

November 24, 2021



# STIRRUP COURAGE

## Equestrian Learning Center

[www.stirrupcourage.org](http://www.stirrupcourage.org)

*Finished with all of our riding sessions for this year, looking forward to seeing a barn go up to be ready for new students in spring of 2022, and getting down to business with fundraising for our Barn Raising Capital Campaign!*

### Fall Sessions completed with 6 new graduates!



We had such a blast starting our first level of riding lessons and getting to know new intro level students this fall, and we couldn't have asked for more perfect fall weather! Our 3 riders worked hard and got to finish out their session with some fun games of basketball and golfball-and-spoon, followed by a fall trail ride and some fall artwork to take home with picture memories from the session. Our intro to horse care



group gave us 3 eager new graduates who can't wait for the chance to come back to start their riding in the spring! We also added 2 new awesome volunteers to the team!

Special thanks to volunteer Paula Schmid who wanted to help with a keepsake graduation gift for our first riding students! The adorably soft stuffed horses she picked out for the girls (that I customized with some Stirrup Courage bling) were very appreciated by the recipients!



### Central Christian School Helps Spark Excitement for Stirrup Courage!

School field trips weren't something I had yet envisioned as an opportunity to share the mission of Stirrup Courage. But when Stacie Tschiegg called from Central Christian School asking about the possibility of bringing some horses to school to share with the children for their elementary School Day Out, I was excited to make it happen! With the help of volunteer Cathy Yoder, we introduced children in kindergarten through 4th grade to Boomerang, Ginger, and two extra horses provided by Stacie. I shared about the mission of Stirrup Courage, and gave the children a basic lesson in grooming and a chance to use the brushes on the horses. There was a lot of excitement, and many children exclaimed that they had never been that close to a horse before, as they proudly brushed a pony's fuzzy coat and combed out horses' manes and tails. The event got us some coverage in the local Dalton-Kidron Gazette newspaper as well!



As a result of this visit, one first grader choose Stirrup Courage as the non-profit she wanted to work at for the school's Community Service Day. On a chilly and rainy day at the end of October, Kylie Tighe and her mom Emily came for the morning to help scrub clean all the brushes and grooming tools used over the summer, pack away lesson equipment for the winter, label all our tools with a Stirrup Courage sticker, and stamp boxes full of horse books for our library with a Stirrup Courage stamp on the inside cover!





## Farm Tour Fundraising SUCCESS!!!



Above, I got to have a picture with one happy little winner of a Stirrup Courage beach ball!

At right, my lovely sidekick Cathy also helped represent at our booth on Saturday.



In early October the Steiner Family opened up Venture Heritage Farm to HUNDREDS of visitors for the Wayne County Farm Tour, and invited Stirrup Courage to be the beneficiary of money raised from the event! We set up an informational booth for our program, complete with our brand new brochures, giveaway pens, a raffle basket of handmade soaps donated by Simple Wholesome Delights,

#couragewearspink shirts for sale, and a big screen TV playing a slideshow of pictures from our sessions.

Micah did a wonderful job promoting Stirrup Courage donations as she served fry pies for 5 hours straight both days of the tour! 700 fry pies, made and donated by Dutch Kitchen, were eaten over the two tour days!



By the close of the Farm Tour on Sunday, **almost \$4,000** had been donated to help jumpstart our capital campaign! We are thankful for members of the Steiner family, Venture Heritage Farm, Tilmor employees, and Dutch Kitchen who all made this event possible!

Below, we provided games for child participation in the event—horseshoe toss, and a “test” to see what kind of barn cleaning volunteer they would be, as they scooped up Stirrup Courage logo beach balls with the pitchfork and tried to toss them into the “muck buckets!” Every child who played got to pick a Stirrup Courage logo ball, color change cup, or pen as a prize!



Venture Heritage Farm also served homemade ice cream, bags of sweetened puffed grain and caramel corn, all food offered for a donation to Stirrup Courage!

## Construction Work in Progress!

After months of waiting for things to move forward during the wait period for the materials order to come in, trucks loaded with blocks and support beams arrived last week! Construction crews have been seen digging the foundation and setting the concrete block this week! You'll have to find excuses to drive down Kohler road to keep tabs on the progress along

with us!

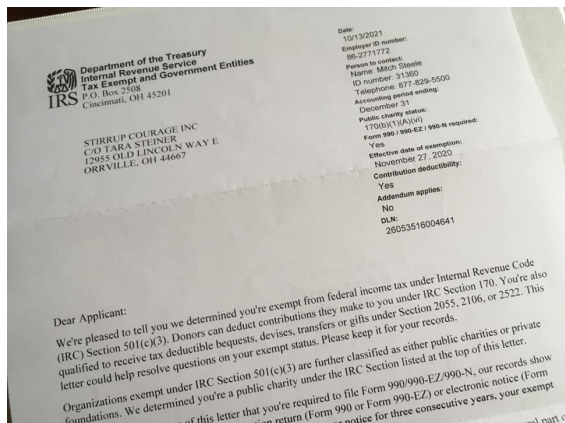
And check out our beautiful new, locally-Amish-made, poly mailbox to be installed for mail at our own Stirrup Courage address! It even has an additional lean-to section to hold brochures and forms for interested families to pick up. (It is also your best hint at what the outside of the barn might look like when finished...) 😊





# The Stirrup Courage “Barn Raising Capital Campaign” — WE NEED YOUR HELP!

At the end of October, a little piece of paper came in the mail that we had been anxiously awaiting ALL spring and summer—our official IRS Tax-Exempt status approval!!! This letter was the signal our fundraising team was waiting for to really get “down to business” on launching our Capital Campaign, preparing to seek out sponsorships from local businesses.



Our team has developed a plan for various business partnership levels, ranging from \$500 to \$15,000 and above, with corresponding levels of donor recognition displays and business advertising offered in return for the partnership. A business might choose to sponsor a horse stall (\$2,000-\$8,000 range), be an arena sponsor (\$3,000-\$12,000 range), partner as a major donor on our indoor gathering space (\$15,000 and above), or help us complete our outdoor spaces and parking lot (\$500-\$2,000 level).

We have started to brainstorm a list of businesses to contact that are closest in location to where our program is located. But we also might be missing some great potential business sponsors that some of you might have more personal connections with! If any of you as supporters would be willing to share about Stirrup Courage and invite a business you are connected to, whether it is your personal or family business, a good friend, your place of employment, or just a business you frequently support that you think would be interested in supporting our mission...we would GREATLY appreciate all the extra help we can get in making as many contacts as possible!

**We will have Business Partnership packets with a cover letter, sponsorship form, return envelope, brochure, pen, and business card, all ready to go for you to deliver and make a request on behalf of Stirrup Courage. Just send me an e-mail ([stirrupcourage@gmail.com](mailto:stirrupcourage@gmail.com)) and we will get you set with all the materials! We'll also be asking for help sharing about our campaign on social media for Giving Tuesday! So if you are willing to invite family and friends to contribute to our campaign individually, share this link: <https://givebutter.com/OKgZHx> .**



And take a peek at our beautiful, full-color, tri-fold brochures! If you'd like some to pass on to families who might be interested, just ask—we have plenty!



Keep Loving Courageously!

Tara Steiner, Director

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