



# CANADIAN THERAPEUTIC RIDING ASSOCIATION

Patron  
HRH The Princess Royal



## ANNUAL REPORT 2017~2018

Charitable reg. no.: 11883 6543 R0001

The 2017~18 audited financial statements are available on request from [ctra@golden.net](mailto:ctra@golden.net)



**CANADIAN THERAPEUTIC RIDING ASSOCIATION  
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE D'ÉQUITATION THÉRAPEUTIQUE**

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*Federation Member, Horses in Education and Therapy International (HETI)*

**2017~2018**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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*Administrator* Brenda Coward

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Jeff Tiessen	Ontario
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Dr. Bob Wright	Ontario

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Mea Renahan	Ontario
Dr. Bob Wright	Ontario

*Front cover photo: Gabriel riding Jewel at the Joyriders Therapeutic Riding Association, Prince Edward Island.  
Photo: Sam Dalton*



## MISSION STATEMENT

**To promote the benefits of therapeutic riding throughout Canada by raising public awareness, working closely with the medical profession, providing continuing education, and maintaining high standards for therapeutic riding instructor certification and accrediting therapeutic riding centres.**

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It's all about passion! Those of us involved in therapeutic riding, working under the CanTRA umbrella, know first-hand how important this special form of therapy, recreation, and sport is to children and adults with disabilities.

As another year flies by, we continue to evolve. CanTRA's standards, constantly under review by our committees, reflect the best of current wisdom and experience from our grass-roots centres, instructors, therapists, and medical professionals. Our field workers – examiners, workshop presenters, site visitors, mentors, and zone representatives – serve as a conduit for this valuable information. It is interesting to note that *all* the members of CanTRA's board and committees have direct experience in therapeutic riding. When decisions are made at the top, it is by people with extensive knowledge under their collective belt!

Our Instructor Certification program continues to thrive, while the process of designating regional Accredited Examination Centres is nearly complete. Our work in the discipline of Hippotherapy is well represented across the provinces, and the Equine-Facilitated Wellness (EFW) program enjoys the benefit of highly qualified mental health and education professionals who bring important insights to our developing standards in this unregulated new field.

On behalf of the CanTRA board, my deepest admiration and thanks to all who help make therapeutic riding the best and safest experience for our clients, and to all who help CanTRA carry out our important standard-setting and education work.



*Eliane Trempe*



## PROGRAM COMMITTEE REPORTS

*Each of our flagship programs is responsible for developing national standards, education, and development initiatives. The following abbreviations are used:*

*CBEIP = Certification Board for Equine Interaction Professionals*

*CTRBI = CanTRA Therapeutic Riding Basic Instructor*

*CTRII = CanTRA Therapeutic Riding Intermediate Instructor*

*CTRSI = CanTRA Therapeutic Riding Senior Instructor*

*CanTRA Coach = CTRSI qualification plus a broad range of expertise in the administration and practice of therapeutic riding*



## CERTIFICATION & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

### Committee members

Margaret Rigby, CanTRA Coach/Examiner (BC) ~ Chair

Jane James, CanTRA Coach/Examiner (BC) ~ Board liaison

Nicola Harman, CanTRA Coach/Examiner (ON)

Linda Rault, CanTRA Coach/Examiner (AB)

Gay Wood, CanTRA Coach /Examiner (ON)

In 2017, we held seven certification events, producing 17 certified CTRBIs and eight CTRIIs. As well, we appointed one Examiner and designated two CanTRA Coaches. The Lungeing Certificate is developing well and a number of people have gone through this certification. In 2017, the following candidates successfully completed the Lungeing Level 1 certificate: Jennifer Henderson, Stacy Reeder, Ashley Sudds, and Tracy Wahl (all from BC).

A number of candidates have also registered for instructor certification events. In 2018, we will hold these only at CanTRA-accredited Examination Centres. Thus, the examination process will be run with a CTRSI co-coordinator at each of these centres.

*Margaret Rigby, Chair*



*Leo, CanTRA 2017 Therapy Horse award winner, with fans.  
Photo: Cowichan Therapeutic Riding Association, Duncan, BC.*



## STANDARDS & ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

### Committee members

Ann Caine, Advisory Council (ON) ~ Chair  
Ruth Carter, CTRII (NB)  
Nicola Harman, CanTRA Coach/Examiner (ON)  
Tegwyn Harper, CanTRA Coach/Examiner (BC)

Sallie Murphy ~ Advisor  
Nanci Picken, CanTRA Coach/Examiner (ON)  
Evelyn Plaxton, CanTRA Coach/Examiner (NS)  
Margaret Tibbo, Board liaison (NL)

2017 was a transition year. Working closely with the Certification Committee chair and the CanTRA administrator, personal connections were made with individual and member centre members. This does not mean that CanTRA requirements are always embraced with enthusiasm, but it has facilitated open discussion and the opportunity to offer advice and support.

In 2018 we plan to accredit and establish new Examination Centres in each CanTRA zone, and to support and strengthen those Examination Centres that have been providing this service for many years.

Plans moving forward:

- Engage Zone Representatives more fully in new developments regarding standards and accreditation.
- As far as possible, provide fall technical/exam dates at all accredited Examination Centres by early summer.
- Engage in ongoing discussion by teleconference, in order to maintain high safety standards across the country and remain open to change where necessary.
- By 2019, achieve the goal of at least one CanTRA accredited Examination Centre in each of our six zones.
- Publicize event dates at each of these sites for the whole year, to facilitate forward planning.

*Ann D. Caine, Chair*



*Bentley enjoys a ride on Petey in the spring sunshine.  
Photo: Sunrise Therapeutic Riding & Learning Centre, Guelph, Ontario.*



## HIPPOTHERAPY COMMITTEE

*Hippotherapy is a rehabilitation strategy that uses the horse as a multi-directional treatment tool for therapeutic purposes rather than equestrian goals. The horse provides unique motor and neuro-sensitive stimulation qualities unavailable in any other treatment setting. In hippotherapy, the client does not influence the horse; rather, the movement of the horse stimulates postural and muscular reactions in the client.*

*NOTE: Hippotherapy is a specialization reserved exclusively to the following rehabilitation specialists: physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and speech language pathologists trained in this field. The term “hippotherapist” is not valid.*

**Mission statement: To promote best practices of hippotherapy in Canada through education, consultation, and continuing professional development with interprofessional collaboration.**

### **Committee members**

Pippa Hodge, PT (BC) ~ Chair	Amy MacKay, PT (NS)
Danielle Champagne, OT (QC)	Sandy Redden, SLP (AB)
Corrine Daymond, SLP (MB)	Devra Rich, OT (ON)
Ruth Isaac, OT (AB)	Sarah-Michelle Senécal, OT (MB) ~ Board liaison
Kristin Kelly, SLP (AB)	Judy Todd, PT (BC)

### **Highlights of 2017**

- \* Danielle Champagne had an article published in the American Hippotherapy Association (AHA) magazine.
- \* Pippa Hodge presented at the RBC Children’s Hospital Pediatric Symposium in Vancouver on the use of music and hippotherapy.
- \* The first AHA-approved Hippotherapy Level I course to be held in Canada took place in Ontario for 15 candidates, instructed by faculty member Pippa Hodge and assisted by Devra Rich, both members of the Hippotherapy Committee. The course was well received.

### **More to come in 2018**

- \* The HETI (Horses in Education & Therapy International) 2018 triennial congress in Dublin will include the inaugural Dr. Gillian Lawrence Memorial Lecture, sponsored by CanTRA. Pippa Hodge served on CanTRA’s review committee, which chose the presentation, “Hippotherapy for patients with Multiple Sclerosis: A multi-center randomized controlled trial,” by Marion Drache (Germany), to bear this honorary title.
- \* In 2018, Pippa Hodge will be teaching AHA Level 1 training at Little Bits in Seattle, and providing hippotherapy training in Australia.

*Pippa Hodge, Chair*



*Cathi Illerbrun, CTRII, longlines Layla on therapy horse Holly. On the far side, Angela Meyer, OT, a member of CanTRA's Medical Advisory Group, supervises the session.  
Photo: Sunrise Therapeutic Riding and Learning Centre.*



## **EQUINE-FACILITATED WELLNESS (EFW) COMMITTEE**

*Equine-Facilitated Wellness brings humans and equines together in healing and learning environments. CanTRA EFW qualifications include Basic and Advanced levels for Mental Health Professionals (MHP), Education Professionals (EDP), and Equine Professionals (EQP). MHPs and EDPs must also take a credentialling exam with CBEIP, our independent, third-party credentialling partner.*

### **Committee members**

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| * Tricia Mellor, MSW, CTRII (ON)         | * Allie Lewis, CTRII (ON)          |
| ~ Chair/Board liaison                    | * Andrea Plesko, BSc, CTRBI (ON)   |
| * Dr. Anne Barnfield, BSc, PhD (ON)      | * Katlyn Wildfang, BSc, CTRBI (ON) |
| * Daphne Davey, CTRBI (PE)               |                                    |
| * Dr. Angela Fountain, BSc, MA, PhD (ON) |                                    |

*Note: Due to space limitations, only academic degrees and equestrian instructor certification qualifications have been listed above. We are most fortunate to have a committee representing tremendous professional depth.*

We thank the following retiring committee members for their valuable service: Kendra Flynn-Stronach and Sandra Mudry. We welcome new members Dr. Angela Fountain and Andrea Plesko.

### **Accomplishments**

- We finalized the certification process for Mental Health and Education professionals.
- We maintained representation on the CBEIP Board, and recommended the renewal of the CanTRA-CBEIP Agreement to continue our credentialling partnership.
- We finalized a Canadian version of the CBEIP credentialling examinations.
- We arranged for the translation of our EFW FAQ document into French, the last of our information package.
- We compiled a list of Canadian colleges and universities that offer equine-related curriculum.

### **In progress**

- Development of an EFW section for the CanTRA Instructor Manual.
- Further circulation of our EFW PR letter to academic sectors.
- Development of an EFW PR card to advertise our certification program at special events.
- Review of EFW certification applications for eligibility and supportive follow-up.

### **Future endeavours**

- Translation of the “Canadianized” CBEIP examinations into French, pending funds.
- Development of an EFW introductory workshop for regional presentation.
- Development of an EFW manual for practitioners, instructors, and facilities.

*Tricia Mellor, Chair*



*Connection with the horse is a vital component in Equine-Facilitated Wellness programs.  
Photo: Kristen Clancy Photography.*





## ZONE REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

*One group of volunteers that comprises an important part of the CanTRA family is our team of Zone Representatives. The country is divided into six regions, each with a Zone Representative serving as CanTRA ambassador and “two-way radio” in their region. Having such knowledgeable people close to the ground is of great benefit to all. We deeply appreciate this volunteer service.*



*Richard riding Max at Creston & District Society for Community Living, Creston, BC.  
Photo: Tanya Simons*



### **ZONE 1 British Columbia, Yukon Zone Representative: Christine Ross**

The process for training new therapeutic riding instructors continues to thrive in BC. During the past year, the following people graduated:

- CTRBI: Alyssa Bigioli, Penelope Harper, Katherine James, Kim Cadigan
- CTRII: Shivaun Gingras.

In addition, Michelle Ingall and Christine Ross were designated CanTRA Coaches.

*Instructors in training:* 36 candidates enrolled in the CTRBI training program, six in the CTRII program, and two in the CTRSI program.

*Accredited centres:* One Accredited Exam and Training Centre, nine Accredited Centres, and three Provisional Centres. During the past year, three centres closed.

The BC Therapeutic Riding Association has become active again with a new website, [www.bctherapeuticriding.com](http://www.bctherapeuticriding.com). They are developing Three Pillars of Support: Therapeutic Riding, Para-Equestrian, and Equine-Assisted Activities and Therapies. This year they were able to grant \$17,000 to centres across the province.

There are many equine-facilitated wellness and learning programs (EFW \*) operating in BC. The qualifications of many who are involved are insufficient to guarantee an acceptable delivery standard of safe and experienced professional practice, regardless of their genuine intentions, and none are qualified through CanTRA's EFW certification program. The EFW discipline is comparatively new and wholly unregulated in North America, so this is of concern. We hope that our CanTRA EFW certification program will reach these practitioners.

\* See EFW Committee report for definition.



**ZONE 2**  
**Alberta, Northwest Territories**  
**Zone Representative: Brenda Spanier**

This past year, two programs moved into new facilities, and one hosted a technical/exam at which two of our Alberta candidates became certified CTRIIs and three others passed the technical and can now take the exam.

*Mountview Special Riding Association (Olds)*

Our program has been running for some 35 years. This year's closing activities commemorated Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> birthday. Rudy, our sole mule, who has been involved in the program for more years than most of us can remember, has been nominated for the 2018 CanTRA Therapy Horse Award. We also received support from Olds College, with whom we have discussed possible enhancement of that cooperation.

*Will for Riding Foundation (Calgary)*

With one third of our volunteers under the age of 18, we are developing a youth volunteer program to develop rider support and leadership skills. We gave a riding demonstration at the Royal West Show before 2,500 spectators with filmed media coverage. President Shelley Hilderman received a 150 Canada medal, and Brenda Spanier, CTRII and CanTRA Zone Representative, was elected to the Alberta Equestrian Federation board. With our move to a heated arena, we have been able to expand our program.

*Little Bits Riding Association (Edmonton)*

In 2017, we moved into the new Whitemud Equine Learning Centre Association facility. After 42 years in a repurposed, uninsulated airplane hangar, we were thrilled to move into the new facility with washrooms in the same building! We are now able to ride in the winter months. We welcomed Cindi Berg, who qualified as a CTRII, to our team.

*Lethbridge Therapeutic Riding Association*

Besides hosting a CanTRA technical/exam, we keep finding innovative ways of fundraising. For example, we will serve a four-course meal, thanks to a unique partnership between Integrated Management Experience students at the University of Lethbridge and culinary students at Lethbridge College.

*Four:Thirteen Therapeutic Riding Association (Calgary)*

We are proud to be working with Birdies for Kids presented by AltaLink (BFK), a non-profit program under the Calgary Shaw Charity Classic Foundation. We hold spring sessions and summer camps.

*Peace Area Riding for the Disabled Society (Grande Prairie)*

We have had a very exciting 2017! We moved into our new facility with a 20,000 sq. ft. indoor riding arena, and launched a pre-school program that partners riders with our Miniatures. Two of our instructors obtained their Equestrian Canada (EC) Instructor of Beginners, and our riders had produced excellent results in the EC Sea-to-Sea video competitions.



### **ZONE 3**

#### **Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Nunavut Zone Representative: Brenda Godin**

Zone 3 was busy promoting, educating, and accomplishing milestones.

#### **Manitoba**

Four CTRII candidates obtained their Equestrian Canada (EC) Instructor of Beginners and are now set to challenge their CTRSI certification. Our current CTRSI and EC Coach, is preparing to apply for CanTRA Coach designation.

*Manitoba Riding for the Disabled Association (Winnipeg)*

Our therapist, Sarah-Michelle Senécal, has joined CanTRA's Hippotherapy Committee.

*Urban Stables (Cartier)*

Along with Manitoba RDA, we were honoured by an invitation to celebrate all our heroes and years of service at the Lt. Governor's House in Winnipeg.

#### **Saskatchewan**

*Equilibrium Therapeutic Riding (Osler)*

Owner Erin McCormick, CTRSI, offered an education presentation about therapeutic riding to the Cognitive Disability Strategy and the University of Saskatchewan Equine Studies class at the College of Agriculture. Team Equilibrium also fundraised for the Autism Speaks Canada walk and participated at the resource fair to spread awareness about the benefits of therapeutic riding.

*CK Horse Horizons (Saskatoon)*

We continued our Special Olympics riding program by providing volunteer training to support our riders' needs.



## **ZONE 4 Ontario**



*Dave riding Freedom in the THRIL program, Lindsay, Ontario.  
Photo: Gary Poliquin.*

### **4a Southern Ontario Zone Representative: Nanci Picken**

Time goes so fast and here we are in a new year! I wish you all a successful year in your rewarding choice of therapeutic riding. Congratulations to the following Ontarians for amazing achievement in 2017:

- \* Cathy Illebrun, Sunrise Therapeutic Riding & Learning Centre (Guelph): CanTRA Outstanding Instructor of the Year.
- \* Eric Ferguson, TEAD (Hamilton): CanTRA Outstanding Volunteer of the Year.

Three technicals/exams were held: two at TEAD and one at Sunrise. On the other hand, no site visits were completed during the past year and no new centres started up.

#### *Coyote Ridge Therapeutic Riding Centre (Mildway)*

We say goodbye to Pat Kell. Hopefully she will continue to teach when she can. We wish her all the best!

#### *THRIL (Lindsay)*

We were pleased to obtain charitable status this year. Our program operates four days a week for 25 riders. Our assistant instructor, Anne Marie Finn, will soon take her CanTRA exam, giving us two certified instructors. We took our Miniature horse ambassadors into Lindsay for St. Patrick's Day to raise funds and awareness. One of our riders, Sarah McConaghy, has been long-listed for the Canadian Para-Dressage team with her horse, Blue Moon, and is looking forward to an international debut.



#### **4b Eastern Ontario Zone Representative: Paula Rolfe**

The Eastern Ontario region includes four CanTRA-accredited centres. One centre is in the process of moving.

##### *TROtt (Ottawa)*

We held a coaching clinic in the fall with Clive Milkins, Equestrian Canada Para-Dressage High Performance Program Technical Leader.



#### **4c Northern Ontario Zone Representative: Jo-Anne Chevalier**

##### *Northern Lights Therapeutic Riding Association / Association d'équitation thérapeutique Northern Lights (Val Rita)*

We recently said goodbye to Buddy, a 34-year-old Quarter Horse, a founding member of NLTRA in 1990. He was a cherished team member and will remain in many hearts. Our program includes therapeutic lessons (English and Western) and driving, and we also provide Equestrian Canada testing and mentoring.

##### *Timmins Therapeutic Riding Association*

Participants in our Miniature Horse program were referred through Autism Ontario, Indigenous Youth Programs, Women and Youth at Risk, and other special needs agencies. We worked closely with the professionals to ensure the safety and quality of our program. The activities and the small size of the horses encouraged the participants' full engagement. Our instructor is a certified CanTRA Coach and an Equestrian Canada Competition Coach. The horses in our riding program are all seasoned veterans. Our oldest is age 33, now used in our grooming program. Two of our horses were adopted from the Ontario Standardbred Adoption Society in 2000 and currently partner with the Timmins Police Service Ceremonial Mounted Unit as community ambassadors. We also use Miniatures in our driving program.



#### **ZONE 5 Québec Zone Representative: Eliane Trempe**

La Fédération québécoise d'équitation thérapeutique (FQÉT), Quebec's provincial therapeutic riding organization, has been very busy again these past 12 months.

We are pleased to advise that Québec is actively pursuing CanTRA accreditation of three new member centres.

FQÉT members and centre members have participated in the following events in 2017-2018:

- 2017 Spring conference: *Remedial Vaulting*
- 2017 CanTRA summer certification event in Sorel-Tracy
- 2017 Fall Conference: *How to start a therapeutic riding program/What about dyspraxia?*
- FQÉT booth at Salon du Cheval, St-Hyacinthe
- FQÉT Facebook page is still alive and running
- FQÉT participation at Cheval Québec's congress, Drummondville



## ZONE 6

**New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland & Labrador**  
**Zone Representative: Ruth Carter (with Sallie Murphy)**



*Ryan riding Tessa at the Joyriders Therapeutic Riding Association, Prince Edward Island*  
*Photo: Daphne Davey*

### **Nova Scotia**

#### *Halifax Area Leisure and Therapeutic Riding (HALTR)*

2017 has been a very difficult year for HALTR. Just before the start of the Spring riding session, Sallie Murphy (CTR II and Program Director) was diagnosed with cancer, requiring immediate surgery. With no other certified instructors at HALTR, the board had to cancel the Spring and Summer programs. During this time, Sallie's husband was also diagnosed with cancer and died three months later. A shortened Fall riding session was offered to some of our regular riders. Unfortunately, after 33 years Sallie has had to step down, and the future of HALTR, which has operated since 1969, is under negotiation. Sallie would like to thank CanTRA for the 2017 Jetty Chapman Outstanding Administrator of the Year award. HALTR would like to thank the people at CanTRA for all their work to make our national organization so successful.

*Free Spirit Therapeutic Riding Association (FSTRA) (Aylesford)*

In 2017, we celebrated our fifth anniversary. Over the past five years, we have grown by over 100%, indicating the need for such a program in the Annapolis Valley. With a Rick Hansen Foundation grant, we were able to make improvements to the facility to significantly increase accessibility. Two of our instructors were certified: Jessica van Nostrand (CTRII) and Nina Gregory (CTRBI). Head instructor Alissa Cue received the Nova Scotia Equine Federation Coach of the Year award. Our physiotherapist, Amy Mackay, now works with us on a more permanent basis, participating in all lessons to improve rider mobility.

**New Brunswick**

*Cavalier Riding Club (Moncton)*

The winter of 2016-2017 was a difficult one, leaving volunteers exhausted and frustrated. Using a free-standing facility, the barn work was done by volunteers, but due to declining numbers we had to do something. So we moved to a boarding facility with an indoor arena where we can offer riding lessons for the winter. This proved successful with our four instructors. In 2018, we aim to expand with more horses and to improve so that our riders have an optimum experience.

*Fredericton Therapeutic Riding Association*

FTRA is fortunate to have several professionals from our community accept positions on our board this year. They are very keen to help our program grow. Our program continues with over 20 riders at the Silverwood Arabian facility.

*Shining Horizons Therapeutic Riding Association (Saint John)*

SHTRA has embarked on a capital campaign to build an indoor arena and horse barn after receiving a donation of land overlooking the Saint John Harbour with a trail system leading down onto the beach. This facility will promote wellness for all using equine-assisted therapy. Support from the local community is overwhelmingly evident.

**Prince Edward Island**

*The Joyriders Therapeutic Riding Association (Hunter River)*

Several members of our instructor team attended a clinic at Cavalier Riding Club (Moncton, NB) with Nanci Picken, CanTRA Examiner. We currently have one CTRBI and one CTRII in training. Our 2017 Joyrider of the Year, Justin McEwan, received his award at our popular Christmas Party. In 2017, we were again most fortunate that Danny and Martie Murphy of Stanhope, PEI, (venue of the 2011 CanTRA Conference), hosted our great biennial fundraiser. Revenue from this event goes a long way to covering our operating budget.

