



# Walk On's Annual Report 2024



*Walk On*  
Equine Assisted Activities®

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# Walk On's Mission

In 2024, our Board of Directors, assisted by our Advisory Board, endeavored to revisit our mission to ensure that our goals and directives from the community are reflected and held up. In March, the following was adopted:



Walk On's mission is to promote well-being and inspire individuals to reach their highest potential by harnessing the healing power of horses.



# Our Team in 2025

## Board of Directors

**Mary Illing - President**

**Nancy Bellis - Vice President**

**Debbie Krukowski - Secretary**

Jan Nestrud

Maureen Prettyman

Nancy Schmid

## Advisory Board

**Allison Greene - President**

Julie Bicknase

Sarah Kovach

Ann Messer

Carolyn Springer

Pat Yun

## Staff

### Barn



**Mary Illing**  
Program Director



**Kelsey Thacker**  
CTRI



**Christine Bania**  
Barn Assistant

### Not Pictured:

**Ramon Huerta** - Barn Assistant

**Matt Liu** - Barn Assistant

**Angela Spigel** - Custodian

**Malinda Patterson** - CTRI & jack-of-all-trades



**Mary Rachel Taylor**  
Executive Director

### Office



**Lisa Barnett**  
Office Assistant

# Our Herd

## Working Program



**Armani**



**Charlie**



**Kashi**



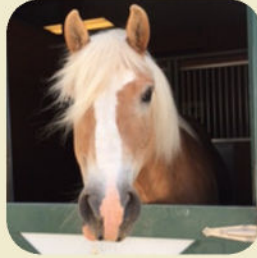
**Little**



**Star**



**Taco**



**Wilbur**



**Wilson**



**Zan**

## Retired



**Rocky aka Rockstar**



**Legacy**

## In Training

## In Memoriam



**Lago**

Our sweet Lago passed in February 2025, after 2 hospitalizations in 2024. He was a much beloved member of Walk On and we grieve with everyone who loved him, including his owner, Toby. Thank you to everyone who has loved him over the years, he will be very missed. You can read his full obituary on our website.

# Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Friends ,

Reflecting on 2024, I am filled with immense gratitude for the dedication and resilience demonstrated by the Walk On community. Our Board of Directors undertook a comprehensive review of our mission and vision, laying the foundation for a strategic plan that ensures Walk On's adaptability and preparedness for future growth. This initiative positions us to navigate uncertainties while steadfastly promoting well-being and inspiring individuals to reach their highest potential through the healing power of horses.

Our programs flourished this year, with notable advancements in therapeutic riding, carriage driving, and equine-assisted learning (EAL). The EAL program, in particular, experienced significant growth as we collaborated with Chicagoland nonprofits to enhance leadership development.

The unwavering commitment of our volunteers—both longstanding and those from corporate groups—has been instrumental in these achievements. Their generosity of time and spirit has enriched the lives of our participants, fostering a community where abilities are built upon and celebrated. As we look ahead to 2025, we are excited about the opportunities that await and remain committed to advancing our mission with passion and purpose.

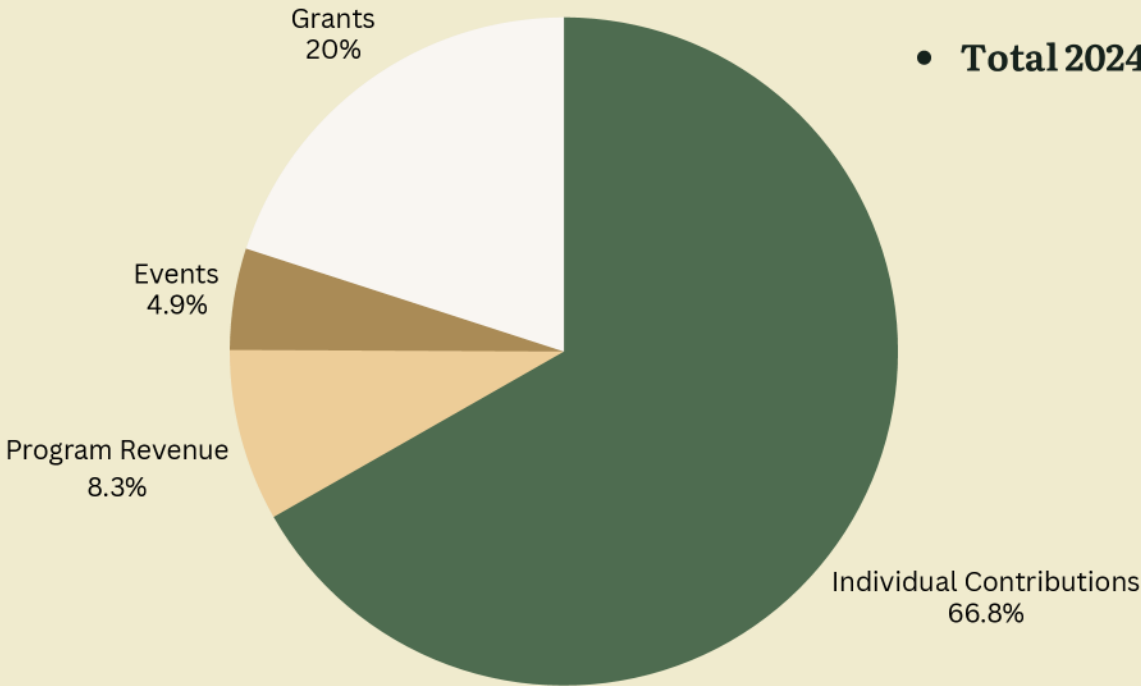
Warm regards,  
Mary Rachel Taylor  
Executive Director



# By The Numbers

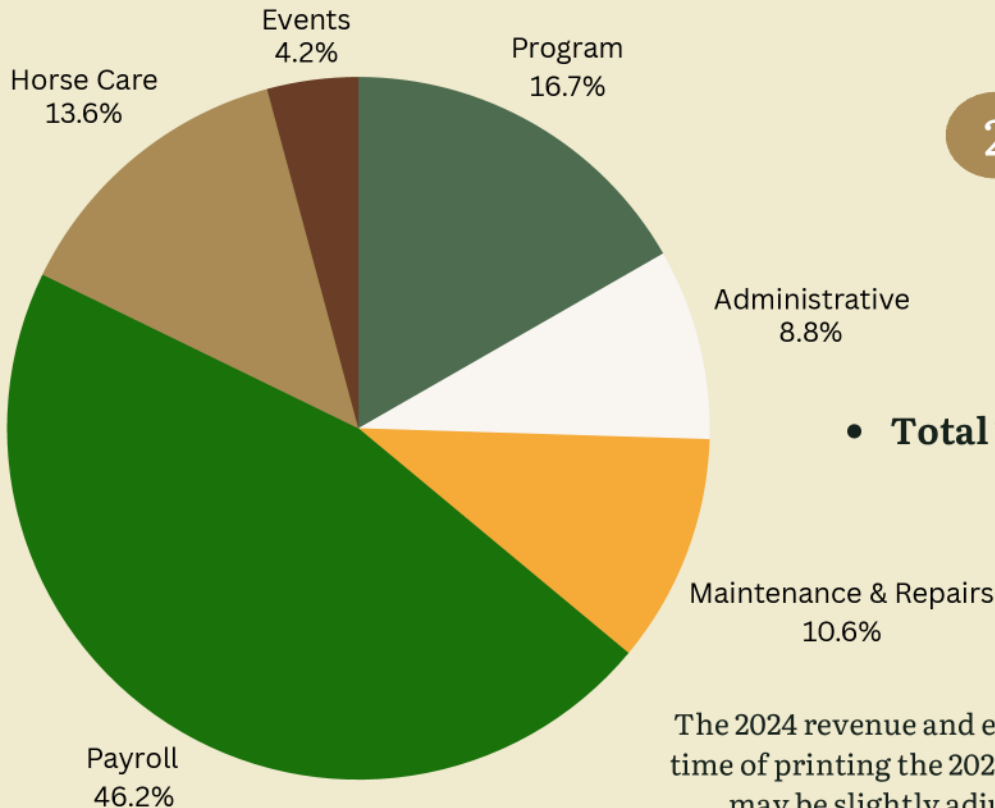


## 1 Income



• **Total 2024 Income: \$486,707**

## 2 Expenses



• **Total 2024 Expenses: \$483,033**

The 2024 revenue and expenditures are unaudited at the time of printing the 2024 Annual Report. These numbers may be slightly adjusted at the time of the audit.

# Programming



- Total of 59 individual served
- We averaged 32 weekly riders
- 3 residential or day program community partners
- 1 weekly carriage driver
- 1 bi-monthly hybrid riding & driving group
- 18 EAL sessions

- **A Total of 1229 Riding & Driving Lessons Given**
- **Average Cost per Lesson to Walk On: \$120**
- **What we charge per lesson: \$38 per semi-private**

Walk On is honored to provide equine assisted activities for groups like Little City, High Road, Camelot, & Mount Saint Joseph's.





# Volunteering at Walk On



Volunteer & Board Secretary Debbie gives Charlie a hug

## We ❤️ Our Volunteers!

- Our amazing barn volunteers put in **over 3000** volunteer hours in 2024!
- **111** individual barn volunteers & **2** office volunteers

According to the Independent Sector Value of Volunteer Time for the state of Illinois is \$30.97 per hour, which means **our volunteers gifted us the equivalent of almost \$93,000!**

- 2 volunteer project days from Omron, who helped us clean up our pastures, do heavy cleaning & painting, and other various chores.
- We had 21 volunteer orientations in 2024.
- 1 volunteer is in training to become a CTRI, 1 is getting her certification in Equine-Facilitated Psychotherapy, and another is pursuing certification in another EAL program. Our volunteers are so dedicated and talented!



Omron volunteers helped get our tree ready for the 17-year cicadas

# Notable Moments



## New Skills Alert!

Kelsey Thacker passed her Equine Specialist in Mental Health & Learning certification. We are incredibly blessed to have such talented instructors at Walk On.

## New Partnership

With the sad news that Palatine Stables was closing in 2024, the Northwest Special Recreation Association (NWSRA) was looking for a new home. We are excited to be their new host, and hope it is a beneficial partnership for both organizations in the days to come.



## Horse of the Year 2024

Little was named Horse of the Year after the most money was raised in his honor. We had a celebration at our Open House in May and he's been milking it ever since. Congrats, Little!



## Legacy



5yo Legacy became the youngest & newest member of the herd when we purchased him from outside Detroit in early December 2023. He is currently in training & has recently started to join our riding program. We're hoping to get him into the carriage driving program soon. We're excited to see him grow!

## Introducing Matt!

Matt Liu joined our barn crew in April 2024 as a weekend barn assistant. Matt has been a fantastic volunteer at Walk On and we're excited to have him in this new role. Say hi if you see him in the barn!

# Grants



**Barrington Area  
Community  
Foundation**

**Horse Care**



**Barrington Junior  
Women's Club**

STRONG WOMEN. STRONG COMMUNITY

**Scholarship Fund**



**Illinois Equine  
Promtion Board**  
**New Helmets**

**Anonymous  
As Needed**

# Community Partners



# Community Events



## 1 Open House 2024

We hosted an open house on Saturday, May 4, where we gave program demonstrations, barn tours, & light refreshments for our visitors. It was a huge success!

## 2 Road Rally Scavenger Hunt

We partnered with 15 local businesses to have a fun afternoon visiting local businesses to get little treats & completing the scavenger hunt.



## 3 Volunteer Connection Live

We connected with potential volunteers at the joint Barrington Area Library/Barrington Area Development Council Volunteer Connection Live event.

## 2 Centered Riding Clinic

Walk On hosted Carol Wilson to give a Centered Riding Clinic in March. Carol also did a TTouch session with our volunteers!



# Valuable Info



## Ways to Give

### Commit to monthly giving

Your recurring donation provides consistent, reliable support necessary for our programs such as essential ongoing farm repairs, arena maintenance, and continual horse care. Your monthly donation will greatly assist the ongoing needs of our mission, allowing us to continue to provide safe and quality services.

### Leave a Legacy Gift

This advanced planning allows you to create a philanthropic legacy with a future gift that impacts our mission and is important to you.

### Share Our Mission - in every way!

Whether you are browsing our new website, following us on social media, reading our email blasts, or just wish to voice your support by word of mouth - we appreciate how YOU impact our mission with your conscious effort of sharing.

### Volunteer

The gift of your time has such a positive influence on our programs, horses, and farms. Become a part of a mission driven community and grow your horsemanship through volunteerism. Horse experience is not necessary to join our team!



Scan To Donate



Volunteering at Walk On is a highlight of my week. As a retired social worker, I missed my favorite part of the job, the students. Also I am a life-long horse girl. Horses have a special healing effect on people, it's science! – Cindy Kozlowski, volunteer



## Where to Find Us



@WalkOnFarm



(847) 381-4231



walkon@walkonfarm.org



26665 W. Cuba Rd. Barrington, IL 60010

## Save the Dates



May 18  
Open House



September 13  
Road Rally Scavenger Hunt



Fall Raffle



December 13  
Holiday Market