
◆ THE DERBY CITY NSCIA NEWSLETTER ◆

FEBRUARY 2005

The Derby City Chapter of the National Spinal Cord Injury Association Network- Serving Kentuckiana.

Message From the President

Dear Members & Friends-

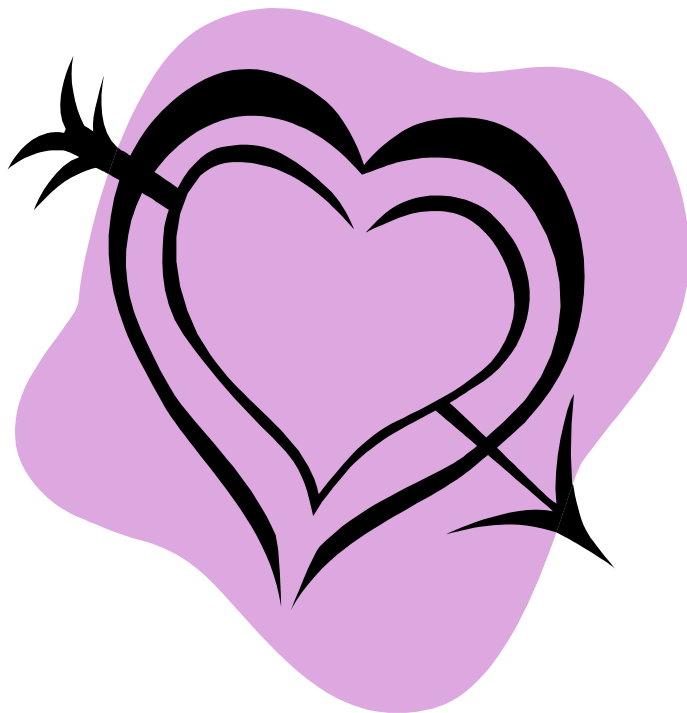
Our speaker for the February meeting will be Dan Pickett, with Pride Mobility. He will be discussing the new line of power wheelchairs manufactured by Pride. He should have plenty of written information and brochures as well as a couple of demonstrations of power chairs.

So come to the meeting and see these new chairs and you may even be able to test ride one of them. Food and drink will be provided at the meeting.

March's meeting will be held at Frazier Rehab; 6:30; 4th floor dining hall.

- David Allgood

HAPPY VALENTINES DAY!!



The following two articles are from gimponthego.com-ed

TRAVEL INDUSTRY TAKES INITIATIVE

It has too often been the case that companies in the travel industry have had to be dragged, against their collective will, into making travel accommodations accessible to everyone. So, when some of these businesses, of their own initiative, enact measures to make things better for disabled travelers, it is our duty to shine a spotlight on their efforts. Three such companies currently deserve our acknowledgement: Delta Airlines, Holland America Cruises and Microtel Inns.

Delta Airlines has taken the forefront in addressing two of the more problematic areas of flying with a disability—getting proper information and physically boarding a plane.

For those who are deaf and hard of hearing, it is impossible to hear flight announcements, gate changes and boarding calls in a noisy airport. Traditionally, requests have had to be made to airline personnel so that they will come inform a hearing impaired traveler of any announcements. However, with airports busier than ever, getting each announcement in a timely manner is a rare occurrence.

(Continued On Page Two)

Table of Contents

President's Message.....	1
Travel Industry Takes Initiative.....	1
Calendar.....	3
Wheelchair Beach Access.....	4
Crafting Your Own Solution.....	5
Treasure Hunting Quad.....	5
For Sale.....	5

Derby City Area Chapter
of the
National Spinal Cord Injury
Association

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The Derby City Area Chapter of the N.S.C.I.A. is a membership organization for individuals with spinal cord injuries, their families, and health professionals. Founded in 1984 as a Charter Member of the N.S.C.I.A., it was incorporated under IRS Section 501 (c) 3 as a not for profit organization. The Board of Directors consists of the Officers, Past President and the Board Members At Large.

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

David Allgood - (502) 589-6620

VICE PRESIDENT

Adam Ford - (502) 425-2206

TREASURER

Tom Stokes- (502) 957-5865

LIAISON TO FRAZIER INSTITUTE

Dr. Bill Kraft – (502) 582-5865

FUNDRAISING CHAIR

Betty Perry—(502) 647-0368

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY/WEB MASTER

Michael Feger- (502) 647-0368

PAST PRESIDENT

Adam Ford- (502) 425-2206

BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE-

Mike Perry
Kelly Young

NSCIA
DERBY CITY CHAPTER
NEWSLETTER

Editor- Barbara Davis

Contributor- David Allgood

TRAVEL INDUSTRY TAKES INITIATIVE
(Continued From Page One)

Enter Delta's new, 42 inch gate information screens. Currently being deployed in many major airports, and eventually system wide, these easy to read screens not only display gate numbers and flight times, but also provide information on boarding times, connecting flights, bathroom locations, in-flight movies and more.

Of course, getting to the gate on time is only half the battle for wheelchair users. Getting on the plane is the real chore. Sadly, plane aisles aren't wide enough for a wheelchair to pass through. As a result, a wheelchair user must be transferred from the chair, to a narrow "aisle chair", and then again into the plane seat. This can be difficult and precarious, both for the traveler and the airline employees who are assisting. Being dropped or banged into an armrest are common worries for the passenger, as are straining ones back or accidentally hurting the traveler, or the employees.

Delta's answer was to design a hydraulic aisle chair. Now, the aisle chair can be raised or lowered to the height of the wheelchair or plane seat, allowing a traveler to slide from seat to seat rather than being lifted.

For some time now, Princess and Royal Caribbean have been the names most commonly associated with progressive accessibility in cruising. However, it is Holland America who has leapfrogged all others in regard to shore excursion accessibility.

While it is true that most cruise lines are now building bigger, more accessible ships—often featuring a dozen elevators and upwards of twenty accessible staterooms—it is the very size of these ships which causes shore excursions to be inaccessible. Especially in smaller Caribbean ports, large cruise liners cannot enter the shallow waters surrounding the docks. Instead, ships anchor further out and employ smaller boats, known as "tenders," to bring passengers ashore. Boarding of tenders is most often done via a flight of gangway stairs, and the boats themselves offer no accessibility features.

Holland America and Cap Sante Marine, Inc. tackled this issue, developing the Shore Tender Accessibility Project. Deployed on its first ship this year, with the remainder of the fleet to come, the system uses a wheelchair lift to traverse the gangway. A ramp on the adapted tender allows the chair direct entry, where it is then locked down to another lift that raises to give the passenger a view through the tender's window.

For those disabled travelers who feel fortunate when they find a hotel room with grab bars in the bathroom, lowered light switches or Braille room numbers, they are going to be quite impressed with Microtel Inns.

(Continued On Page Four)

Refrigerator Calendar

***2005**

FEBRUARY

7th - Elderly & Disabled Advisory Council Meeting

Mon 1:00-2:30 p.m.; TARC; 1000 W. Broadway; Board Room.

21st - NSCIA Derby City Area Chapter meeting, 6:30 p.m., Frazier Rehab.

Mon 4th floor dining hall; speaker to be announced. Call David or Barb at 589-6620.

19th - Metro disAbility Coalition Meeting; 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.; PVA Office on Goss Avenue.

Sat Speaker to be announced; if questions, contact Terri Leasor at 589-6620 or at mdclouky.org

15th - Louisville Metro Sweep for Access

Tues Crescent Hill Library; 2762 Frankfort Avenue

MARCH

7th - Elderly & Disabled Advisory Council Meeting

Mon 1:00-2:30 p.m.; TARC; 1000 W. Broadway; Board Room.

21st - NSCIA Derby City Area Chapter meeting, 6:30 p.m., Frazier Rehab.

Mon 4th floor dining hall; speaker to be announced.

19th - Metro disAbility Coalition Meeting; 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.; PVA Office on Goss Avenue.

Sat Speaker to be announced; if questions contact Terri Leasor at 589-6620 or mdclouky.org

15th - Louisville Metro Sweep for Access

Tues Crescent Hill Library; 2762 Frankfort Avenue

For More Information Call
David Allgood, 502-589-6620

TRAVEL INDUSTRY TAKES INITIATIVE (Continued From Page Two)

Microtel has recently decided to take by the horns, the accessibility issue at its properties. Promising that every Microtel Inn will meet ADA standards, they are not only incorporating the typical accommodations—wide doors, roll-in showers with hand-held showerheads, bathrooms with rails, Braille or raised room numbers—but are also implementing what they call “attitude accessibility” by undergoing disability etiquette training. Aimed not just at customer “sensitivity,” but practical knowledge, the training includes employees spending time in the hotel while simulating a disability using blindfolds or wheelchairs. Understanding the barriers faced by disabled guests, Microtel hopes to remove them.

Additionally, recognizing the growing importance of the Internet for researching disability travel, Microtel is starting to integrate icons for travelers with disabilities at the bottom of each hotel’s listing in their on-line directory. Icons will indicate the availability of roll-in showers, hearing-impaired guestroom kits and properties whose employees have completed their etiquette training.

WHEELCHAIR BEACH ACCESS

Admit it. The true lure of any sunshine filled vacation is the beach. The whole reason we stuff our belongings into a suitcase, fight our way through crowded airports, and pay top dollar for a shoebox of a room, is for the joy of relaxing on a warm, sandy beach and taking a dip in the soothing coastal waters.

So what happens if you’re in a wheelchair? Does enjoying a beach holiday have to mean admiring the sun baked shore from a boardwalk or nearby patio? Definitely not!

Many coastal communities throughout America are seeing to it that everyone has equal access to their beaches. Boardwalk ramps, lifts, and even paved paths have been introduced at many popular U.S. beaches. Still, getting a wheelchair over the sandy terrain can be almost impossible, and there is still the issue of actually getting into the water.

The most common answer to the beach mobility dilemma is to use a beach wheelchair. These plastic or aluminum chairs are equipped with mesh seating slings and oversized tires that will not sink into the sand. Although they cannot be propelled by the wheelchair user him-or-herself, they do roll pretty smoothly with somebody pushing from behind.

Of course, trying to bring one of these chairs with

you on your trip can be rather cumbersome. Fortunately, beach towns from Rehobeth, Delaware to Honolulu, Hawaii, now have these chairs available for users on their vacations. Lifeguard stations at most beaches can fill you in on the particulars for their specific beach.

Great as these beach wheelchairs are for sitting out on the sand, they do have a limitation when it comes to getting into the water. For somebody who can walk a step or two from the chair into the water, this is fine. But for those who need complete entry assistance, a floating wheelchair can be extremely destabilizing, and has resulted in the chair’s tipping over on occasion.

Being a huge fan of the water, and faced with this problem, I was able to devise an interesting alternative that may work for many of you as well. What I came up with was the idea of using a stretcher to be carried into the water and then placed on a float.

Standard stretchers, such as the ones that paramedics use, come either with solid frames or watertight slings. Neither is suitable for a water transfer, since submerging the stretcher without it becoming full of water would be difficult at best. Instead, I took the two aluminum poles from a standard stretcher and stripped off the sling, replacing it with a heavy-grade nylon mesh. This way, water could flow freely through the stretcher without it collecting and adding weight.

Assuming you are staying right on the beach, it is easy to have the stretcher slipped under you in bed. Then, depending on your size and the strength of those helping you, 2-4 people can fit the stretcher and carry you directly into the water. Once there, simply have them release the stretcher as they put a flotation mat under your body. As long as the waves aren’t too rough you can spend countless hours floating peacefully on the water. It is truly a spectacular feeling of freedom, especially for those of us who spend most of our time either sitting in a chair or lying in bed.

Another discovery I made was that by securing a flotation belt around my chest, and with some balancing help from friends, I was able to stand upright in the water. Quite an experience and new perspective after having not been in a standing position in almost two decades!

The stretcher method turned out to be a success in my situation. However, it is possible that the beach wheelchair, or even some third alternative, is better suited to you. No matter which way you decide to tackle the beach, the key is just that: trying.

**FOR A LIST OF BEACHES WITH
BEACH WHEELCHAIRS, SEE
WWW.GIMPONTHOGO.COM.**

From New Mobility, January 2005

CRAFTING YOUR OWN SOLUTION

It's no secret standard accessories sometimes aren't enough for the average auto-driving SCI wheeler, especially quads. Doug Grems, C6, from Esterville, Iowa, employed some homespun smarts of his own when he realized the tabless wiper control on his 2004 Chevrolet Express van was too hard to operate.

His solution: Cut a small piece of black plastic and contour it to match the curve of the control with a rotary tool. Adhere it with Gorilla Glue and clamp it on overnight to finish the job. Grems says his solution, now colored with a black marker, looks like it came standard. Nice!

TREASURE HUNTING QUAD

Lurking beneath the warm depths of the Gulf of Mexico is one of the most unlikely treasure hunters that curious clownfish have ever run into. Tim Swieckowski, 29, is one of the very few scuba divers in the world with his level of injury (C3-5). He's also the founder of DreamQuest Adventurers (www.dreamquest.cc).

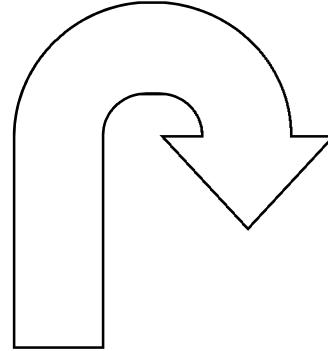
Swieckowski's bicycle accident in 1990 led him to found the company, which researches long-lost shipwrecks and splits the treasure among their investors. "My company was set up to bring in all adventurers, nondisabled and disabled alike," says Swieclowski. "At this present time we've started the final archaeological research on three specific treasure wrecks off the coast of Florida."

Swieckowski, a resident of Indian Rocks Beach, FL, uses PADI scuba gear, a 100-cubic-foot oxygen cylinder, and a breathing regulator with a sensitive setting to accommodate his shallow breathing. "I hope to have a diving company support me with the more costly, but safer, full diving mask with communication and a breathing regulator built in."

Swieckowski hopes the company's first official dives will happen soon. In the meantime, he has diving recreationally in his favorite spot, Key West, FL.

"There are so many incentives to diving beyond my own biased Dream Quest," he says. "One of the most fascinating things I've found about being underwater is that when you take in air and keep more in you than you expel, you rise up. With that said, this technique enables a quadriplegic to stay mid-drift off the bottom, moving with the current. This actual feeling is the closest I have come to the feeling of walking again—because if you concentrate on your breathing you can almost stand up with your feet touching the ocean

FOR SALE!!!!



***Chair Topper & Hand Control;** price negotiable; Call Greg @ 968-4630.

***2003 Ford F-250 lift-equipped green/gray van;** leather seats, TV, DVD player. Playstation hookup, am-fm radio. Rick Miller, 937-2245.

***Shower Chair; 2 yrs old, negotiable; 2 RoHo cushions; low profile; \$150 each; Invacare 900 Action Power Chair; 4 yrs. Old; \$600. Call 448-5296.**

***RoHo High Profile 16x16 cushions; \$160; 589-6620.**

***Ford 1997 Econoline Van;** 100,140 mi; \$16,000. Hunter Green-gray; new tires & brakes; "loaded"; call 270-786-4547; ask for Dale.

***Cookbooks for Sale:** Recipes compiled by Chapter members; \$10:00. Call David @ 589-6620.

***Video tapes for sale.** Various topics related to spinal cord injuries. Call David Allgood or Buddy Lawson.

*****If assistance is needed to pay for any of the above items, contact Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation at 1-800-327-5287 for information on loans at 5% interest to qualified candidates.**

HAPPY SUPER BOWL PARTY!!!

