

HOLD YOUR HORSES



**Fiscal Year 2024-2025
Annual Report**



Director's Note



To Current and Future Friends of the Farm,

This past year at Hold Your Horses has been another season of transition and powerful growth—one that has reminded me again and again that healing is never a solitary act. It is something we create together through connection, care, and the rhythms we share with the land and the animals who hold us.

As we step forward with our new strategic plan—shaped by refreshed mission, vision, and values—we are grounding ourselves in a future where healing is reimagined, differences are celebrated, and every being has access to transformative care. Our new plan doesn't just guide our work; it calls us to become even more intentional stewards of the people, horses, and natural spaces that make Hold Your Horses a community cornerstone of connection and belonging.

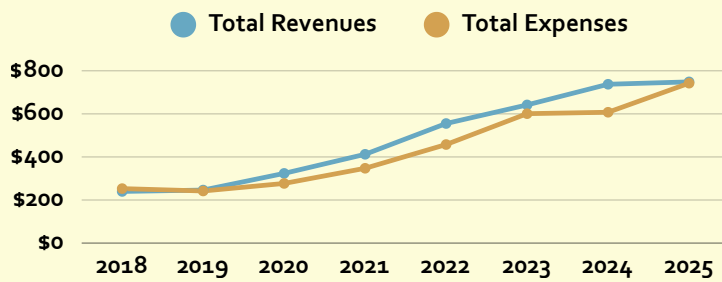
This year's rhythm was marked by community gatherings to honor significant leaders in our story. Founding Director, Janet Weisberg, continues to transition into a clinical mentoring role, and Ruth Rovner—whose steady wisdom and countless contributions have kept the farm running from the start—felt ready to retire, having generously shared her wisdom with all of us. Even our beloved herd leader, Ghost, stepped into semi-retirement, reminding us that rest and rhythm are essential parts of a full life. As part of the legacy handoff, we continue to welcome new horses, new team members, and new partners who bring energy and possibility (reach out with leads!). Together, we are all helping carry forward the legacy of those who came before.

In the year ahead, our goals center on widening access to care, strengthening the heart of our clinical work, onboarding new horses and people, and expanding our non-clinical partnerships. Thanks to the generosity of Mary and Armand Brachman and the pro bono support of the Lacek Group and Red Cape Consulting, we are strengthening our development and marketing initiatives so the people who need our services—and those who believe in this mission—can find us with greater clarity and ease. By building this solid foundation, we are ultimately expanding our capacity to serve our community, deepen our impact, and ensure that more individuals can experience the healing power of horses, nature, and connection.

Hold Your Horses has always believed that individual care radiates outward—and that small acts of kindness can lead to meaningful waves of positive change. This interconnectedness is our greatest strength and our greatest source of hope. Thank you for all the small and big things you do to help others discover their gifts and offer them back for our collective good.

With care, gratitude, and hope for the future,

Kenz Becco
(they/them)
Executive Director



Financials



Balance Sheet

ASSETS	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 250,259
Accounts Receivable	\$ 36,569
Subtotal	\$ 286,829
Property and Equipment, Net	\$ 1,113,196
Total Assets	\$ 1,400,024
LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable & Other Liabilities	\$ 22,637
Long Term Debt	\$ 619,455
Total Liabilities	\$ 642,091
NET ASSETS	\$ 757,993
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 1,400,024

Statement of Activities

REVENUE	
Contributions and Grants	\$ 391,792
Program Revenue	\$ 350,160
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$ 6,620
Total Revenue	\$ 748,572
EXPENSES	
Staffing	\$ 532,278
Operating Expense	\$ 210,269
Total Expense	\$ 742,547
Change in Net Assets	\$ 6,025
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	\$ 751,908
NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR	\$757, 933

Our Team

Mental Health Therapy:

Barbara Guy (LMFT)
 Molly DePrekel (MA, LP)
 Carissa Brandt (PsyD, LP)
 Kay Neznick (MSW)
 Ella Schreck (MA, LPCC, C-AAIS)

Occupational Therapy:

Janet Weisberg (MS OTR/L HPCS)
 Sheryl Butler (MA, OTD, OTR/L)
 Rachel White Robinson (OTR/L)
 Lauren Putnam (OTD, OTR/L)

Kenz Becco
 Ruth Rovner
 JoJo Reiling
 Emily Loberg
 Shelby Hart
 Syd Vollendorf
 Avery Deffner
 Grace Palubicki
 Leslie Davis
 Lori Kozicky
 Kellie Kvern
 Brynn Bieker

Board of Directors

Brigid Goss, President
 Birgit Kelly, Vice-President
 Kristi Argyilan, Secretary
 Forest Wilde, Secretary
 Chad Lassen, Treasurer
 Alan Eidsness
 Tiffany Pavelka
 Cally Swanson
 Molly Kelly



Looking Back



Looking Ahead

Our Values

- Safety:** We actively cultivate physical, emotional, and relational safety in every decision and action, ensuring a safe space where people and animals can thrive.
- Belonging:** We celebrate diversity and dignity for all, fostering an inclusive, welcoming environment where every individual can explore their identity and grow as their most authentic self.
- Rhythm:** We embrace the natural rhythms of horses, nature, and people to foster healing, mindfulness, and resilience, creating a foundation for growth and transformation.
- Connection:** We build trusting, responsive relationships that honor the needs of our clients, community, animals, and team - deepening our impact and shared experience.
- Stewardship:** We are dedicated to the ethical care of our animals, land, facilities, people, and financial resources - ensuring sustainability for future generations.



Mission

We harness the power of horses, nature and human connection to create a place of belonging where individuals can break barriers and grow through transformative care.



Vision

We envision a world where healing is reimaged, differences are celebrated, every being has access to transformative care, and individual change radiates throughout the community.

3-Year Strategic Goals



Goal 1 - Clinical Excellence

Be a leader in providing inclusive, trauma-informed, equine and nature-based therapy.



Goal 2 - Diversity & Accessibility

People of all backgrounds experience deep healing and participate in meaningful work.



Goal 3 - Farm & Property Integration

Our farm and services act as an integrated, sustainable model of ethical stewardship, connection and care.



Goal 4 - Financial Health

Hold Your Horses is a thriving, sustainable organization fulfilling it's Mission.



Therapy that moves you

Everybody deserves care that meets them where they are. At Hold Your Horses, we create somatic, embodied experiences that help people get unstuck and move toward their most meaningful, vibrant life. Our farm is more than a setting—it's a refuge. A place to breathe deeper, move differently, and release the expectations and limitations the world may have put on you. Here, every part of who you are is honored. There's no need to explain or fit into a box. In partnership with horses, nature, and community, you can arrive as you are and leave more connected to who you're becoming.

Mental Health:

At Hold Your Horses, therapy isn't confined to an office—it unfolds in partnership with horses, in nature, and at your pace. Our licensed therapists support people of all ages and identities through trauma, anxiety, depression, grief, stress, and life transitions. Whether in the pasture, barn, or woods, therapy is relational, embodied, and grounded in safety and connection. You might talk, walk, create, or simply be—with or without a horse nearby. This is a place to find your voice, regulate your nervous system, and come home to yourself.

Occupational Therapy:

Our occupational therapy services support people across the lifespan in building strength, coordination, confidence, and functional skills. We integrate movement, relationship, and purposeful activity into every session. At Hold Your Horses, occupational therapy may involve working with a horse—on the ground or mounted—while incorporating rhythm, texture, balance, and body awareness. Hippotherapy ("hippo" means horse) is an evidence-based practice that intentionally uses equine movement as a therapy tool while the client is mounted to engage sensory, neuromotor and cognitive systems to support daily living skills. In this sensory-rich environment, therapy feels less like a chore and more like an adventure.

Youth Trauma Therapy (Co-Therapy):

At Hold Your Horses, healing is relational, sensory, and embodied. Our co-therapy program combines the "being" of mental health therapy with the "doing" of occupational therapy, supporting the whole person—mind, body, and spirit. Developed for youth referred by Hennepin County's DOCCR and HSPHD who are at risk or have experienced trauma, the 14-week program pairs two therapists in each session. Together, a mental health therapist and occupational therapist provide a flexible, personalized experience with horses to help clients build trust and gain resourcing skills in self-regulation, grounding, communication, boundaries, cooperation, empathy, self-love, responsibility, and healthy relationships.

Percentage of our total services are dedicated to:

25%

Hennepin County Services

35%

Occupational Therapy Services

39%

Mental Health Services

Thanks to our donors, more than half of every session is subsidized, and clients can also access our sliding fee program. Currently, 54% of our mental health clients and 12% of our OT clients receive sliding-scale support.



Scan the QR code to view a testimonial video about our mental health therapy!



Scan the QR code to view a testimonial video about OT!



Scan QR code to read an article showcasing our co-therapy model with Hennepin County!





Read more
articles!

Yoder Says...

Did you know that Yoder is famous? He has been writing a column for the American Hippotherapy Association with Founding Director, Janet Weisberg, since 2019! He recently coined his own term to describe the work he does: Yoderizing. Here's a short preview:

For a long while at the farm I worked only with the littles, but soon my steady, dependable nature won over older clients as well. In fact, I don't mind saying that I am kind of a barn favorite. Clinicians and clients choose me for their sessions when fear or restless energy are significant. I like experiencing how people change their breathing and heart rate as they curry my backside or brush out my tail. The therapists say I help clients co-regulate. I call it Yoderizing.

Yoderizing is not passive. It requires participation through movement or mindful observation. I often Yoderize new volunteers and staff when they are training for barn chores. They want to learn about entering and exiting stalls, safe leading through pasture gates, and how to put on a halter or clean feet. I am calm and patient with them and they say it helps them feel confident and ready to work with other horses. I say they put in the effort and have been Yoderized.

I know that people have a lot of big feelings, too. Before people do the growing they need to do, they don't always have the capacity to manage their big feelings. The unabashed delight of a child is a joy to experience. When other unabashed feelings emerge, I understand how important it is to be patient. As horse and human professionals, we practice showing up as a steady presence for our clients. This is an everyday practice and some days it is hard enough to show up and manage ourselves. I just want to send out some Yoderizing to all of you and say that it is okay. Please remember to treat yourself as kindly as you treat others. That is how we feed our own inner calm so we can show up in the best way possible. I am heading off for a roll in the green grass. Sending peace and sunshine out to all of you for the summer. ~ With Love, Yoder

Quotes from the farm

"Being at HYH is like coming home again. The supportive staff and the time with the animals and nature has had such an amazing impact for me. So rewarding."

"I choose HYH because it challenges me to be present, improves my confidence, teaches me how to deal with personal anxiety, and encourages me to hold boundaries in life."

"The clinical expertise and the welfare of the herd is paramount."

"HYH lives the values they state."

"I learned if you are calm and stay steady, it makes people around you feel calm. It makes you feel like you have less anxiety."

"I started noticing other people's feelings around me and I ask if they are okay and what I can do to help"

"Being aware of other people's emotions, learned what I like and don't like and how to advocate for myself."

"I donate to HYH because of the integrity, compassion and professionalism of the entire staff, both human and equine (and feline!)."





Volunteers



Barn Chore Crew

Our 30+ weekly volunteers fulfilled a total of 1,642 hours doing barn chores this year and have kept this place running!



Property Ponies

Our dedicated group of volunteers called the "Property Ponies" have helped with numerous property projects including paddock irrigation, energy efficient lighting, and an enclosed tack room.



Maple Syrup

To make use of the maple syrup harvested, we hosted a Pancake Breakfast for Volunteer Appreciation Week!



Tree Planting

Trees were planted across the property and in pastures for added shade, water retention, and habitat!



Maple Syrup

This early spring, volunteers Lisa Nygard, Mark Gittleman, Craig Kupritz, and Willy Kluck harvested, boiled, and canned maple syrup from the farm's trees.



117
volunteers
in 2025!



Hay Stacking

Volunteers helped with stacking over 600 bales of hay this year!



Community



Sunday Yoga

Halen Bower, a HYH volunteer and experienced Yoga instructor, hosted Yoga sessions on the farm once a month throughout the year.



Derby Watch Party

We hosted another in-person Kentucky Derby Watch Party to cap off our online virtual horse race fundraiser by crowning Ghost as winner (later tying with Yoder after final calculations).



Energy Workshop

We partnered with Therese Naber from All Being Energy to host an Energy Tune-Up Workshop.



Drum Circles

HYH partnered with Amidst the Trees to host healing drumming circles and drum making classes on the farm.

Hay There!

Hay There! was a big hit this year featuring talented musician Ellis Delaney! Everyone participated in the usual fun of hay rides, Lily Plop Bingo, stick horse races, Lucky Auction, labyrinth walk, OT demo, and petting zoo!



The Herd



Ghost *Mental Health Partner*

Ghost has been with HYH since our founding and original location at Pergola Farm in 2006. On the very first day, he walked right up to our founding director and placed his head on her chest as if saying, "let's work together." Originally an outcast, he found a new sense of purpose with this work. He became a steadfast therapy horse and is now leader of the herd.



Whisper *Mental Health & OT Partner*

Whisper came to HYH with his owner, psychologist Molly DePrekel in 2012. Whisper is intuitive and playful and a willing partner in all of our programs and services. He is also our only horse who appreciates pajamas to maintain overnight comfort in his stall!



Karl *Mental Health & OT Partner*

Karl was a seasoned therapy horse before joining our herd. He was a member of the Stable Pathways therapy program before joining HYH in 2021. Karl is such a great therapy partner that he has gleefully stepped into mental health sessions beyond hippotherapy.



Bingo *Mental Health & OT Partner*

Bingo was donated by Connie and Jack McCann. He is our go-to pony for little kids and is a frequent favorite with mental health clients. His nickname is "Pony Soprano" because he's the strong silent type, ya know? If it weren't for his size, he would be the leader of the herd - no doubt!



Rose & Ida *Mental Health & OT Partners*

Rose & Ida, a mother-daughter duo, were gifted to us by Dr. Sarah Carlson to bring love to the farm after losing one of our best equine partners, Lily. While they often serve as mascots or comic relief, their small stature and loveable personalities make them approachable therapy partners in OT and mental health!



Bentley *Mental Health Partner*

Our founding director, Janet Weisberg, randomly stumbled across a photo of Bentley online and she immediately drove to Wisconsin to meet him. Bentley was waiting at the fence and it was love at first sight. Nearly unrideable at first because of pain, after some dental work and physical therapy, he is now a happy and dedicated therapy partner with a big heart.



Remi *Mental Health & OT Partner*

Remi is the new guy in town! He's still learning the ropes, but is quickly settling into his new role as a therapy partner. He is very attuned to energy making the perfect match for many of our clients (mental health or occupational therapy) who need someone to connect with.



Yoder *Mental Health & OT Partner*

Yoder spent many years as a cart-horse on an Amish farm. After losing his cart-horse partner, he was sent to a sale barn for a short while and that's where we found him. Originally not for sale, we inquired and eventually purchased him thanks to sponsorship from the Brachman Family.



Champ *Mental Health & OT Partner*

Champ was donated to us by the same wonderful family that donated Bingo! Champ had been a pasture pony for some time with his closest friend being a cat. Wanting to give him a purpose again, he was graciously donated to HYH where he now loves his job and wants to make everyone happy.



Kubota & Cookie *Mental Health & OT Partners*

Kubota belonged to a past farm manager before becoming a permanent resident at HYH. He fell in love with our farm cat Mittens who sadly passed away in 2023. A few months later, we searched high and low to find him a new friend. Fortunately, a nearby farm had several cats needing a home and that's how the rambunctious Cookie came along!



Donate or Lease a Horse

Do you know of a good therapy horse? We are looking for new therapy horses to join our expanding programming through lease, donation or purchase. The ideal candidate would match these specifications:

- ✔ Gelding
- ✔ 7-16 years old
- ✔ Can carry adults, and is, under 15.2 hands
- ✔ Healthy, sound & safe
- ✔ Acclimated or can easily acclimate to different environments, people and equipment.
- ✔ Well-trained, on ground and under saddle:
 - Can be an intermediate rider horse but must be beginner safe on a lead-line
 - stands well in cross-ties
 - good for farrier
 - good with farm animals

Land & Facilities



We acknowledge that the land on which we work, heal, and grow is the ancestral homeland of the Dakota people. We recognize the past harms inflicted upon Indigenous communities and commit to honoring their history and importance today. We strive to foster a future rooted in respect, equity, and justice.

Join & Support!

At Hold Your Horses, we believe in the transformative power of horses and nature to heal, connect, and inspire. Through animal and nature-based therapy and community programs, we provide a place of solace and care for individuals of all abilities. Your support fuels this mission—helping us nurture resilience, foster belonging, and create opportunities for growth. Join us in making a meaningful impact—volunteer, donate, or spread the word.

Start your therapy journey
Join our expanding volunteer community
Meet us at community events

  Follow us on social @holdyourhorsesmn

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