



# TEC Connections

*The Therapeutic Equestrian Center engages the power of horses to challenge people with special needs to build stronger bodies, minds, and spirits.*

## New Facility, New Friends, And a New Program

Just a  
reminder...

Holiday Riding Session:  
Nov. 7 to Dec. 10, 2022

### Connect with TEC

[www.tecfarm.org](http://www.tecfarm.org)  
(269) 429-0671  
[info@tecfarm.org](mailto:info@tecfarm.org)

### FOLLOW US



**Located at:**  
Jane M. Hiler Facility  
1207 E. Galien-  
Buchanan Road  
Buchanan, MI 49107

**Mailing Address:**  
PO Box 1250  
Niles, MI 49120

*TEC is a 501(c)(3)  
Nonprofit Organization*

All TEC instructors are  
certified by and TEC is  
a member center of:



The family of Jane M. Hiler at the dedication of the new facility in April 2022.

**TEC's move into the Jane M. Hiler Facility last November opened the doors to a beautiful new home and the making of new friendships.** One exciting happening was the advent of a new program launched in May 2022 called Mane Event. The program meets once a month, May through October, and includes aspects of horse care, riding, and building trusting relationships with our horse companions. Groups are limited to two or three participants to allow for individualized instruction, and each group is taught by a TEC instructor.



Mark & Scott show off their  
Double D temporary tattoos.

The participants choose what they want to learn at their meetings, as well as what they want to call themselves. The current group decided on the name "The Dynamic Duos" or "Double D's", then applied temporary tattoos to make their membership official.

One thing the Double D's wanted to learn about was checking a horse's vital signs. Using Nellie and Trixie as the stoic patients, the two men were led by TEC Instructor, Marilyn Bubula Harvey, on the use of a stethoscope to hear the beating of the heart, counting breaths by observing the horses' flank movement, and looking at the color of gums in the four-legged patients to assess their health.

*Article continues on page 2.*

## *cont.* **New Facility, New Friends, And a New Program**



*Scott learns how to check a horse's heartbeat.*

Scott S., who has participated in TEC programs for several years, explained that Mane Event is “a nice shift from what he used to do”. Scott enjoys the learning and activities included in each session. He likes grooming his horse, and is especially enjoying his newly-learned skill of cleaning the equipment. **Scott reports that being around the horses relaxes him and says his time spent at TEC has “been therapeutic”.** He particularly likes the longer time with the horses, since each session lasts 2 ½ hours.

Mark C. reported that Mane Event has given him something new to look forward to. With the help of his communication board, Mark shared how he enjoys the educational side of the program and the games that he can play with the volunteers and with his roommates. **Mark likes that the program offers him activities where he is able to use his hands and learn other motor skills.**

Learn more about the Mane Event program by visiting our website at [www.tecfarm.org/maneevent](http://www.tecfarm.org/maneevent). You can also reach out to TEC Instructor, Marilyn Bubula Harvey, at [meowharvey@yahoo.com](mailto:meowharvey@yahoo.com) or TEC Rider Coordinator, Lisa Mearing, at [meariment@gmail.com](mailto:meariment@gmail.com).

*Mark displays his horse-drawing homework assignment.*



## **Keep Up To Date on TEC News**

We do our best to communicate key information to TEC participants, volunteers, and friends of TEC. To ensure you're “in the know” and never miss the latest news from TEC, stay connected with us via the communication channels below.

- Follow us on:
  - ♦ Facebook - [www.facebook.com/TherapeuticEquestrianCenter](https://www.facebook.com/TherapeuticEquestrianCenter)
  - ♦ Instagram - [www.instagram.com/tecfarm\\_swmi](https://www.instagram.com/tecfarm_swmi)
  - ♦ YouTube - [bit.ly/tecyoutubechannel](https://bit.ly/tecyoutubechannel)
- Watch our website. Several pages are updated regularly, including:
  - ♦ Home page - [www.tecfarm.org](http://www.tecfarm.org)
  - ♦ Fundraisers & Special Events - [www.tecfarm.org/fundraisers-specialevents](http://www.tecfarm.org/fundraisers-specialevents)
  - ♦ COVID Safety Measures - [www.tecfarm.org/covidsafetymeasures](http://www.tecfarm.org/covidsafetymeasures)
- Make sure we have your most up to date contact information.
- **Sign up for our e-communications at: [bit.ly/signupfortec](https://bit.ly/signupfortec)**





# Meet Some of our Invaluable Volunteers

Sixteen-year-old **Ilijan Jarnjak** enjoys walking, painting miniatures, and playing video games with friends. He also serves as Student Council Secretary at Grace Christian School. Three years ago, he added to his resume volunteering at TEC. His sister was taking lessons, the crew asked him to help out, and he has been filling water buckets, cleaning stalls, and feeding hay ever since.

*Those three years have confirmed Ilijan's initial impression of TEC: "a nice place with nice people".* In fact, working with the supervisors is his favorite part of the job. He fondly recalls a day when his cousin showed up to help, and they got to throw hay down from the loft to put in the store room. It kept them super busy, made the time fly by, and they had fun to boot.

*Like most workers at TEC, Ilijan feels the greatest need there is "volunteers who keep volunteering".* He says that people at TEC are doing good work, and they need help to keep doing it. His advice to anyone considering volunteering would be to wear an old pair of jeans and invest in a pair of boots just for the barn!



*Ilijan and Garth take a break from work to smile for the camera.*

After retiring from the corporate world in Texas and returning to her hometown of Niles last year, **Elaine Fulbright** began a search for volunteer opportunities.

*She attended a TEC volunteer orientation, recognized a well-run organization when she saw one, and started helping at the barn in March.*

Elaine has always loved horses, and has had three of her own over the years. But because she has asthma and is unable to sidewalk for lessons, she helps take care of the horses two days a week, which she finds fun and relaxing. In addition to the horses, she enjoys her fellow volunteers and says that because they want to be there they always have a good attitude which, of course, makes it even more fun to be there and the work go fast.



*Elaine enjoys her newly-learned TEC skills.*

*Elaine says to the people who are always thanking her for the time she puts in at TEC, "You don't need to thank me; I'm having a good time here!"* As for others who are considering volunteering? *"I'm 73, I can now lift a 50-pound bale of hay by myself, and I've even learned to drive a tractor!! What more could a person want?"*

When a long-ago memory of horse camp sparked in **Brittany Ego** a desire to combine her love of animals with volunteering alongside other people, a Google search led her to therapeutic riding and, eventually, to TEC. She began working as a sidewalker in lessons, is now acting as both a leader and a ring assistant, and is even in the process of becoming a PATH-certified instructor! *She has thrived in the structured and well-organized environment, and has found that the learning, the relationships, and the "I Did It!" moments are therapeutic for her, and keep her coming back week after week.* As she describes it, *"Once I walk through the barn door I'm in a different world and can focus on me, my horse, and my rider."*

Brittany sees TEC's greatest need as more hands. *She says "You don't have to be a horse expert to volunteer, and it's so much more fun than it is work. If you're thinking about it, come observe a lesson and see if it's something you might like before jumping in. Come take a tour, meet the horses, meet some of the volunteers. Then try it!"*



*Brittany walking Nellie as they prepare for lessons.*

## YOU Help TEC Change Lives!



Many of us are familiar with the saying, "it takes a village to raise a child". In truth, it takes a village to achieve just about anything. **There's no doubt that one person can make a difference but when many come together the difference made is even grander.** It leads to the creation of a community that serves to make a change.

YOU are a part of TEC's community! **Whether you're donating your hard-earned dollars, giving of your time, contributing supplies and materials, working behind the scenes, or being an advocate, YOU are making a difference in the lives of our participants!** It's because of each and everyone of

YOU that TEC continues to do what we do ... Engage the power of horses to challenge people with disabilities to build stronger minds, bodies, and spirits.

**On behalf of our participants, we THANK YOU for your ongoing support of TEC.**

Check out the many ways are community comes together to change the lives of others.

### Our donors for the period of January 1 thru April 22, 2022.

- |                                |                                  |                             |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ♥ Linda Best                   | ♥ Deborah Kaniewski              | ♥ Cecilia Skalla            |
| ♥ Berrien Community Foundation | ♥ Margie Hojara-Hadsell          | ♥ Raymond & Michelle Waid   |
| ♦ Heart of Cook Grant          | ♥ Ledyard Family Charitable Fund | ♥ Faye Walker               |
| ♥ Richard & Patricia Bolin     | ♥ Richard & Nancy McCreedy       | ♥ Gary & Kathleen Wieczorek |
| ♥ Edytha Bowerman              | ♥ Mary McMullan                  | ♥ The Employees of Wightman |
| ♥ Judith Buck                  | ♥ Donald & Janet Padgett         | ♥ David & Qiwin Wright      |
| ♥ Paul & Ann Collier           | ♥ Kristine Petlick               | ♥ Russ & Autumn Zick        |
| ♥ Emily Egan                   | ♥ Mary Poehlman                  |                             |
| ♥ Pam Forst                    | ♥ Laura Reynolds                 |                             |
| ♥ Kalmbach Feeds, Inc.         |                                  |                             |

We wish to acknowledge those who have made in-kind donations by giving horse treats and SmartPaks, copy paper, bottled water, and so much more.

A shout out also to those who support us through charitable shopping at Harding's and AmazonSmile.



**Thank YOU Shoppers ...**  
**amazon**smile  
 You shopped. Amazon donated!

**Your shopping through AmazonSmile during the months of January - March 2022 provided TEC with a \$266.30 donation.**

Not an AmazonSmile shopper? Sign up today at: [bit.ly/shop4tec](https://bit.ly/shop4tec)





# Baird Scores a Hole in One for TEC

For the second year, TEC was the designated charity of choice for Baird's Annual Charity Golf Outing which took place at Lake Michigan Hills Golf Club. On a beautiful August day, 82 golfers came together to participate in the Best Ball Scramble. **The day was filled with sportsmanship, good times, prizes, and lunch. At the end of the day, the event raised more than \$10,000 for TEC – WOW and THANK YOU!!!**

We are beyond grateful to the Baird volunteers who organized this event – Mike Wyble and Rick Sanders, the amazing sponsors, and TEC volunteers – Janet G. and Clare C., who lent a helping hand in preparing gift bags for the golfers and working the event. A shoutout also to TEC participants – Makayla G. and Alex B., who greeted golfers with water bottles. Alex also had the pleasure of having some fun with the golfers at the putting green.

Baird is a wealth management firm in St. Joseph (MI), who has a long tradition of giving back to the communities where their associates live and work. To learn more about Baird, visit [www.stjoseph.bairdwealth.com](http://www.stjoseph.bairdwealth.com).



## Let There Be Light

We are pleased to share that TEC's indoor arena will now be fully illuminated thanks to those who participated in our Shining a Light on TEC campaign. From those who funded the purchase of the lights to the team who got them wired up, we couldn't have done it without each of you.

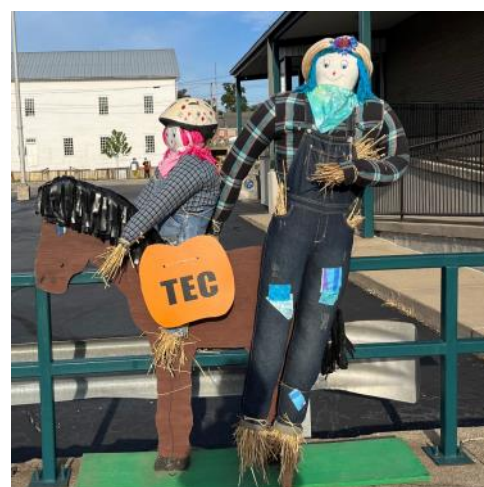
A shout out to Gerri & Cory Sly for donating the materials and supplies to power up the lights. The Sly's, along with Margie Hojara-Hadsell, Ron Hojara, Charles Payne, and volunteers from Power Home Remodeling worked over the summer to get the lights installed and shining brightly overhead. **THANK YOU!**



## Eye Spy

Have you spotted the scarecrows around Buchanan? They have been created by volunteers from the Buchanan Scarecrow Charities, including this one featuring TEC.

We'd like to thank this group for supporting TEC this summer with a \$1,000 donation towards expenses for our current programs.





# Give your heart. Lend a hand.

## Volunteer at the Therapeutic Equestrian Center!

The Therapeutic Equestrian Center (TEC) partners with horses to build stronger bodies, minds, and spirits for people with disabilities, veterans, and active military. But we can't do it without your help.



### Volunteer opportunities include helping with:

- Therapeutic riding lessons and activities
- Chores around the barn and pastures
- Marketing and community outreach
- Teaching in our school programs
- Administrative and office tasks
- Fundraising and special events

**CALL US OR GO ONLINE FOR MORE INFORMATION!**

#### PLEASE VISIT US AT:

Jane M. Hiler Facility  
1207 E. Galien-Buchanan Rd.  
Buchanan, MI 49107



#### CONNECT WITH US AT:

Therapeutic Equestrian Center  
PO Box 1250 | Niles, MI 49120  
269-429-0671 | [info@tecfarm.org](mailto:info@tecfarm.org)  
[www.tecfarm.org](http://www.tecfarm.org) | 



SERVING SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN AND THE MICHIANA AREA

TEC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization



## Get to Know the New “Kid”



TEC welcomed our newest four-legged family member, Trixie, to the barn in March. Trixie is 20-ish year old pony mare who had been purchased by her previous owners to be a gestational carrier (surrogate mom) for a mare who was not able to carry foals. When it became apparent Trixie was not in foal she was sold to a different family, but was soon returned to her previous owners because the family didn't like her color. **That greyish-tan color, known as "smoky buckskin", actually makes her a standout among the much more common bays and chestnuts of the horse world.**

When Trixie came to TEC she was in need of some conditioning, but she had a very kind eye. It was the sweetness in Trixie's eyes that convinced Margie H., Ron H., and Debbie K. to bring her from southern Indiana to TEC to see if she had the makings of a therapy horse. A few groceries, lots of affectionate grooming, and some much needed exercise have turned Trixie from an ugly duckling into a beautiful girl who is loved by many. Now her coat reflects the sunshine and her chunky belly reflects her love of treats.

Trixie's fan base includes the instructors, the participants and their families, as well as the chore volunteers. **Everyone who interacts with Trixie feels her warmth, goodness, and quiet kindness.**

One instructor has said of her, *"Trixie is worth her weight in gold"*. Another instructor has described Trixie as *"the perfect horse to work with our smaller participants to gain confidence, build muscle strength, and improve riding skills"*.

**Trixie's willingness and gentle participation is already helping the smallest TEC riders discover "I Did It!" moments.** The smiles on those riders' faces make clear that when it comes to being a therapeutic riding horse, Trixie has reached her stride.

If you know of a horse or a large pony that might be suitable for TEC, please contact us at (269) 429-0671 or send us an e-mail to [info@tecfarm.org](mailto:info@tecfarm.org).



*Alex's balancing feat on Trixie gets a two-thumbs up!*

## Snapshots from Camp TEC





# Knights to the Rescue



Our knights didn't come dressed in shining armor but instead came with toolbelts and a checkbook. **TEC has been blessed throughout the years to be supported by several Knights of Columbus (K of C) councils from the area.** And this summer a handful of them came together to rescue an old shed at TEC that was in need of much repair.

It started when Ed Smith from the St. Anthony Catholic Church (Council #14409) in Buchanan reached out asking if there was a project that a team of Knights

could work on for us. **Then the K of C St. John XXIII Assembly #3542 gave us a generous donation of \$1,000 for the purchase of materials to repair the shed and a new door was donated by Sir Knight Deacon Roger Gregorski.**

Spearheading the project was Sir Knight Ed Smith and TEC's Facility and Maintenance Volunteer, Debbie Kaniewski. These two and a group of hard-working Knights came together for several work days to complete the project, including Dan Snodgrass, John March, and Mike Zenk from Council #14409, Roger Gregorski from St. Mary's Catholic Church in Niles/ Council #708, and Cliff Asch from St. Mary of the Lake Catholic Church in New Buffalo/Council #14366.



Support for the project through member labor was led by Assembly #3542 Navigator Sir Knight Carl Kent. Assembly members consists of 4th degree Knights from councils based in New Buffalo, Buchanan, Niles, Dowagiac, and Edwardsburg.

Thanks to all these helping hands, the old shed is now fully enclosed with new siding, has access via the new door, and will serve as a clean, dry storage area for hay and equipment. The renovated shed and workers also received a blessing from Sir Knight Deacon Roger Gregorski.



**We are grateful to all of these organizations for their support – THANK YOU! The shed is awesome and we look forward to using it for many years.**





# Support of TEC Comes in Many Sizes & Shapes

The cost of everything has gone up. So we completely understand that it's not necessarily feasible to make financial contributions to your favorite charity. **As a TEC supporter, you can help without impacting your budget or breaking open that special piggy bank.** It's simple ...

Can you spare an hour or two during the work week, or maybe part of your Saturday morning? **Volunteer at TEC.** This is a great way to learn a new skill, meet new friends, be active in your community, and have fun (and exercise) at the same time.

Do you shop for groceries at Harding's or how about online at Amazon? **Earn donations through charitable shopping.** Turn your everyday shopping habits into donations. When you shop, both organizations give a percentage of your order as a donation to TEC.

## Lean more by visiting:

[bit.ly/shophardings](http://bit.ly/shophardings)



TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

[bit.ly/amazonsmile4TEC](http://bit.ly/amazonsmile4TEC)



You shop. Amazon gives.

Speaking of shopping, if you have a few extra dollars, **donate supplies and materials.** In-kind contributions can include mouthwash for cleaning the horses' buckets, horse treats, and many other items are greatly appreciated.

And if you fret over finding just the right gift for that special person, **honor them by making a donation to TEC in their name.** This is a unique way to show them how special they are to you.

The list of ways to support TEC goes on. **Visit our [www.tecfarm.org/support](http://www.tecfarm.org/support) to learn more about how you can support TEC in making "I Did It!" moments.**



## Horse Owners ... Here's an simple way for you to support TEC!

If you use Tribute Equine Nutrition products, donate your product labels to earn TEC \$0.25 cents for every label collected. Labels can be dropped off at Family Farm & Home in Benton Harbor, placed in the box on the check-in table at the barn, or mailed to TEC.



**Yes! I want to support more "I DID IT!" moments at TEC with this tax-deductible donation.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

FALL 2022

☐ Check or Money Order (Payable to: Therapeutic Equestrian Center)

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cardholder Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code (3-digit code on back of card): \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please apply my donation to: \_\_\_\_\_

(Unless specified, all donations go to the general fund.)

☐ This donation is made in ☐ honor or ☐ memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Yes, I'd like to become a TEC volunteer. Please contact me at: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail your donation to: Therapeutic Equestrian Center, PO Box 1250, Niles, MI 49120

Save a stamp! Make your donation online using your debit/credit card or PayPal at [www.tecfarm.org/donate](http://www.tecfarm.org/donate).



## Therapeutic Equestrian Center

Mailing Address:  
PO Box 1250  
Niles, MI 49120

**NON PROFIT  
USPS  
#510  
49120**

**Barn Address:**

Jane M. Hiler Facility  
1207 E. Galien-Buchanan Rd.  
Buchanan, MI 9107

**ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED**

Phone: (269) 429-0671

E-mail: [info@tecfarm.org](mailto:info@tecfarm.org)

Website: [www.tecfarm.org](http://www.tecfarm.org)

# Horses Change Lives *but ...* **WE NEED YOU!** **TO MAKE IT HAPPEN**

Ask any nonprofit and the answer is the same, "Finding new 'blood' (aka volunteers) is more challenging than ever!" **Financial support is vital to an organization's success and spreading awareness of the nonprofit is key as well but VOLUNTEERS are the organization's lifeline.** Having a generous donor base and an ample group of cheerleaders won't mean much if there's no volunteers to do the work; especially, as the demand for their services increases.

**This is true now more than ever for TEC!** As we continue to expand our reach into more communities and add new programs to TEC's offerings, we struggle with having the minimum number of lesson volunteers. Our lessons range in size from 1 to 4 participants with each participant needing at least 1 volunteer and some needing more. This means the number of needed volunteers can quickly add up.

**If you'd like to become a TEC volunteer, visit [www.tecfarm.org/volunteer](http://www.tecfarm.org/volunteer) to learn more or reach out to our TEC Volunteer Coordinator, Lonna Dick, at (574) 520-0403 or by e-mail at [lonnad.tec@gmail.com](mailto:lonnad.tec@gmail.com).**

  
**VOLUNTEERS**  
*always ♥ needed*  
**FOREVER  
APPRECIATED**