



Report

Brought to You by Nebraska Orthotic & Prosthetic Services... Partners in Rehabilitation Care

Rehab Partner is a Hit at Show 'n' Tell

There aren't many kids who take their practitioner to school for Show and Tell. But then, Andrew Asche — newly-turned-ten — isn't like a whole lot of kids.

In today's world when medical experts are worried about overweight and lethargic 'couch-potato' youngsters, Andrew is a blurrrrrr. His parents, Terri and Paul Asche, just get quick glimpses of him jumping on a trampoline, flying by on his bike, kicking a soccer ball, dribbling a basketball. Still, quiet, and sedate are conditions foreign to Andrew's energetic makeup.

Another thing that distinguishes Andrew is that he breaks his leg on a regular basis. Not his flesh and bone leg, but the other one that he's been wearing since he was three. Three years and three months was Andrew's age when his parents noticed him limping slightly. Concerned, they took him to a doctor who discovered a cancerous tumor on his right leg in August, 1997. Despite months of intensive chemotherapy, the decision was made to amputate the toddler's leg through the knee joint. He has been cancer-free since then.

"If it had to happen, I'm glad it did when he was so young so he could adjust so well," commented Terri Asche.

She recalls Andrew protesting riding in a wheelchair before he was ready to be fit for his prosthesis. Instead, she said, he insisted on crutches or compromised by riding in a wagon. No wheelchair. It's been pretty much that way ever since, the mother of three reports.

Andrew is the oldest child, followed by his sister Alyssa, 5, and baby brother Austin, 16 months. Paul Asche is employed by Crest Communications and, for the past five years, the family has lived in Grand Island where Terri is a stay-at-home mom. The action is lively and "Our house is usually the neighborhood hangout," Terri reported happily.

All that activity is what contributes to the beating that Andrew gives his prosthesis. Far from alarmed, his prosthetist, Brandon Quick, CP, is delighted.

"I'd much rather keep fixing his leg. It means he's doing what he should be doing — playing hard and having a good time. As far as I'm



A very active Andrew Asche shows off his stance.

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concerned, Andrew's able to accomplish anything he sets his mind to!" the Nebraska Orthotic & Prosthetic practitioner emphasized with a laugh.

According to Terri, Andrew and Brandon, despite a 19-year-gap in their ages, share a deep bond. Prosthetist and patient are both lower limb amputees. Brandon, a left, below knee amputee for the past 16 years, can relate to his patient's occasional pain and frustrations as well as offer advice drawn from his own experiences. When Andrew enrolled at Knickrehm Elementary School, he asked Brandon to accompany him for a class "show and tell" presentation focused on wearing a prosthesis.

"That's the first time any patient has ever asked me. But we had a great time demonstrating our legs and helping his class-mates understand what it's like to be an amputee," Brandon noted.

When it was time to replace Andrew's last prosthesis, Brandon fabricated a Hosmer Mighty Mite pediatric knee joint with suction suspension, an Alpha Gel Liner from Ohio Willow Wood, and a Flex-Walk foot. A knee disarticulation amputee, Andrew still has his patella, or knee cap, and can bear full weight on the

distal end of his residual limb. This gives him an advantage over an above knee amputee, Brandon explained.

Andrew usually wears his prosthesis throughout his waking hours, his mom reported. Although he swims without it, he gives it a rough workout whether he's playing football, rollerblading, practicing Tae Kwan Do, or doing any of the million other activities that fascinate 10-year-old boys.

"I hope Andrew and Brandon can keep their relationship for a long, long time," Terri said fervently. "It's so important to Andrew that Brandon understands what he means when he describes a pain, that he knows what it's like to be an amputee. Andrew rarely complains about anything, so when he has a problem, we know it's real. We've been very happy with NOPS and the services, and if we ever had to move, we'd keep Andrew coming back to Brandon, if at all possible," she added.

At this point, it seems likely their meetings will continue on a fairly frequent basis. As Andrew goes through growth spurts, his prosthesis will need regular adjustments and periodic replacements. Repairs are also a given.

"There have been a number of times when Andrew has broken a part on his leg and we need an emergency repair. It doesn't matter if it's evening or a weekend — either Brandon or Cory Schutte will come in and fix it so Andrew can keep on going," she stressed.

"That kind of care means a lot to all of us!"



Prosthetist Brandon Quick, CP, and Andrew share a deep bond as lower limb amputees who have benefitted from prosthetic advances.



Andrew, 3, rallies from cancer surgery.

Prosthetists First to Learn New MAS Socket

Nebraska O & P Services certified prosthetists Brad Rosenberger and Randy Brown are the first practitioners in the U.S. to become qualified to teach and fabricate a new prosthetic socket technique for above knee amputees developed by a colleague from Mexico.

Referred to as the MAS Design for Marlo Anatomical Socket, the new concept was developed by Marlo Ortiz Vazquez del Mercado of Ortiz Internacional, S.A. de C.V., Mexico. A refinement of an ischial containment socket, the MAS variation started in 1999 when its creator trimmed the posterior, or back segment, to make it less obtrusive in the gluteal, or buttocks, region. By lowering the posterior shelf, Ortiz found it easier to confine the ischial/ramus area without interference from the buttocks or hamstrings. The result was a closer fit of the socket's lateral wall, improved cosmesis, and greater range of motion, while still maintaining secure suspension. Additional benefits include more comfort while sitting, easier donning, better mobility without a mechanical rotation device, increased control of the prosthesis, and a more functional gait.

Ortiz emphasizes that proper fit is crucial to the socket's function. Suspension is by suction, either with silicone liners or by means of a suction valve.

With the intent of sharing his findings with colleagues worldwide, Ortiz introduced his MAS socket in October, 2000, at the Spanish O & P Federation Congress in Seville, Spain. Subsequent presentations were made in the United Kingdom and in the U.S. at the spring meeting of the American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists.

Brad Rosenberger met Marlo Ortiz in Mexico while traveling there as part of a humanitarian aid project.

"I was part of a team relief effort organized by AOPA that went down in



Increased comfort and range of motion are major benefits of the MAS socket design.

the mid-80s after a severe Mexican earthquake. I met Marlo through that experience," he explained.

Marlo contacted Brad regarding ideas for introducing the new socket design to prosthetists in this country. The practitioners felt that optimal exposure could be obtained through a series of MAS socket courses for prosthetists that would be conducted across the United States under the auspices of the Orthotic Prosthetic Group of America (OPGA), a nationwide association of independent O & P practices. OPGA hosted the first instructor course this past January in Iowa with Brad and Randy Brown attending. Also enrolled were John Michael, CPO, an internationally-known prosthetics expert who has contributed repeatedly to professional publications, and Agnes Curran, CP, of OPGA, an Iowa practitioner and author of a textbook on upper extremity prostheses, plus a number of other prosthetists.

Future MAS socket courses will be taught by Marlo Ortiz and John Michael in Waterloo, Iowa, on Sept. 10 - 11 and Nov. 12 - 13. Next year the courses will travel to different regions of the U.S. Attendees can earn 13.25 Category I continuing education units from the American Board for Certification in Orthotics & Prosthetics. The hands-on workshop includes patient casting, modifications, and fitting of two test sockets; there is also an observer option that allows participation in all classroom lectures.

Rehabilitation professionals interested in attending should contact Jim Andreassen, president of OPGA, by e-mail at jim.andreassen@vgm.com, or call Kelly Weidman at 800-214-6742.



Improved cosmesis is apparent.



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COMING SOON: AN OMAHA OFFICE TO SERVE YOU!

Zero-G Walker Protects Foot, Ankle

Patients referred to Nebraska Orthotic & Prosthetic with foot ulcerations or other foot/ankle conditions can, in some instances, be assisted by wearing the Zero-G Orthosis developed by Scott Orthotic Labs.

Designed to relieve pressure on the bottom surface of the foot by eliminating weight bearing, the orthosis is a walking aid which can be worn with or without crutches. Force applied to its rigid plastic rocker sole is transferred by means of malleable uprights to a strong yet supple leather lacer calf corset secured by Velcro closure. Meanwhile, the patient's foot and ankle hover above the footplate, protected from weight and exposure by its thermoplastic enclosure.

Conditions which could indicate using the



Zero-G Orthosis include arthritis, Charcot Joint, Spina Bifida, fractures, heel or metatarsal ulceration, crushing injuries of the mid and hind foot, pre and postsurgical intervention for various foot conditions, and any time it is necessary to remove weight from the foot and ankle. Among its benefits, the Zero-G Orthosis has a rocker sole which aids gait from heel strike to toe off, easily adjusted closure, and a protective sock which wicks perspiration and inhibits fungal growth.

For details on this comfortable and highly effective foot orthosis, contact your practitioner at Nebraska Orthotic & Prosthetic.

ONE STEP AHEAD An Integrated Approach to Lower Extremity Prosthetics and Amputee Rehabilitation

Nov. 5, 6, 7

led by Robert S. Gailey, PhD, PT
*faculty member of the University of Miami School of Medicine,
 Department of Orthopaedics, Division of Physical Therapy*

at the
**Rehabilitation Center of
 Tabitha Health Care Services**
 4720 Randolph St.
 Lincoln, Nebraska

Co-sponsored by
Nebraska Orthotic & Prosthetic Services

Nurses and case managers are encouraged to attend Friday's workshop. Among the topics will be postoperative management, phantom pain, and acute care of the amputee.

PTs, PT assistants, OTs, and prosthetists are welcome all three days for a comprehensive view of modern prosthetic designs and components, skin care, and gait training exercise, assessment, evaluation, and procedures.

For further information and registration, call Deldee Brown at 402-486-8554.