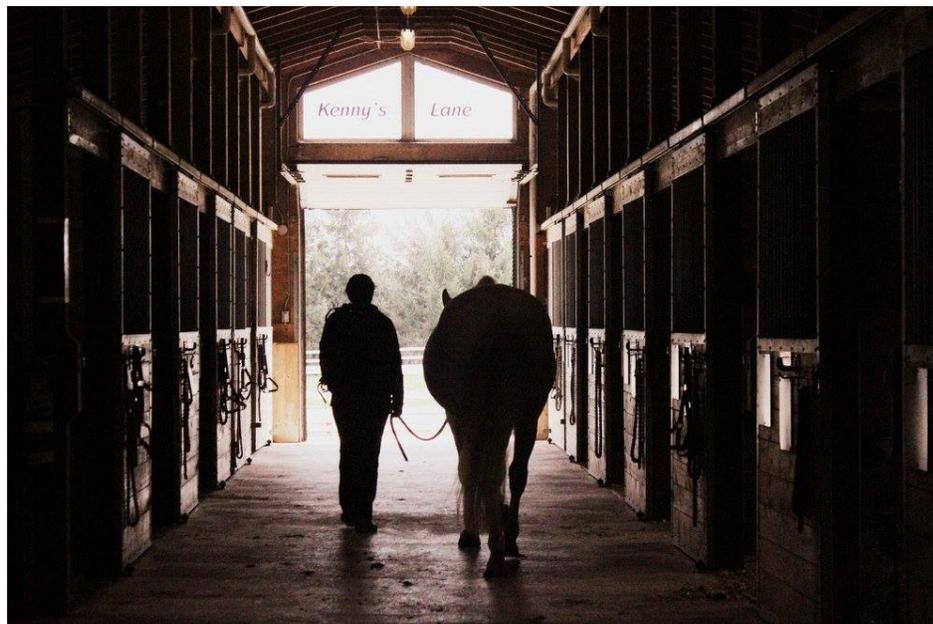
In addition to rising to every challenge along the way, 2021 has been a time of inward reflection and growth at SARI. As we embark on a new strategic plan for the next three years, we have set new and exciting goals to ensure that we continue to offer our participants and families a warm, inclusive, and safe space as we grow to extend our programming to future participants. None of this would be possible without the dedication of SARI's incredible staff and volunteers. This group of individuals are the core of everything that SARI does.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our 2021 Board of Directors for their dedication and support of SARI throughout this challenging year. In particular, our outgoing Board Members, Nicole Niddam and Ian Smith both of whom have spent countless hours lending their support and professional expertise to the Board. The Board of Directors is well posed to take on any challenge that 2022 might have with our new executive of Jared Alger, Rees Greenberg, Deanna Parkes, and Jennifer Lade.

Finally, I want to congratulate SARI's Executive Director, Janine Langley, on celebrating her 20th anniversary with SARI in October 2021. Janine's commitment to SARI is exemplified in her decades long career and her passion for SARI continues to energize every aspect of the organization. We thank Janine for 20 years of incredible dedication to SARI and look forward to continuing to grow under her leadership.



Emily Assini
Board President



2020-2021 Outcome Measurements for Therapeutic Riding Program

Each program year (September to June) at SARI our instructors set individualized goals that are designed to meet the unique needs of each participant in the Therapeutic Riding Program. In September 2020, participants/caregivers were asked to collaborate with instructors and/or program therapists to identify areas of focus in four categories: communication, social skills, independence and physical activity.

We know that weekly programming provides the maximum benefit to participants, so through our closures and 50% capacity restrictions we naturally worried about participant progression coming to a halt. But we believe in the power our horses harness and we were ultimately not surprised that we still saw some great improvements, including...

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!

And **76% of participants showed increased social connections**—including social skills, following direction, recognizing the feelings of others, showing a willingness to engage in new activities, etc.

Did You Know...

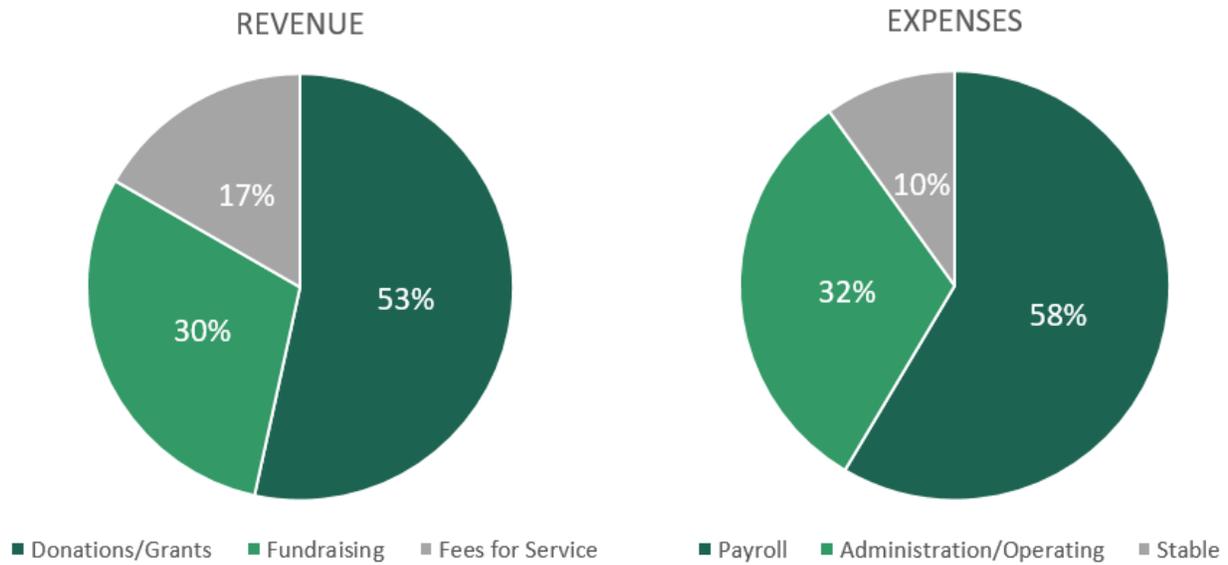
- Children aged 4 to 18 represent 52% of participants; 48% are 18+ with our eldest rider 63 years young!
- Most prevalent diagnoses are: Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Developmental Delay and Down Syndrome
- There are 94 applicants on the waitlist and growing. With two years of repeated closures, the natural attrition of participants has halted. This caused our waitlist to grow significantly through 2021.

Four Legged Friends



- In July, we retired our longest-serving and eldest mare Glory (pictured) after 11 years of service. We estimate she provided over 3,000 lessons in her time here, and is now enjoying her remaining years being loved by close friends of SARI.
- We have 20 horses on the farm, ranging in age from 8 to 24. The majority are senior citizens with an average age of 20 years old.
- Our smallest herd member Tinker stands 37" tall while our tallest herd member Allegro is 16.2hh. Our strongest horse Willow weighs in at a whopping 1300lbs!
- Ben is now the longest serving herd member at 11 years, while minis Tinker and Belle marked their 10th anniversary!
- Beloved barn cats Medway (age 14) and Charlie (17) were laid to rest together after spending their entire lives sharing their love with SARI participants and volunteers. We welcomed Calvin, Hobbes, Goblin and Tommy to the barn (and the latter to the office, too!).

Finances



Fast Facts...

- SARI received ongoing payroll support through Federal programs: Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy and Canada Summer Jobs.
- Provincial funding opportunities included the Ontario Small Business Support Grant and Business Cost Rebate Program.
- The London Community Foundation generously granted \$45,000 to support our COVID-19 recovery.
- SARI played host to six student placements throughout the year at both the high school and university level. These students offer additional assistance to the staff team!

2021 Event Outcomes

Bowling for Ponies	Day at the Derby	Golf Tournament	Ride-a-Thon	Artisan Auction
				
\$35,726.61 raised	\$22,382.61 raised	\$44,374.99 raised	\$33,649.86 raised	\$13,410.43 raised
2022 Date: Sunday April 3rd	2022 Date: Saturday May 7th	2022 Date: Thursday June 16th	2022 Date: Sunday September 25th	2022 Date: November TBD

2021 Highlights



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



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



100 golfers enjoyed a gorgeous sunny day on the links at RiverBend for the SARI Golf Tournament!



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



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

2021 Highlights



SARI Participant Holly completed many of our “March Challenges” including this one to spell out SARI using objects at home.



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



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 some very lucky SARI participants and their families.

Testimonials

- *“All of you at SARI are so special to me and you are always so thoughtful. I am grateful that all of you and SARI came into my life. I feel special every time I come to SARI that I am part of such a friendly and caring organization and surrounded by a special group of people (and animals). Thank you so very much!”*
- *“Thanks to all of the efforts of SARI and its extraordinary sponsors/donors, [Rider] now benefits from core stability, self-confidence, assertiveness, and enhanced logical reasoning. He is happy when he is riding, and it warms our hearts to see him extend a tender caress to Topaz, who he trusts intimately with this safety and well-being as they ride around the barn or in the paddock. Please know that your contributions are deeply appreciated, impactful, and lasting!”*
- *“SARI has been a place of great comfort for [us]. I often tell people it is a magical place. The staff are incredibly welcoming, dedicated and kind. They open their doors and hearts to all who seek the therapeutic benefits that come from riding.”*

Acknowledging the Generous Support of Our 2021 Donors

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*** London Community Foundation**

2021 Heritage Club Donors

The SARI Heritage Club recognizes donors who have contributed to SARI for 5 or more years. We welcome the following members to their anniversary year:

5 YEARS

<i>Brianna Anderson</i>	<i>Robert Gould</i>	<i>Matson, Driscoll & Damico Ltd.</i>
<i>Argyle Tax Service</i>	<i>Mary Hayes</i>	<i>Michael Roach</i>
<i>Kim Crawford</i>	<i>Amanda Margison</i>	<i>Wanda Steeper</i>
<i>Kate Goodwin</i>	<i>Rick Goodhew Medicine Professional Corporation</i>	<i>Bill Tucker</i>
<i>Allan Edwards</i>	<i>Ron & Shelley Martindale</i>	<i>Rose Marie & Clyde Walton</i>

10 YEARS

<i>Marilyn Craig</i>	<i>Linda Grace</i>	<i>Nicholson Smith & Partners LLP</i>
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15 YEARS

<i>Byron Corner</i>	<i>David Greenberg</i>	<i>Diane Blackall</i>
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20 YEARS

<i>Faye Black</i>	<i>Jackie Cullen</i>	<i>Ray Cullen Chevrolet Buick GMC</i>
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Special Thanks

SARI thanks Belvoir Estate Farm & Equestrian Centre for their ongoing support of our fundraising efforts.

SARI is grateful to Dr. Lisa Marchuk and the team at Scholl Animal Hospital for their exceptional care, donated in-kind, of our barn cat Medway.

SARI thanks Brownwyn Findley of Goodwilll Healing for her osteopathic care of our herd members.

SARI is grateful for donations made in memory of Blake Bennett, Jim MacDonald, Wayne Sanders, Jack & Selma Rothfeld, Jim Thompson, Carol Malpage, Helen Mettham, Karen Peterson, Lorne Scott, Cathy Neely, Frances White, Erin Driscoll-Davies, Ann Buechler, "Medway", and "Charlie".

SARI Therapeutic Riding endeavours to ensure the accuracy of the donor list and regrets any oversights that may have occurred. Please contact office@sari.ca if changes are necessary.