



Windsor-Essex Therapeutic
Riding Association

2025 Annual Report

A Centre of Excellence for Innovative Equine Assisted Services

Charitable Organization No. 108214867RR0001

COMMITTED TO
EXCELLENCE



CELEBRATING

2025 Annual Report



ABILITIES



WETRA exists because every person—regardless of ability or challenge—deserves the chance to grow, succeed, and feel empowered. Horses offer a special kind of healing and connection, creating a safe environment where riders can build trust, confidence, and strength.

This unique partnership is at the heart of why WETRA does what it does.

Each lesson is designed to help riders discover their abilities, not their limitations. Whether it's a child gaining balance and confidence or an adult finding emotional grounding after trauma, the progress we witness fuels our purpose. The physical, emotional, and cognitive benefits of equine-assisted activities make a lasting impact on each participant.

Above all, WETRA is driven by community and belonging. Horses don't judge—they simply accept—and we carry that same spirit forward. Our mission is to create opportunities, celebrate abilities, and support individuals in ways that truly change lives, one stride at a time.





Who We Are

The Windsor - Essex Therapeutic Riding Association (WETRA) empowers youth and individuals of all abilities through adaptive equestrian sport and therapeutic programs that build confidence, strengthen mental well-being, and support meaningful goal achievement. We are committed to creating inclusive, safe, and supportive experiences where progress goes beyond the goal and every participant has the opportunity to grow, thrive, and reach their full potential.



A photograph of a person from behind, wearing a light-colored t-shirt and blue jeans, leading a dark brown horse on a lead rope. They are walking on a paved path in a grassy field with a blue fence and trees in the background. The text 'OUR PROGRAMS' is overlaid on the image.

OUR *PROGRAMS*

Windsor - Essex Therapeutic Riding Association: Therapeutic Riding, Horses Offering Outstanding Futures (HOOF) Program, Equine-Assisted Cognitive Processing Therapy (EACPT), Camps, Group Visits, Off-Site Visits, and Community Events all come together to create meaningful, inclusive experiences for individuals of all ages and abilities. Through these diverse programs, WETRA uses the power of horses to build confidence, promote independence, support mental wellness, and strengthen community connections—offering life-changing opportunities every day.

YEAR IN REVIEW

2025

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BECKY MILLS

As we reflect on 2025, I am filled with gratitude and pride for all we have accomplished together at WETRA. This year has been one of meaningful progress, resilience, and continued commitment to our mission.

Thanks to the dedication of our staff, volunteers, partners, and supporters, we have expanded our programs, strengthened our impact, and deepened the relationships that make our work possible. While we faced challenges along the way, each one reinforced our adaptability and determination, helping us grow stronger and more responsive to our community's needs.

Looking ahead, we remain focused on building on our successes, investing in sustainable growth, and serving with integrity and purpose. We are committed to fostering inclusivity, strengthening partnerships, and ensuring WETRA continues to thrive as a trusted and impactful organization.

As I reflect on my 22-year journey with WETRA, I want to share that I will be retiring at the end of 2026, making this my final year as Executive Director. It has been an incredibly meaningful and rewarding chapter of my life, and truly a privilege to serve in this role. WETRA has meant so much not only to me, but to my family as well. As I look ahead to retirement, I do so with gratitude and pride, and I look forward to continuing to support WETRA in the years to come. Our family will always cherish the special place this organization holds in our community.

With that in mind, I am pleased to share that our Program Director, Paige Shepley will assume the role of Executive Director in January 2027. Paige brings a strong vision, proven leadership, and a deep commitment to preserving our history and continuing our mission. I have every confidence that under her guidance, WETRA will continue to grow, innovate, and make a lasting impact for years to come. Be assured that I will be working closely with the organization to support a smooth and thoughtful transition over the next year.



Rebecca Mills - Executive Director

Thank-you for your continued support. Together, we are making a lasting impact.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Mills

Rebecca Mills

Executive Director

WETRA



11,556

THERAPY SESSIONS IN 2025

1,115

**MOUNTED PROGRAM, UNMOUNTED PROGRAM,
CAMP PROGRAMS, SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS,
SENIOR PROGRAMING, GROUP VISITS,
OFF-SITE VISITS**

PARTICIPANTS

OUR HERD

17

AVG. AGE OF HERD

3,856

**BALES OF
HAY CONSUMED**

21

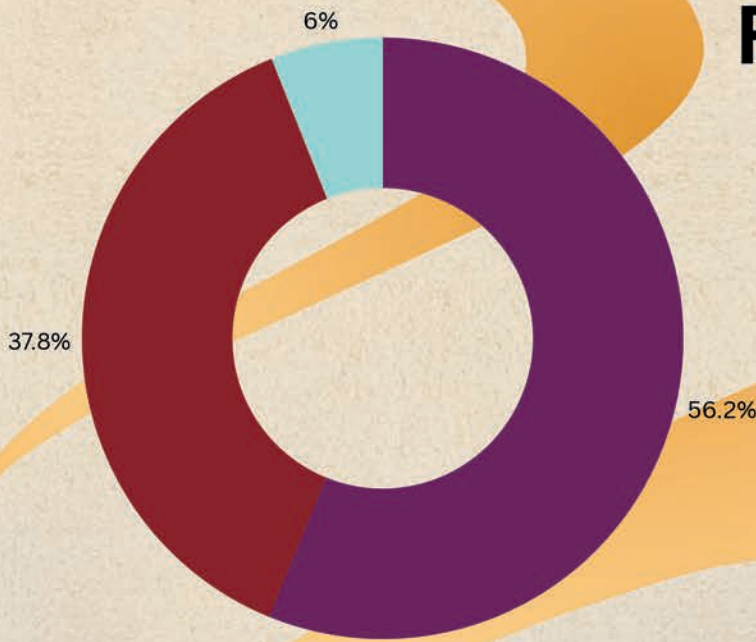
THERAPY HORSES



FINANCES

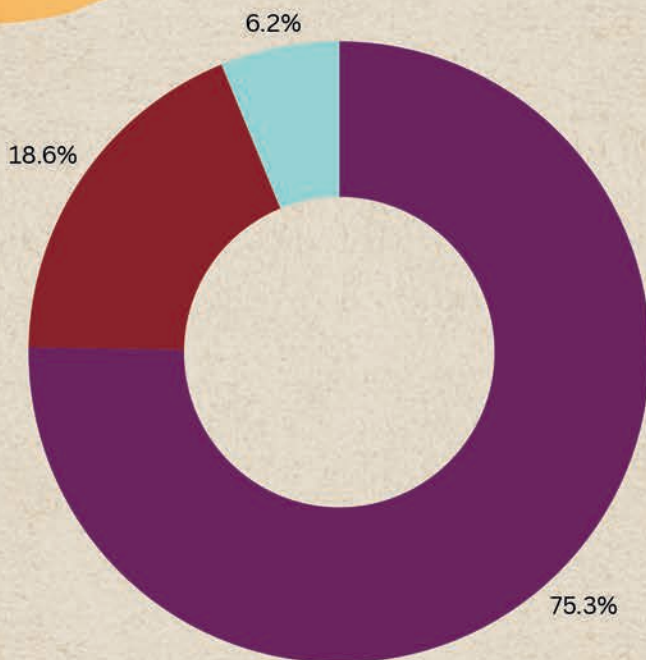
2025

Revenue - \$1,101,579



- Donations
\$624,278
- All Other Revenue
\$415,533
- Government Funding
\$61,768

Expenses - \$966,102



- Charitable Programs
\$727,587
- Management & Administration
\$179,686
- Fundraising
\$58,829



PROGRAM COST BREAKDOWN

\$200

1 HOUR RIDE

\$55

Participant fees cover just over one-quarter of the true session cost.

True Cost of a Therapeutic Session

Each therapeutic session at WETRA costs \$200 to deliver. Participants contribute an average of \$55 per session, with the remaining \$145 (72.5%) subsidized through donations, grants, and community support. This funding model ensures equitable access while maintaining high standards of safety, care, and horse welfare.



Community support makes every session possible!



YEAR IN REVIEW

2025

BOARD PRESIDENT DAWN ARSENAULT

As I reflect on the past year at Windsor - Essex Therapeutic Riding Association, I am filled with a deep sense of pride and gratitude for the incredible community that surrounds and supports WETRA. This year has been especially meaningful for me, as it marked my first year serving as President of the Board of Directors.

Over the past year, we have continued to see the impact of our programs in the lives of participants and their families. Building confidence, fostering connection, and creating opportunities that truly make a difference. It has been inspiring to witness the growing demand for our programs, which remains at the heart of everything we do. We have also seen tremendous interest in our March Break and Summer Camps, which continue to fill faster than ever before. These camps not only provide meaningful experiences for participants but also play an important role in supporting our core programming.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to our Executive Director, Becky Mills, and the entire WETRA team. Their dedication, compassion, and commitment to excellence ensure that our programs remain safe, inclusive, and impactful.

I would also like to recognize our incredible volunteers. Their time, energy, and unwavering support are essential to everything we do. Without their assistance alongside our staff, we simply would not be able to deliver our programs or operate at the level we do. We are truly grateful for the role they play in making WETRA what it is.

We are also incredibly grateful to our donors and the broader community for their continued support. Whether through generous donations or participation in our fundraising events, your involvement plays a vital role in allowing us to deliver the exceptional programs that WETRA is known for. Your support makes all of this possible.

As a Board, we remain focused on ensuring the long-term sustainability of the organization while preserving the heart of what makes WETRA so special. We are committed to strong governance and thoughtful stewardship so that WETRA can continue to grow and serve our community for years to come.

Thank you for being part of this journey with us.

Warm Regards,

Dawn Arsenault

Dawn Arsenault

President, Board of Directors

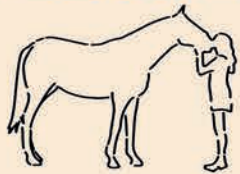
WETRA



Dawn Arsenault - Board President



Small Horses



BIG Impact

Briar and Winnie may stand only a few feet tall, but these two American Miniature Horses carry with them a presence far bigger than their size. With gentle hearts, curious minds, and an endless willingness to connect, they have quickly become beloved members of WETRA's HOOF Program.

Each week, Briar and Winnie work with clients who come to build confidence, improve emotional regulation, and rediscover their sense of capability. Their small stature makes them unintimidating to individuals who may feel unsure or anxious around larger horses, and yet their impact is anything but small. Clients learn to lead them, groom them, communicate with them, and celebrate each tiny milestone – and it's in those moments that the biggest breakthroughs happen.

But their work doesn't stop at the farm. Briar and Winnie are also ambassadors on offsite visits, bringing comfort, joy, and connection to people who may not have the chance to experience equine-assisted interactions. Whether visiting schools, community events, long-term care homes, or mental health programs, the minis brighten every room they enter. Their presence sparks conversations, laughter, and healing in ways that truly speak to the power of animals in human wellbeing.

Despite their size, Briar and Winnie are making large, meaningful gains – both in the community and in the lives of their weekly clients. They remind us every day that strength doesn't always look the way you expect it to.



VOLUNTEERING

INCLUSIVE - EMPOWERING - VALUED

Barn Buddies

Each week, Spencer and Clark make their way to WETRA ready to volunteer, bringing with them a strong work ethic and an infectious sense of joy. Through the Life Day Respite Program, one of the many valued community partnerships WETRA is proud to be part of, they help wherever they are needed—always willing, always engaged, and always smiling. Their positive attitudes shine throughout the farm, making a meaningful difference for staff, volunteers, and participants alike.

Spencer and Clark arrive each week with a smile and leave with a smile, a true reflection of the connection and purpose they find at WETRA. Keep up the great work, Spencer and Clark, and thank you for all that you do!



Clark & Spencer



WETRA gives our members a sense of responsibility and provides them with the opportunity to achieve work ethics and a sense of accomplishment. It also gives our members something to look forward to each week and offers a relaxing environment and improves their well-being. Our members look forward to seeing the friends they have made each week, including the furry friends. It also means giving back to the community!!

Sherri Currie
LIFE Day Respite Essex
Program Co-Ordinator



OUR AMAZING VOLUNTEERS



137 Volunteers = \$77,897.60
4,426 Hours



PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT 2025

ACHIEVING GOALS TODAY - RAISING THE BAR FOR TOMORROW

I have had the privilege of working with Russell every Friday afternoon for the last three years when he participates in our HOOF program, and he always brings a smile to my face. His positive energy and friendly personality light up the barn week after week.

While on the farm, Russell has responsibilities. His main chore is feeding the small animals their dinner and checking if they have enough water for the night. Russell has become so independent with this task, and I am confident he could feed the small animals all on his own if I wasn't there to guide him. He treats the animals with respect and takes care of them with a gentle hand, especially our barn cats, Pebbles and Brie.

Russell's skills go beyond helping in the barn. Over the last few months, Russell's horsemanship skills have flourished. Russell started by leading Briar, one of WETRA's miniature horses, but he has now graduated to a bigger therapy horse named Dixie. Russell and Dixie have this amazing relationship and a special bond. Russell leads Dixie in the arena all by himself. They've practiced patterns and completed obstacle courses as a team. Their favorite challenge is walking over ground poles. Russell has also mastered weaving, halts, and following a circle.

To make Russell's sessions more personable, I incorporate some of Russell's favorite things. Russell is Bob the Builder's biggest fan! Each week we listen to the Bob the Builder soundtrack and have fun singing along too! Throughout the arena patterns, I add cards with pictures of the Bob the Builder characters. Russell spells the names of Bob's machines and friends and answers questions like, "Can you list two items in Bob's toolbox?" And "What is your favorite candy? Disney movie? Pizza topping?" Russell's communication skills have really improved with this exercise.

It's great to see Russell's progress; I think that if he is interested, he has the potential to be a dedicated volunteer one day. He has a passion for working with the therapy horses and is gifted when it comes to interacting with the small barn animals too. Keep being awesome Russell!

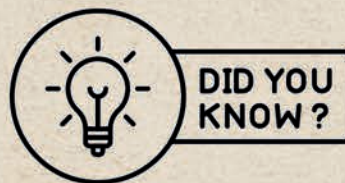


Dixie and Russell

Christina Pacitti

Christina Pacitti

Experiential Learning Coordinator



Our HOOF Program will be celebrating its
10 year anniversary in 2026!



BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2025

Shared visions empower strong outcomes



Dawn Aresenault
President



Sue Klotzer
Past President



Crystal Sylvester
Secretary



Debbie Richards
Board Member



Hazel Keefner
Board Member



Catherine Gravelle
Board Member



Lois Wares
Board Member



Tara Gatten
Board Member



Tom Lanoue
Treasurer

CARING

We care about people creating a safe environment to explore opportunities. We are committed to act with compassion, integrity, and honesty in all situations and to listen with respect and empathy.

INNOVATION

We show creativity, drive, and adaptability to solve problems and think progressively when working toward our vision. We are passionate about new possibilities and implement innovative ideas to create value.

COMMITMENT

We are passionate about our work and focused on the best interests of the people we serve. We recognize the uniqueness of each individual and strive to adapt our services to be responsive.

LEADERSHIP

We are committed to continuous learning to ensure our knowledge and skill levels are at the highest standard. We are current on the latest research, developments, and community needs related to the services we provide, so that we can develop and promote best practices.

EXCELLENCE

We are determined to achieve ambitious, measurable outcomes in working toward our mission. We strive for accuracy and credibility in our relentless pursuit of results. We maintain best practices in all aspects of operations.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

We strive to create social change that is in the best interest of individuals with special needs and a positive impact on society.





Windsor-Essex Therapeutic Riding Association

With the help of donors, grants and community partnerships, we have been improving and growing the facility to facilitate program growth and to maintain a safe, unique opportunity for our clients, volunteers and guests.



DONATIONS

WETRA SINCERELY VALUES THE SUPPORT
OF DONORS WHO HAVE CHOSEN TO
INVEST IN OUR MISSION

2025

Strong Partnerships Empower Strong Outcomes

Foundation Giving

WE Care for Kids Foundation
Santini Foundation
Lucier Family Foundation
Anna and Murray Temple Foundation
The Dunbar Alexander Wellness Foundation
The Stephanie and Barry Zekelman Foundation
The Solcz Family Foundation
Farrow Family Foundation

Corporate Giving

Russel A. Farrow Limited
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Walker Aggregate Inc.
Rachel C. Park Medicine
Mills Woodworking
Colchester Bar & Grill
Polo Sur
Farrow Realty
Century 21 Teams & Associates
Form & Build Management
Knights of Columbus 5642
Matthew Wealth Management
Capri Pizzeria Inc.
Fred Martin Trucking
Integrity Tool & Mold
Knights of Columbus 9528
Lara Michelle Souliere Dentistry
Laramie Farms(McGregor) Inc.
Rapid Drainage
Chevalier Drainage Limited
Fort Malden Chapter #268 Order of the Eastern Star
Royal Canadian Legion Belle River Branch 399
Assist Group for Putting Youth in Sport
Unifor Local 444

Holland Cleaning Solutions
Scorpaz Group Inc.
Windsor Essex County Insurance
Windsor Loyal Moose Order
Bloomin' Gardener
Quality Craftsmanship Woodworking
Creative Stairs & Railings
J & B Auto Wreckers (Essex)
Baker Tilly Windsor LLP
Al's Auto Repair
Royal Canadian Legion Branch 201
Settingingtons Fertilizer Service
Canadian Recreational Horse and Rider Association
Greater Essex Elementary Teachers Foundation
May Court Club of Windsor
Royal Bank of Canada
Unifor Local 2458
Royal Canadian Legion Branch 594
Unifor Local 240
Rotary Club of Harrow
Royal Canadian Legion Fort Malden Branch 157
Rotary Club of Windsor Roseland
Mayor McNamara's Annual Charity Gold Tournament
Ladies Auxiliary to the Royal Canadian Legion Belle River Branch 399



*Through community collaboration, WETRA continues to
expand opportunities for individuals of all abilities*



DONATIONS

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2025

Strong partnerships empower strong outcomes

Our Donors

Sandy & Ellie Tyndale	Rick & Amy Wismer	Michael & Valarie Bates	Tom and Lori Sutts
Christopher Benateau	Gerald & Bettie Fraser	Marilyn and John Fahringer	Wayne & Elizabeth Taylor
Carol Malott	Lena Walsh	Piere Lacasse	Jack & Mirjam Wood
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Kevin Telfer	Martin Gillis	David White	Ruth Revenburg
Bill & Jaqueline Sideris	Erin Holt	Carol Abrams	Linda Caccaro
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Gary McGuinness	Joyce Meloche	Louis & Laura Bertoia	Katherine John
Kenneth & Sharon McMahon	Sharon Wasyluk	Michael Birch	James Marchi
Willie & Joyce Zimmerman	Kenneth & Deb Pailey	Katherine Block	Lynnee Skanes-Bannon
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Jody Ness	Brian & Shelly Bobbie	Anette Durham	Kay Kotsis
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Gerald Horsfall	Alan Dube	Nicole Gibbs	Diana Murphy
Christopher John	Wayne & Sharon Durham	Bernadette Grenon	Rosa Richardson
Joanne King	Larry & Twyla Glassford	Sandy Hamilton	Andrea Ryan
Helen Lefler	Lyle Hall	Mike Kovacs	Richard & Judy Sinasac
Wilfred Renaud	Helgrit Hepner	Heidi Marie Larsen	Lisa Blonde
Daniel McLean	Donald & Linda Jones	Christa MacLaggan	Sandra Blonde
Charles McLean	Beverly Kerr	Michelle Malo	Katie Bloomfield
Peter & Lois Wares	Sue Klotzer	Kathy McCarty	Ricki-Jo Broad
Evelyn Cochrane	David & Anita Lapoint	Debbie Moore	Randy Butcher
Giuseppe Nardon	Andrea Laramie	Daryl & Krisztina Muscat	Chris Candido
Jerry Pillon	Gary & RoseAnne Laramie	Alison Noble	Delanie Champagne
Diane Poisson	Tari Leclair	Chris Ouellette	Tony Coutsogiannakis
Denica Sipos	Pascal & Anna Maola	Katalin Piatkiewicz	Audrey Famula
Michael & Elise Solcz	Murdo McLean	Linda Renaud	Shay Freeman
Yvonne Soulliere	Janith & Richard Menard	Heather Scully	Vince Giannotti
Kenneth & Bonnie St Amour	Michael & Rebeca Mills	Connie Simone	Renn E Guzman
James Tanner	Lynda Monik	Pamela Skillings	Sandy Guzman
Mary Lou Tanner	Evelyn Morin	William & Margaret Snow	Doug & Ada Jones
Dorothy Vanderhaeghe	Robin Nantais	Ken St Amand	Karen Kapostiak
Ethel & Darwin Wismer	Chris Yates	Kathleen Steffler	S. Khan
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Kerry Lauzon	Trevor Nemeth	Michael Rogers	Angela Amond
Kyle Lebert	Mona Paulin	Michelle Ruest	Eugene & Helen Santi
Sabrina Lebert	Dave Pitti	Martha Ryan	Robert Pillon
Rachel Mattsson	Dale Richardson	Dawn St. Pierre	
Paula Michaud	Sydney Richardson	Kristen Walker-Dube	

*Through community collaboration, WETRA continues to
expand opportunities for individuals of all abilities*



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT 2025

Strong Partnerships Empower Strong Outcomes



★ PONY UP FOR *wetra* ★
★ 50/50 RAFFLE ★
★

SUPPORT THERAPEUTIC RIDING
& BUY 50/50 TICKETS!

SCAN HERE FOR YOUR CHANCE TO
WIN 1/2 THE POT!



WETRA5050.CA

