

HEROS ON HORSEBACK

A Program of Healing

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Equine Writers

MaryAnne Dabek is a graduate from St. Andrew's Presbyterian College. She majored in Therapeutic Riding and Philosophy. She is now the Executive Director at a non-profit therapeutic riding center in South Carolina called Heroes on Horseback. This is the fourth year that Heroes on Horseback has been operating. MaryAnne is currently the only paid employee at this barn. She is the center's executive director. They are currently borrowing riding facilities as well as horses to run their program. Heroes on Horseback currently serves 35 students.

Heroes on Horseback have two leaders and an instructor to oversee the lessons each day. The Class Coordinators call and keep track of the volunteers for that particular day. The Barn Managers take care of tacking the horse before lessons, as well as any barn preparations before students arrive. The instructor oversees the entire lesson, making sure that everything runs smoothly. Being as this is still a very small facility, it is important for them to retain as many volunteers as possible. For MaryAnne, this was a good opportunity for her to use a few things that she learned while at St. Andrews. From our very first therapeutic riding class we learn about the importance of

the three R's: Recruit. Retain. Reward. MaryAnne has had to work with various volunteer primarily senior citizens. She told us about the difficulties she has trying to find young volunteers in the area to help run her program.

MaryAnne also talked about the importance of location when evaluating job offers. The program has to be in a location that is going to support the need for students as well as the need for volunteers. MaryAnne has been advertising at churches and schools trying to get the volunteer interest from the community. She stressed the importance to getting people with out prior horse experience involved in the program because they can be some of the most valuable volunteers.

MaryAnne received three different job offers upon her graduation. She carefully weighed the pros and cons of all of her offers and finally came to a decision to act as Executive Director of Heroes on Horseback. She told us what appealed to her about this program was the challenge that this organization offered to her. She has had to adopt an administrative role at this facility and even though this job was not quite as secure as her other offers, she enjoys the challenges of this new position.

MaryAnne said that one of the most difficult things about a program that is just establishing itself is the insecurity of what is

going to happen from month to month. Acquiring grants to fund a therapeutic riding center is one of MaryAnne's most stressing jobs. The center of the program is run out of now is borrowed. They currently do not own their own facility, but they hope to in the future. At this moment they own only one horse and have to borrow horses from different sources for their classes. At St. Andrews we have the privilege of owning many well-trained therapeutic riding horses. At a facility of this size you learn to deal with horses of all shapes, sizes, and temperaments. She has access to many horses where she has a very hard time trusting them to act appropriately in all circumstances. MaryAnne is also a strong believer in riding the horses for their mental state. Horses need mental stimulation so that they don't get burned out. Going every day in a therapeutic riding class can be mentally draining for the horses.

MaryAnne shared a few words of wisdom. In the real world, knowledge is worth its weight in gold. As an Executive Director, she has to apply skills she learned for Stable Management and Stable Management Lab, and strongly suggest taking as many horse care classes as possible. She suggests participating in work-study at the barn so you can learn first hand what is involved in the care for your program's horses.

The disabilities that she primary works with are Autism, Learning Disabilities, Down Syndrome, Multiple Sclerosis, Cerebral Atxia, and profound Cerebral Palsy. She suggests that Therapeutic Riding majors to take this opportunity to study up on more of the specific disabilities. St. Andrews Presbyterian College offers an awesome education to its students and everyone should take advantage of all that they can learn while here. She suggests attending any clinics offered and to get as involved as possible in the Therapeutic Riding Program at St. Andrews. The internship program is a great way to see they way that the Therapeutic Riding world functions outside of St. Andrews. SAPC students are very pampered with an amazing program.

MaryAnne had a few tips for the rising Therapeutic Riding majors. First, don't forget to ask for help, your instructors have a wealth of knowledge, use it. MaryAnne has kept in touch with not only Pebbles Turbeville, but also some of her other non-equestrian professors at St. Andrews. Volunteer as much as possible. The time you spend observing and listening can be just as valuable as the time you actually teach. Start getting into the habit of writing good goals and objectives for you lesson plans. The better you become at teaching with the What, How, and Why's, the more effective of an instructor you will become. And finally, take advantage of all that St. Andrews has to offer. The knowledge and skill you can gain from the St. Andrews faculty is a treasure that cannot be matched..

Pipes Play Tunes of Victory

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Staff Writer

The St. Andrews Presbyterian College Pipe Band won the Grade III Pipe Band contest at the Charleston Scottish Games held at Boone Hall Plantation in Mt. Pleasant South Carolina on September 20. The band played against three other bands in the Grade III competition (the highest grade of band competition offered or available in the southern United States). There were five judges for the competition; three piping judges, one ensemble judge, and one drumming judge. The band was placed first by all three piping judges and the ensemble judge and was second in drumming to give the band its overall placing.

"I was delighted in the effort and teamwork that paid off in this

competitive victory," said Pipe Major Bill Caudill. "It was amazing that our group had only been together for one month to the day from the date of this first contest and still came away victorious over other bands who are active throughout the whole year. Everyone worked hard to make this effort the success that it was. I told the group prior to contest that the final result would be a direct reflection on their efforts, good attitudes, and positive team spirit were rewarded."

"Out of the pipe band members who played in this competition, there were seven members who had never played at this level of competition and three who had never played in a pipe band competition of any level prior to this date," Caudill added.

Several band members also

excelled in solo competition events. Pipe Sergeant Christoph Kresse who took prizes in Amateur Grade 1 piping competition, Chance Bell who took prizes in Amateur Grade II piping competition, and Jamie Boulais who took a prize in Amateur Grade IV piping competition. Pipe Major Caudill was one of eight judges who judged the amateur competitions. No professional level contests were held.

The band also enjoyed a special concert appearance by the former Grade 1 World Champion 78th Fraser Highlanders Pipe Band from Toronto, Ontario on the evening following the competition. The concert, held at the Gaillard Memorial Auditorium in Charleston, combined traditional and contemporary pipe band music with interpretive dance, Gaelic folklore and song, and storytelling. It was an educational event enjoyed by all in attendance.

The pipe band will be preparing for an appearance at the Stone Mountain (Georgia) Scottish Games on October 18, and prior to that time will appear at the local Flora Macdonald Highland Games in Red Springs on October 4. They also play for the Laurinburg Kiwanis Club's "Salute to Laurinburg" local talent show that evening.

The pipe band practices every Thursday night at the Belk Student Center from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Anyone is welcome to come out and listen. The band welcomes students who are interested in pursuit of the Scottish arts of piping and drumming, and the band is particularly interested in recruiting any drumming students with previous drumming experience into their ranks. For further information, please contact Pipe Major Bill Caudill at ext; 5236, or speak to one of the pipe band members.