



Merlin's Muse

By Mary Hadsall
Executive Director

Recently, I heard the phrase, "You are never too old to have dreams," and the words resonated within me. The road to 'becoming' is not always clear cut and well defined. For some, it takes many years to understand their true calling and to turn that dream into reality. I had my 'ah-ha' moment when I taught my very first therapeutic horseback riding lesson at the National Ability Center in Park City, Utah. It was in September, 2002. Many pieces came together, and the direction my life would take was suddenly very clear.



I would like to share with you one woman's dream and the drive she possesses that made her dream become a reality, too. In 2010, Ms. Alicia Draper made the decision she wanted to become a PATH Intl. (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International) certified horseback riding instructor.

I don't want to get ahead of myself as her story really begins in 1994. That is when Alicia first came to Camelot. As an impressionable young lady, eager to soak up everything she could, Alicia had the great fortune to be a student of Eileen Szychowski, Camelot's founder. Alicia was a student until the year 2000, when, as it does for many, life took a turn, and college captured her attention. I want to think that during her time being mentored by Szychowski was when the seed was first planted that would compel Alicia to dedicate years of her life to make a place for herself in the therapeutic horseback riding industry. Alicia went to college, but she did not forget about Camelot. In 2010, she picked up the phone and called me to ask about volunteer opportunities. I was quick to tell her that she was welcome; she joined the volunteer staff, and her new education began.

Alicia worked alongside other volunteers through the long, hot summer months, and when fall arrived, she rejoined the rider schedule so that she could hone her horsemanship skills. Her mentorship transitioned from student to learning how to become a teacher. Over the course of the next eight years



Alicia (center) teaching a semi private lesson. Pictured left is Larry riding Jim, visible in the mirror reflection is John riding Barbara.

while volunteering her time at Camelot, Alicia obtained her Equine Science Degree from Scottsdale Community College and completed two internships - the first, a five-month internship at Horses Help, a therapeutic riding facility located in Phoenix, Arizona, and the second, a two-week internship at Freedom Riders, a therapeutic program located in Topanga Canyon, California. Alicia volunteered for a year at Stable Influence Charity Programs, a therapeutic riding program in Cave Creek, Arizona, audited a PATH Intl. therapeutic riding instructor workshop in Oceanside, California, began horse driving lessons at the Phoenix Zoo, and volunteered at Therapeutic Riding of Tucson (TROT).

In March, 2019, Alicia attended a PATH Intl. certification workshop in Oceanside, California, where she successfully completed and obtained her PATH Intl. Registered Instructor Certification! A certification that less than a dozen other people with disabilities hold. What an accomplishment for Alicia and an outstanding day for all. Alicia worked hard, she studied harder, and she went to California prepared and ready to succeed. And, succeed she did!

It brings me unbridled joy to announce that this fall Ms. Alicia Draper will be joining my staff as a riding instructor. Dreams can and do come true. I am so very proud of all the hard work that Alicia has put into achieving this goal. The full measure of this monumental accomplishment will be seen in the years to come. Congratulations on a title well earned, and welcome aboard! ∞

A Camelot love story!



By Keren Grindrod

In our family, we have a saying “love looks like something”...to us it means that you can see the word in action - you can feel it; you can touch it. Camelot is one of those places filled with love. For the past two+ years, our daughter, Kiara, has been able to fulfill one of her loves here. Horses have always been one of her loves, and when she was diagnosed with brain and spine cancer shortly after turning six, we felt much farther away from her getting to ride than ever. The effects of the brain surgery resulted in her losing all of her motor skills. After almost two years of treatment and therapy, we found ourselves, and more importantly our little princess, exhausted from the process. She fought hard to regain so much but was still fighting to regain strength, balance and coordination to walk again. We began looking for alternative therapy options as we knew Kiara had to continue therapy, but she was burnt out...and who could blame her. Hippotherapy was recommended to us, and it was a no-brainer knowing the love Kiara had for horses...what wasn't a no-brainer was finding a place that either took our insurance or we could afford. Enter Camelot...and enter Mary Hadsall (a real life super-hero in our eyes); from our first visit we felt the love and care...A place where Kiara is celebrated for her ABILITY and challenged to push herself in the areas where she needs to build strength. A place where love looks like countless volunteers serving and giving time and resources to see all people from young to old have the opportunity to push themselves to get stronger, and enjoy the beauty of horsemanship. We have encountered many challenges since our world was turned upside down with a pediatric cancer diagnosis...but we have also encountered many blessings. One of those blessings is the Camelot family that we now belong to...a place where we all are included. A community of people working hard to love those who require some extra time and attention to accomplish things that a lot of us take for granted. We will be forever grateful for our Camelot family stepping in to LOVE us and welcome us in... ∞



Kiara riding Cayanna. Standing left to right are Lynn, Kristina, Keren, Roz, (foreground) Kylie, Sharon, Hannah, and Felicia.

“The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.” — Pablo Picasso

A Heroes' Hero Roslyn “Roz” Tayne

By Hannah Brisso
Volunteer Coordinator &
Principal Riding Instructor

After reading an article about Camelot in a local publication, Roz began volunteering as a ranch hand in September of 2016. Her resume boasted extensive account management and bookkeeping experience, however, it was the ten years she spent as a dairy farmer in Israel that really stood out! Roz has two weekly scheduled shifts — Thursday afternoons working with the students as an instructor assistant and Friday mornings working as a ranch hand. However, Roz substitutes almost weekly an additional afternoon per week and is currently serving on the PATH Intl. accreditation committee. Roz has assisted with technology at our major fundraisers, and has served on event committees. Staying close to her roots as a dairy farmer, she is available to help with feeding all three meals to the horses, assist with bunny care, and is often found in the chicken coop, paying special attention to our senior duck, Vivian. In her free time, Roz enjoys tennis, hiking, and cultural events. ∞



Pictured with therapy horse, Barbara, left to right Auora, Sharon, Karen, Erica, Hannah, Kristina, Lynne, Roz, and Lynn.



Kristina handing Jim's driving bridle to Heidi.

Camelot is proud to announce the appointment of Kristina Vahe as Camelot's Barn Manager/Riding Instructor.

"When I first walked through the gates of Camelot, I had no idea how much Camelot would change my life. Being able to help our students reach their goals and gain more independence is a beautiful thing to be a part of. I am honored that I get to work with such amazing people and horses every day." ∞

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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Nifty Bits News from the Ranch



Where would we be without our community standing behind our hard work as we serve our mission. It is my pleasure to acknowledge our major donors, with deepest gratitude and heartfelt thanks:

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Thunderbirds Charities
Tim and Nan Corwin Charitable
Pass-Through Grant Fund of the
FM Area Foundation
Verdoorn Foundation

Lets have a big round of applause for **Amy Bonner**, Camelot's newest Board Member!

Camelot welcomes the following Dragon Slayers to our rider schedule!

Eliron F., Nikki H., Bridget K., Angela M., Amy N., and Missy W.

Three cheers to our new volunteers and welcome aboard!

Ally C., Lou E., Laura H., Gina L., Chris M., and Phillis Y.

Welcome back wishes to **Sara L., Dave M., & Taylor N.**



"A society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they know they shall never sit"

~
anonymous Greek proverb



Big things come in small packages! Say hello to Phil our 12 year old mini mule!

In Memory Of

Marge Milliman
Coughdrop
Ted & Loretta Szychowski
Anthony Szychowski
Lynn Martinka
Jack Peterson
Gucci & Willow
Col. Dick Francisco
Dr. Frank Schuster
Molly Blank
Josef Rivers
Patti Hodson
Drayton
Vickie Jo Multhauf
Teak & Bonnie
Col. Buck Francisco
Jake
Viola Casalegno
Karen Dawson
Marjorie & Everett Walker
Joaquin Najera
Anna Figueroa
Col. Huff
Grandma Jan

Scout
Marylou Hadsall
Rosemary Goldner
Tucker
Peggy Welsh
Mac & Koa Gage
mom & dad Loomis
Merlin & Murphy
Gonzo & Otis
James
Scout & Bravo
John & Virginia Linda
Faye Hornsby

In Honor Of

Eileen Szychowski
Drayton the mastiff
John & Louise Beckett
Karen Bishop
Sandra Pina
Molly, Russel, Raphe', &
Buck
Chuck Johnson
Sydney Morrison
Robin Erlich

Lynn Wright's birthday
Ben Erlich
Eileen Szychowski
Eric Astor
Jim Hadsall
Sydney Morrison
Lou & Sharon Goldman
Kristina Vahe
Camelot's Percheron's,
past, present and future
Samantha Tayne's wedding
Roselyn Tayne
Paolo Contu-Owen
Jeanne A
Kiah Zeman
Cayanna
Alicia Stasinsky
Winfield Racquetts
Evan & Yale Richardson
Sophie & Camelot
Bella Trowbridge
Evan & Yale Richardson
Katie Griffith
Edna Pindler
Fitz & Riggs Sayder
Alicia Draper

Girl Scout Troop 691
Mary Hadsall
Robin Erlich
Pyper Stillman
Ella
Camelot
Boston Moss
Danny Zelisko
Phil
Ben & Dani Erlich
Erika Schilling
Lyla
Ava Mason
Junior aka Court Marshall
Grandpa Levi
Camelot staff & volunteers
Jim aka K2
The Brisso's, Smarty, Ellie,
Reeky, Minnie, Thea, Gus-
Gus, Webster, Yellow Cat &
Black Cat
Laura Del Grosso
The Camelot family -
director, instructors,
volunteers, students and
supporters

Camelot wishes to acknowledge all of the special people and cherished animals who were honored with hearts before and during the spring fundraising campaign. Best efforts were made to acknowledge everyone; sincere apologies if your loved one is not mentioned.

Raise your sword against the most formidable enemy of all... the voice within that says "I can't" ~ Eileen Szychowski, Camelot Founder

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Please join us in celebration of our 36th lesson season!

Friday, October 18 • 6 - 10 pm
Camelback Vista at Scottsdale Plaza Resort
7200 N Scottsdale Road

This evening filled with stories of inspiration and achievement will include drinks, dinner, raffle, live & silent auctions, and a special presentation featuring **Shining Star Bridget Korn and Camelot Alumni Patrick Bonner & Evan Richardson!**

Tickets available at www.bidpal.net/sk2019

- \$125 Student & Volunteer
- \$150 Individual
- \$275 Couple
- \$1000 Table of 8
- \$1250 Table of 10

For information on becoming a sponsor or to make a donation online or by phone, please contact us at:

info@CamelotAZ.org
480.515.1542



Who is your shining star?



Make a donation to Camelot, and we will honor the person or cherished pet of your choice with a shining star at the Camelot ranch. Stars will be on display in the educational center through the end of the year. To purchase a star, visit www.CamelotAZ.org/stars or fill in the form below and mail it to Camelot:

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