

# Ho-Wong

OFFICIAL  
NEWSLETTER OF  
CAMP CIRCLE STAR

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## Happy Holidays!

We just recently wrapped up our fall Fun Day season, and it was honestly a little bittersweet. It will be a few months before we see our campers down at the Circle Star Ranch again, but now we will definitely have more time to devote to camp planning for next season.

I am very excited to announce that one of the programs we will be planning for will be our new weekend camp program, coming in the Fall of 2019! We were thrilled to receive a grant for this program from the Jefferson County Developmental Disabilities Resource Board, & we can't wait to implement it.

We plan on bringing a small group of campers down on a few Saturday mornings, spending the night and having a ton of camp fun, and then returning on Sunday afternoon. This program will have many of the same elements of summer camp, including 1:1 support and flexible activity schedule, but it will involve more skilled staff. CCS's Weekend Camp Program is the next natural progression for CCS. We are very excited to offer this experience to our campers and families.

Our campers will increase their independence by sleeping away from home, assisting with meal prep, and completing self care tasks, all under our caring and supportive supervision. Our families will have over night respite, which, I can tell you first-hand, is priceless.

Because our staff will need to be skilled and work for us for 38 consecutive hours, this will be a more expensive program, so our end of the year fundraising drive will be themed "Workin' For The Weekend". (Think Loverboy, 1981). You will definitely have "a piece of my heart" when you donate to this program. See what I did there?

We know there are many very worthy organizations in the area who need support, so we greatly appreciate your consideration with your end of the year giving. We are small, local, and grassroots. We provide much-needed services to those who have few options, and we are very grateful to be here. Thank you for being a part of our story!

*-Renee*

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The mission of Camp Circle Star is to enrich the lives of children and adults with disabilities with recreational and residential opportunities which respect and embrace their individual preferences and needs.

## Camp Circle Star

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### On The Cover

We were absolutely thrilled this fall to receive a Cardinals Care grant to fund our purchase of a Bounce House for our campers. We love having this option for our campers, especially when our pool is closed for the season. It gives our campers a safe, gross motor outlet for their energy.

Thank you, Cardinals Care, for being a champion for children with different needs! Our campers love our new piece of equipment, and we look forward to many years of bouncing in the future.

## Camper Spotlight

Our Camper Spotlight is on Miss Caroline Teepe. Caroline has attended CCS for many years. Her mom, Marie, was gracious to answer a few of our questions about this very special camper.

### ***Tell us a little bit about Caroline. How long has she attended CCS?***

Caroline is a 16 yr old girl with Autism. She loves to sing, dance, play outside, go for walks, swim, go for long car rides, and have fun with friends. She has trouble communicating, and she often will exhibit negative behaviors, but she is a fun-loving teenage girl. She has been attending CCS since its inception!

### ***What are Caroline's favorite things to do at CCS?***

First of all, she loves the bus ride there! Caroline loves to go places, look out the window and anticipate her arrival. She loves that CCS has so much to do both inside and out. She loves the walking trails at CCS. She loves to be in nature, have the wind in her hair and go on walks. She loves their big swimming pool, she loves ALL the staff who take her lead and sing and dance with her. She loves that she can be herself!

### ***How does Caroline feel about going to CCS? How does she feel when she returns?***

CCS is her absolute FAVORITE place to go. Since she has been a camper for a while, we have many green "camp shirts". EVERY single day after I help her dress in the morning, she goes back in her room, ruffles through her drawers, finds a camp shirt and puts it on. She stands in front of me with a big smile and says "CAMP?". I have to tell her she is not going to camp today, she sighs, goes back in her room and puts her other clothes back on. If she could go to CCS every day, she would! She is so happy upon return, but very tired!

### ***CCS prides itself on not only providing an exceptional camp experience for our campers, but also providing respite for our families. Is this respite important to you? Is there anything in particular that you like to do when you have respite?***

The respite is extremely helpful for our family. My husband and I are able to take our other 2 children out and do activities that we would not otherwise be able to do because Caroline is not capable. Last Saturday, we took our other kids on a long bike ride in forest park and it was awesome. We went to lunch and spent the day just having fun. We are so happy knowing Caroline is having the time of her life at camp and we are having a great time with our other children. We absolutely love Caroline, but it's nice to have a day when autism isn't always around.

### ***What do you feel makes CCS so different from other camp programs?***

Caroline can pick what SHE wants to do at camp. She is not forced to follow a "camp agenda" and have her day and her activities mapped out for her. She can absolutely be herself and do the things that she loves. Caroline has attended other camps who "specialize" in autism and was asked to leave because they could not handle her "autistic behaviors". CCS was my saving grace! They smile when Caroline arrives for camp. They WANT her to be there. It makes all the difference in the world.

### ***Anything else you'd like to add?***

I want to thank Renee and everyone at CCS. They have provided an opportunity for Caroline to go somewhere that is just "hers". All of the volunteers have been great with Caroline, and have just let her lead the way to the fun she wants to have. On those mornings when she puts on her green shirt, and I say, "Yes, you can go to camp today!", it is better than Christmas morning in her eyes!



Pictured above is Caroline most likely singing "Bear Hunt" or "Happy And You Know It" with her Fun Day Buddy. Below it is Caroline with her family.



**Coming your way April 13, 2019!**  
**The 16th Annual CCS Mouse Race Event**  
**The Redbird Club at Busch Stadium**  
**Mark your calendars now!**

# Camp Circle Star 2018 Highlights

It's been a great year for Camp Circle Star, thanks to all our loyal supporters! Here are just a few of our highlights.

- Changed our name to Camp Circle Star in January, 2018
- Held our most successful Mouse Race Event ever in April, 2018
- Hosted 88 campers during seven weeks of summer camp and seven Saturday "Fun Days"
- Provided 90 volunteers with a gratifying and educational volunteer experience of a lifetime
- Hired skilled staff for all our camp programs; and therefore, were able to provide specialized support to all our campers, especially those with high-need disabilities
- Provided an environment where campers were able to forge friendships amongst themselves
- Provided over 335 hours of respite time to St. Louis area families of children with disabilities



We are so proud of what we've accomplished this past year. And now it's time to set some new goals for 2019! Our main goals for 2019 are:

- Continue to provide 7 weeks of summer camp and 7 Fun Days
- Implement the Camp Circle Star Weekend Camp Program where campers will partake in a highly individualized overnight program at the Circle Star Ranch
- Hire more staff to allow us to increase our programming to include more year-round activities and programs
- Improve our infrastructure around CCS so that we can better serve our current campers and accommodate more campers in the future. We hope to improve our playground area and build a garage to store and protect our CCS bus and store vital camp and maintenance equipment.

• Get closer to our long-term goals of opening an on-site adult-day program and Independent Supported Living Home

We are so excited to set forth on this journey of setting and accomplishing new goals. We are asking for your support with our "Working For The Weekend" end of year campaign. If you'd like to make a tax-deductible donation, you can do so by

- Scanning the QR code to the right with your iPhone or Android,
- Visiting our website at [campcirclestar.com](http://campcirclestar.com), or
- Detaching and mailing the donation agreement on the following page

Thank you for your generosity! You can be assured that your donation, no matter the size, will have a direct impact on the campers we serve!



## 2018 CCS TV, Movies & Rock 'n Roll Trivia Event



**Thank you to all who attended! We raised over \$25,000.00!**

**Your support and generosity is much appreciated.**

**We'll see you at the same Bat Time and the same Bat Channel on 9/28/19 for the 2019 Trivia Event!**

**Mark your calendars now!**

**See you there!**



## WANTED!

### LOOKING FOR THIRD-PARTY FUNDRAISERS

A third-party fundraiser is when a non-profit relies on their supporters, community members, and businesses to create fundraising campaigns that benefit a nonprofit. These can come in the form of birthday parties, Dress Down Days, Bring your Pet to Work Days, tournaments, wine tastings, or a business donating part of the proceeds of their sale, etc. One of the main advantages of third-party fundraisers is that, we as an organization, don't have to invest a lot of time and energy on the event so that we can focus on our programming for our campers. We are also able to grow our mission through your contacts. We have been lucky to receive support from a few third-party fundraisers this year! Several companies had work days at the Circle Star Ranch, other groups held supply drives for Camp Circle Star, and we were the charity partner for The Spooky Sprint hosted by Bodies Race STL. We would love to benefit from more of these events in 2019. Is your business, social group, church, sports team, scouting group, or family looking for a charity to support? We'd love to hear your ideas! If you'd like to host a third-party event or fundraiser please contact Heather or Renee at [heather@campcirclestar.com](mailto:heather@campcirclestar.com) or [renee@campcirclestar.com](mailto:renee@campcirclestar.com)



## Donate Now

Camp Circle Star is a 501c3 organization. All donations are tax deductible.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ \$1000 Camp Champ

\_\_\_ \$500 Happy Camper

\_\_\_ \$250 On The Right Trail

\_\_\_ \$100 Adventure Guide

\_\_\_ \$\_\_\_\_\_ S'More (You decide!)

\_\_\_ I have an auction item to donate

Please detach and return to :

Camp Circle Star

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# Ha-Wong

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**Mouse Race Event 4/13/19!**