



## Replacement Barn News

Diane David, Executive Director, WELCA



Whitemud  
Equine Learning Centre  
Association

Construction on the replacement barn did not start in early September as anticipated. Here is an update:

- Design Development is complete and development of construction drawings is underway.
- Submission of scope of work to address the site drainage issues was approved and is now being included in the design process.
- Environmental Consultant was retained to complete the development permit requirements of a greenfield update to the 2014 Environmental Site Assessment. We anticipate this work to take 3 weeks to complete. Diane met with the consultant on Friday, September 20.
- Abatement and demolition of Barn #3 occurred in early November. This will allow for the construction of the temporary facility. This work is not contingent on the completion of the requirements for the Development Permit. It shouldn't affect LBTRA volunteers when they are getting horses. If you ever have any concerns about the construction crew, let Diane or Linda know and WELCA will get it resolved.
- With the funding approval now in place, a revised construction schedule will be confirmed. Estimated completion for the barn is now February 2020 with the site drainage being addressed in the Spring.





## Keillor Cabin/Stone House Rehabilitation

The City's Heritage Resources branch received budget approval from City Council last year to carry out repairs and rehabilitation of the two houses onsite. The plan is to turn Keillor Log Cabin back into a rentable space and move the Admin Offices to the stone house. Before that can happen, there are some major structural repairs required to the foundation of the stone house, its roof as well as addressing accessibility and other Code requirements. The branch is currently working on finalizing a schedule and RFP for the consultant to oversee the project. The design phase will likely take one year. Construction including the temporary closing of the buildings will likely not start until 2021.

Also - a group of City employees from the River Valley Parks branch came to walk the trail and see what can be done in terms of signage to reduce conflicts on the trail. A crew also came out (October 18<sup>th</sup>) and removed all the deadfall that was blocking the Belgravia hill trail so it is passable again.



**Our Pancake Breakfast** was held on Saturday June 29<sup>th</sup> at the WELCA facility on the patio outside the main building. It was a beautiful sunny morning and many people who showed up were very hungry. Even though we got off to a slow start with pancake mix that was a bit thick, the cooks figured out quickly that they needed to thin the batter and the pancakes sold fast and furious. There was a line-up for most of the morning and thankfully folks were patient. Thanks to our parent workers and many thanks to the Pearse/McKinney family for doing the lion's share of work to make this fundraiser a success.

Ticket sales were: \$1287.00, donations of \$1000.00 from the Little Miracles fund at CFCW presented by Jackie Ray, and \$75.00 from the Hummingbird Foundation. The Silent Auction brought in \$291.00.

## Fall Volunteer Appreciation Party

A party for current Little Bits volunteers!

**Sunday, December 1, 2019**

**1:00 to 3:00 pm**

**at**

**Laurier Heights Community League**

**14405 85 Ave NW, Edmonton, AB T5R 3Z3**





## Helping Grand

by Linda Rault



I spend a lot of time driving to and from Edmonton from my home at Pigeon Lake and my go-to radio station is 96.3 The Breeze. The radio station was running a campaign called Helping Grand and in July I decided to nominate Little Bits. A few weeks later I received a call from Sean Burke (the morning show DJ) and we were honored with the \$1000.00 that week. I picked up the cheque from their studio at WEM.

**Shaw Birdies for Kids** presented by AltaLink is a non-profit program run under the Calgary Shaw Charity Classic Foundation. Held at the Canyon Meadows Golf and Country Club, the Shaw Charity Classic ran August 28 - September 1, 2019. We were thrilled to be included in this year's Shaw Birdies for Kids fundraiser. All administrative costs and efforts for the program are covered by the Shaw Charity Classic tournament. Charities have no costs associated with the program and 100% of all LBTRA-targeted donated funds through the Foundation will go directly towards Little Bits TRA. At this point in time, we are just waiting for the final disbursement cheque to reach us.



## KBH Accountants Ultra Night Run



We are so grateful to be the chosen charity of choice for donations to the KBH Ultra Night Run. KBH was able to raise over \$10,000 for Little Bits Therapeutic Riding Association. Connor Thompson rode in our program for 18 years. On September 7, in honor of Connor, his parents Ward and Susan Thompson and friend Nadine completed the 5 km walk in 48 minutes; sister Tyrra Thompson ran the 5 km in 42 minutes; and friends Karen and Chris were much more ambitious and ran the 10 km at the Ultra Night Run on behalf of KBH Accountants. There were many more KBH participants as well and a fun night was had by all!





# 2019 LBTRA Service Awards





# 2019 LBTRA Service Awards (continued)



**May 29, 30, 31, 2020**  
CANADIAN THERAPEUTIC RIDING  
ASSOCIATION'S NATIONAL  
CONFERENCE  
**WE'RE CELEBRATING**

Early Bird rates until January 31, 2020



OLDS COLLEGE, ALBERTA, CANADA - HOSTED BY MOUNT VIEW SPECIAL RIDING ASSOCIATION

Physiotherapy, Hippotherapy, Biomechanics, Equine Para-Sport, Equine Facilitated  
Wellness, Program Management, Mounting and Dismounting riders

Read speaker Bios on : Pippa Hodge, Tegwyn Harper, Jane James, Tricia Mellor at [www.cantra.ca](http://www.cantra.ca)



# "Little Bits" That Make Us Whole

by Logan

Little Bits is where lots of people ride, including me. My love of riding horses started with a little toy hobby horse that my grandpa made me when I was very young. I rode that horse all over the ridges along the Athabasca River where I lived.

Then when I moved to St. Albert, I started to ride with the Little Bits Program. This is where I learned to ride "real" horses. I ride in the spring and fall with Little Bits and have learned a lot about horses. I've ridden big horses, taller than me, and I'm now over six feet tall!

This past year, I've started helping in the barn where we groom and tack the horses before and after the lessons. Tacking is fun and sometimes hard work. I enjoy getting to know the horses and their personalities. I've learned that sometimes horses can be a bit stubborn to work with, like when you're trying to clean their hooves. Other times they are sweet and pick up their feet even before you ask to clean their hooves. Then there is the funny horse who picks up the left foot when you bend down to clean the right one.

My favorite things to do at Little Bits are trotting, leading and tacking horses, giving horses hay, and talking to all the great helpful people at Little Bits. Now that I have some experience, I even did a trail ride in Jasper along the ridge above the Athabasca River.



## Volunteering is Therapeutic, too!

by Tanya

My name is Tanya and this is my 3<sup>rd</sup> time around volunteering with Little Bits, and I absolutely love it. I also volunteer with Homeward Trust which provides inner city and vulnerable Albertans with an opportunity to receive free services in one location, twice a year, at Homeless Connect.

Volunteering at Little Bits is therapeutic not only for the riders, it's therapeutic for me, too; it's a great opportunity to meet new people and volunteer in a stress-free environment. I love the horses; they are so friendly and beautiful. Plus, the staff is amazing! I absolutely would recommend to anyone thinking of volunteering to volunteer with Little Bits!



**Canadian Derby** was run at Century Mile Race Track near the EIA on Sunday August 18<sup>th</sup>. Rex (who is an Honorary Little Bits Director) and wife Nang were able to make several hundred daisy corsages in a very short amount of time. With the help of Dave Nicholas and some parent/rider workers, we were able to sell daisies at the track and deposit \$3061.00 into our account. Many thanks to Paul Rothier (Sales Manager) at Century Mile Race Track for facilitating our sales on Daisy Day.



### **Little Bits is the Best** *by Mara*

My name is Mara Steiner and I've been volunteering with Little Bits for almost a year. I'm currently enrolled in the Master of Public Health program at the University of Alberta, and I've been living in Edmonton for 4 years. I found out about Little Bits when I was scouring the Internet for work with horses. I grew up riding horses in Medicine Hat, and I really missed it. When I found this opportunity, I was thrilled!

Little Bits is without a doubt the best volunteer program I've been a part of because it really feels like the volunteers are needed and that we are contributing to something meaningful. I love being paired with the same rider week after week and session after session, because I get a chance to build a relationship with them!

Although spending time with the horses (especially Mike, who is my not-so-secret favourite) is a treat, the best part of volunteering is seeing the riders' progress throughout the session, especially as they become more confident and comfortable with their horses. You can't help but be excited when one of the riders steers their horse on their own or trots the full length of the rail! The other special thing for me about this volunteer position is the opportunity to meet the instructors and other volunteers who are so dedicated to their work. It isn't very often that you hear of people volunteering with the same organization for so many years at a time, and I think it's just a testament to how great the program is. This is something that I will keep doing as long as I am still in Edmonton.

### **Summer Riding**

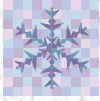
The summer week of riding had 24 riders for the week of July 29<sup>th</sup> to August 4<sup>th</sup>. Jo-Anne and Catherine taught. Sarah replaced Marielle as Volunteer Coordinator while Marielle was away. Ros was our most excellent Barn Manager along with her many assistants!



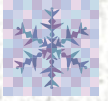
# *Riding Calendar for 2020*

**2020 Volunteer Training -- for Winter and Spring sessions  
in WELCA classroom and arena**

**Wednesday, January 15, 2020 (5:30 pm – 9:00 pm)**



## **Winter 2020 Riding Session (8 weeks)**



**Sundays: January 19 to March 8, 2020 (10:00 am to 3:00 pm)**

**Wednesdays: January 22 to March 11, 2020 (4:00 pm to 9:00 pm)**

## **Spring 2020 Riding Session (11 weeks)**

**Sundays: April 5 to June 21, 2020 (10:00 am to 6:00 pm)**

No riding on Sunday, May 31, 2020

**Tuesdays: April 7 to June 16, 2020 (9:00 to 1:00 pm & 4:00 pm to 9:00 pm)**

**Wednesdays: April 8 to June 17 (3:00 pm to 9:00 pm)**

## **Summer 2020 Riding Session**

**Monday, July 27 to Friday, July 31 (10:00 am to 3:00 pm each day)**

**2020 Volunteer Training -- for Fall Session  
in WELCA classroom and arena**

**Wednesday, September 2, 2020 (5:30 pm to 9:00 pm)**

## **Fall 2020 Riding Session (11 weeks)**

**Sundays: Sept. 13 to Nov. 22, 2020 (*Achievement Day*)  
(10:00 am to 6:00 pm)**

**Tuesdays: Sept. 15 to Nov. 24, 2020 (*Achievement Day*)  
(9:00 am to 1:00 pm and 4:00 pm to 9:00 pm)**

**Wednesdays: Sept. 16 to Nov. 25, 2020 (*Achievement Day*)  
(3:00 pm to 9:00 pm)**





## CN Railroaders in the Community Program

CN is extremely proud of their employees and their families who volunteer in our communities. They recognize and celebrate the volunteer commitment of their employees' family members by donating \$250 to charitable organizations for which they have volunteered at least 40 hours in a given calendar year. The CN Railroaders in the Community program has approved a \$250 donation request submitted by CN employee Albert Lim on behalf of his wife Anne, to Little Bits Therapeutic Riding Association.

### A Note from Ava

My name is Ava and I have been a volunteer at Little Bits since January. I first gained interest in the program by talking to a friend who had previously volunteered. I have been around horses nearly my whole life. I used to be a competitive hunter / jumper rider, and eventually progressed to be a riding instructor for young children and beginner riders for four years. I love working with people, and so obviously I thought that Little Bits would be a great fit for me — I was right!

Volunteering for Little Bits has been excellent on a personal level - being around horses and being able to support my new community in this manner has been a breath of fresh air in my busy student schedule. I have learned skills and valuable experience from the students and the excellent LBTRA staff. Little Bits is truly an example of an inclusive community. I find this so admirable; the volunteers, staff, parents, and students have a valuable cooperative relationship that is a remarkable example of how inclusivity and sport can co-exist. It is incredibly rewarding to spend time in this environment.

My time volunteering for LBTRA has truly affirmed to me that I have chosen a correct career path: I am applying to Occupational Therapy master's programs this fall. This program is an excellent model of what happens when a lot of people care about each other and do something about it. It is very rewarding for me to witness the positive impact that LBTRA has on all the individuals involved. In short, I know that being a volunteer here has improved my weeks, and I am thankful to be involved in such an important program.





## Volunteer Fair

A huge **thank you** to a few wonderful volunteers that came down to talk to the students at J Percy Page on Thursday, October 17. Ivan, Cami, Arianna and Erik did an excellent job of letting the students know what it is like being a volunteer. We had an exhibit set up on a table with lots of photos of our riders, the horses and volunteers doing their various jobs.



## Visit from Saskatchewan friends

*by Linda Rault*

Early this year, I received an e-mail from friends I had made when travelling to Moose Jaw to do some examining for the Canadian Therapeutic Riding Association - instructor training. Pat Jacobson and Keith Anstead started the PMC – Prairie Mentoring Centre to assist and encourage candidates to take the training to become Canadian Therapeutic Riding Association Certified Instructors. They were associated with a lovely facility a few minutes west of Moose Jaw for several years. After hosting several successful training events and exams, Pat and Ken turned their focus to therapeutic driving with their three miniature horses. They continue on this journey closer to their home in Regina.

In late October, Pat and Ken came to Edmonton to visit relatives and asked if I would be free to give them a tour of the new facility and our program. I was happy and proud to do so.





## Some of Our 2019 Sponsors

The Shaw Charity Golf Classic and Birdies for Kids (BFK)  
ACT/ UCT Edmonton South Club  
Edmonton Sheriff's Posse  
Tim Hortons: store #3336 at the Misericordia Hospital  
Sean Burke and 96.3 The Breeze and the Helping Grand  
Jackie Rae and 840 CFCW radio  
Hearts of Blue from the Blue Cross  
Horse' n Around - Red Deer  
City of Edmonton, Community Investment Operating Grant  
Community Initiatives Program Operating Grant  
Achievement Day Donors  
EPCOR Helping Hands  
ATCO EPIC Program  
Edmonton Hash House Harriers

## Volunteer Appreciation BBQ

June 23, 2020  
4:00 pm to 8:00 pm  
(tentative)

William Hawrelak  
Park Campsite #2



### Roy Fisher

My wife (Louise) was reading the Edmonton Journal about 13 years ago when she saw the advertisement calling for volunteers for the Little Bits Therapeutic Riding Programme. So, we both signed up for the orientation and I haven't regretted it ever since.

Both of us had a farming background but we didn't have saddle horses, but we had REAL horses like Clydesdales or Percheron's that did heavy farm work. We rode those horses bareback and frequently without a stitch of gear on the horse. Not even a bridle or reins. We didn't know of safety rules or OHSA.

I am a Veteran of Foreign Wars and have suffered some long term consequences. I guess Louise saw the signs, so she hoped Little Bits would provide the diversion I needed. I spent over four years in intensive therapy and it's "a work in progress."

About six years ago I was hauling my sailboat out for the winter when I suffered a massive heart attack on my boat when I was talking to the

Wabamun Fire Chief. He initiated CPR and I was later revived by no less than 12 trained First Responders. I was unconscious for several days. I had also suffered two strokes, leaving some cognitive damage. I entirely lost my ability to speak. I had to work like mad to reach my current level ability to communicate. I must speak slowly because I have had to master a new language – well, it's new to me.

This is home for me. If it wasn't for the horse therapy, the staff, the wonderful volunteers and the people with disabilities, I wouldn't be here. I am constantly impressed with the volunteers, selflessly giving up their time as high school students or university students or find time between regular jobs. You make this one of the finest organizations in the world.

I see the clock on the wall has its big hand on 8 so it's time to tack up the horses.







## A Dream Come True

by Abi

It has been a dream come true navigating the circuitous path that has led me to the doors of WELCA and the Little Bits Therapeutic Riding Association. Having grown up around horses and the thoroughbred breeding and racing industries in Lexington, Kentucky, riding is something with which I have long been familiar, but was never permitted to pursue. It wasn't until my 40<sup>th</sup> birthday, after a trail ride in Jasper, Alberta, and a riding lesson with a friend, that I was able to begin my life with horses. It was about this time that I also ran across a beautiful, life-changing and affirming book, [She Flies without Wings: How Horses Touch a Woman's Soul](#). I found such truth, wisdom, inspiration and insight in the words penned by author Mary Dyke Midkiff, that I felt as though I had stumbled across something "meant to be" when I entered the horse world.

To be perfectly honest, I believe horses saved my life: my sanity, my marriage, and my family. My husband, a Canadian Armed Forces veteran, suffers from severe PTSD, an invisible injury that changed not only his life, but also the lives of the people closest to him – myself and our two daughters. Though present in a physical sense, he was mentally and emotionally absent from us for a number of years. Horses became the entities that gave me and our girls connection, independence, freedom, activity, responsibility and purpose. They gave us options, and a sense of power, strength and freedom, all of which were being depleted by the situation in our family. Horses gave us not only what we needed to survive that frightening, unpredictable, confusing and uncertain time...they gave us the gift of perseverance and a lifelong pursuit to enjoy, as well as the glue that helped us stay together.

As Ms. Midkiff identified in her book, horseback riding and association with horses gives women a feeling of freedom, power and strength that they do not get to experience as fully in our traditional social structure. I concur with her thinking, as this is exactly what my and my daughters' association with horses and riding gave us during a time in our lives when we needed some semblance of control, confidence, acceptance, affirmation and connection. I believe this is a direct parallel to the sense of freedom, connection, power and strength experienced by all of our Little Bits riders and their families as they witness the MAGIC that occurs during every riding session. There is a joyful transformation that is palpable when connections are made between the amazing horses in the LBTRA program and the people who ride them. Getting to experience this joy on the ground as a leader is an absolute gift ... my experience with Little Bits has given me another opportunity to fly without wings, for being part of this organization, its work and the people's lives it touches ... will touch my soul forever.

## Traffic Study: Keillor Road and Fox Drive

Traffic Management, City of Edmonton, conducted a traffic survey of this intersection that was completed on June 27, 2019 and an assessment was completed on September 11, 2019. The assessment concludes:

- There are about 0.2 collisions per year
- Traffic volume is low but has some minimal delay
- Intersection likely will not make it to the priority list to be upgraded next year
- The intersection will be surveyed again in 2021.



We pointed out that the challenge is turning from Fox Drive onto Keillor Road, not turning from Keillor Road onto Fox Drive. This was not the focus of their study. We also pointed out that a study conducted at the end of June would not take include university and school traffic. Our Partner Liaison Officer will relay those comments to Traffic Management.

Little Bits families are encouraged to contact 3-1-1 or their city councillor and complain about the intersection. Remember to identify the intersection as Fox Drive and Keillor Road.