SHC Creates 2nd Shooting Club in Alabama

Story by: Tom Burcham IV

 The Spring Hill College Sports Shooting Team is the culmination of two years of dedication and preparation brought about by juniors Elizabeth Wellendorf and Kean Jones.

 The Sports Shooting Team, which consists of around 13 members, is actually a club and not a registered collegiate sports team. This designation does not take away from the competitive aspect of the sport, however. The members are still able to shoot “Trap and Skeet”, which are the two most popular categories of shotgun sport shooting, in various tournaments and other competitions.

 With the club’s foundation in the spring, the Sports Shooting Team became only the second shooting club in Alabama behind the University of Alabama. The club has hopes to compete in several major tournaments throughout this season. The team plans on traveling to many destinations across the country such as Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Tiller, Arkansas, and San Antonio, Texas. The practice schedule is not concrete. Instead, when members of the team have time to shoot, they travel to Taylor Creek shooting range in Theodore, Alabama.

This past week, a few members of the Sports Shooting team competed in a tournament at Taylor Creek that was held in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Taylor Creek Sporting Clays acts as the Spring Hill College practice range for the sports shooting team and gives the still new team a chance to grow in their skill sets and chase the dream of competing in a sport that is so personal to so many.

 The club started as an idea and was the “brain-child” of Elizabeth Wellendorf, a junior from Nebraska ever since she arrived at Spring Hill in 2014. When asked why she wanted to start the club and bring a shooting team to Spring Hill College, Elizabeth responded by saying that she “wanted to bring the opportunity to competitively shoot, not only to those who have been hunting since they were young, but to those who had never picked up a gun in their life”. In order to bring this idea, the pair of juniors started the journey their freshman year here at Spring Hill.

Club president and co-founder, Kean Jones detailed what efforts and abilities were used to create one of the student organizations on campus. Jones said that he was approached by Wellendorf his freshman year and said he wanted to help create the shooting team. Though a key member in the foundation of the sports shooting team, Jones said that Wellendorf made the main effort when he said “[She] started it last semester by filing out all the paperwork and getting the club itself started through administration’s eyes, as well as writing the bylaws and starting to spread the word as well as gain interest and recruit members as well as start holding meetings” for the new organization.

 Due to scheduling conflicts and an increased work load this school year, Wellendorf “started handing over the reigns [this last spring semester]” to Jones who is the acting president of the shooting club. Jones also stated that this semester Wellendorf “handed the whole thing over to him [Jones]”. Although she is not an active member of the organization this year, Wellendorf says she knows that “This family will keep [the organization] going”.

 Public Safety’s Kyle Callaghan guides the Sport Shooting Team as the faculty representative. Throughout the process of becoming a recognized and Wellendorf worked with Public Safety in order to get administration to okay the club. Wellendorf stated that she “hopes [the club will] bring joy and a family to those on this campus just like my high school team brought me”.