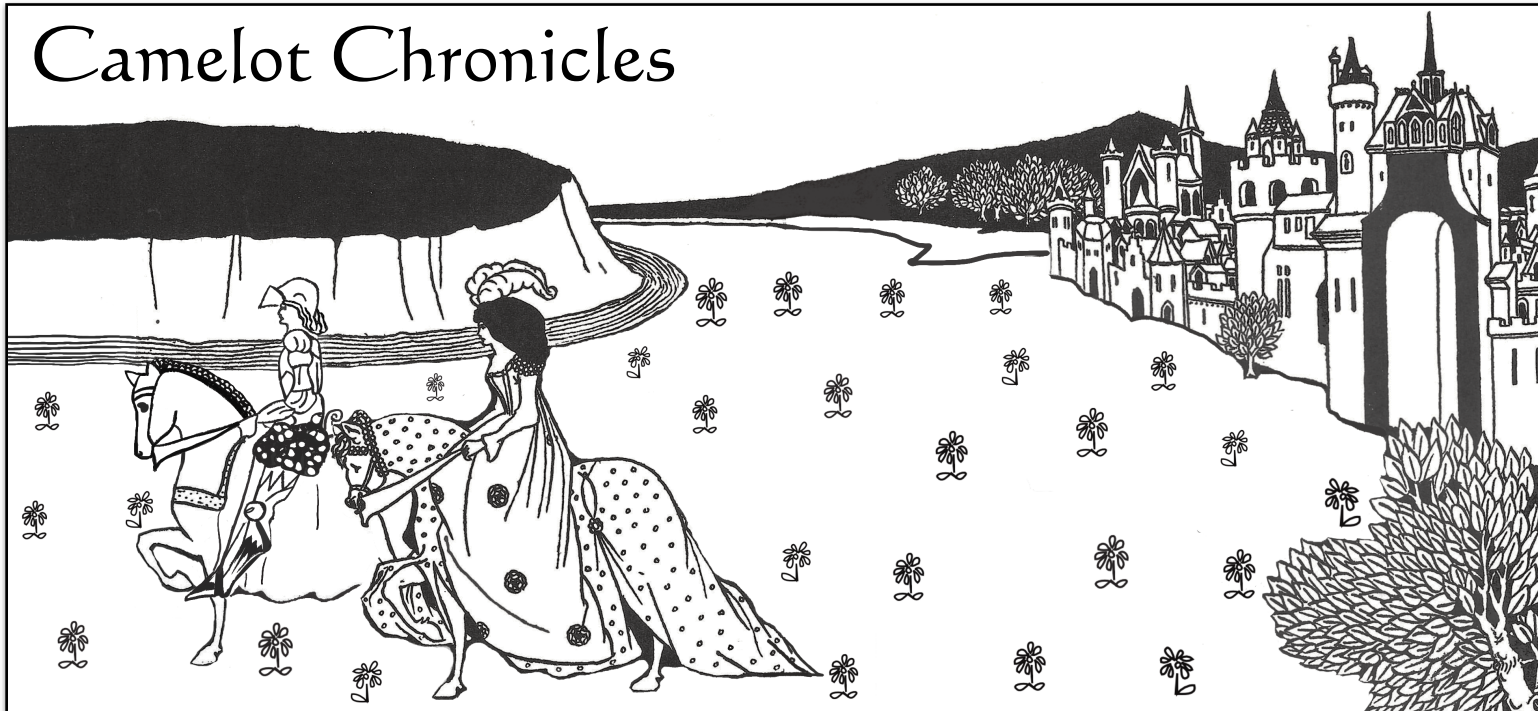


Camelot Chronicles



Celebrating 40 Years of Camelot...Where Heroes are Born



Merlin's Muse

By Mary Hadsall
Executive Director

There are so many exciting announcements it's difficult to decide where to begin! First, happy 40th anniversary to Camelot! This is an impressive achievement for any organization, but when you take into account that we're a nonprofit that gives their services away at no cost, well that makes this celebration all the sweeter. More thanks than I can express to our dedicated community, volunteers, board of directors, donors, staff and therapy horses who made this milestone possible!

The timing of Michelle Guerrero's book release is spot on! There's no better way to celebrate forty years of excellence than to learn exactly how Camelot came to be in the true story about Eileen Szychowski, our program's founder. *The Rise of Camelot, A Modern-Day True Tale of Horses, Dragons, and a Girl with a Dream*, is a young adult

biography that comes out on August 22, 2023. Eileen took the road less traveled, and this book shares all the challenges she overcame to open the gates of our beloved Camelot.

Finally, a fortieth anniversary deserves a big party! We are shaking it up this year and hosting *Starry Knights* and *Twinkle Lights* at the ranch for the first time ever! We'll have all the panache our typical gala fundraiser has, so dig out your fancy clothes. There's an incredibly special evening planned that includes cocktail hour, dinner, silent and live auctions, a program featuring Camelot students, and of course, dessert. But this year, we'll be under the Camelot stars and surrounded by horses. Truly, there's no better way to honor this program than that.

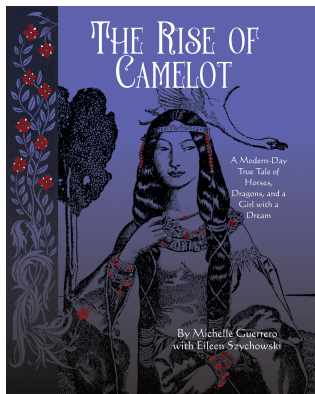
I hope that you will join us in celebrating this momentous year! Tickets go on sale Tuesday, September 5th. They're limited and we expect to sell out quickly so be sure to stay tuned to our website, CamelotAZorg. ∞

Remembering...

Denise Thompson, a rider with a visual impairment and one of Camelot's first students, learns about hoof picks from Lauren, a volunteer. This photo was taken forty years ago, in 1983, by Karen Berggren. Denise went on to own her own horses and became a breeder of Missouri Fox Trotters and miniature horses. She was a devoted Camelot volunteer for years and would eventually be the chairperson of our board of directors. Some of Denise's story is highlighted in the book *The Rise of Camelot*.



Denise is seated facing Lauren who is holding a hoof pick flat in the palm of her right hand. Circa 1983



The Rise of Camelot

A Modern-Day True Tale of Horses, Dragons, and a Girl with a Dream

By Michelle Guerrero with Eileen Szychowski

Available August 22, 2023
Hardcover – Paperback – Ebook

When a childhood illness landed Eileen Szychowski (“shahuski”) with a life-changing disability and “you can’t” became an all too familiar phrase, she began to believe that her horse dreams were no more than that: dreams. But then she met Josef, a mysterious man who lived in the redwood forest and saw obstacles as dragons.

There are uncanny parallels between Eileen, the girl who raised Camelot in the Sonoran Desert, and Arthur, the boy who founded the medieval kingdom of Camelot in England. Both heroes fought for justice. They lived their lives with chivalry. And they had a mystical mentor who always seemed to be at least two steps ahead of everyone else.

Eileen blazed trails through the Grand Canyon, bringing disability awareness to the National Park Service, before starting the first therapeutic riding center in Arizona. But before she could fulfill her destiny, there were dragons to slay...

Order from your favorite online bookstore such as Amazon, Books-A-Million and Barnes & Noble. Or pick up a copy at Camelot.

o o Nifty Bits o o
News from the Ranch

Camelot welcomes new Dragon Slayers to our rider schedule: **Vicki M., Robin O., Harper S. & Miki S.**

We can’t do this alone and are so grateful for our new volunteers: **Casey F., Kelly J., Emily M., Todd M., Destiny S., & Peggy T.** & a heartfelt welcome back to **Frankie A. Master Gardner.** It is lovely watching our garden receive a face lift!

It’s always hard to say goodbye, **Felicia J.** we are grateful for your years of dedicated service, we will miss you!



Eileen pictured in 2003 with Mack, one of Camelot’s therapy horses.

Michelle Guerrero approached me in September 2020 with the idea of writing a children’s story based on my life and my work with horses and people with disabilities, she was the right person asking at the right time and in the right way. The many articles and grant proposals Michelle had written over the years as Camelot’s newsletter editor and grant writer assured me that she was someone who could write about disability issues in a straightforward and dignified way.

From the outset, she pitched the book project as an ongoing source of revenue for Camelot; that is 100% of all sales would go to Camelot in perpetuity. Neither Michelle, nor I, nor any other person would make a single dollar from this project. How could I say no to such a great and generous idea? Little did I know just how hard she would work to make this project really special.

I’m very proud of the book that Michelle has produced, and I hope that all who purchase this story of the origins of Camelot will enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed reliving it with my favorite author of books for children and young adults, Michelle Guerrero.

Yours in Chivalry,



Eileen Szychowski, Camelot Founder

Heroes’ Hero ~ Dusty

Dusty Hoffman is fiercely devoted to Camelot. Even though she’s quiet and observant, she has the courage of a lion and doesn’t hesitate to promote our program. Dusty joined the student roster in the fall of 2018. Since then, she has been active in soliciting silent auction items for our fundraisers; she also talks about Camelot to everyone she meets. Thank you, Dusty, for recently reaching out to **Culvers of Tempe**, located at 630 E Southern Ave., and bringing Camelot to the attention of the store owner, Destiny. We now have an **upcoming fundraiser on August 14th from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.** and a new volunteer as a direct result of your initiative! ∞



Dusty grooming Nutmeg in a driving lesson.

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.

Camelot Chronicles is published semiannually by Camelot, a nonprofit equestrian therapy and outdoor education program run for people with disabilities. All materials herein are copyright 2023 Camelot. Material may be reproduced with permission and credit. For subscription and other information, visit our website at CamelotAZ.org; write to 23623 N. Scottsdale Rd., Suite D3 Box 259, Scottsdale, AZ 85255; or call 480-515-1542. **Publisher:** Mary Hadsall **Editor:** Michelle Guerrero



Hannah holding her beloved chicken, Pompom.



Alicia seated on left with Amanda, a Camelot student.

Saying Farewell



“A bird sitting in a tree is never afraid of the branch breaking because its trust is not on the branch but on its own wings. Always believe in yourself.” ~ Charlie Wardle

In the spring of 2013, I said that change is not only necessary but also responsible for growth—growth in personal lives and in business. Which is exactly what two outstanding ladies that I have had the distinct honor and pleasure to work alongside are doing right now.

Ms. Hannah Brisso announced in early May that she was looking for change, and with great courage, she stood on the edge and jumped! Hannah has been a driving force in her dual role as our principal riding instructor and volunteer coordinator. She first came to Camelot in 2010 as a volunteer, then became a member of our staff in the fall of 2013. Hannah is an excellent therapeutic driving and riding instructor, yoga instructor, party/excursion planner and people magnet. Students and volunteers have truly enjoyed her good energy. She has the kindest heart for all animals, especially elderly pets.

Hannah is not alone in taking a leap! Ms. Alicia Draper, a Camelot alumna and riding instructor, is back in school. Alicia is getting her Master of Science in Recreational Therapy through the School of Public Health at Indiana University Bloomington. Once she graduates, she will be qualified to take the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist Exam, which is offered through the National Council for Recreation Certification. Once she passes the exam, she will be a Certified Therapeutic Recreational Specialist (CTRS) or recreational therapist. She is on target to graduate in the spring or summer of 2024.

Draper said, "As a future recreational therapist, my purpose is to continue to lead by example and help improve the quality of life for people with disabilities through leisure and recreation."

It takes strength and determination to follow your dreams, and both ladies have courage and fortitude in spades!

Welcoming Wishes



Riding Instructor

Beck Hinshaw's love of horses started in early childhood, with her uncle, who was a respected breeder and trainer of racehorses. Beck has ridden in Turkey, England, Saudi Arabia, Italy and the United States. She grew up in Istanbul, Turkey where she attended the University of Istanbul on a full scholarship studying journalism and English. She also graduated from a dance academy and worked as a children's dance instructor. At the age of nineteen, she relocated to the United States and is now a proud U.S. citizen.

When she became a mother, she saw the positive effect riding had on her children's lives, especially her oldest daughter, who competes as a hunter jumper. She shifted her focus to becoming an equine therapist after witnessing the amazing and positive benefits of working with horses. After acquiring her PATH Intl. and EAL (Equine Assisted Learning) certifications, she quickly became the lead trainer at a Glendale micro school that provided equine therapy. Beck's background and knowledge of horses provide her students with a superior experience.

Beck lives in Phoenix, Arizona with her family. She enjoys riding, running, swimming, gardening, caring for her pets, reading and being a soccer mom.



Volunteer Coordinator

After only a week of living in Arizona, Holly called Camelot not only to see about volunteering but also to find her people. She moved from New Hampshire, where she volunteered at UpReach Therapeutic Equestrian Center for 13 years. After a year of volunteering at Camelot, she won the Golden Stirrup volunteer award, joined the event committee, and is now Camelot's volunteer coordinator.

According to Holly's mother, her first word was "horse." Holly spent her summers at Kingsbury Hill Riding Camp in New Hampshire and learned proper horse care in the stable management classes, along with the pony club techniques from the European councilors. Having never owned her own horse, she learned to adapt to the abilities of the horses available to her.

She graduated *summa cum laude* from the New Hampshire Institute of Art with a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a concentration in photography, but found the photography field quite saturated. She then decided to go into education, specializing in STEM classes with students who had learning disabilities or autism.

Holly and her husband had been Arizona visitors for decades, and decided to move here permanently. Their two adult children had already moved here, which made

the decision that much easier. Currently, Holly is the owner of Simplified LLC, an organizing business which specializes in property transition for people selling their homes. Much of her free time is spent finding new ways to enjoy this beautiful state.



Riding Instructor

Regan's first experience with Camelot was in 2021. She was immediately taken with the enthusiastic, professional and talented team. As a lifelong horse girl, she brings a plethora of experience and passion to the Camelot community.

Regan discovered equine assisted activities and therapies more than a decade ago. Today, she is passionate about deepening people's understanding of their own physiology and psychology by connecting them with horses. Regan is a certified PATH Intl. Therapeutic Riding Instructor, Equine Specialist in Mental Health & Learning, and PATH Intl. mentor.

In addition to her EAAT certifications, Regan has bachelor's degrees in psychology and theatre from New York University, is a certified Yoga Teacher with Yoga Alliance, and a registered behavior therapist. Outside of teaching at Camelot, Regan enjoys riding her horses, attending graduate school at Arizona State University and participating in the performing arts.

Memorial Gifts

In Honor Of:

Friends of Camelot
 Katherine Vaughan
 Haney
 Rose Mulholland
 Sadie Gibrich
 Lanore Baxter
 Dr. Jamie Foley
 DVM
 Roslyn Tayne
 Kelly Knodel
 Eileen Szychowski
 Evie Michelle Stone
 Camelot
 Amanda Fehlberg
 Lynne Lo Cascio
 Marsha Lindsey
 Mary Hadsall
 Sydney Morrison
 Rebecca Thompson
 Jan Miller
 Sara & Matt Robison
 Ruth Erlich
 Amanda Harwood
 Camelot Staff &
 Volunteers
 Peg Mulloy
 Faith Schulsinger
 John
 Lynne and Melissa

Partner's 30th
 birthday
 Camelot
 Debbie Griffith
 Patrick Bonner
 Danielle Sweets

In Memory of:

Ellen Hopper
 Joe Kalinsky
 Laura Del Grosso
 Molly Blank
 Beverly Eisenberg
 "Bob" Rebels
 Raysen
 Katy Bar Dee Door
 Gidget
 Ted Szychowski
 Ralph R. Schatke
 Drayton the Mastiff
 Fur babies that have
 passed
 Jim & Mary Lou
 Hadsall
 George Wells
 Lucky Boy
 Flash & Cash
 Baloo
 KiKi
 Dean Benigno
 Cathleen Jo Gorman

Paolo Contu-Owen
 Roy and Ann Crall
 Joan Schiralli
 Tammy Schaffer
 Nordin
 Susan Martorello
 Zen
 Janik



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

Welcome Rose!

Rose was under evaluation at the time of our last Camelot Chronicles and since then she passed our evaluation and is officially a part of our four-legged teaching staff. She's already a favorite among students, volunteers and staff.

Rose is a Norwegian Fjord/Quarter Horse cross with the sweetest temperament and the most beautiful color. She's a grulla, a type of dun with a tan-gray, mousey colored coat. She has a dorsal stripe down her back and black points on her lower legs, mane and tail. This coloring comes from her Quarter Horse lineage. We keep her mane trimmed short in keeping with her Fjord heritage.

Before arriving at Camelot, Rose was used primarily as a cart horse and had over a thousand hours of pleasure driving! Her previous owner also used a variety of different pieces of mobility equipment, including walkers and wheelchairs, which gave Rose a heads up on her training and life at Camelot!



Rose is hitched to our wheelchair accessible carriage with Trish in the drivers seat and Rebecca as the able bodied whip seated in back.

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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