



The author of the National Best Seller The Soul of a Horse: Life Lessons from the Herd has a new series of books teaching positive values to children in lyrical verse with colorful engaging illustrations

Joe Camp, film writer, producer, director, author, passionate speaker, and the man behind the canine superstar Benji believes that anything is possible if you work hard enough and have faith in yourself. He was told by industry "experts" not to bother with the original Benji film; that it wouldn't work. He proved the experts wrong and now, after five Benji movies, he's at it again with his latest career as an author. His new best selling book *The Soul of a Horse* published in 2008 by the Harmony Books imprint of Random House is in its fourth printing and is changing the lives of horses and people all across the planet for the better.

His recent book *Who Needs Hollywood* tells the amazing story of a small-time filmmaker who wrote the screenplay, raised the production budget, directed, and distributed the #3 movie of the year. This book is an incredible tale of slammed doors, rejection, ridicule, and ultimately the tenacity that brought home to Joe Camp the #3 movie of the year with no help whatsoever from Hollywood. It's an inspiring insight into how to make things happen, against all odds, and confirmation that every dream is, in fact, possible.

And now Camp is embarked upon another of his dreams, a series of books for children that teach positive character traits in an emotional and engaging way. The Benji Promise

Books speak in lyrical verse with colorful, engaging illustrations each teaching a positive value in a lilting, playful manner that encourages (and in trials actually produces) multiple readings. The stories place Benji (and the unconditional love of every dog) in the role of being a conscience of sorts, so that when the child - or even later the older child or adult - is about to tell an untruth, a line like "Would Benji tell a tale so tall, and make you feel so very small?" might be fondly (and effectively) remembered. Each book focuses on a single value like Truth, Love, Hope, Trust, and Courage (to say no to your peers).

Camp has written, produced and directed seven theatrical motion pictures (including all of the Benji movies) cumulatively grossing well over the equivalent of \$600 million in today's dollars, making him one of the most successful independent filmmakers of all time.

Camp ignored industry "experts" who said the original Benji movie would never work. He raised the money from private sources to produce the film, but when completed the movie was turned down by every major film distributor in Hollywood. Camp and his partner Ed Vanston had to form their own distribution company and release the picture themselves worldwide from their offices in Dallas, with Camp personally developing the marketing strategy, writing advertising copy and press releases, and supervising each and every booking. In spite of the many obstacles, Variety reported the picture was the #3 grossing movie of the year.

When Camp struck out across the country in the Fall of 2001 to find the new Benji in an animal shelter, media flocked to follow him around. The American Humane Association had reported that the original Benji's rescue from a shelter had caused more than one million adoptions. Camp wanted to recreate that model. Local and network television, radio and newspapers covered the search, with the ultimate selection being a feature on ABC's Primetime Thursday and Good Morning America, and the floppy-eared mutt went on to star in the highly acclaimed *Benji Off the Leash* in 2004. The search and Benji's new movie generated more than one billion media exposures for the efforts of shelters and rescue groups all across the nation.

Even with all the accomplishments and media exposure, Camp is still in awe of his own success. "Inside, I'm still a kid sitting in a dark theater in Little Rock, Arkansas, watching Disney's 'Song of the South' or reading books like the Black Stallion with happy tears rolling down my cheeks," he says. "To be able to bring that that kind of happiness to others is very special."

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