

WHAT WOULD ISABEL DO?

By Michelle Bartlett
Isabel's Riding Instructor & Camelot's
Director of Community Relations

It's Jessy's first day riding at Camelot. She's seven years old, speaks her mind at all times, and is fearless. After Jessy's helmet is snapped on, Isabel walks into the barn. Eight year old Isabel has been riding in the program for a year and is known for her pink boots and bows and curious nature.

As the girls are introduced, Jessy immediately reaches down and pokes Isabel in the thigh.

Mary Hadsall, her instructor, says, "Jessy, it might be nice to introduce yourself before you get in someone's personal space."

Jessy looks up, as a child only can, and says, "I wanted to see if she has prosthetic legs, too."

"What's that?" asks Isabel, and the conversation I'll remember for a lifetime ensues.

Mary helped Jessy answer the



Isabel and Jessy with Scout.

question by telling Isabel that prosthetic legs are artificial legs that make it possible for Jessy to walk. Isabel was still a little confused so Mary suggested to Jessy that she show Isabel her ankle. Jessy happily lifted her pant leg to show Isabel.

Curious Isabel starts tossing out an arsenal of questions. "Do you wear them all the time? Do you wear them to bed? What about the bath? How do you get in the bath? Were you born with them? Do you wear them at the house? Can you go fast?"

When Isabel asked about "going fast", Jessy revved up to show her just how fast she could run. And Mary reminded her about the no running policy in the barn.

Jessy was more than happy to answer all of Isabel's questions the

best she could, but she thought one of them was funny and threw back a sarcastic answer.

"How do you get around?" asked Isabel after they had been chatting for some time.

Jessy put up her hands to make quotation marks in the air. "With [quote / unquote] legggssss!"

Jessy didn't have a lot of questions about Isabel's disability, because Isabel wears Cochlear Implants, a hearing device, and Jessy's mom wears hearing aides; therefore her disability wasn't new for her. However, Jessy did tap Isabel on the shoulder. "I hope your hearing aides don't fall out like my mom's do," she said sweetly. As for Isabel, it is in her nature to be curious, in part because so much is new for her. She had limited language skills until she was five years old. That's when she received her first Cochlear Implant. She gobbles up knowledge and vocabulary like most kids eat cotton candy.

By the end of the conversation, all the volunteers in the barn had gravitated to this lively discussion between the girls and watched in awe. There were no boundaries that couldn't be crossed by these two girls.

THE MORAL OF THE STORY

There is a lot to be learned from children. The moral of this story is, when you first meet a person, remember the ease and level of comfort these girls

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Come on! Open your mouth and sound off at the sky! Shout loud at the top of



WHAT WOULD ISABEL DO?

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shared during their first conversation. They discussed disability like most

adults discuss the weather. It wasn't any big deal to Isabel. It's just that Jessy's prosthetic legs were new to her and she was curious. They were two little girls meeting each other for the first time. Their differences didn't keep the girls apart, it just made things more interesting.

If you find yourself in a curious situation, ask yourself "What would Isabel do?"

I know the answer. She would not hesitate to make a new friend.

PIGTAILS AND CHICKENS

I had a feeling the girls would be fast friends; after all, they have so much in common. Both say horses are their favorite animal. Both wear braids in their hair and have to be reminded of the barn speed limit. I'm confident they will have much to discuss in the future.

After Isabel's lesson, I walked with her to the car. Isabel ran to her mom's window. She was too excited to wait until she was seated in the car to tell her about her afternoon. Isabel didn't tell her about the great ride on Scout or the new chickens in the coop. She said, "Mom, guess what! I learned what prosthetic legs are!"

Many of the lessons learned at Camelot are beyond what takes place in the saddle. Sometimes it's about the new friends, strengthened vocabulary and the conversation of a lifetime, the kind that may lead to you asking, "What would Isabel do?"



The Little Elf

I met a little Elf-man, once,
Down where the lilies blow.
I asked him why he was so small,
And why he didn't grow.

He slightly frowned, and with his eye
He looked me through and through.
"I'm quite as big for me,"
Said he,
"As you are big for you."

John Kendrick Bangs (1862-1922)

Merlin's Muse

By Mary Hadsall
Executive Director



Oh the joy of seeing the world through the eyes of a child.

The word "Kindermund" is the one word that keeps coming to mind as I watch a few of the younger and newer additions to our Camelot family. *Kindermund* is the German equivalent of the phrase "out of the mouth of babes". Ah, the days when you said what was on your mind, and what was on your mind was always kind, honest and pure. If you are a parent or grandparent, you know what I am talking about.

This lesson season, which is well under way, we have the delightful privilege to watch a fresh young crop of Dragon Slayers exploring the ranch and discovering the delights in our horses and beautiful desert. They are energizing the barn and keeping smiles on everyone's faces. I personally could not resist a grin when Jessy's voice rang across the breezeway, "This is soooo cooooolllllllll", as Cayanna carried her away from the mounting ramp for the first time. I know I will never forget the look of utter surprise and delight on Yale's face as Bravo shook the dust out of his coat, giving Yale that brief moment in time when he felt his body rise like a miniature hovercraft over his horse's back! And I can still hear the sweet

sound of Tori and Jeanne's laughter as the pair struggled briefly while Tori gave Jeanne, her instructor, a leg up onto one of our tallest horse's back.

The moments go on, as does the magic of Camelot. For all of this, we have you, our devoted community, to thank.

The New Year is rapidly approaching, and we are excited about what 2010 will bring. We have new energy in the barn and many exciting events on our horizon.

About one year ago we published a special edition newsletter that focused on expanding our circle of influence, diversifying our fundraising possibilities, and encouraging you to be a part of these endeavors. Indeed, our dreams are coming to fruition, and our community is pulling together to create fundraising opportunities for Camelot.

Supporters are writing letters to their friends, family and business associates to encourage financial support. One of our volunteers hosted a Pampered Chef Fundraiser for our program creating a fundraising opportunity, as well as a chance to acquire some great items for our wheelchair accessible kitchen.

Currently we are wrapping up a holiday bizarre, thanks to the efforts of a dedicated volunteer. She facilitated a large donation of items from Heritage Mint and made beautiful baskets to sell for Camelot.

Yet another volunteer orchestrated a clinic with the Scottsdale Mounted Police Unit that will be held at the ranch on February 6. People will train their horses with the mounted police and have lunch with the officers. All the proceeds from the event will benefit Camelot.

I invite all of you to stay abreast of our busy schedule by regularly tuning into our beautiful and informative website at www.camelot-th.org. Connectivity to Camelot is only a keystroke away.

As the holidays approach, my thoughts return to my family and friends. My wish to all of you as you bring 2009 to a close is that you take the time to stop and smell the cressets, to enjoy and be present in the here and now, and most important of all, look at your world through the eyes of a child.

Mary Hadsall, Executive Director

your voice, "I AM I!" Me! I am I! And I may not know why but I know that I

NIFTY BITS

News From the Ranch

Welcome to our newest volunteers! Roseanne Finocchiaro, Elli Ganiel, Joeseff McCann and Paula Wright.

Welcome to our newest students: Curtis Chandler and Jessy H.

Thank you to the following for your major contributions:

- Ruth & Hartley Barker
- Joyce & Ed Goljan
- Quest Civil Constructors - John Lehman
- James & Carol Sexton
- Bonnie & John Trowbridge

Thank you to the Thunderbird Foundation for providing Camelot with a grant for additional arena improvements.

Upcoming 2010 Events

Jan 22: James Shaw Day of Healing Fundraising Clinic

Feb 6: Arizona Cactus Cruisers Car Show

Feb 6: Scottsdale Mounted Police Fundraising Clinic

April 24: Hooves & Heroes Fundraiser

Learn more about these events on our website at www.camelot-th.org.

Adonis, our three-year-old Arabian therapy horse in training, has found a new loving family. We weren't actively seeking a home for him, but one found him. As we say here at Camelot, "The place you are seeking, is seeking you!" He's found a lovely home with green pastures.

GIVEN IN HONOR OF

- Dick Ames
- John & Sharon Ames
- Michelle Bartlett
- Lou & Sharon Goldman
- David Hornsby
- Mary Ann Sprinkle
- Eileen Szychowski

CAMELOT REMEMBERS

- Patricia Hoffman
- Frank Taurisano
- Louis Zenti

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 events. All such donations are acknowledged with a special card and a mention in our newsletter.



Robin Erlich, Camelot's office manager and Mary Hadsall, executive director.

Witches & Goblins at Whispering Pines Ranch

By
Michelle
Bartlett

John as "Camelot's King Arthur". The title became official at the Halloween party as Mary read to him the qualities of a knight and Michelle swore him in with an Arthurian sword, which was later presented to him as a gift.

As we thanked John, he did what any noble King would do. He turned the praise to the people who support him, like Deanne Kimes, Ron Rasmussen and Larry Palmer who all help fulfill Camelot dreams.

Most recently, John undertook a large and costly project to improve the footing in Camelot's covered arena. Through the combined efforts of John Vermillion, President of Environmental Products &

Application, Inc., the existing dirt was refurbished and turned into a solid, level foundation to which fresh washed mortar sand was added. The combined results created a dramatically



Jessy dressed up as a robot.

improved riding surface for students, volunteers, horses and staff to enjoy. Now there is less dust, better shock absorption and reduced watering needs.

In the true spirit of King Arthur, John attributes

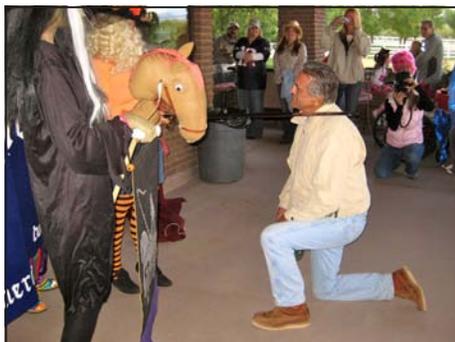
his strength to the strength of those around him. We are ever so grateful for your support John. You and your community of friends, family and business associates have worked diligently to create a stronger Camelot.

"You have reminded us that the strength of the kingdom is not based on the strength of the king, but on the strength of its people."

King Arthur in the Quest for Camelot



Patrick dressed up as a king.



John Ames being dubbed King Arthur.

like it. Three cheers! I AM I! - HAPPY BIRTHDAY BY DR. SEUSS

Heroes' Hero!

Jenna Stiles



Jenna Stiles riding Bravo.

To teach leadership, it helps to be a leader. A dedicated volunteer since November 2003, Jenna Stiles demonstrates that leadership well. She was a huge support for years in our Teen Leadership program working hard to mold young people into strong members of our community. She also has been instrumental in planning and coordinating field trips and guest speakers.

When Jenna isn't working with the Leadership teens, she works one-on-one with students



learning to ride. Thursday afternoons wouldn't be the same without her smile, enthusiasm and caring personality!

Jenna has also left a mark in the hearts of our horses by coming out extra days to spend hours polishing them until they sparkle and schooling them on our trails.

Thank you, Jenna, for all you do for the people and horses at Camelot!



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UNLESS someone like you
cares a whole awful lot,
nothing is going to get better.

It's not.

THE LORAX BY DR. SEUSS

“Take up your sword against the dragon within...the voice that says, 'I can't.'”



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Sometimes the questions are complicated and the answers are simple.



Please think of Camelot when making your year end donations.



Thank you for being more than our supporters...

you are our believers!

*~ Mary Hadsall,
Executive Director*