



*At this time of thankfulness and giving, we wish to share this heartfelt message from LTR parents and supporters Tim and Pat Corcoran, in hopes that it may inspire you to consider making a year-end gift to LTR and help us continue to sustain the important work we do; making a difference in so many lives.*

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Our 18 year-old daughter Caitrin is non-verbal and has a history of seizures and self-injurious behaviors. She began her adventures in horseback riding with Loudoun Therapeutic Riding when she was five years old. At that time, our intent and hope was that therapeutic riding would provide Caitrin with a means to:

- increase her physical and sensory development,
- improve her awareness and interactions with others,
- mitigate her tendency for self-injury,
- complement other therapies and communications training in which she participated, and
- engage in an activity that was fun, which included physical exercise.

What we had not anticipated at the time was the extent of the heartfelt care, understanding, and support that the Loudoun Therapeutic Riding staff and volunteers provide to these special individuals and to us, the parents. The experience, perceptiveness, and patience of the staff and volunteers have enabled Caitrin's riding program and routines to evolve over the years to accommodate her changing needs and physical capabilities.

Nonetheless, all of these factors and outcomes are enabled and facilitated by Caitrin's relationship with the beautiful horses that are part of the Loudoun Therapeutic Riding family, just as beloved family pets are embraced by their families. This family, in total, has benefited Caitrin in her non-verbal communicative skills, personal behavior, physical development, and social interaction.

As Caitrin's parents, the riding program also provided us with unexpected benefits. We are able to see and assess Caitrin's behavior and physical skills in a more dynamic and interactive environment and to share and exchange information with staff, volunteers, and with other parents.

Consequently, the perspective and experience we obtain through her participation in the program allows us to more effectively try to understand her changing needs and wants and, as a result, make adjustments to both her and our activities, routines, and sometimes her behaviors.

Thank you and love to the Loudoun Therapeutic Riding Community,

Tim and Patricia Corcoran

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*LTR wishes all a very warm and peaceful holiday season!*