

A HORSE TO REMEMBER

CLOUDWALKERS THATS AMORE & JUDITH BELFORD

Just before Christmas, we received a request from Judith Belford regarding Cloudwalkers That's Amore. She knew Amy had been born in Canada and she was looking for any information or pictures. I sent her a few Futurity pictures and then asked how she'd acquired her. After some discussion, I knew there was a story to be told.

I received the story by snail mail with some photos. In honor of Bill and Delores Salt of Cloudwalker Stables, I am going to submit the story to 'A Horse To Remember'.

Dianne Little

Below: Delores & Bill Salt with Amore winning the 1998 Two Gait Class at 'The Canadian' Futurity.



CLOUDWALKERS THATS AMORE

aka Amy, My Amyness, Sunshine

and She Who Quietly Watches

Born September 12, 1995 at Cloudwalker Stables
Strathmore, AB Canada

At 66 I was just recovering from a 'flying lesson' given to me by an eight year old barrel racing Appendix Quarter Horse, and was trying to figure out who would be my next best friend.

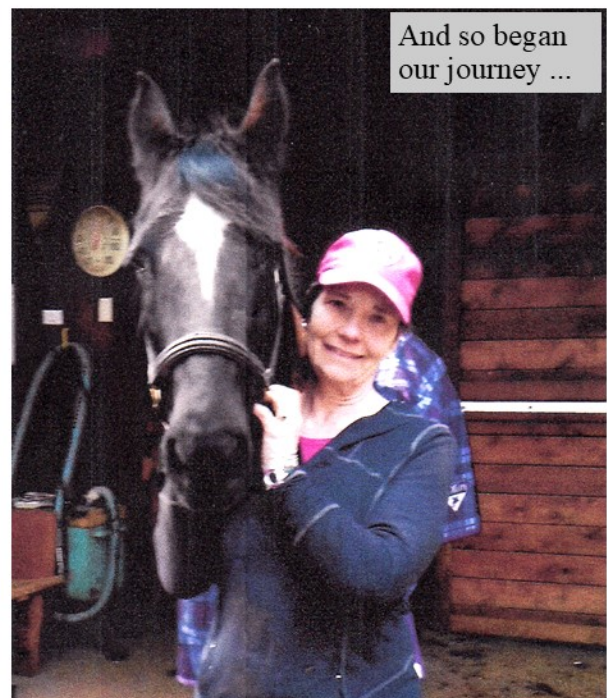
Someone said, "Have you ever thought about a Tennessee Walker?" I tried two or three but they were all pretty hot for a middle-aged woman who was an advanced beginner. So I went to a place where they give Equine wine tours through the hills south of Portland using TWH's. He showed me one also too hot and he mentioned Amy. And there she was, standing in the background, quietly watching the

goings on, and so I introduced myself, and the rest is history.

What was so cool to me is that she was born in Alberta. My dad grew up in Moose Jaw, and all my relatives live in Lethbridge. It was just meant to be.

She was pretty shut down when our journey started, and in pretty bad shape physically, being ridden on long rides by amateurs. Both her knees were bone on bone, and there were many other things wrong. Our hearts connected, and I told her the rest of her life would be the best I could possibly make it for her, and she would never be sold, or allowed to hurt ever again. I told her I would be with her til the very end.

And so began our journey of Amy teaching me how to ride, me trying to let her know what love was, what respect and dignity and good loving care was. I spoiled her, but she spoiled me...we used so little rein I switched to an English hackamore, and just a slight movement of my legs and off we went. It took a few years, but finally she came around, found her voice again, and boy, when she did she made up for lost time. I will always remember her deep nicker when she heard my car. And boy, did I learn to listen to her; one time I was trying a new girth. I was worried it was too big, but decided to ride anyway. When we got to the gate she stopped. Completely. It was so unlike her to do that, but when I shifted my weight to open the gate, the saddle slipped completely under her with me underneath also. She didn't move an inch.



And so began
our journey ...

The only time she nipped at me was when I was tightening her saddle, so we went to a place nearby where they test saddle fit and it turns out, the one I'd been using was all wrong for her wide shoulders and hips. And another time we were riding with a friend in the woods and when we went down a hill into the deeper woods, she stopped and refused to budge. By this time, I had learned to listen; we found out the next day that a cougar had been spotted right where we were. She became a wonderful, happy trail horse, from spooking at every leaf, bird, snappy twig to ears forward, huge TW stride, and a wonderful trail companion. We rode by ourselves; Amy never was herd bound except if she was in her pasture without her two pals. Her stride was so long, and she covered ground so much it was just easier. And we talked back and forth all the time.

Fall of 2022 we decided that riding was just too painful for her legs so our relationship evolved to one where both of our feet were on the ground, and it was wonderful. She finally got to be a horse, one who could let me know what she wanted, that I was her person who she could trust. We had wonderful walks, green grass, we'd talk about our day, and we'd have spa days where she ended up looking the show horse she had been.



My little black mare, One Who Quietly Watches, I will love and miss you forever.

Judy Belford,
the luckiest woman in the world.



Amore winning the 1998 Breeder's Class with Bill Salt at halter

Her Cushings became more of a problem, and over the last few months she began to decline. At one point she told me, "Mom, I'm really tired." When we knew the end was here, I determined to have her passing be one with dignity and respect like she'd lived her life with me the last eight years. The day we were going to do it, I was sitting in her stall with her while she ate all the alfalfa, carrots, treats she wanted and she came over and nuzzled both of my knees and looked at me with those beautiful, beautiful, expressive brown eyes, as if to say, "I know, mom, and it's okay, thank you for being my best friend."