



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2021 - 2022

JULY 2021 TO DECEMBER 2022



# CONTENTS PAGE

About RDA T0p End	Page 2
Message from the Chairperson	Page 2
Our Objectives and Purpose	Page 3
RDA by numbers	Page 3
Strategic Plan 2021 - 2024	Page 4
Staff Members	Page 5
Program Report	Page 6
Educational games	Page 7
Volunteer Report	Page 8
Volunteer training and Awards	Page 9
Volunteer Fun	Page 10
Coach Training	Page 11
Asset Report - Horses	Page 12
Horse Sponsorship	Page 13 - 14
Upgrades facilities and equipment	Page 15 - 16
Events - Fundraising	Page 17
Grants, Sponsors and Donations	Page 18
2022 Partners and Sponsors acknowledgement	Page 19
Management Committee	Page 20
Finacial's	Page 21
2023 Outlook	Page 22



Riding for the Disabled in the Top End is a not-for-profit community dedicated to providing opportunities for people of all abilities in the greater Darwin area. The centre enables participants to engage in equestrian-related activities, including horse care and riding programs. We foster, promote and support the integration of people with varying abilities into community activities in a safe and supportive environment. This experience result in an increased quality of life, achievement of personal goals, and improved life skills.

Our equestrian centre is situated on 26 acres, 25 minutes from Darwin CBD, with a full-size sand-based undercover riding arena. We currently have 9 horses individually trained by our RDAA and Australian Sports Commission accredited coach. Our programs cater for 35 riders with varied abilities using an accredited coach and a group of active volunteers.

RDA Top End also offers a valuable opportunity for people to contribute to the community through volunteering. We provide a fun, safe and encouraging environment for people to grow their skills and experiences. Volunteers have opportunities such as supporting people with disabilities, horse care and a range of other general maintenance, events and fundraising activities.

## MESSAGE FROM CHAIRPERSON

This annual report will cover the period from July 2021 to December 2022 before moving to regular calendar year reports after a change to the financial year date.

I am very proud of everything we achieved in THESE past 18 months and look forward to continuing to consolidate the efforts to develop and grow RDA Top End.

Some of my favourite outcomes include: welcoming an onsite caretaker, securing a sponsor for every horse, the purchase of a big horse named Cloudy, offering a First Aid course to a group of our volunteers, 2 level 0 coaches graduating, and making a start on arena upgrades.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved: our dedicated staff, all the volunteers who help either with programs or on the management committee, our valued sponsors and partners, and the wider community. RDA Top End feels grateful to receive your input and support.



**TANIA LESNEUCK,  
CHAIR**



# OUR OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE

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The objectives and purpose of the Association are as follows:

- To increase the range of recreational therapeutic and training opportunities for people with disabilities through the provision of riding and horse care programs
- To foster, promote and support the integration of people with disabilities into community activities
- To publicise and promote the work of the Association
- To cooperate with any person or organisation, whether inside or outside Australia, whose objectives are similar to those of the Association
- To liaise with other disability service providers, including government organisations and agencies
- To seek to influence all levels of government; Federal, State/Territory and Local, to support and finance the activities of the Association
- To provide an advocacy/advisory service to the community
- To undertake other activities that support all the above objectives as the Association may determine from time to time

## RDA TOP END BY NUMBERS

“Average 30 riders per term”

“1290 hours of equine experiences”

“31 Riding members , 10 volunteer members & 23 Social members”

“50 Registered volunteers”

“9 Amazing Horses”



The Management Committee worked with a consultant to draft and complete a plan outlining 6 Key Objectives and a range of strategies to achieve them. The committee uses these to guide decisions and improve the organisation's and its members' outcomes.

## **OBJECTIVE ONE**

*Review and improve the Governance of the Association*

## **OBJECTIVE TWO**

*Diversify income streams to achieve long term financial sustainability*

## **OBJECTIVE THREE**

*Implement a strategic marketing and promotional plan*

## **OBJECTIVE FOUR**

*Develop the Association's facilities and assets*

## **OBJECTIVE FIVE**

*Invest in our coaches and volunteers*

## **OBJECTIVE SIX**

*Increase the diversity of programs offered to meet client needs*

# Staff Members

## NATASHA SCREPANTE

SINCE 2017

Level 1 Coach - Coach Educator  
Horse Manager



## TREASA O'KANE

SINCE MARCH 2022

Office and Volunteer  
Administrator



## JULE BLISS

SINCE JULY 2021

Caretaker



# Program Report

Our coach and volunteers delivered another year of fun and engaging sessions for our riders young and old.

## ARENA SESSIONS

The arena provides a safe space for riders to develop and practise their riding skills. They work on their posture and balance, as well as steering the horse using the reins, their legs and verbal commands. Participants also follow the directions from the coach, so there is a lot to learn.



## TRAIL RIDES

Trail rides are always a hit with riders and volunteers. And they may be the favourite activity of the horses as well.

Tranquil trail rides on the beautiful property, looking for birds, flowers and plants or going on a treasure hunt collecting ribbons and a yummy carrot to feed the horses, what is not to like?



## SPECIAL CELEBRATIONS

We love to get creative and have fun celebrating special days.

A yearly favourite is Halloween. The riders collected Halloween items around the arena to dress up their spooky volunteer. So much fun!

And, of course, the horses love Christmas. They were a little surprised to find an elf and a shiny star in the arena but enjoyed getting decorated with bows, tinsel and reindeer antlers.



## EDUCATIONAL GAMES

Our team aims to make sessions fun and educational. Participants practise skills during a range of games: bingo, shopping, a fishing game, throw and aim activities, etc.



## GROUND SESSIONS

We also ran ground sessions. These included activities such as painting your horse, leading a horse, preparing feeds and grooming and washing the horses. It is so much fun to decorate the horses and then learn how to wash them. Washing the horses is an excellent addition to the program for our riders. It provides opportunities to cross the midline when washing and drying the horses, giving them confidence and a sense of achievement that they can care for a horse as independently as possible.





# Volunteer Report

RDA Top End cannot describe in words the huge contribution our volunteers make. We would not be able to offer our programs without the countless hours they contribute.



## Management Committee Volunteers

The Management Committee members attend monthly meetings to drive the strategic planning of the organisation. In addition, due to the current developmental phase, the association is in, they support a number of operational tasks and activities.

## Volunteer Supervisors

Natasha worked with a number of our incredible, dedicated volunteers to train them to be volunteer supervisors on their day at the centre. This means they are the first point of contact for all other volunteers for guidance and questions. Their commitment has meant Natasha can focus more on horse training and lesson delivery.

## Client Support Volunteers

These people are the face of our centre alongside our staff. They support our riders before, during and after lessons. They turn up week after week to saddle up the horses before session, to lead or sidewalk during lessons and to saddle down the horses. These volunteers also reassure riders when needed, pass on instructions from the coach and provide many opportunities for our riders to develop their communication and social skills.

## Horse Care Volunteers

Horses require constant care and attention. We count on a number of regular volunteers who come out every week and spend a few hours preparing feeds, collecting horses from the paddocks, and keeping the stables and arena clean. They shampoo, rinse and brush horses and pick hooves. Under the guidance of our horse manager, they also learn how to treat minor health issues, including applying treatments for skin problems and keeping their eyes clean.

## Volunteers supporting maintenance

Riding for the Disabled in the Top End has a beautiful property that needs ongoing maintenance. Throughout the year, people offer their expertise and time to fix fences, trim trees, slash paddocks, and install saddle racks and clear trails. We also have volunteers who are happy to sweep floors, do dishes and keep the clubroom and toilets tidy and stocked up.

# Volunteer training

All volunteers working with the horses complete an induction and stage 1 and 2 volunteer training. In 2021-2022, we hosted several volunteer training evenings, and our coach provided ongoing support to all volunteers.

We also hosted an on-site First Aid Training on 27 July, where 6 of our volunteers gained their Senior First Aid Certificate. Well done to all these people!



## 2022 Volunteer Awards – nominations and recipients

### NT SA VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

#### 2022 Nominees

Volunteer Encouragement: **Tianne Vladcoff**

Volunteer Team of the Year: **RDA Top End Saturday Team**

Young Volunteer: **Jakub Jenik**



### RDA AUSTRALIA VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

#### 2022 Nominees

Volunteer Encouragement: **Leigh Moore**

Young Volunteer of the year: **Tianne Vladcoff**



**2022 Finalist RDAA Young Volunteer of the Year: Tianne Vladcoff**



## Volunteer fun

RDA Top End's volunteers are an integral part of the RDA. We encourage our volunteers to use their voices to provide feedback and assist us with future planning. It is also important to show our appreciation and give something back!

In 2022 the organisation held a number of volunteer appreciation days. It is RDA Top End's way to thank them for all the time, effort, care and dedication throughout the year, we wouldn't be here without our volunteers.



The volunteers nominated for the 2022 Volunteer NT Awards also enjoyed a dinner after the ceremony and had a fun night out.

Staff and volunteers shared a lunch at Noonamah Tavern after a busy Saturday.

It is important for the RDA Top End that our volunteer have a voice. We invited them to join the staff and committee at the 2023 Planning Day



The volunteers and staff celebrated the end of the year with a xmas party at Cazaly's Club, Palmerston!



We also finished off the year with a visit from Santa to present our clients and volunteers with certificates and a small gift.

## Coach Training

In line with the RDA Top End's strategic plan, we focused on increasing the centre's capacity by developing our coaching team.

We are delighted to have 2 newly qualified Level 0 coaches. Both have been incredibly hardworking volunteers for several years.

Both Julie and Daisy are undertaking their Level 1 coaching training and hope to be qualified before the end of 2023.

The focus to increase capacity by developing volunteers into coaching pathways remains a priority.



Julie Cadd, Level 0 coach



Daisy Burgoyne, Level 0 coach

# ASSET REPORT

## HORSES

The fantastic herd of horses at RDA Top End are so willing to please, and it is touching to see how they interact with the participants. Every horse brings its own personality to the sessions, and it just melts your heart. Seeing all the participants' smiles and improvement makes all the hard work worth it.

Our horse manager Natasha ensures the horses are cared for as best as possible with veterinary checks, vaccinations, yearly dental check-ups, and farrier visits.

RDA Top End had been looking to buy a large horse, and we were delighted to welcome Cloudy, a Cleysdale Cross measuring 17 hands. The big boy settled in well, supporting our adolescent participants to enjoy riding.

Sadly, we lost one of our critical horses, Kevin (aged 19), due to severe colic in late December. Our riders, volunteers and staff miss him greatly.



Cloudy



Kevin



Volunteer Leigh,  
Kinder & R. Clarke Farrier  
Services

# HORSE SPONSORSHIP

In 2022 we established a horse sponsorship package. This sponsorship package provides 1 year of basic feed and care for our horses. The sponsorship was a huge success, with 9/10 horses sponsored in 2022. We thank our generous businesses that have partnered with us, and we hope to continue the partnerships going forward.



Sponsors receive a range of benefits, including:

- A volunteer shirt and horse blanket with a logo
- Acknowledgement on RDA Top End's social media, website, end-of-year thank you, and annual report.
- Photo opportunity at the centre with the sponsored horse
- Sponsorship and thank you certificate.

## 2022 HORSE SPONSORSHIP'S

Huge thanks to our 2022 Horse Sponsors!

### Johnny

Age: 21  
years young  
Sex: Gelding  
Type: Welsh  
Hands: 12  
Favourite Treat: Carrots  
Personality: Cheeky  
Colour: palomino paint  
Helping us, help others since: 2019



2022 sponsor

**Bendigo Bank** Community Bank  
Coolalinga & Districts

### Charm

Age: 10 years young  
Sex: Mare  
Type: Stock Horse  
Hands: 15.2  
Favourite Treat: Apples  
Personality: The Boss lady  
Colour: Bay  
Helping us, help others since: 2019



2022 sponsor

**Bendigo Bank** Community Bank  
Coolalinga & Districts

## MYSTIC

Age: 10 years young (2022)  
 Sex: Mare  
 Hands: 15  
 Favourite Treat: Carrots  
 Personality: Curious & sweet  
 Colour: Chestnut, white markings  
 Helping us help others since: 2020



2022 sponsor



## Cloudy

Age: 10 years young  
 Sex: Gelding  
 Type: Clydesdale Cross  
 Hands: 17  
 Favourite Treat: Carrots  
 Personality: Gentle Giant  
 Colour: Bay  
 Helping us, help others since: 2022



2022 sponsor



## Jo

Age: 21 years young (2023)  
 Sex: Mare  
 Type / Breed: Brumby  
 Hands: 13  
 Favourite Treat: Apples  
 Personality: Sassy  
 Colour: Buckskin  
 Helping us, help others since: 2006



2022/23  
 sponsor



## Kinder Surprise

Age: 12 years young  
 Sex: Gelding  
 Type: Welsh Breed  
 Hands: 12.3  
 Favourite Treat: Anything  
 Personality: Circus horse  
 Colour: Bay Roan  
 Helping us, help others since: 2019



2022 sponsor



## (Leased) Tilly

Age: 10 years young  
 Sex: Mare  
 Type: Shetland Pony  
 Favourite Treat: Carrots  
 Personality: Very sweet  
 Colour: Dary Bay / Black  
 Help us, help others since: 2000



2022 sponsor



## Star

Age: 22 years young  
 Sex: Gelding  
 Type: Thoroughbred  
 Hands: 16.1  
 Favourite Treat: Carrots  
 Personality: A real Gentleman  
 Colour: Bay  
 Helping us, help others since: 2021



2022 sponsor



## Kevin

Age: 19 years young  
 Sex: Gelding  
 Type: Welsh x Pony  
 Hands: 11.2  
 Favourite Treat: Apples  
 Personality: Shy and sweet  
 Colour: White  
 Helping us, help others since: 2019



2022/23 sponsor



# UPGRADES FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

## Wash area (overhead beam and matting) - finalised August 2021

The wash bay was unsafe for horses, riders, volunteers and staff. The concrete became slippery when wet and hoses became tangled when washing the horses.

We refurbished the horse wash area by installing rubber matting and an overhead hose boom.



## Specialised equipment - 2021

Some of our riders need a little extra equipment to get the best experience out of their sessions. We were able to get some adaptive reins, transfer belts and educational resources via a grant.



## Air conditioners replaced - May 2022

The existing air conditioner in the clubroom was too small to cool the area appropriately. For the wellbeing of riders and volunteers it was a must to have it upgraded. We also get it cleaned regularly as the dust build-up on the property is significant.



## Recovery stable - June 2022

A recovery stable allows us to house an injured or sick horse in a safe manner, away from the other horses. It is an important part of our horse care capacity.





# UPGRADES TO FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

## Arena roof netting removed, beams painted, broken lights replaced - July 2022

The undercover arena needed some love and care. The metal netting holding up the insulation had started to rust along the sides and pieces were falling into the sand. This was posing a safety hazard for our horses. A group of volunteers from Sage Automation removed the damaged netting.

A number of beams along the arena were in need of replacement and the remaining ones needed a coat of paint. We organised a paint party for our community and the beams are looking great. Finally, a few lights were replaced by LED lights.



## New car - August 2022

"Norm" the old RDA car was looking very tired and was not the most comfortable to drive. We are very happy to have been gifted a new Hilux for staff and volunteers to use when undertaking RDA activities.



## Ride on mower - October 2022

We were able to secure funds to purchase a great ride on mower. The caretaker and volunteers really enjoy using this piece of equipment and it makes the job so much easier.



## Shed roof repaired - December 2022

Over the past couple of years one of the jobs before the start of the wet season has been to make sure everything in the equipment shed is off the floor because the roof leaked in several places flooding the area. We finally set aside some funds to repair the roof of this shed and our hay container. And a drain was installed around the shed.



# EVENTS - FUNDRAISING

Throughout the year we held many events. In 2022 we focussed on getting out and about to raise funds for RDA Top End. These are a few highlights.

## 27 March 2022 Open Day

Supported by our volunteers and supporters we hosted an open day for the wider community. Over 300 pony rides were completed on the day, and everyone enjoyed the food, drinks and entertainment on offer. The day was attended by several VIP's.



## May 2022 Bunning Sausage sizzles

The RDA Top End team made up by staff, volunteers, committee members and supporters cooked over 100kg of sausages at the Coolalinga and Darwin Airport Bunnings.



## 15 May 2022 Deckchair Cinema

We were lucky to get a spot of the fundraising calendar at the Deckchair and had a great night watching Spirit Untamed. We raised funds via food and snack sales and ran a wonderful raffle.



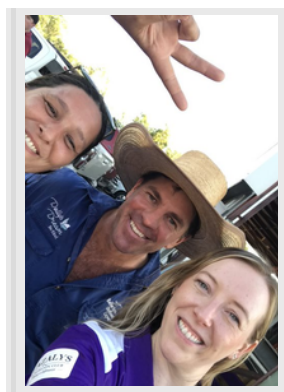
## 28 May 2022: Palmerston Pride

RDA attended the Palmerston Pride with 2 rainbow coloured horses and some of our dedicated volunteers. They were a real eyecatcher and a very popular feature in many photos.



## 23 October 2022: Tom Curtain Album Launch

When Tom's team contacted RDA with the request to use our undercover arena for the Darwin leg of his new album launch we were sold straight away. He is a great horseman and has an amazing way with dogs and a guitar. He performed a well-attended show and concert.



# GRANTS, SPONSORS AND DONATIONS

## *Department of Tourism, Sport and Culture – Active Recreation Grant*

The NT Government provides operational funding supporting our daily operation costs, such as feeding horses, maintenance, and staffing expenses. We submit our report with information on key performance indicators twice per year to secure this funding and continue the delivery of our programs.



## *Variety NT – Grant Program*

Variety NT raises funds for children who need some extra support, and they generously provide funds to purchase adaptive horse equipment and educational resources.



## *Jacana Energy – Volunteer Shirts*

Volunteer shirts had been on the wish list for several years.

This grant finally made it happen, and staff and volunteers are very proud to represent RDA Top End and our sponsors. They look amazing!



## *Australian Government, Stronger Communities Programme – Upgrade aircon*

The existing air conditioner in the clubroom was too small to cool the area appropriately. For the well-being of riders and volunteers, it was a must to have it upgraded. We also get it cleaned regularly as the dust build-up on the property is significant.



Australian Government  
Department of Industry, Science,  
Energy and Resources

## *Australian Government - 2021 Volunteer Grant*

This grant allowed us to purchase items to make the work of the volunteers easier and their time with us agreeable. We also organised a First Aid course for our volunteers and 6 of them obtained their certificate.



Australian Government

## *NT Government, Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade – HR review*

RDA Top End received a grant to have our Human Resource documents reviewed. The NT Chamber of Commerce provided us with a template for our staff contracts and a number of HR Policies.



## *Donations - Anonymous*

We received several generous donations from organisations looking to support local community groups. These funds were hugely appreciated and allowed us to fast-track some maintenance projects, purchases and supported us to increase staff hours and capacity.



# 2022 Supporters and Sponsors

**MAJOR PARTNERS (+\$50,000)**

Partially sponsored by  
**NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT**

**PLATINUM SPONSORS (+\$10,000)**      **GOLD SPONSORS (+\$7,000)**      **SILVER SPONSORS (+\$4,000)**

**COOLINGA & DISTRICTS COMMUNITY BANK\* BRANCH**  
**Bendigo Bank**

**BRONZE SPONSORS (+\$2,000)**      **EMERGING SPONSORS (+\$1000)**      **MINI SPONSORS (+\$500)**

**COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

**LOCAL BUSINESSES PROVIDING ONGOING DISCOUNTS & SUPPORT**

## PRESENTING AGM 29 APRIL

Tania Lesneuck – Chair  
Luke Roe – Vice-Chair  
Keshini Renilson – Secretary  
Chris Heron – Treasurer  
Maddalyn McBeath – Public Officer  
Nicole Jacobson – Ordinary Member  
Lorraine Hodgson – Ordinary Member

## SERVED DURING 2021-2022

Jen Telfer, Lakshmi Vazhayil, Michael Hamilton, Jo Leonard, Ajit Shinde



## FINANCIALS

### INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

WHAT WE EARNED 2022		WHAT WE SPENT 2022	
Sponsorships and donations	104,816	Staff and on costs	152,202
Grant income	128,398	General	33,794
Session fees and memberships	58,579	Depreciation	15,916
Other, incl. sales and fundraising	34,919	Horses	40,296
		Maintenance	12,696
		Insurance	22,682
		Consultancy fees	6,050
		Other expenses	11,242
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>326,712</b>	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>294,878</b>

## FINANCIALS

### BALANCE

WHAT WE OWN 2022		WHAT WE OWE 2022	
Cash and cash equivalents	84,239	Accounts and other payables	51,451
Account receivable and debtors	2,009	Employee provisions	12,203
Property, plant and equipment	211,818		
Other	15,230		
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>313,296</b>	<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>63,654</b>

## 2023 Outlook

2023 is set to be another exciting year for the centre as we continue to work towards and deliver our objectives outlined in the strategic plan.

We thank our sponsors, supporters, partners, volunteers and clients for supporting us.

We have lots of exciting opportunities and hope you continue to be part of our journey.

If you want to support the centre, please contact the team to discuss opportunities.

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