
◆ THE DERBY CITY NSCIA NEWSLETTER ◆

MARCH 2007

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

Message From the President

Dear Members & Friends-

March's meeting will be held at Frazier Institute, 220 Abraham Flexnor Way, Louisville, in the 10th floor dining room at 6:30 p.m. The speaker for March will be Paul Erway with Superior Van & Mobility. He will be discussing adaptive vehicle modifications, potential funding sources, and the latest innovations.

April's meeting will be held at Frazier Institute, 220 Abraham Flexnor Way, Louisville, in the 10th floor dining room at 6:30 p.m.

-David Allgood

From shreveporttimes.com, February 16, 2007 edition.

DESIGNERS ROLL OUT CHIC WHEELCHAIRS

By Adam Edleman

If you can't stand up, stand out. That has been Marilyn Hamilton's motto since she was paralyzed from the waist down in a hang-gliding accident almost 20 years ago. And in the midst of New York's glitzy Fashion Week, one group of perseverant women showed they shared her philosophy. With style.

The event last week marked the inaugural fashion show for Discovery Through Design, a nonprofit that raises money for spinal cord injury research and paralyzed women. Their Rolling With Style Gala, at New York's Cipriani 42nd Street, showcased stylish wheelchairs designed by some of the top names in the fashion industry.

"It's time for us to celebrate and honor the lifestyles and abilities of women in wheelchairs," says Hamilton, who is one of four Discovery Through Design founders and creator of the ultra-light Quickie wheelchair. "We have the same desires and same opportunities to participate in society and contribute in remarkable ways, and I just don't think society knows

For each fashion line, traditional models strutted down the runway. They were followed by one of four "roll" models in attire and wheelchair custom-created by the same designer. The roll models were selected by Discovery Through Design after an essay competition and interviews.

"As a woman in a wheelchair, I get stared at," says roll model Melissa Holley, 25, of Nashville from her new wheelchair, adorned in elegant black leather. "Now I'm getting stared at because I'm so fashionable. It's very exciting." Holley, who just earned her Master's degree in organizational management from Vanderbilt University, has been in a wheelchair since 2000, when a car wreck left her a paraplegic. Her new chair was designed by Marc Bouwer.

Nicole Miller, St. John and Kimora Lee Simmons also designed wheelchairs for other models: Jenny Smith, 34, of Louisville, who works for a nonprofit that provides wheelchairs for the developing world; Michele Boardman, 20, of Harleysville, Pa., a biology major at Arcadia University near Philadelphia; and Rosemarie Rosetti, Ph.D., 53, of Columbus, Ohio, a speaker, author, and consultant.

Leslie Stahl of 60 Minutes emceed the event, and pop singer/actress Shani Rigsbee and former pop star turned adult contemporary singer Deborah Gibson performed. But it was the roll models, the Discovery Through Design "chair women" as they call themselves, and other honorees who stole the show. A crowd of 600 applauded when Army Staff Sgt. Eva Cochran, of Springfield, Ill., a paralyzed vet wounded in Afganastan, won the Rolling With Style award. The money raised—nearly \$1 million— was donated to the Christopher Reeve Foundation, the Miami Project to Cure Paralysis, and the

Table of Contents

President's Message/Roll Models.....	1
Fathering Children with SCI.....	2
Calendar.....	3
Smart Ideas/Motherhood & Disability.....	4
Virtual Business/Robotic Legs/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

Jill Farmer , CTRS—(502) 582-7618

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

Visit Our Website at
www.DerbyCitySpinalCord.org

**The Derby City Area Chapter Newsletter is
brought to you through the generous support of
Frazier Rehab Institute**

From the Internet –ed.

FATHERING CHILDREN WHILE PARALYZED

In the weeks following the car accident that left him paralyzed below the waist, Geoff Luther was haunted by worries that he'd lost the chance to become a father.

Then 27, he hadn't yet fallen in love with the woman of his dreams. When he did, he wanted to start a family with her. But how?

"It was some of the stuff I was thinking about the most," said Luther, who rolled his S-10 Blazer on black ice. "What about having children? What about getting married? Can you naturally conceive a family?"

His questions are shared by thousands of young men each year who suffer paralyzing spine injuries. But many men give up hope, or suffer unnecessary, invasive procedures — because their doctors don't know about simple ways to help them.

Doctors at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago told Luther, now 43, that most men with SCI can father children. But the treatments that allowed Luther and his wife, Tammy, 38, to conceive aren't offered to many injured men.

Instead some fertility doctors jump immediately to expensive, invasive procedures, such as surgically extracting sperm from the testes of men in wheelchairs.

The Luthers, who live in Oak Brook, Ill., avoided that procedure. Nonetheless, it took six years and, they acknowledge frankly, tens of thousands of dollars before they succeeded. But after a tour through most of the methods and procedures of rehab fertility medicine, the Luthers conceived their son, Trent, now 6, and daughter, Kayla, now 3.

"We went through it all," Tammy Luther said.

Their story illustrates how determined couples can conceive with guidance from medical professionals versed in techniques that work for paralyzed men.

Unfortunately, many fertility clinics don't know the basics.

Nancy Brackett, a researcher at the Miami Project to Cure Paralysis, surveyed more than 100 fertility clinics and discovered that 28 percent don't offer two simple techniques that rehab experts have used successfully and that work for 95 percent of paraplegic and quadriplegic men. Brackett published her findings in the October issue of "Fertility and Sterility", a journal read by reproductive medicine doctors.

Most men with spinal cord injuries have varying degrees of difficulty with erection and ejaculation. Medications like Viagra help some. Others need only a special vibrator to collect sperm; insemination of their partners can be done with a syringe in private, at home.

Paul and Shelly LeVasseur of Winfield, Ill., felt lucky they could conceive at home.

Refrigerator Calendar

***2007**

MARCH

5th - Elderly & Disabled Advisory Council Meeting.

Mon 1:00 P.M.; TARC; 1000 W. Broadway; Board Room.

19th - Derby City Chapter meeting; 6:30 p.m.; Frazier Rehab Institute.

Mon 220 Abraham Flexnor Way, Louisville, 10th Floor dining room.

17th - Metro disAbility Coalition Meeting; 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Sat For information about MDC meetings contact Catherine Senn at 451-8011.

APRIL

2nd - Elderly & Disabled Advisory Council Meeting

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

16th - Derby City Chapter meeting; 6:30 p.m.; Frazier Rehab Institute.

Mon 220 Abraham Flexnor Way, Louisville, 10th Floor dining room.

21st - Metro disAbility Coalition Meeting; 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Sat For information about MDC meetings contact Catherine Senn at 451-8011.

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

FATHERING CHILDREN, CONT'D

"There are times when it is rather clinical and there are times when it is very romantic," Paul LeVasseur said. Their children are Ben, 6, and Danielle, 2, and they are trying for another.

Other injured men require a different device that triggers ejaculation with a low-voltage impulse procedure borrowed from animal husbandry and developed for use in humans by Dr. Carol J. Benett and her colleagues in University of Michigan's urology department.

Geoff Luther remembers asking his doctor, "How will you know when you have it turned on high enough, will my ears start smoking or what?"

That technique worked for Luther, but his sperm quality was low. So, a single sperm was injected into Tammy's eggs to create an embryo. The resulting embryo was implanted in Tammy's womb and, finally, she was pregnant.

"I loved being pregnant," she said.

Brackett wants doctors to try simple solutions before assuming they must use surgical means to retrieve sperm from the testes of injured men. In her survey, some doctors said they lacked training or equipment, or were unfamiliar with the methods.

"If we forget these simple things, it's almost like going backward," Brackett said. "It does a disservice to our patients."

Of the 11,000 spinal cord injuries annually in the United States, 80 percent are among men between 16 and 45—the prime reproductive years.

Rehabilitation Institute nurse practitioner Diane Rowles, who teaches a class called "Sexuality and Fertility" to patients, said sex is "a very private topic, a very personal topic." But if medical staff don't educate spinal cord injury patients about sex and fertility, they may assume the worst: that they're not able to have a sex life or have children.

"It's a big thing. You just can't leave it out," Rowles said. "They need to learn about it, too."

The Luther's children haven't asked where babies come from. Tammy Luther said someday, if they ask, she'll tell them about many different ways children come into the world, from adoption to reproduction with medical help.

Geoff Luther said he doesn't know what he will say. "I still haven't had that talk with my mom and dad, so I'm not sure." He does know he would say to any man with SCI who wants to be a father: "See the best doctors, or you can waste a lot of time and resources." ★

"Blurbs" From Paraplegia News, August 2005**SMART IDEAS**

The bottle sling allows hands-free feeding. The device promotes proper bottle positioning and eliminates choking hazards caused by improper bottle propping. Priced at \$9.95, this product is available at Buy Baby Buy, Babycatalog.com, and specialty stores.

The lie-down Nursing Nest Breast-feeding pillow is designed to safely cradle the contours of a baby's body while being fed by a mother who is lying down. It is available at select Babies R Us and Baby Depot stores nationwide, Buy, Baby Buy, One Step Ahead, and other independent retailers. The price is \$34.95-\$39.95.

MOTHERHOOD & DISABILITY

Should women with disabilities become mothers?

Although many women experience social pressure to have children, the opposite is true for those with disabilities—who are often pressured NOT to have children. Is it wrong for them to act on their natural instincts to be mothers? What challenges are likely to affect their bodies during pregnancy? What happens if the child they have also has a disability? How can someone with a disability parent a baby or toddler?

These are some of the questions author Judith Rogers, O.T.R., a disabled (cerebral palsy) mother of two addresses in her new book, *The Disabled Woman's Guide to Pregnancy and Birth*, as she raises seldom-discussed issues of mothers with disabilities.

Rogers is the pregnancy and parenting specialist at Through the Looking Glass, a national resource center in Berkeley, Calif. She spent four years as a birth instructor and has been involved in advocacy for people with disabilities, especially women, for more than thirty years.

She began the Breast Health Access for Women with Disabilities project, giving women with disabilities one-on-one education on breast self-examination, mammograms, and health. She was a Robert Wood Johnson Community Health Leader in 2002 and continues to provide training and technical assistance to disabled parents, prospective parents, and professionals around the world.

Rogers interviewed ninety women with disabilities about their pregnancies. This resource also includes solutions for common pregnancy problems, such as sleeping on satin sheets to avoid leg cramps.

Other topics include: The decision to have a baby; Emotional concerns; Nutrition and exercise during pregnancy; The trimesters; Labor and delivery; The postpartum period; Breastfeeding.

The guide is available for \$24.95 from Demos Medical Publishing (www.demosmedpub.com), Amazon.com,

From Paraplegia News, November 2005

VIRTUAL BUSINESS

A disability can lead to huge medical bills while at the same time hindering a person's ability to work outside the home. A friend or family member often chooses to stay home and act as caregiver—but someone still has to pay the bills.

A home-based virtual services career is a possible solution for caregiver and care recipient. The 2-Second Commute by Christine C. Durst and Michael D. Haaren (Career Press, August 2005), is said to be the first mainstream how-to book for virtual assistants.

Virtual Assistants, offices, and teams work from home. They set their own hours, don't commute, and provide everything from administrative support to high-end consulting via e-mail, phone and fax.

The 2-Second Commute takes readers through the start-up and growth process and demonstrates how to become an entrepreneur and establish a rewarding, home-based virtual business. The book contains self-assessment exercises and reality checks that examines issues that should be carefully weighed before going into business. Interviews with successful virtual assistants, clients, and telework industries experts help estimate costs and set fees, find clients, and build a foundation of consistent cash flow.

Priced at \$14.99, the book is available from Career Press, (800) CAREER-1. ★

From New Mobility, February 2007

ROBOTIC LEGS REPLACE WHEELCHAIRS?

Atsuo Takanishi, an engineering professor at Tokyo's Waseda University, has invented a set of robotic "legs" that he hopes will one day replace wheelchairs. The device has been named WL-16Rlll and is operated by using a pair of joysticks.

In April 2006, Takanishi demonstrated his robotic legs. The legs successfully climbed up and down a staircase, maneuvered through a pebbly outdoor path, and have been compared to the mechanical "wrong trousers" of Wallace and Gromit fame. "They're fully operational in a human environment—specifically one with features such as stairs that they can climb as Homo sapiens do," says Takanishi.

At present the invention is heavy and bulky and won't work for everyone, but to visit a second-floor apartment or other inaccessible destination, some day, and not have to worry about stairs—or to freak your friends out at Halloween? This could eventually be enticing to a lot of people.

To see pictures and a video of the WL-16Rlll in action, visit www.takanishi.mech.waseda.ac.jp/research/parallel/WL-16rr/index.htm—and keep an open mind.

FOR SALE ***

WC Lift; \$7,000 new; only used 2 months; asking \$3,800. **Invacare Storm TDX 3 Power WC;** full reclining; less than 1 year old; \$12,000 new; asking \$3,000. **Quickie II manual chair;** good cond.; \$1,000.

Call David 589-6620.

NC topper; used; 3 E&J Manual chairs; used; 1 Quicksilver Action manual chair; Monarch hand controls. 93,000 miles. Price negotiable. **Call Ruth @ 239-9754 after 5 p.m.**

***Shower Chair;** 2 yrs old, negotiable; **Invacare 900 Action Power Chair;** 4 yrs. Old; \$600. Call 448-5296.

***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 individuals..*

SCI & PREGNANCY

INSIDE EDITION WOULD LIKE TO CONNECT WITH PREGNANT WOMEN WITH SCI FOR AN UPCOMING STORY ON PREGNANCY & CHILDBIRTH WITH A DISABILITY. IF YOU ARE WILLING TO DO SOME ON CAMERA STUFF AND ARE IN 2ND OR 3RD TRIMESTER, CONTACT JANE HANAWAY AT jhanaway@kingworld.com

SKIN HEALTH-WOUND PREVENTION DISCUSSION

**SATURDAY MARCH 10, 10 AM-11:30 AM
KOSAIR CHARITIES CENTER**

982 EASTERN PARKWAY, LOUISVILLE

Kathy, Constable, RN WOCN, will focus on skin health & skin breakdown prevention. *This program is not appropriate for those under 16.* Call Sarah at 502-637-7363; 1-866-637-7363; 1-866-340-SBAK; swingfield@sbak.org by March 18 if interested.

