

The phone call received on May 28th should have been met with loud and ecstatic cheers. Linda Rault with Little Bits



Therapeutic Riding Association in Edmonton (LBTRA) spoke to Daphne Davey, President of Canadian Therapeutic Riding Association (CanTRA) in Guelph and heard the news: their applicant, Snowball, had won CanTRA Therapy Horse of the Year 2013.

The news was tainted with sadness because Snowball had been euthanized less than three weeks earlier on May 9th.

“[On] Wednesday evening she carried her two Little Bits riders outside for a trail ride and was then tucked away for the night in her stall,” says Linda, “Thursday AM she was showing signs of colic and was transported to the veterinary clinic. An ultrasound revealed a twist in her hind gut and she was humanely put to sleep with two of her ‘keepers’ from the staff of WELCA at her side.”

Although it is a devastating loss for the staff and riders, the award will stand and honour Snowball’s life and career as a devoted therapy horse. “We are so very honored and blessed to have worked with this special pony. Congratulations Snowball!” says Linda.

Born at Still Meadows Ranch east of Edmonton in 1975, Snowball came to WELCA from Maxine Rusnak in 1996. This white part Arabian stands only 14 HH and had been used mainly as a Western pleasure pony. She was used as an English lesson pony by Jean Archer at Whitemud until Jean sold her business in 1999. Snowball was purchased and donated back to Whitemud for use by Little Bits and the lesson program.

“When Jean was selling her business I was asked to list the horses in order of importance to Little Bits and Snowball was at the top of my list,” comments Linda. “She is truly worth more than her weight in gold and she will never be replaceable.”

Snowball was retired from jumping in 2006 and right up until her passing, she worked six hours a week with Little Bits and

