



Hoof and Hearts News Quarterly

Mission Statement: Improve the quality of life for individuals with special needs through the power of the horse.

FOURTH QUARTER, 2015

DECEMBER 31, 2015

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Faith Equestrian Earns Top Medals at Special Olympics Horse Show

More than 300 Special Olympic athletes, unified partners and coaches from around the state were in Gainesville, Ga., at the Chicopee Woods Agricultural Center on October 9—11, 2015 for the Special Olympics Horse Show. The competition featured riders in dressage, showmanship, walking trail, English and Western style riding. The Special Olympics Georgia serves more than 26,000 athletes with intellectual disabilities in over 180 programs in 120 counties. The Special Olympic athlete oath is "Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."

Faith Equestrian Therapeutic Center in Guyton took eight of our students to the Georgia Special Olympics. They all worked exceptionally hard to prepare for the competition, and they came home with eight gold medals, twelve silver medals, three bronze medals, as well as three 4th Place ribbons.



From left: Program Director Amy Tripson, Cicely McNeil, Angela Jackson, Michael Holton, Jr., Samantha Cheney, Erin Pevey, Lauren Todd, Bryce Drew and FETC CEO Bonnie Rachael. (not pictured Samuel Munoz)

Faith Equestrian would like to thank their sponsors this year: Holton Plumbing Co., Inc., Byrd Heating and Air Conditioning Inc., Weimar Construction, Effingham Subway, Savannah Winnelson Wholesale Plumbing Supplies, Ferguson Enterprises, MetalQuarters, Serv-Pro of Savannah, Effingham Printing & Copy Center, Sundi Williamson (State Farm), Amy & Scott Pevey, Pam Moore and Debbie Sykes.

And to all our dedicated volunteers and parents - those who worked with the above athletes and accompanied them to Gainesville, a huge thank you.

To those volunteers who are working with the schools—thank you.

To those volunteers who help with Saturday classes—thank you.

To those volunteers who help see everyday needs met—thank you.



A Warm Welcome to Hallie Myers, Program Director



Hallie Myers came to FETC in December 2015 as a result of an amazing opportunity offered our Program Director Amy Tripson in Korea . Further explanation can be found in the article following this one.

Hallie Myers, our new Program Director grew up in South Carolina, went to school in North Carolina. She admits that even though she grew up in the South, she is definitely not in love with the bugs or the heat but wouldn't want to be anywhere else in the country!

Hallie was first introduced to horses at age six when her Mom took her on a scavenger hunt around town that ultimately led to her first riding lesson. She's been riding for sixteen years and horses have always been a therapeutic part of her own life, something she feels called to share with others.

The book, "Hope Rising", helped her discover that she wanted to use her love for horses to somehow help people. She found the Therapeutic Riding program at St. Andrews University shortly thereafter.

Hallie fell in love with the people of Namibia, Africa after spending an incredible summer there recently.

Other than horses, she is a bookworm and is attempting to teach herself to play guitar!!

At St. Andrews she got her degrees in Therapeutic Horsemanship and Equine Business. She is also a certified PATH registered level instructor.

Welcome Hallie—we're so happy to have you !!

We Bid A Fond Farewell to Amy Tripson

Although with us a relatively short time (March—December 2015) Amy Tripson had a big impact on the Center, its students, parents, and volunteers. She hit the ground running. Her ambition, dedication, compassionate and caring instruction served the Center well. During one of our normal breaks between sessions here at Faith, she taught a two-week long therapeutic camp in Korea. She admitted it was an experience of a lifetime. Well, needless to say, they fell in love with her, as we had, and offered her an amazing job opportunity helping them establish therapeutic riding centers there.

"It is with gratefulness for her drive and ambition while here and happiness for her in this next step in her professional journey that we say farewell," said Bonnie Rachael, CEO. "She was instrumental in getting us organized and ready for the long-awaited accreditation process review and she helped implement and improve the school programs."

Additions to the Herd—Meet Peabody & Roody

Peabody (pictured on the left) has contracted tendons (its hard to see -its like he's walking on his toes) and Roody (on the right) is blind. He gets to wear a long forelock to protect him in case he bumps his eyes. They were both born with these special challenges and are adjusting nicely to their new environment.

They will be used in our mobile pony visitation program, as well as with our school kids.

We're happy to say that we have a sponsor for Roody and are hoping someone meets Peabody and simply can't resist doing the same for him!

They are sweet and love visitors. Just know that Roody relies on Peabody's lead and also loves the attention.

Be sure to stop and say hello on your next visit!



FETC's Anticipated Premier Accreditation Update !

We are happy to report that the PATH International site visit was done on December 15th, 2015 and although we were not given the official results, at that time, we felt successful in our attempt and were given positive comments by the site investigators.

Things that they are looking for include organization and accuracy of student records; safety records, equipment, procedures, signed releases, This is the tip of the iceberg but represents hours of training, organization, procedure review and policy development and maintenance. The Center's Premier Accreditation will enable further growth, industry recognition, development and training opportunities.

Official notification that should be received from PATH headquarters by letter in mid-January 2016. We will include that information in the 1st Qtr 2016 issue of this newsletter.



Professional Association of Therapeutic
Horsemanship International

With Accreditation comes the ability to offer therapeutic riding workshops to prospective centers and/or provide continuing education credits for certified PATH instructors.

Many thanks to Angela Grovenstein, an accreditation auditor who helped us work through the volume of paperwork to ensure our compliance.

We are extremely pleased and proud to announce that we received our official PATH **Premier Accredited Center** designation in mid-January, before this newsletter went to print. Many worked endlessly to meet all of the requirements and we thank each and every one of you.



**United Way Agency
of the Coastal Empire**



Visit us on the web at www.faihetc.org

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Business Spotlight: Holton Plumbing, Inc.

Michael Holton, President of Holton Plumbing, Inc. located at 4131 Ogeechee Road, Suite 121, Savannah, GA 31405 in a longstanding supporter of Faith Equestrian Therapeutic Center. Anyone who has ever stepped foot on this property can see his dedication to our program and the Center.

The plumbing needs and repairs Holton Plumbing has provided over the years are far too many to mention, but always done with the utmost care and quality.

Holton Plumbing has also been a supporter of the Special Olympics State Horse Show by being a sponsor for years, as well as his namesake, Michael, Jr., competes.

If you, or anyone you know, are looking for a reliable plumber or anticipating a plumbing need in the near future, please contact



Michael Holton at 912 732-5455. Their hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8 am to 4:30 p.m.. We know you'll be pleased with the service.