

# 2022 CHRISTMAS LETTER

## *Nature's Edge Therapy Center*

Nature's Edge Therapy Center Incorporated  
2523 14 3/4 Avenue  
Rice Lake, WI 54868  
[www.naturesedgetherapycenter.org](http://www.naturesedgetherapycenter.org)



### LETTER FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

I write a Christmas letter every year and this being our 21st year at Nature's Edge Therapy Center, I want to add a message that resonates close to my heart.

This year the word that best captures the growth and expansion of our mission is "TEAM." The definition is "a group of people with different skills and different tasks, who work together on a common project, service, or goal with a meshing of functions and mutual support."

Our therapy center includes not only our therapists working creatively with our patients to further their independence but also staff and volunteers specializing in animal care, landscaping, strategic fencing, garden growing, grant writing, office management, and resourcing. As a team, we strengthen our mission together.

Our team continues to guide and build ideas to further develop Nature's Edge Therapy Center and the mission we serve. In this year's newsletter, I think it is very important to introduce our staff and give them an opportunity to describe what this mission means to them as they engage in this journey. I am most happy to be a part of such an incredible team of people that drives the mission of helping others reach their highest potential. May you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

Becky L. Payne MATCCC/SLP/HPCS



# WE LOVE OUR MISSION - OUR TEAM SAYS:

Courtney Losey, MS, CCC-SLP  
Speech Pathologist



I love being outside and utilizing nature, animals, the horse, and horticulture in my sessions. It's so rewarding to see the excitement my patients have when they arrive.

Christine Rowe, OTR/L  
Occupational Therapist



I love that we are able to use our team of skilled professionals, the outdoor world, animals, and horticulture to creatively motivate patients to achieve incredible things!

Hannah Hoff, COTA  
Occupational Therapy Assistant



I am so honored to work in the most unique setting for therapy with the best team! Nature provides us with every tool we need to treat our patients individually and effectively.

Jedd Beach  
Facility Supervisor



I like working here because I work with dedicated and compassionate people. Patients receive treatment in a safe and engaging environment that is also exciting and fun.

Kristin Lulich

Special Projects Coordinator



I love seeing clinical interventions in a non-clinical setting! I have experienced how animal assisted therapy and horticulture shows great improvements with our patients!

Marissa Fitzgerald

Equine Specialist



One thing about Nature's Edge that I have noticed in the last few months is how willing everyone is to help out; coming up with ideas when we are stuck and how we all get along with one another.

Isabella Nelson

Equine Specialist



I love how well the animals are treated and put first. I also love how Nature's Edge allows mature patients to see how animals can positively affect their lives.

Suzette Byhre

Equine Specialist



There's a certain kind of magic that happens when I see the patients connect with animals and mature through the guidance of their therapists. It's truly a blessing to witness the progress first hand.

Maryah Cadotte  
Office Manager



I am proud to be a part of the amazing team here. Witnessing each patient connect with the animals and nature in individual and unique ways is an experience like no other.

**Merry Christmas  
& A Happy New Year!**

*From Our Team to You!*

## TAKING THERAPY BEYOND THE CLINIC

### PROVIDING SPEECH AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY FOR ALL AGES

Infant - Toddler - Elementary - Middle School - Teens -  
Adults - Senior Citizens

Have you ever wondered what Occupational and Speech  
Therapy can do for you?

#### Speech Pathologists

Provide Assistance With:

- Hearing
- Swallowing
- Feeding
- Stuttering
- Voice
- Articulation
- Assistive Technology
- Memory
- Social Skills
- Reading
- Writing & Language

#### Occupational Therapists

Provide Assistance With:

- Attention Span
- Arousal Level
- Sensory and Processing Skills
- Emotional Regulation
- Fine & Gross Motor Skills
- Upper Body Range of Motion
- Pre-Employment
- Driving Education
- Daily Living Activities: Feeding, brushing teeth, dressing, toilet training, visual-perceptual skills, handwriting, and assistive technology
- Adaptive Devices & Medical Equipment



Our diagnostic assessments and treatments occur on a 65 acre ranch, utilizing the talents of animals, the movement of the horse (hippotherapy), horticulture, and our nature-based platform.



# SUMMER HAPPENINGS AT NATURE'S EDGE



## FUN ON THE FARM AND SENSORY EXPLORERS

Fun on the Farm was our occupational therapy-based group in which participants had the opportunity to engage in outdoor and animal-based activities to promote daily living skills including problem-solving, responsibility, attention, and social interaction! Sensory Explorers was another occupational therapy-based group that engaged participants in sensory-based activities incorporating smell, taste, touch, and vision to promote sensory exploration and regulation!



## OUR SOCIAL SKILLS GROUP

Our speech therapy program inspired participants to experience the joy of friendship, communication, conversation, and community in a fun social skills group! Participants engaged with each other in enlightening animal-assisted and outdoor activities to promote teamwork, flexible thinking, skills for social interactions, and of course, the building of many positive relationships!



## REMINISCING ON THE FARM

The Reminiscing on the Farm program held at Nature's Edge each summer invites seniors, senior groups, and group programs for adults with disabilities to visit the Nature's Edge farm and meet the animals that reside here. Reminiscing on the Farm (ROTF) combines our natural setting and the company of animals to provide a supportive, sensory-rich setting that encourages seniors and other participants to recall memories of cherished moments. Sharing recollections from each person in a warm and caring environment promotes a sense of well-being for participants.

# Testimonials

Our Families Say:

## "WE HADN'T RECEIVED THERAPY IN DECADES"

A Story of New Beginnings

I have been impressed with the excellent care & love that the animals receive. The therapists are excellent, always working on improving their program & increasing their own knowledge that they pass on to their patients. I can't say enough positive things about Nature's Edge.



## "NIGHT AND DAY"

A Story of Transformation

It was almost a night and day transformation when he first rode one of their ponies. Our son started talking a lot better. Since he has been going nearly every week, we have seen so much improvement in his speech. It is such a blessing that we are getting help from foundations like Nature's Edge.



## "NETC IS HEAVEN SENT"

A Story of Progress

He has so much fun he doesn't know its therapy. He has made such great progress that he went from being hard to understand by even his family to being understood most of the time by everyone he talks to. If you have children in need of speech and OT services, especially those with sensory issues, this is the place for them.



## "THE THERAPY WE NEEDED"

A Story of Overcoming

Our daughter has fine, gross motor, and speech delays with retention of primitive reflexes as well as optic nerve atrophy. This therapy has helped her strive in all areas and we are so appreciative!

## "NATURE'S EDGE FEELS LIKE HOME, MOM"

A Story of Belonging

After multiple failed attempts at traditional counseling, we finally struck gold with Nature's Edge. What started as me looking for horseback riding lessons grew into real life skills training for my daughter. Communication and social skills, flexible thinking, self-care and hygiene, growing her independence, and future job preparation are all things that my daughter learned.



## "THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING"

A Story of Growth

Our son has grown so much in his speech and we are so grateful. We are blessed that God put Nature's Edge in our path and that our son was able to work with such lovely people.



# Diane's House

Intensive Therapy Provided at Diane's House



Once we opened Nature's Edge Therapy Center in June of 2001, we were blessed with people nearby that came to receive occupational, speech, and physical therapy for an hour or two at a time. People were intrigued as to what therapy on a 65-acre ranch would provide outside the four walls of a rehabilitation clinic.

Becky Payne began presentations in the areas of autism, brain injury, stroke rehabilitation, augmentative alternative communication, dementia, and the incorporation of animal-assisted therapy and hippotherapy (the movement of the horse) nationally. Through these presentations and media press releases, we found a need from people more than a few hours away.

We had one family call from Chicago with a son who had autism but the travel was too difficult to manage and they did not want to stay in a hotel. We needed to have a place where a family could come for a week at a time and stay as a family in a family-friendly setting where Becky could work collaboratively with the family to learn their routines, barriers, challenges, and strengths. We needed to build that place. We were able to get all the money needed without taking from our scholarship funds and now we have an endowment that will ensure its continued operations into the future.

At Diane's House we can provide therapy to anyone of any age. We provide speech, occupational, and physical therapy for a week at a time, for either full or half days. Diane's House is a legacy to Diane of her passion for helping people and promoting the human-animal bond. We are excited to continue to share our ability to help families learn skill sets and collaboration in a short amount of time but hours each day.



## THANK YOU to Our Continuing Sponsors!

Nutrena  
Synergy Co-Op Rice Lake  
Boehringer Ingelheim  
Pet Supplies Plus  
The Wood Hoof  
Tom's Grader Service  
World's Best Cat Litter  
NutriSource  
Wedgewood Pharmacy  
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Zoetis  
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Rice Lake Community Health  
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GLC Direct  
Greta Franti  
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Kaytee Products  
LuitPold Pharmaceuticals  
Synergy Co-Op Chetek  
Flyer 411  
NT Canine  
No Thrush  
Jiffy Biffy  
Double J Equine Services  
Cascades Tissue Group  
Erv Smith Services  
Dr. Michelle Armstrong

# SPONSOR A THERAPY ANIMAL!

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT

Please consider sponsoring a therapy animal with your donation. 100% of your donation will go to the care of one of our animal assistants!



## GET INVOLVED TODAY!

<https://www.naturesedgetherapycenter.org>

Visit our website and hover over the "About Us" tab. Click on "Get involved." Here you will have the option to sponsor one of our animals!

Or contact us at:

Phone: 715-859-6670

Email: [naturesedge@citizens-tel.net](mailto:naturesedge@citizens-tel.net)

# FUELED BY SCHOLARSHIPS

The Mission of Nature's Edge

# POWERED BY VOLUNTEERS



## 2022 Volunteers

A special thank you to all of our volunteers this year who have logged over 2,900 hours at Nature's Edge! Every hand and heart has helped our mission to flourish!

Please consider volunteering with us! Give us a call at 715-859-6670 or sign up on our website today!

[naturesedgetherapycenter.org](http://naturesedgetherapycenter.org)

## Our Awards



### Board of Directors

Noel Smith, Board President

Theresa Brommer, Vice  
President

Becky Payne, Executive Director

Kay Searfoss

Dr. Rebecca Blotz

Barb Flouro

Neil Hanson

Shawn Payne

### Advisory Board

Randy Braun

Katherine Carlson

Jewel Market, M.D.

Kristin Zuzek

Dr. Charlie Westman

Dr. Zoe-Inglis

## SCHOLARSHIPS

Many of our patient families struggle to obtain medically necessary physician-prescribed speech and occupational therapy services through their insurance. Your support has helped us provide thousands of therapy hours on scholarship to families in need.



2523 14 3/4 Ave.  
Rice Lake, WI 54848

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

## CONNECT WITH US!

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Website: [www.naturesedgetherapycenter.org](http://www.naturesedgetherapycenter.org)



Nature's Edge Therapy Center



@naturesedgetherapy

# Gift Giving



**Yes! I want to make a gift in the amount of:**

\$500     \$250     \$150     \$100     \$50     \$20     \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Please visit our website at [naturesedgetherapycenter.org](http://naturesedgetherapycenter.org) for our "wish list" of items needed or give us a call if you would like to volunteer your time!

*It takes many hands and hearts to accomplish our mission & we would love your help!*

Nature's Edge is a 501(C)(3) non-profit organization. Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. No goods or services were received in consideration of this donation.