

Happy 35th Anniversary!

1983 - 2018



Merlin's Muse

By Mary Hadsall
Executive Director

There is a freedom waiting for you,
On the breezes of the sky,
And you ask "What if I fall?"
Oh but my darling, What if you fly?"
~ Erin Hanson, poet

This year marks the extraordinary 35th anniversary of Camelot Therapeutic Horsemanship. This incredible longevity bears the mark of so many Camelot Dragon Slayers who sized up a challenge before them and said, "Why not me? Why not here? Why not today?" and then moved confidently forward to make their own dreams, and the dreams of so many others, come true.

They say courage is not the absence of fear, but rather, pressing on in spite of it.

For 35 years, the Camelot students, volunteers and employees have shown true courage in working together to create a place where, together, we can let go of the fear of falling and instead, learn how to fly!

- 1983 Eileen Szychowski, Camelot's founder, establishes Camelot as a non-profit while operating out of rented space at Santa Rita stables
- 1988 Camelot launches quest to raise funds for a fully wheelchair accessible facility
- 1992 Camelot purchases 14.25 acre parcel in North Scottsdale
- 1996 Foundation is poured; a barrier-free, wheelchair accessible barn and educational center are under construction
- 1998 Grand Opening Ceremony is held
- 2007 100' x 200' cover is erected over the existing arena
- 2010 85' wheelchair accessible labyrinth is built
- 2011 Three pastures with shade structures are built for the therapy horses
- 2014 A second outdoor 20m x 40m dressage arena is constructed
- 2016 Administrative building and educational center receive new paint and carpeting
- 2018 Three more pastures are constructed
- 2018 Eight-stall barn is renovated



Cheryl & Paladin riding with volunteer Cate & Bravo on the Camelot property trails

I can ride!

By Cheryl Rapp
Camelot Student

Before Camelot, the only time I had been on a horse, it was attached to a merry-go-round.

I had read that horse-back riding was a good activity for people with multiple sclerosis so I thought I'd try it. But I still approached Paladin, that beautiful, gentle (I didn't know that at the time)

giant with a quickly beating heart.

This was before Camelot had the lift that lets riders like me, who have limited use of their legs, mount a horse easily, comfortably and without any embarrassment. Back in the day, Mary would . . . well, I don't know exactly what Mary did, but she got me on the horse. I don't know who was more excited about the lift, Mary or me.

When you have limited mobility, even the simplest things require planning. Visiting someone means asking a series of questions. Is there handicapped parking? Are there any stairs? How wide is the bathroom door? Will my wheelchair fit without destroying the walls? If I can get into the bathroom, will there be room to close the door? Etc. Etc. Etc.

And then there are so many things you simply can't do anymore. Walking for one. Skiing, dancing, jogging, tennis. But with Paladin, I could focus on what I can do, not what I can't. I can ride! It still amazes me that I can make a thousand pound animal do what I want.

Camelot has given me so much. Exercise of course. Friendship. Confidence. A community of people who are all dealing with difficulties with grace and courage. Camelot's motto is "Where heroes are born." I can't really say I feel like a hero. I feel like a rider. And that's good enough. ∞

[Editor's note: Cheryl is referring to Mary Hadsall, Camelot's Executive Director]

In Memory Of

Coughdrop
Karen Dawson
Charles Green
Luther
Carol Penque
Josef Rivers, teacher & gentleman
Ted Szychowski
John Ventre

In Honor Of

Jeanne Alspaugh
Mike Brisso
Kelli Cummings
Sharon & Lou Goldman
Teri & Bill Lyng's wedding
Martha Turner
Lynn Wright's birthday

In Appreciation of Kindness

Ray Klein

Memorial gifts in any amount are a beautiful way to honor a beloved friend or family member, be they human or otherwise. We also welcome gifts in honor of birthdays or other special occasions. All such donations are acknowledged with a special card or email and a mention in our newsletter.

When sending in your gift, please include a brief note designating whom it is memorializing, and in which category you are submitting it. If you would like an acknowledgment card sent, please include the recipient's address.

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Jim driving in his new cart with Camelot instructor Kristina & student Richard

Driving Big Jim

By Hannah Brisso,
Volunteer Coordinator, Barn Manager
and Principal Riding Instructor

Camelot is very excited to share some big barn news! We have reinstated the driving component of our multifaceted horsemanship program. Jim, Camelot's Belgian/Percheron draft horse, has been to driving school, and he returned the first of the year educated and ready to work with students!

Bred for pulling, draft breeds like Jim are recognizable by their tall stature, upright shoulder, and broad, short backs with powerful hindquarters best suited for the purpose of pulling.

While he will continue to carry students in saddle, Jim has found new purpose as Camelot's driving horse! ∞

Nifty Bits News from the Ranch

Welcome new students: **Makayla C., Amanda F., Bonnie H., Isa R., Kayra Y., and Kiah Z.**

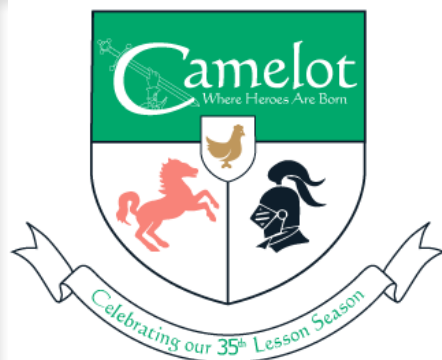
Welcome to our newest volunteers: **Lindsey B., Lynn B., Courtney G., Felicia J., Rebecca N., and Roslyn T.**

Camelot would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the **Scottsdale Police Mounted Unit** for another successful and super fun desensitizing clinic! Guests had fun and truly enjoyed the day with the wranglers and policemen!

Thanks to **Ray Klein**, recently appointed **Eagle Scouts Conner Williams and Matthew**

Zettlemoyer of Boy Scout Troop 131 for your endless energy and hard work setting our pasture posts in concrete. The pasture expansion project is labor intensive, and we are grateful for all your helping hands!

To our major donors, deepest gratitude & heartfelt thanks: **AAM, Albertsons-Safeway Foundation, Ames Construction, AQHA Foundation, AZ Cutting Horse Association, Ginger Barry, Michael & Carmen Blank and the Molly Blank Donor Advised Fund, The Charro Foundation, Joyce & Ed Goljan, The Grainger Foundation, Phil Hagenah, Harold's Cave Creek Corral, Knights of Columbus Councils #11116 & 13286, Shirley A. Lowman, Kristyn & Craig Moore, Curt & Gerry Pindler, ProTravel International, PPRMS Group, Right**



Hooves & Heroes 2018

Bring your friends and family and join us in celebrating our 35th lesson season as we showcase our newly renovated barn!

Saturday April 21, 2018
11 am - 3 pm
6250 E Jomax Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85266

This year's event will feature:
Face painting & pool noodle races for the kids, cart rides with a Camelot therapy horse, Wine Pull, multiple raffles, lunch by Wandering Donkey, student performances and more!
Free admission!



Toyota, Scottsdale Active 20/30 Club #547, Kris & Mike Stevens, Jack & Paula Strickstein, Studio Movie Grill, Bonnie & John Trowbridge, David Van Denburgh Foundation, The Verdoorn Foundation, Mary Beth Walker.

Camelot prides itself on providing community outreach, disability advocacy and education in addition to riding lessons. This year, Camelot students, staff, and volunteers have visited **Kemah Farms, The Phoenix Herpetological Society, Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center, Ability 360, and The Scottsdale Arabian Horse Show**. Camelot gives a big shout out to our wonderful hosts and tour guides for the outstanding education provided to everyone!



A Heroes' Hero ~ Janene Nielson

By Hannah Brisso,
Volunteer Coordinator, Barn Manager
and Principal Riding Instructor



Janene Nielson began volunteering in April of 2012 after seeing an article about Camelot in Scottsdale Health Magazine. Janene's work history in the social services field as well as her degree in Human Development and Family Studies allowed her to easily transition from helping out with the horses in the mornings to working with students in the afternoon. Camelot instructors describe Janene as always cheerful, easy going, and willing to help in any capacity. She is consistent and reliable on her scheduled Tuesday afternoons, and is often around on additional afternoons as a substitute when we are shorthanded. Outside of Camelot, Janene enjoys hiking, yoga, travel, and spending time with her husband and daughter. ∞

Janene on right assisting student Halie groom Cayanna



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