

IN HIS OWN WORDS

"I have a fear of horses, so the thought of volunteering to work around these large animals seemed an unlikely choice for me. However, after Tina Mengine and Brenda Borgia from TREC made a presentation to my employer, Scott Enterprises, I put my fears behind me and decided to join 9 other volunteers from my company every Monday night. Our responsibilities included tacking and grooming the horses, barn chores, getting the riders prepped for their class and finally leading the horses or side walking with each rider to ensure safety and security.

To our surprise, the riders started to get to know the volunteers and expected us each week during their class. They got to know us by name and requested their familiar favorites. Little did I know that in attempting to help TREC with their riding program, I would leave the arena feeling as if I had benefited in some way too!

No matter how crazy my day may be, as I begin working with the riders at TREC everything else seems to disappear and I am reassured that someone there needs me. That without people like me, with a lack of volunteers, class might not be able to continue. I've experienced riders that are very peaceful and quiet, riders that love to sing to their horses and volunteers, riders that update me on their entire day, and riders that are such free spirits they find themselves hootin' and hollerin' throughout their entire session.

Each personality brings happiness to the entire TREC community. There is something to be said about the way people leave class with a massive smile on their face; one of those smiles that is genuine and impacts me so greatly that one thought of it can change the mood I carry on any given day!

One rider in particular mentioned to me every week that I was her "Angel". She wasn't able to communicate much more than that while concentrating on her riding skills but always managed to remind me how important my job was in assisting her during her class time. To give a mere 3 hours a week to a rider that appreciated me so much that they considered me an "Angel" was enough to convince me that volunteering with TREC is a wonderful and impactful experience that will keep me coming back year after year."

-Tony Bruno, TREC volunteer