



SRT
PROSTHETICS
& ORTHOTICS

Superior Rehabilitation Techniques

"Life Without Limitations"



SUMMER 2011 NEWSLETTER



A Local Hero: The Story of Matt Pedersen



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Calendar of Events

- Anderson Walking School*
Monday, July 25, 2011 6:30-8:30pm
- Kokomo Walking School*
Tuesday, July 26, 2011 6:00-8:00pm
- Fort Wayne Walking School*
Wednesday, July 27, 2011 6:30-8:30pm
- Defiance Walking School*
Thursday, July 28, 2011 6:30-8:30pm



Everyone has that day in their life that they will always remember. No matter how long ago it was, you can recall it like it was yesterday. You can remember the most insignificant of details as if they were imbedded in your memory. This is the kind of day that turns everything you know upside down. For Private First Class Matt Pedersen, that day was November 6, 2004.

During his tour in Iraq, Pedersen was riding in the back of a seven ton Marine vehicle with 20 other soldiers, just a few miles outside of their base. In the distance, an Iraqi police car sat off to the side of the road. The driver jumped into the car, and made a direct path straight at the Marine truck.

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LIFE CHANGING OPPORTUNITY:
Therapists in the Dominican on pg. 7

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Matt Pedersen and the New Power Foot BiOM

Continued from page 1

“Marine drivers are trained to take the brunt of any collision”, says Matt. It is part of their training to protect the rest of the passengers.”

The suicide bomber’s car was filled with white phosphorus which exploded upon impact. When it struck the Marine truck head-on, it turned the two vehicles into a giant fireball.

Fortunately for Pedersen’s unit, everyone survived the crash, including the driver. The only fatality was the suicide bomber, whose car was ripped to pieces, leaving only one tire and one axle in the sand.

Everyone helped those who were injured out of the truck, and transferred them onto a stretcher (Matt and another soldier had suffered the most damage).

“The base that we were stationed at had been stripped down to the bare minimum”, says Matt, “so there wasn’t much more than bandages available”.

Matt was taken to Longstool, Germany for medical attention. At this time, both of his legs were still intact, however they had swollen to 3-4 times their normal size. Matt would spend a few days in the ICU in Germany where he received two blood transfusions and was treated for third degree burns on his hands and face. He also received skin grafts on his left hand and left calf, and was treated for several shrapnel wounds in his left arm, hip and even in his neck where it missed his carotid artery by one-eighth of an inch.

After a year of recovery, Pedersen was later taken to Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C. Although his right foot was still intact, the bones in his foot had disintegrated from the blast. The doctors attempted a trial procedure with a partial foot prosthesis, however it was never comfortable enough for Matt’s day-to-day living. Two years after the horrible explosion in Iraq, Matt’s right leg was amputated below the knee.

Private Pedersen received a Purple Heart from the Secretary of the Army, Les Brownley, who personally visited him in his hospital bed. He also received the Combat Infantry Badge, the Global War on Terrorists Medal, and the Expeditionary War on Terrorists Medal.

“I received so much love and support from my family and friends when I finally came home. I hadn’t seen them in years, and I was very excited to be home”, says Matt. “The city of Angola, Indiana threw me a welcome home celebration, where I received a letter from Mayor Richard Hickman, declaring the day “Private First Class Matthew Pedersen Day”.

After struggling with several prosthetic facilities, Matt finally found the right fit for him at SRT Prosthetics. Matt is now the first amputee in Indiana to be fit with the Power Foot BiOM by a private prosthetic facility.

“SRT is awesome”, says Matt. They know exactly what I need to be comfortable, and my phantom pains have significantly reduced. The technology of the Power Foot BiOM is amazing. I can keep it on longer because I don’t get as sore, I don’t have to stop when I get to a curb, and I don’t have to use hardly any effort when going up or down stairs.”

Matt now works at Frontier Communications in Fort Wayne and lives in Auburn, Indiana with his wife, Desiree and four children Myiah, Kyrstin, Ethan, and Addison.

After bravely serving his country, the staff at SRT is very proud to not only know Matt, but also to provide him with this life changing care.



A Closer Look at the Power Foot BiOM

The staff at SRT Prosthetics and Orthotics have always encouraged their patients to live a “life without limitation”. Now, with the advanced technology of the Power Foot BiOM, their patients can take one robotic step closer to that kind of life.

Recently, Sam Santa-Rita and Shawn Brown of SRT Prosthetics made a trip to Boston, Massachusetts to witness the technology of the Power Foot BiOM, which represents an entirely new category in prosthetic technology. They immediately saw the potential of this device, and knew that it would provide a higher quality of life for amputees in their community. Sam and Shawn are excited to announce that SRT Prosthetics is now the exclusive provider of the Power Foot BiOM in the state of Indiana, and also one of only ten facilities in the world to provide it to their patients.

The BiOM is the first bionic lower-leg system to replace lost muscle function to allow patients to walk with less stress to the rest of their body, allowing them to get through their day using less energy. The Power Foot BiOM relies on precision robotic engineering that powers amputees from one step to the next.

The BiOM is a bionic lower-leg system that simulates the action of the ankle, Achilles tendon and calf muscles by propelling the amputee upwards and forwards during each walking step. Unlike passive carbon fiber feet that only returns 50% of the energy of a natural limb, the reflexive

action in the BiOM performs net work on every step and returns 100% of the energy while accommodating for real time terrain changes.

Inside the device is a lithium-polymer battery that is just as easy to use as a battery in a cordless drill. This BiOM reacts to its environment, whether its stairs, ramps, or level ground. Built-in sensors and microprocessors enable the Power Foot BiOM to mimic the natural way that the foot, ankle, Achilles tendon, and calf muscle work together.

But what does all of this mean for the patient?

The Power Foot BiOM is more than just an “upgrade” in prosthetic technology. It will allow an amputee to walk further and faster with less effort over all terrain types, while reducing muscle pain and fatigue. The BiOM makes rapid

and real time accommodations as the amputee walks, which greatly improves their balance, and reduces their risk of falling. With the Power Foot BiOM, an amputee can easily walk up a flight of stairs step over step, and walk up a curb without hesitation or fear of stumbling.

“This device has the power to change lives”, says Shawn Brown of SRT. “I’ve been an amputee for years, and after spending an entire day on the BiOM, I felt like I had my foot back.”

Ultimately, the Power Foot BiOM provides the opportunity for a higher quality of life. For any amputee, the dream of regaining the sensation of their ankle always seemed to be out of reach. Now, with the technology of the BiOM, that dream can become a reality.



iwalk.com

Don't miss your opportunity to see the Power Foot BiOM up close and personal!

This brand new technology is in high demand, and a waiting list has already been started.

Call 866.633.3961 to witness the future of prosthetic technology!

Father of the Bride: The Story of Kenny Gerardot

There are certain milestones in everyone's life that they are simply not willing to give up. For Kenny Gerardot of Bluffton, Indiana, dancing at his daughter's wedding was one of those milestones.

For over 30 years, Gerardot drove a gasoline tanker in Indiana and Ohio. During one of his trips, he noticed a sore on the bottom of his foot that progressively got worse. Gangrene had set in, and a few days later, his left leg was amputated below the knee. After returning home from the hospital, Kenny's first few weeks at home were challenging.

"I didn't even have enough energy to walk from my car to the house. I used a walker for a while until I finally got a wheelchair", says Kenny.

Three months after returning home

from the hospital, Kenny joined the SRT family and was fit for his first prosthesis by his practitioner, Shawn Brown.

"My first week with my prosthesis, I was so excited to finally walk again that I went camping with a Boy Scouts troop in Huntington, Indiana", says Kenny. "It was a lot of fun, but I admit I was still in a lot of pain".

Like any father, when Kenny found out that his daughter, Michelle, was engaged, he was very excited, and also very determined that his amputation wouldn't stand in his way of dancing with his daughter. He attended his first Amputee Walking School in January of 2010 where he met Dennis Oehler and Todd Shaffhauser, instructors of the School.

"At first I thought I was an odd ball. I didn't know there were so many other amputees in the area", states Gerardot.

Kenny quickly found a kinship with Dennis Oehler, and after hearing Kenny's desire to dance at his daughter's wedding, Dennis immediately changed tactics and turned the Amputee Walking School into the Amputee Dancing School. Kenny didn't stop there. A few months later, he enrolled in a class at the Arthur Murray Dance Studio in Fort Wayne, Indiana where he took lessons from dance instructor, Amy Shuldt.

With an endless amount of determination, Kenny's hard work paid off, and he reached his milestone of dancing with his daughter at her wedding in early



Dennis Oehler and Kenny turn the "Walking School" into the "Dancing School".



Amy Shuldt of the Arthur Murray Dance Company gives Kenny some pointers.



Kenny and his daughter Michelle dancing at her wedding.

The Story of Kenny Gerardot continued...

May of this year.

“Shawn Brown and everyone at SRT have been very helpful to me”, says Kenny. All of the technicians and office staff have been a great support system.”

In Kenny’s spare time he enjoys camping with his family and spending time in the yard landscaping around his house. He also enjoys working out on a regular basis at the Turnstone Center in Fort Wayne, walking and lightly jogging three miles every other day.

He also loves spending time with his wife, Lu, two daughters, Michelle and Jennifer, and his 10 grandchildren, Aubrey, Austin, Mia,

Lucas, Conner, Shawn, Chris, Orion, Dominick, and Shelly, who refer to his prosthesis as “the robotic foot”.

“Kids have a natural curiosity to see my leg”, says Kenny. “I don’t have a problem sharing my story with people. In fact, not too long ago I met an amputee at a health fair in Scottsburg, Indiana. He was still in a wheelchair, and chose not to wear a prosthesis due to his fear of falling. He asked me what I do when I fall and I simply told him, “I roll on my knees, and get up.”

Kenny’s empathy for fellow amputees sparked an idea to start an amputee support group in Fort Wayne. With the help of the

Turnstone Center for the Disabled, a few local physical therapists, and Carl Didier, a fellow amputee, Kenny will be leading the initial meeting of the Amputee Support Group on Wednesday, July 27, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. at the Turnstone Center in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

This meeting will take place one hour prior to the Amputee Walking School held at the same location. Kenny and his crew invite any amputee in the area to attend this free program. For more information, feel free to call Kenny Gerardot at 260.273.0713 or Carl Didier at 260.515.7999.

Upcoming Amputee Walking Schools



Monday, July 25, 2011
6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
NEW LOCATION
Anderson Office
614 E. 53rd Street
Anderson, Indiana



Tuesday, July 26, 2011
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Kokomo Event Center
1500 N. Reed Road
Kokomo, Indiana



Wednesday, July 27, 2011
6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Turnstone Center
3320 N. Clinton Street
Fort Wayne, Indiana

DENNIS & TODD RETURN TO OHIO!

Due to an overwhelming response, the Defiance Walking School will return on
Thursday, July 28, 2011 6:30 – 8:30pm

NEW LOCATION

Knights of Columbus Hall – 111 Elliot Road, Defiance



Sponsored by Mercy Hospital of Defiance
& Promedica Defiance Regional Hospital

SRT in the Spotlight: Doug Hodge, CO

The staff at SRT is proud to introduce a new face to the Anderson and Kokomo area. Doug Hodge, Certified Orthotist, recently joined the SRT family two months ago, having nearly 25 years experience under his belt.

“I am excited about bringing my experience and talents a little further north and getting to know and serve new doctors, therapists and especially patients. Trying to exceed expectations is always exhilarating”, states Hodge.

However, orthotics wasn’t always Doug’s lifetime goal. Before attending Northwestern University in Chicago, Illinois for Orthotics, Doug attended the University of Oregon where he developed an interest in making period musical instruments. He went on to work in South Whitley, Indiana making bassoons as a step towards his musical interests. Those aspirations took a turn after he met his wife

and had two children. During that time, his daughter developed a dislocated hip.

“During her hospital treatment, I found myself helping the staff with her traction equipment and learning about the condition in the hospital medical library. When she came home, I made her highchair that held the full body cast so she could join us at the dinner table. Eventually, she was taken out of the cast and placed in a hip brace. I then began exploring orthotics and it seemed to be a great match for my skills and talents, and it was a great opportunity for service as well. Our family has always considered this my daughter’s gift to us (who has now recovered from her dislocated hip)”.

Doug’s career blossomed after that, as he went on to work for ten years at Riley’s Hospital for Children in Indianapolis, Indiana, eventually rising to Chief Orthotist. Hodge has

lived in the Westfield and Carmel, Indiana area for the past 25 years and is excited to join the SRT team.

“The staff at SRT is awesome”, says Hodge. I wanted to make the next stage of my career the best possible, and after visiting several other facilities, I found the perfect fit at SRT. I give my highest rankings to SRT for talent, skills, and above all the compassion and commitment for positive outcomes for their patients.”

In Doug’s free time, he still sticks to his musical roots, playing the guitar and singing in his church’s choir. He also claims to be a decent cook when entertaining friends, as well as his children and two grandsons.

For the past few months, Doug has jumped in head-first, servicing the surrounding communities of Kokomo and Anderson, Indiana. SRT is very excited and honored to have Doug join our family.



Newcomer Doug Hodge works on an orthotic in the Kokomo lab.



Doug works with a new patient, Steve Wright in the Kokomo office.

Life Changing Opportunity: An Invitation for Therapists

Nestled in the small town of Cangrejo, on the outskirts of Puerto Plata, sits a small orphanage for disabled children. Since 2008, a few staff members of SRT and other members of the community travel to the Dominican Republic to visit with these children, and bring them the items they need for ongoing care. Sam and Julie Santa-Rita, owners of SRT Prosthetics and Orthotics, are excited to extend an invitation for two physical or occupational therapist to make the trip as well.

Inside the Hogar Immanuel Orphanage, 20 children with mental and physical disabilities live in a very safe, clean, and loving environment. A few of the children do attend some form of therapy, however it is very limited and generally instructed by volunteers. Although most of the children are immobile and limited in their activities, they love to be cared for and loved just the same.

There are two spots available for physical or occupational therapists in the area to travel to the Dominican to train those who work with these

children every day. The staff members and volunteers could learn numerous techniques to provide a more professional quality of care for the children in the orphanage.

SRT Prosthetics is willing to underwrite the lodging and taxi expenses for the next trip coming up in February of 2012. This week-long trip will include approximately 2-3 hours per day training and educating the staff and volunteers and leaving treatment plans for each child.

Although this is a third world country, it is a very safe and comfortable environment, and therapists will enjoy staying at the all inclusive Celuisma Tropical Resort on the beach of Playa Dorada, where you can enjoy numerous activities such as snorkeling, golfing, and botanical gardens surrounded by tropical plantations.

Along with therapy, the children of the orphanage are in constant need of items for daily living such as medication for pain, cold, cough, flu and allergies. They are also in great

need of diapers and personal hygiene supplies such as baby wipes, sanitary towels, tooth brushes, combs, and toilet paper. For the past few years, SRT has been sending these supplies to the Dominican, and there are donation boxes in the lobbies of each office.

The full list of needed supplies is listed at:

www.srt-prosthetics.com
www.mustardseed.com

If you are a physical or occupational therapist, and would like to take advantage of this life changing opportunity, or if you have any questions regarding this trip, please call

Julie Santa-Rita
419.633.3961



*The Mustard Seed
Communities Orphanage*



*Sam Santa-Rita of SRT
spending time at the orphanage*



*Lauri Wilson of SRT with
Jeffery in the Dominican*



*Julie Santa-Rita of SRT sharing souvenirs
from the Spangler Candy Company of Bryan,
Ohio who donated supplies to the orphanage.*



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