

Five Stars for Camelot!

Five-year Journey To Becoming A Premier Accredited Center Comes To An End

By Hannah Brisso

Principal Riding Instructor, Volunteer Coordinator

Remember when reviews used to be limited to movies? Now, most of us turn to them for a lot of things like making smart purchases, picking the best restaurants, and even choosing the ideal therapeutic riding program. Two kinds of reviews are particularly helpful when on the hunt, those written by participants or peers. Camelot recently passed the most discerning peer review in our industry. We are officially the only PATH Intl. (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International) Premier Accredited Center in Scottsdale, and one of only five in Arizona!

PATH Intl. offers a peer review system in which trained volunteers visit and evaluate centers in accordance with their standards. Programs are evaluated on administrative, facility and program requirements, as well as applicable activities and service criteria. Once a center has been approved, they're accredited for five years.

But this didn't happen overnight. In 2017, Camelot staff and a group of volunteers committed to this journey. After two years of preparation, an application for accreditation was submitted and accepted. Site evaluators were scheduled to visit

Camelot in the spring of 2020, but the world pushed the pause button.

Evaluators were finally able to visit Camelot in the spring of 2022. They went over the facility, policies and procedures with a fine-toothed comb. They observed a therapeutic riding and driving lesson, and ground activities. Over 150 safety standards were evaluated. After five years of hard work and faith, (drumroll please!) Camelot passed the accreditation process with flying colors!

Was it worth it? Absolutely! Not only does accreditation increase the visibility of Camelot in the community, but it also brings additional grant funding prospects, discounts on education for instructors, and the opportunity to host on-site workshops and certifications.

After 40 years of offering the highest quality therapeutic horsemanship instruction at no cost to our participants, the honor of receiving Premier Accredited status will help Camelot sustain and adhere to the mission and vision set forth by its founder, well into the future. ∞



John, all smiles, riding Barbara in the covered arena.



Last season, we welcomed a high school intern into our volunteer program. At the completion of her internship, she had a senior year project which was about equine assisted activities. I volunteered to help. My task was to ask our students one simple question... “*What does Camelot mean to you?*”

I could only use a few words from each rider because of the limited space available. I wanted people’s initial response, spoken from the heart, so I didn’t give them much time to think about it. Then, as a surprise, I placed these quotes on the beautiful 18” handcrafted origami horse she made to use during her presentation. The end result was more endearing than I ever could have imagined! I knew immediately that I must share it with you, the Camelot family.

This project helped me in more ways than I expected. It reminded me of what’s good in this world and my life—my personal Chicken Soup For The Soul. The answers embody my reason for choosing this path. In true Camelot fashion, the beautiful origami horse was gifted back to the program, and the intern is now our weekend ranch hand. The circle of giving continues.

Merlin’s Muse

By Mary Hadsall
Executive Director

What does Camelot mean to you?

When the gate swings open at Camelot, I enter a world of optimism and hope. A place where a “you can do it” becomes “you did it!” A place that sees each person’s potential and provides the positive push for it to be realized. **Leslie B.**

Camelot means a lot. It gives me hope and brings a smile to my face every time I ride. **Sabrina W.**

Camelot is loving and caring. I feel happy when I ride! **Kelly K.**

Camelot gives me a little more confidence each week that I can do more than I think I can. Volunteers make all the difference! Horses help you see the world a little bit different, in a great way! **Helen H.**

I feel safe and comfortable when I ride! **Halie B.**

Camelot is a fantasy of real reality! You can’t imagine a place like this! **Margaret B.**

I don’t like it today. [When asked how he felt about Camelot last week] It was fun! **Ben P.** Editors note: Ben was introduced to putting on and buckling his own helmet independently prior to being asked his opinion. It’s a difficult task to learn for many riders.

Thursday is not just the day between Wednesday and Friday. It’s the day I get to see my friends, the volunteers, riders and staff, and of course that big gentle giant, Jim. Thursday is the day I leave my wheelchair on the ground and I soar. How amazing is that! **Cheryl R.**

Camelot means friendship and purpose—a place to go where I can get away from other things (my disability). That is Camelot to me. **Amy P.**

Camelot has given me the independence to do things with my own horse that I did not know I could do. Freedom! Independence! **Angie H.**

Fun and Freedom! **Heidi M.**



I feel happy when I ride Frisco and Rooster at Camelot! **Jaz P.**

Joy and Security. **Dusty H.**

I like grooming horses and giving them apples and carrots. I like Spirit [Anabel’s nickname for Nutmeg] and he wants to go back to his herd. **Anabel R.**

Camelot means that horses are treated great, and everyone is kind. And everyone helps us as much as they can. Camelot always helps! **Eliron F.**

The ability to connect with animals and fun physical therapy! **Sydney M.**

Camelot is independence, courage and strength. **Katie G.**

Camelot is like a big family and through the friendships with the staff, volunteers and students I feel like I am part of that family. Over the past 15 years I have grown to love you all and I tell people this

is the best job I ever had and that I get paid in smiles and hugs! **Phil S.**

Camelot makes me feel happy. I love all the horses and I am riding Nutmeg right now. My favorite part of Camelot are my friendships. **Chelsea L.**

Camelot has been the highlight of my life for the last 19 years. The special calmness when stepping on the property brings me the best peace that no medicine can! **Lynne L.**

Camelot makes me happy. My favorite part is the friendships. I ride Nutmeg. **Chelsea L.**

Camelot means a lot, it’s interactive. I get to interact with the horses. It’s an amazing place to come to because we have fun! **Amanda F.**

Camelot really is my family. And just like being with your family you exchange information about your lives, and you learn to care about others. Camelot has really expanded my ability to care for others. There really is a feeling of love there, the love of family and animals. **John B.**

Heroes' Heroes



Cathleen Jo Gorham
5/26/1958 - 3/29/2022

It's with a very heavy heart that we share with you the untimely passing of Cathy Gorham.

Cathy began volunteering at Camelot in November of 2014. She came, she saw, she loved, and she stayed! When an opportunity to join the staff in February of 2017 became available, Cathy eagerly jumped on board! She took on the responsibilities of caring for the Camelot horses and therapy animals on the weekends while continuing her Wednesday volunteer duties.

Cathy was fiercely devoted to her family, especially her husband Charlie, and had a deep, deep love of all animals. Not long ago, a beautiful horse named Joker came into her life fulfilling a lifelong dream of becoming a horse owner. He truly brought her immeasurable joy.

Cathy was the kindest person to come through our gates and she will be forever missed.



Cliff Dweller
a.k.a. **Cliffy**
July 15, 1994 - May 27, 2022

"When I bestride him, I soar.
I am a hawk; he trots the air;
the earth sings when he touches
it; the basest horn of his hoof is
more musical than the pipe of
Hermes."

~ William Shakespeare

September 2003 Cliffy came into my life and was my dream horse. He was the perfect partner for me as I learned the art of dressage and most notably when he carried me boldly through the desert while riding with the Paradise Valley Beagles. To say he brought me immeasurable joy would be a gross understatement. All that being said, Cliffy truly shined during the past 19 years as a patient and noble servant to Camelot. He was dubbed Sir Caramore The Bold in 1994 by his first mom, Mandy. My sweet boy will forever be remembered, loved and greatly missed by many.

RIP my sweet friends.

Nifty Bits News from the Ranch

A special thanks to Helping Youth Participate and Excel (**H.Y.P.E.**) for lending a hand, not once but twice! It is no small task to strip eight stalls, add new dirt, compact said dirt, and THEN refill all of the stalls with fresh bedding! What was to be a one day project turned into two, the barn smells wonderful and the horses appreciate their refreshed bedrooms!

Ray Klein the new **barn sunshades** look amazing and are doing just what we hoped, reducing the temperature in the southwestern stalls! The horses are eternally grateful for all your hard work designing and then installing our custom shades!

Congratulations to Camelot alumna **Marissa Boone & Blaine Clement** on the arrival of their little bundle of joy. **Cooper Maxton Clement** arrived on 7.25.22 at 7:25 pm, weighing in at 4 lb. 11 Oz and measuring 18"!

Camelot welcomes **Vaishnavi C.** as our weekend ranch hand! Thank you so much for your loving care of the Camelot therapy animals.

Camelot welcomes new Dragon Slayers **Amanda H., Amy P.**, to our rider schedule. Three cheers to our new volunteers **Holly T. & Joan H.** We are grateful for your service!

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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Coming soon!

Rebecca and Sean Thompson
are happily awaiting the arrival
of their first born child:

Master Gabriel Nolan
Thompson

Due date: August 23, 2022

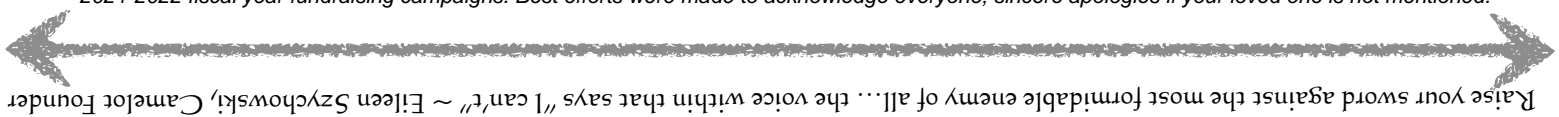
Starry Knights 2021 "Stars"

Hooves & Heroes 2022 "Hearts"

In Honor of:	Ray Klein	George Wells
Geff & Sheila	Shirley Lowman	Van Williams
Graham	Eileen Szychowski	Melissa Lo Cascio
Ginger Barry	Lynne LoCascio	Weimer
Jim Howard	Bonnie Trowbridge	Ray & Greg Cheeley
Raymond Ames		Dean Benigno
David & Shayna	In Memory of:	Kerri Lynn Hodges
Nagpal	Phyllis Heppenstall	Joan Schiralli
Sydney Morrison	Archie	Charleen
Roslyn Tayne	Bob Karla	Rev. John Simpson
Lynn Wright	Anthony Szychowski	Drayton, the Mastiff
Hannah Brisso	Marg Milliman	Ray Deyo
Camelot	Molly Blank	Rico (the dog)
Robin Erlich	Beverly Eisenberg	Jim Draper
Brad & Deb Ballif	Bill & Vi Casalegno	Frank Schuster
Rebecca Thompson	Gizmo	Halyna Hutchins
Camelot Staff &	Galia Sodoma	Teak
Volunteers	Col. Buck Francisco	Joyce Happersett
Barbara, the horse	Lucille Mogaard	Ty Horshok
Louise Beckett	Virgina Richards	
Jubi	Walker	
The Graham Family	Mary Lou Hadsall	
All the Volunteers	Laura Marie Del	
The Queens of	Grosso	
Camelot	Marie Krombholz	
Praisz	Bill Flite	
Mary Hadsall	Rosemary Goldner	

In Honor of:	In Memory of:
Sharon & Lou Goldman	Bob Flite
Bryant Pittman	Max
Frank DeAgostine	Col. Richard Francisco
Camelot Staff & Volunteers	Robert Rapp
Eileen Szychowski	Melissa Weimer
Jim Hadsall	Ruth "Aunt Rivie" Learner
The Erlich Family	Zoey
All the Frontline Healthcare workers	Bill & Vi Casalegno
Paolo Contu-Owen	Michael E. Stone
Evie Michelle Stone	Allen J. Stone
Jan Miller	Marjorie Milliman
Sydney Morrison	Big Dave Hornsby
Cliff Dweller a.k.a. Sir	Canyon
Caramore the Bold	Ty the Therapy Dog
Sydney Morrison	Jim Olk
Camelot Volunteers	Margaret Kantz
Rebecca Thompson	Cathy Gorham
The men, women and children of Ukraine	Grandpa Levi
Tallulah and Memphis	Gidget
	Torben Poulsen
	Paladin & Bravo

Camelot wishes to acknowledge all of the special people and cherished animals who were honored with hearts and stars before and during the 2021-2022 fiscal year fundraising campaigns. Best efforts were made to acknowledge everyone; sincere apologies if your loved one is not mentioned.



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