

# NEW MOBILITY

life beyond wheels

## 2016-2017 Consumer Guide

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# TOGETHER

DEVICE



Steven and Annetta Jabari exchange vows at the Agoura Hills Community Center in Agoura Hills, California as friends and family look on. Steven suffered a debilitating aneurism and uses the TEK-RMD with assistance.

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*\*The ADI package includes accessories only, not the wheelchair frame.*

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PRESIDENT & CEO: JAMES WEISMAN  
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### EDITORIAL

PUBLISHER: JEAN DOBBS  
EDITOR: TIM GILMER  
MANAGING EDITOR: JOSIE BYZEK  
SENIOR EDITOR: IAN RUDER  
SENIOR CORRESPONDENT: BOB VOGEL  
  
EDITORIAL SUBMISSIONS:  
tgilmer@unitedspinal.org

### CUSTOMER SERVICE

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MEGAN LEE, EXT. 7253  
AD MATERIALS:  
DEANNA FIKE, EXT. 7250

### PRODUCTION

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CIRCULATION COORDINATOR:  
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## ( BULLY PULPIT )



### Voting By Mail Works Best

If you live in the United States and have a disability, chances are the voting process has never been quite right for you. This year marks my 13th opportunity to vote for President of the United States. In Oregon we have been voting by mail since 1998. At first I opposed the vote-by-mail system due to fears of manipulation and corruption. Those fears were unfounded. Voting by mail is the most accessible, easiest, least costly and least stressful method of voting I have ever experienced.

Unfortunately, only Oregon, Washington and Colorado have a vote-by-mail system for all voters, although California is considering it. Other states allow people with disabilities to vote by mail by request, but many disabled voters still experience some form of inaccessibility that either prevents or discourages them from voting. The Ruderman Foundation estimates that millions of people with disabilities are therefore unable to exercise the most fundamental right that our nation promises.

My lifelong voting record is a testament to the sanctity of our freedom to choose the candidate — and/or the political party — that each of us favors. In past presidential elections I have voted for candidates from widely diverse parties. One year — 1968 — I chose not to cast a ballot. That was the year when both Martin Luther King, Jr. and Bobby Kennedy were assassinated. I was 23, looking forward to casting my first presidential vote ever, for Kennedy. Instead, living under the flight path of L.A. International Airport at the time, I watched, grieving, as the jet that held his lifeless body passed overhead.

My next opportunity came in 1972. I chose

to vote for the Peace and Freedom candidate, Dr. Benjamin Spock, because I wanted to see a third party emerge. I voted for a third party candidate a second time decades later. The rest of the elections I voted for either the Democrat or Republican, but I have most often registered as an Independent voter.

I have voted after waiting in line for a long time. I have voted one minute before the poll

*My lifelong voting record is a testament to the sanctity of our freedom to choose the candidate that each of us favors.*

closed after a mad dash through traffic. I have complained because I needed help getting boosted up a curb to gain access to the polling place; complained because no disabled parking was available; complained about having to vote in the open, without privacy, due to inaccessible voting booths.

This year I will vote in the comfort of my home after receiving my ballot in the mail weeks ahead of election day. I will take my time, relax, maybe drink a cup of coffee while studying the voter's pamphlet for the umpteenth time. Then I will drop off my ballot at a drive-by mailbox two or three days before election day, postage-free, or have my wife or daughter do it for me. Or I will drop it off on election day at a drive-by collection box. My vote will count the same no matter who I choose to vote for. What is important is that I have a free and easily accessible opportunity to make my personal choice.

— TIM GILMER



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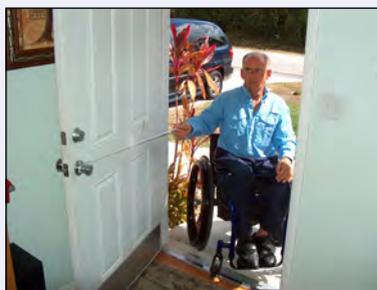
# ADAPTATION, TOOLS & TECHNOLOGY

The old adage that nothing is certain but death and taxes no longer applies. Technology is everywhere, constantly evolving. This is where your search for the latest in adaptive innovation begins.

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# DRAGON INDIVIDUAL PROFESSIONAL FOR PCS AND MACS: THE TECH JUST KEEPS GETTING BETTER AND BETTER

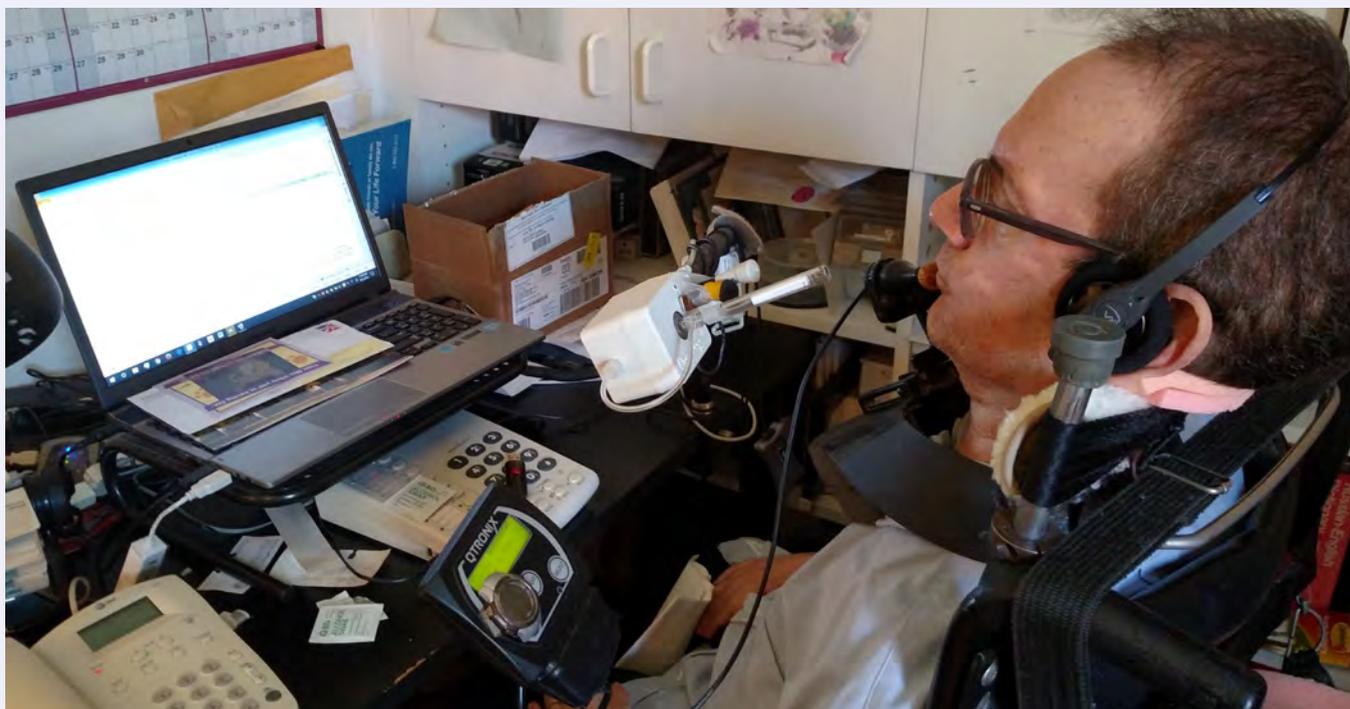
BY BEN MATTLIN

**B**ackground: Some 30 years ago, when I first read about a new technology that would enable people to dictate to computers hands-free, I was elated but skeptical. Because of my inborn neuromuscular disability — a form of spinal muscular atrophy — and my chosen

\$20-grand for hardware capable of running it, and have the equivalent of an extra bedroom to store it.

But within three years the price came down below \$5,000, and the thing could be run on a home PC. I was one of the first customers.

“tions,” explains Rick Brown, senior director of product management for Nuance. In other words, it works with Windows 10, Microsoft Office 2016, WordPerfect 8, and a host of online apps such as Twitter and Facebook, as well as most previous incarnations of those popular programs.



This article was written by Ben Mattlin using Dragon Individual Professional 15 for PCs.

profession as a writer/journalist, I was really struggling to input words. This news seemed too good to be true.

Soon I ventured to a local university lab for a demonstration. I met a polite geek who took me into a small, overly air-conditioned room filled with computer equipment and little else. In the center hung a lone microphone.

This early version of DragonDictate was a marvel to behold! If you spoke — extremely slowly ... like ... this — your words would appear on screen! If I wanted my own, though, I'd have to shell out \$20,000 for the software, plus another

Fast-forward to 2016. Nuance Communications, the corporation that now owns Dragon, released Dragon Professional Individual 15 for PCs (for Macs, it's version 6) — the fastest, most accurate, most user-friendly and feature-rich version yet. The upshot: For those who've owned previous versions of Dragon products, the upgrade is definitely worthwhile. Newcomers, too, won't be disappointed.

What's different this time? “One of the things we've focused on is making sure this new release works seamlessly with an even broader variety of current applica-

In addition, the improvements in speech recognition are significant. From the moment you install it, the speed and accuracy of dictation are startling, even without much prep. Nuance calls the tech “Deep Learning,” a vocabulary-searching algorithm that's touted to deliver 24 percent greater accuracy than last year's model, though I'm not sure how to prove that. All I know is, it's surprisingly precise. And it's always learning from the user's speech patterns, word choices, and intonations. So in theory, at least, it'll get even better the more you use it. (I wish my wife listened to me as attentively.)



# Giving Back Helps Us Give More

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“The underlying engine for speech recognition has been greatly enhanced,” says Brown. “This means that, for a larger and larger number of people, Dragon’s usability is better, easier, and more available than it’s ever been before. Loyal users will see the difference, and for those who were frustrated in earlier years, now is a good time to try Dragon again.”

Although earlier versions were more than adequate for me, this newest one really does have several unprecedented and worthwhile advantages. First, like last year’s model, Professional Individual is a kind of hybrid between the old Professional and Preferred. Specifically, it can run macros (that is, a series of commands can be put into effect with a single trigger phrase, such as “enter boilerplate contract language”). Moreover, it can save a recording of your dictation with every document. So if you’re rereading something you composed earlier and come across an odd word or two — the kind of glitch that makes you wonder, “What the heck was I really trying to say there?” — you can actually replay what you dictated and see what Dragon typed wrong, and correct it.

In earlier versions of Preferred, the recordings disappeared as soon as you changed windows, which drove me crazy! Many times I lost recorded dictation before I’d bothered to listen to it and correct the text. But now the recordings can be saved forever, or not if you’re ready to delete them. The Options menu under Tools in the DragonBar gives you a choice of whether to always save the dictation files, never save the dictation files, or “ask me” every time I close a document. I like the third option best.

### BEST OLDER FEATURES REMAIN, NEW IMPROVED ONES ADDED

Second, the latest Dragon is made for our mobile world. It syncs with the Dragon Anywhere app, sold separately for \$15 a month or \$150 a year, and works well on Android and iPhones. The app is basically a cloud-based version of Dragon, and it can work with your computer’s Dragon user files for improved accuracy. That is, it syncs your customized vocabulary and auto-texts, such as using “home address” as a shortcut for automatically inputting your home address.

The new Dragon also comes with commands that enable you to use touchscreens by voice. Last year’s model had a version of this, but the new one promises several enhancements for improved productivity.

Another useful tool is the “Dictation-Box,” which enables you to dictate text into a program or website that’s not fully compatible. A little window pops up, you dictate, and when you’re done the text automatically appears in the app. You can even set it up to automatically open the DictationBox whenever it encounters an appropriate situation.

In fact, the new software has so many features I haven’t yet been able to try them all. You can dictate into a separate recording device, then attach the recorder to your computer and have Dragon transcribe it. In my experience, this isn’t as accurate as dictating directly into Dragon, but it can be a boon for those on the go. It can also transcribe someone else’s speech, though again the accuracy isn’t quite as good. Maybe future versions will improve this.

Another complaint about the 2016

## ADAPTIVE TOOLS & TECHNOLOGY

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upgrade: When you close Dragon, it now automatically saves your user profile without asking whether you want to. If you think it's saved a bad dictation session, at least you can restore a previous saved profile fairly easily.

In fairness, previous incarnations have had a few glitches. I haven't found one yet in this upgrade. What's more, the best features from prior versions are still there. For instance, there are still the familiar commands such as "MouseGrid" to bring up nine numbered squares on your screen. Say a number and the grid shrinks to fill that space. You can keep doing this until the cursor arrives where you want it, and then say "MouseClicked" or "RightClick" or "LeftClick" or "DoubleClick." You can also say "Mark" and "Drag" to move a mouse pointer from one spot to another.

As in previous versions, the newest has different modes — Normal, Dictation, Command, Numbers and Spell — to limit the active vocabulary to whatever task you have at hand. If you're doing a lot of math, say, you might put it in Numbers mode so it only recognizes the numbers you speak.

**"I've never regretted making the additional annual investment. I use Dragon every day for everything — I'm using it now — so, to me, it's definitely worth it."**

A few tips: The speech recognition accuracy is so good out-of-the-box that you no longer have to spend time training it. Still, there's a tutorial and help menu if you get stuck. In addition, you can train specific words or phrases, and the software can scan your emails and other documents already on your computer, as well as perform an extensive reevaluation of your audio conditions after a few sessions, to gain a better sense of your speech patterns and enhance accuracy. You can also add or remove words from the active vocabulary.

Dragon isn't perfect, to be sure. It can't always understand what you say, especially if you mumble or work in a noisy environment. The newest version can

work with most built-in microphones, and it comes with a headset, but for the best accuracy I recommend buying a good noise-canceling microphone headset. Look up online reviews before purchasing. I prefer USB headsets because they have their own independent sound technology, for greater clarity and therefore improved accuracy. Good ones cost between \$50 and \$200.

Also, Dragon tech support is only free for 90 days. After that, save your money and search online for solutions. There are many helpful blogs; my favorite is knowbrainer.com.

No doubt next year's Dragon upgrade will be even faster and more accurate than this one, as will the one a year after that, and so forth. But I've never regretted making the additional annual investment. I use Dragon every day for everything — I'm using it now — so, to me, it's definitely worth it. The newest complete package costs \$300; upgrades from predecessor versions, without a new headset, go for half that. If you want a wireless Bluetooth headset instead of the standard one, it costs an extra \$100. **MI**

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# HEALTH & HYGIENE

Products and strategies that encourage healthy living cannot be overemphasized. In this section you will find useful urological supplies, bowel and bathroom equipment and more.

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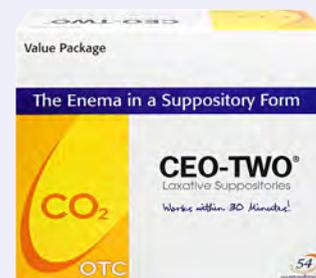
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## HEALTH & HYGIENE

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# CAN MILD HYPERBARIC OXYGEN THERAPY HELP YOU? AT WHAT COST?

Riley Poor had been on bedrest for months trying to heal a pressure sore. He had grown so accustomed to the nerve pain and spasms he dealt with that they were beginning to seem normal. That's when his partner, Andrea Peruzzi, suggested he look into hyperbaric oxygen therapy. "All I really knew about it was that Michael Jackson had apparently slept in a hyperbaric oxygen chamber," he says. "I was a little bit skeptical because there is so much woo-woo type crap out there."

But feeling like he had tried pretty much everything else and had nothing to lose, Poor, a C5-6 quad who lives in Portland, Oregon, went ahead and signed up for 13 hours in the closest chamber he could find, about 30 minutes north in Vancouver, Washington. "Logistically it was challenging because it was expensive and far away, but once I got on the bandwagon, and as I got to hour nine or 10 of therapy, I started realizing that I had a dramatic reduction in nerve pain and my spasms were so much better," he recalls. On top of that, the wounds that had refused to heal started to get smaller and soon went away. "It was really bizarre, and it was amazing."

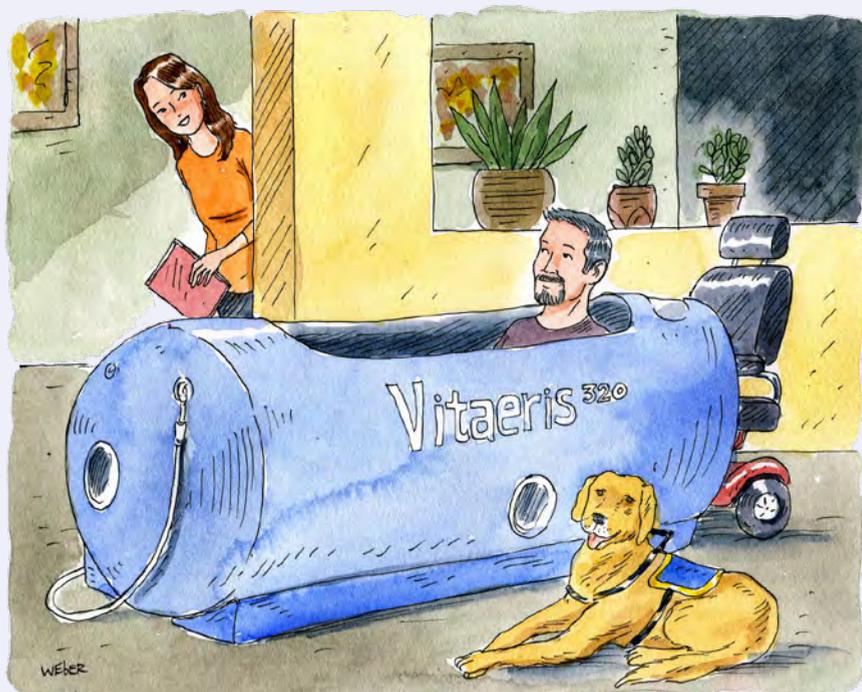


Illustration by Mark Weber

## A TWIST ON TRADITION

Traditional hyperbaric oxygen treatment has been used for many years to heal wounds, help with decompression sickness and deal with infections, but what Poor and a growing number of people are turning to is a variation, often called "mild" hyperbaric oxygen therapy. In

traditional HBOT, recipients sit or lie in large metallic chambers, where the air pressure is as much as three times normal air pressure, and breathe pure oxygen. These chambers can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars and are generally only found in hospitals. Mild HBOT chambers, like the one Poor used, are generally soft-sided, filled with ambient air instead of medical grade oxygen and can't attain the same high levels of pressurization. Many users breathe concentrated oxygen through a mask while in the chamber. Mild chambers start as low as \$3,999 and are available for home use. There are even models that wheelchair users can roll directly into. Both forms of HBOT require a medical prescription, but while traditional HBOT is usually covered by insurance, mild HBOT is not.

The mainstream medical profession has supported the value of traditional HBOT with thousands of clinical studies, but it tends to eschew mild HBOT and question its value. Poor understands the skepticism but swears by the results. "I do believe that on a molecular level it's definitely giving your body an advantage to heal and improve inflammation," he says. "It's made a huge change to my life."

## A DOCTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

While many of the people using mild hyperbaric oxygen therapy swear by its benefits, many medical professionals will just as ardently question whether it has any impact. Breathing 100 percent oxygen in traditional, hard-sided chambers at upwards of twice the normal atmospheric pressure (2.0 ATA) has been scientifically proven to heal tissue and bone. Being exposed to the lower pressure (1.3 ATA) of soft-side mild chambers filled with ambient air has not been proven to have any medical value. Dr. Bruce Ruben, the founder and medical director of Encompass HealthCare and Wound Center in West Bloomfield, Illinois, has used hyperbaric oxygen to treat infections for years ["An Accessible Wound Clinic," *NEW MOBILITY*, Feb. 2015]. A triple-board-certified specialist, Ruben was unfamiliar with the newer mild chambers that rely on ambient air. He was skeptical, but not dismissive. "If you're just breath-

ing air under pressure, all you're doing is just supersaturating nitrogen into your fluid compartments and you're not going to get a whole lot more oxygen." He qualifies that by saying that if you breathe 100 percent oxygen through a mask while in the mild chamber, you would be getting a treatment. "The question then is, are you getting a benefit?"

"I'm all for anything that works and is safe," he says. "If they're getting a benefit, great, more power to them ... I believe them when it happens and I wouldn't tell them to change what they're doing, but I would tell people I don't want to treat them [using mild HBOT] because I don't want your money." He says the potential for helping inflammation makes physiological sense, but that he can think of "a million, less expensive, more time efficient ways of dealing with inflammation."

It's given me more bandwidth to be active and get out on my bike and actually have the strength and energy to spend more time in the chair. It helps give me the little boost to get ahead."

"I think of it as like drinking water," says Poor. "If there was some super-hydrated water where you only had to drink one glass a day and you were good to go, it's kind of like that with oxygen. Its undeniable, you wake up refreshed."

On top of added energy, reduced nerve pain and healed wounds, Poor says his edema and hemorrhoids are both noticeably improved. Peruzzi, a licensed acupuncturist with a background in oriental medicine, says the undiscerning focus of HBOT is one of its strengths. "That's the thing about hyperbarics, it's not choosing what tissue to act on — it's a very systemic treatment," she says. "So all of the tissues of your body are getting more oxygen, having less inflammation, getting more blood flow, healing. There are all these positive side effects that people comment on that they didn't really anticipate."

Peruzzi recommends different treatment protocols depending on what her clients are hoping to accomplish. She wants

clients to build frequency and duration, recommending five days on and two days off of 60-90 minute treatments for those who can do it. For chronic conditions she recommends around 40 hours a month.

## RELIEF, AT A HIGH COST

Poor was so sold on the benefits that he purchased his own unit, a Vitaeris 320. At around \$22,000, it didn't come cheap, but he decided the benefits of more regular usage and not having to pay the \$200-plus per session most clinics charge were worth it.

Less than two years later, Poor estimates he has spent close to 180 hours in the chamber and says he feels better than ever. He purchased a second chamber secondhand last year and his original chamber now resides in the health and wellness clinic that Peruzzi runs. She had never offered mild HBOT before Poor started using it but has found the treatments to be a perfect fit for her clinic. She explains that the therapy's focus on nourishing the blood and improving blood flow coincides with the tenets of acupuncture and the oriental medicine she studied. She learned about the treatment potential of hyperbaric ox-

xygen in her studies, but she didn't pursue it until it became relevant in her personal life and her relationship with Poor.

"I've never seen a person in more pain. His experience of living was pure hell. We couldn't figure out how to help him and he was going everywhere and spending all this money — acupuncture, chiropractor, naturopath, physiatrist — this has helped him more. It's been insane watching his evolution with this."

Since Peruzzi moved the chamber to her clinic, it has become a staple of her practice and has drawn around 15 wheelchair users with various needs. For Debbie Sloss, a C5 incomplete quad who goes to Peruzzi's clinic, the decision to try HBOT boiled down to a simple question: "What do I have to lose?" She noticed improvement almost right away. "The extreme burning in my fingers really subsided," she says. "After I'd been going for a while I could really feel my energy and blood flow waking up. It's a really strange feeling but it was really good, very positive."

A typical session for Sloss is about one and a half hours. She stands and pivots into the chamber and then lies down and zips in. "Once I'm there it's comfortable,"

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she says. “I let the oxygen just take over and I take a nap.” Sloss started out using the chamber almost every day, but with no help from insurance, the cost of regular sessions quickly piled up. She now tries to make it twice a week and is considering purchasing a chamber for her home. “If it works and is very beneficial — you’ve just got to kind of swallow it, even though that’s easier said than done,” she says.

## A MORE ACCESSIBLE FUTURE?

Peruzzi is fully aware of the financial burden that keeps people from realizing the benefits of a product she wholeheartedly believes in. To that end, she has started Access Oxygen, a venture with the goal of making mild HBOT more financially accessible.

“I’m much more in favor of seeking other options than having people come to the clinic,” she says. “Coming to the clinic is great to start with, but I want to help people realize this isn’t something that needs to be done in a clinical setting. These chambers are approved for home use, and are meant to be used in the home ... they’re easy to operate and I think



This Summit to Sea HBOT chamber is wheelchair accessible.

there is this façade that has been created that you need to come to the clinic and spend a whole bunch of money to do this. I want to make it more attainable.”

Buying one of the cheaper chambers is the most cost-effective route if you are planning on regular use, according to Peruzzi. Peruzzi sells chambers made by Summit to Sea and Newtowne Hyperbarics, two of the three leading manufac-

turers of mild HBOT chambers. She says OxyHealth, the manufacturer of the Vitaeris 320, is another solid, if often more expensive option. She also rents chambers and is working to develop scholarships to help clients in need. Sloss adds, “I think it’s important to go in with an open mind. Don’t just give it a one-time shot, try it a handful of times.” Poor points out that many professional athletes are now using mild HBOT and hopes public perception will change. Peruzzi deflects mainstream medicine’s skepticism of mild HBOT’s value by pointing to a number of positive studies from less traditional perspectives. She believes in mild HBOT. “People were saying the same [skeptical] things about acupuncture a few years ago.” **MM**

## RESOURCES

- Access Oxygen, 503/808-9145; [www.accessoxygen.org](http://www.accessoxygen.org)
- OxyHealth (Makers of Vitaeris 320), 877/789-0123; [www.oxyhealth.com](http://www.oxyhealth.com)
- Summit to Sea, 877/774-3483; [summit-to-sea.com](http://summit-to-sea.com)
- Wellness Without Limits, 321/265-9028
- Newtowne Hyperbarics, 410/575-4220; [www.newtownehyperbarics.com](http://www.newtownehyperbarics.com)

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# HEALTH: APPLE CIDER VINEGAR ELIXIR FIXER

BY ROXANNE FURLONG



Apple cider vinegar has been gaining in popularity as a remedy for conditions ranging from acne to blood sugar management to weight loss. Google it and you'll get about 1.8 million hits and learn that vinegar has been a noted remedy throughout the ages. Babylonians used it for food preservation in 5000 B.C.; Hippocrates for wound care in 520 B.C.; and 18th century medical practitioners for skin infections, stomach ailments and diabetes symptoms, according to a report by the National Institutes of Health. *Reader's Digest* claims apple cider vinegar rivals tea tree oil in its uses as

a natural helper, and that people use it for cancer, heart problems, high cholesterol, leg cramps and cold symptoms — and as an energy booster. But can it really be a cure-all for many of the medical maladies facing wheelchair users? Based on my experience, I say, "Hell yeah!"

## NEW ENGLAND FOLK MEDICINE

Six years ago I came across the book, *Folk Medicine: A New England Almanac of Natural Health Care from a Noted Vermont Country Doctor*. Published in 1958 by Dr. D.C. Jarvis, it covers numerous

natural remedies, including benefits of apple cider vinegar. Jarvis first observed and cured health problems in domestic farm animals using the vinegar. He eventually began offering it — along with honey for some cases — to his Vermont patients, noting positive results as a remedy for colds, allergies, diabetes, arthritis and digestion symptoms, to name only a few.

I've used it topically for years to stop a recurring skin infection under my weakened right arm that dermatologist-prescribed oral and topical drugs would not help. I recently re-read the book and found the answer to combating a daily problem I have with phlegm and secretions caused by my bi-pap machine during sleep. My daily morning elixir of 2 teaspoons apple cider vinegar, 1 tablespoon honey, and ½ cup water also reduced arthritis pain in my joints and eliminated irritable bowel syndrome symptoms, including my morning burp fest.

I can't tell you which of the results I'm most thrilled about. Daily phlegm prevented me from holding a conversation. Several doctors I asked for help — including a pulmonologist, allergist, two ear, nose and throat specialists, even my dentist — shrugged their shoulders — though one ENT was sharpening his knives to cut into my sinuses.

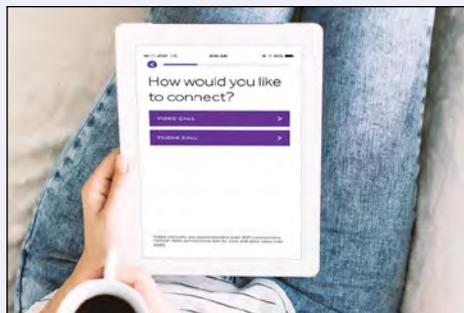
Humidity I breathe during the night via my bi-pap causes the phlegm, but

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weakness from my facioscapulohumeral muscular dystrophy prevents me from coughing anything up, so all day long I'm constantly trying to clear my throat and hack up the ... I'll stop there, it's not pretty.

As for IBS symptoms, I quickly realized that I hadn't had any problems — digestive or eliminative — since beginning my morning elixir. I can now eat without worrying if I'll make it to the bathroom in time or have my bi-monthly non-elimination round.

## BALANCING ACT OF MINERALS

So, why does apple cider vinegar work? First, it helps your body absorb nutrients from foods. Jarvis found that the natural acid in apple cider vinegar (and grape, apple or cranberry juices) contains potassium that floods your blood and frees your blood vessels from calcium deposits. Potassium, also the mineral necessary for "proper performance by the nervous system," is responsible for drawing fluid into cells, which hold 50 percent of our body fluid. Jarvis explains that because our body composition is partly mineral, it is important that we keep potassium-sodium in balance. In so doing, we can eliminate many health conditions and be energized every day.

I have read that you can use apple cider vinegar to clean your teeth *and* that it can damage tooth enamel. Therefore, I drink my elixir with a straw to be safe. You can also make a salad dressing from apple cider vinegar and oil to get your daily intake. Keep in mind, it's vinegar and is harsh when swallowing. Luckily, it makes no difference if you dilute it, you'll still get the much-needed mineral it provides.

It is suggested that you use unfiltered, raw, unpasteurized or organic apple cider vinegar, which contains the mother of the vinegar, a harmless, good-bacteria residue. One pint of apple cider vinegar using my recipe lasts me two weeks. Though no side effects have been noted, it's best to start out slow and use in moderation.

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# FITNESS & SPORTS

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# TOTAL BODY FITNESS VIDEOS MAKE EXERCISING EASIER

BY ALEX JACKSON

You know that feeling after a great workout? You've lifted weights and have worked up a sweat. Now you have that sense of accomplishment since your heart is racing. We all know that exercise is important to keep ourselves physically fit and strong. However, trying to exercise with a disability can be challenging. Even if you can overcome the many challenges, including transportation to the gym, there may not be accessible equipment.

Total Body Fitness may be just the workout solution you want. The online video subscription service gives you the opportunity to exercise from the comfort of your home. The workout website was created by Kristin McNealus, a physical therapist who wanted clients to continue their workout routines once they returned home from the rehabilitation hospital.

McNealus, who has a background in neurological rehabilitation, says, "It was getting more frustrating, with the changes in health care, to be discharging people with a limited number of resources, especially when you want them to continue to get stronger and stay healthy." She wanted to provide another option for people to get the exercise without having to worry about having a place that's accessible or finding a way to get there. Every Body Fitness offers a variety of programs that are taught by a team of physical therapists and people with disabilities.

## F.A.S.T. CLASS AND BOOT CAMP

The Fitness and Strength Training Class is a cardio exercise program that gets your heart pumping. The videos average 45 minutes in length and encourage you to keep moving throughout. Additionally, Boot Camp sessions present the workouts in intervals, giving you a chance to rest in between each exercise. Regardless of which videos you watch, the entire program is meant to be done at your own pace and comfort level.

Individuals with disabilities lead the video sessions, and McNealus' voice can



The author works out with wrist weights.

be heard as she gives instructions and motivates you throughout the routines. Some people use three to five-pound weights as they're exercising. If you don't have weights, you can use a water bottle and adjust the amount of water to vary the weight.

Julio Castro, a T10 para, is one of the people featured in the videos. The 30-year-old was injured eight years ago in a welding accident. Since working out with Every Body Fitness, Castro has lost 40 pounds. He credits the workouts for his success in staying healthy, and says, "The exercises really work you out!" He likes rocking out to Metallica when he's working out.

As I was reviewing the Every Body Fitness website for this story, I had the chance to work out with the videos, and it definitely tested my endurance the first time. I only made it through about 15 minutes before I needed to take a break. Although I go to physical therapy each week for an hour to get a combination of stretching and cardio exercise, and I play wheelchair tennis, it is still beneficial to get some additional reps in throughout the week. As I continue with the video series, I'm looking forward to increasing my endurance and building up my strength for activities of daily living and other recreational opportunities.

Denese Edsall, 52, also enjoys working out with the video series. She was born a para and uses a chair for mobility. Edsall was one of the first subscribers to Every Body Fitness nearly four years ago. "I was feeling like my strength wasn't where it should be, and I felt like I needed something new." She came across the website by doing an online search, and now she exercises to music by Journey nearly every day.

McNealus is excited to hear success stories from the participants. One lady wrote in saying now she is able to reach above her head to blow dry her hair. "Hearing what people are able to do now that they are exercising is amazing," McNealus says.

## SOMASENSE YOGA

In addition to the intense cardio sessions, people can subscribe to watch yoga classes taught by physical therapist Alex Schang. Schang has taught accessible yoga for people with disabilities for several years, but began working with Every Body Fitness earlier this year. She enjoys teaching yoga since it is another option for wellness.

Depending on your ability, you can stay in your wheelchair, sit in another chair or sit on the floor. As a C5-6 incomplete quad, I appreciated learning the breathing techniques. It has helped my body relax in the evenings when I'm trying to go to sleep.

Schang points out that living life is already stressful, but when you manage the physical and emotional needs, it keeps everything in balance. That is why the program is named "Somasense." It means to have knowledge of the body, she says.

McNealus and Schang are glad the website caters to a variety of people and offers a range of exercises. It has the strengthening and aerobics, and it also includes yoga techniques. "They all complement each other well," Schang says.

Several subscription options are available beginning at \$25 per month. You can choose different plans depending on your workout goals. To learn more about Every Body Fitness, visit [www.scitotalfitness.com](http://www.scitotalfitness.com).

# SLINGSHOT GOLF IS COMPETITIVE FOR ALL ABILITIES

For as long as I can remember, I always loved the feeling of being on a golf course. There was something special about the aroma of freshly cut grass, being surrounded by so much green and the satisfaction of knocking in a long-distance putt. When I broke my neck in 2004, I was determined to find a way to get back out and play again with my limited movement, and over the years I created a new adaptation of the game called “Slingshot Golf.”

This golf season I played the majority of my rounds at my local public golf course. Before teeing off, I always head to the driving range, and what happens next makes me smile. Other golfers often nod their head with a look of “good for you for making it out here.” When they see my caregiver (a.k.a. caddie) take a hand-held slingshot out of his bag, their look changes to “really?”

I position myself about five feet behind my caddie and instruct him on the line, height and strength of my desired shot followed by the words “launch!” The ball travels in the air with precision accuracy, and eight times out of 10 lands perfectly on the shortest target green 95 yards away. The golfers’ expressions quickly turn from



This specially-designed putter uses a protractor arm to calibrate the power of a shot.

“really” to “that’s damn impressive.”

After practicing, I’m off to the putting green with my putting device. The device has a specially designed putter that rotates back and forth in a pendulum motion on a framed structure. On the shaft of the putter there is a protractor with a ruler arm that moves along its 180-degree

surface, which is used to calibrate the power of a given shot.

Before my first practice putt, my caddie places an armband holder onto my forearm or onto my wheelchair armrest. Attached to the armband is a Power Sheet with different distances (two feet to 120 feet) on the left column and on the right column the correlating degree number used to calibrate the putting device.

For example, if a player wants to hit a 30-foot putt that is on a perfectly flat green, then the golfer would have his caddie adjust the protractor arm to 65 degrees. By pushing the handle of the putter forward, the putter head moves backwards, and as soon as the 65-degree ruler arm points straight to the ground, you know you have a 30-foot putt.

What makes golf so fun and difficult at the same time is that you rarely have a perfectly flat putt, and you find yourself with a putt that is either uphill or downhill with a left or right break and sometimes multiple breaks. Taking away power or adding power is needed for almost every shot. Also, moving the frame of the device left or right and aiming with the specially designed stripes on the putter head helps to accurately position the desired line.

Once at the first hole, I determine where

## FITNESS & SPORTS



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I'm going to tee off from. The average male caddie can launch a golf ball around 100 to 130 yards with a slingshot. Compare this to an average male nondisabled golfer with a drive of 200 to 260 yards. With a slingshot's shorter launching distance, Slingshot Golf follows the "tee it forward" mentality in order to speed up the pace of play and to have an opportunity to make it on a green for a birdie or par.

The starting distance for each hole is determined by the Distance Sheet, which is located inside the previously mentioned armband. A slingshot golfer first determines if the hole is a par 3, 4 or 5 and then the distance from the blue tees. This calculates the starting distance from the green. Most of the time a slingshot golfer tees off in the fairway. If the hole is short for a nondisabled golfer, it will also be short for a slingshot golfer — and vice versa if the hole is long.

The beauty of Slingshot Golf is the accuracy of the slingshot and the pendulum putting device. Both devices take away so much human error, and they function like a video game controller. The key is practicing, knowing how to calibrate them, a player's strategic course management and properly reading the greens.

Slingshot Golf allows people of all abilities to enjoy any golf course. My goal over the next few years is to get the word out about the sport and for the paralysis community to start playing with their friends and family. My long-term goal is to create state leagues and tournaments across the country.

To learn more about the game or to watch a detailed instructional video of Slingshot Golf in action, visit [slingshotgolf.org](http://slingshotgolf.org).

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### *Who can be a caddie?*

Anyone willing to try, such as your caregiver, family member or friend.

### *How many holes can a power wheelchair last before the battery dies?*

My power wheelchair typically lasts a total of 10 to 12 holes, depending on how

hilly the golf course is. When I want to play 18 holes, I bring an old power wheelchair to transfer into after the ninth hole. Most the time I just play nine holes.

### *Can a paraplegic use the slingshot?*

A paraplegic can use the slingshot to launch a golf ball. It depends on a person's upper body strength and trunk control. Often a caddie will launch the long ball, and a paraplegic golfer will use a slingshot for the approach shot.

### *Can power wheelchairs go on to the greens?*

A golfer in a power wheelchair must avoid wheeling onto the greens and can go up to the fringe anywhere around the green to assess a putt. The heavy weight and thin wheels of a power wheelchair can damage the greens. The putter head's white and black aiming stripes can clearly be seen from the fringe for selecting the desired line of a putt.

### *What are the rules to Slingshot Golf?*

For in depth rules, visit [slingshotgolf.org/rules](http://slingshotgolf.org/rules)

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# MOBILITY & SEATING

They say there is no reason to re-invent the wheel. But they are wrong. This section is chock-full of innovative and boundary-pushing variations on the theme of wheeled mobility.

## ACTION TRACKCHAIR

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# THE iBOT RETURNS: LIGHTER, LONGER AND COVERED BY INSURANCE?

BY BOB VOGEL

**N**ews that a new iBOT is in the works has generated a lot of excitement among wheelchair users. A May 22 press release explained that Toyota North America is joining forces with DEKA Research and Development, the company founded by iBOT inventor Dean Kamen, to help complete the development and launch of the next iBOT power wheelchair. The announcement has created a great deal of anticipation and a myriad of questions from fans of the chair, ranging from what kind of advances the new machine will have to whether it will be covered by insurance. For answers I turned to the man himself, Dean Kamen.

For those not familiar with the iBOT, it is a revolutionary four-wheel-drive wheelchair that can climb up and down stairs and curbs, roll across varied terrain, raise a seated user to eye-level-standing height by rising up and balancing on two wheels, and travel in this mode — all while relying on sophisticated sensors and gyroscopes to maintain the chair's balance. The original iBOTs were manufactured and sold through Johnson & Johnson's Independence Technology division starting in 2003. It discontinued the chair in 2009 because of slow sales due to lack of insurance coverage for the \$24,000 cost. Additional challenges included only one available seating option and only one control mechanism, a joystick.

Many wheelers who did

get iBOTs loved them, and many are still driving theirs to this day — something that is becoming increasingly difficult because repair support is extremely hard to find. To its credit, Johnson & Johnson continued to service the original iBOT fleet for five years after the 2009 discontinuation.

To say Kamen is excited about the next generation iBOT is an understatement. “The new iBOT will blow away the per-

formance of the original — it has every benefit of the original but with advances similar to comparing a cell phone from 15 years ago to a smartphone of today,” says Kamen. He offers a glimpse of improvements starting with lighter chair weight — in some configurations the entire chair weighs less than 200 pounds. The original NiCad (nickel-cadmium) batteries have been replaced by two stacks of lithium ion batteries (three on each side). They are much lighter, easily swapped in and out, produce more power, more energy, longer battery life and have onboard charging — no external battery charger is required. The chair can also be plugged directly into a wall socket. In addition, charging is fast — a 50 percent increase in battery power takes about two hours.

Kamen cites the battery advances as emblematic of the product-wide improvements. “Another example is the gyro systems. The previous ones were the size of half a shoebox. The new gyros are the size of a sugar cube, are digital solid state and they sit inside totally new electronics.”

Perhaps of equal importance to the improvements in technology is the FDA's reclassification of the iBot from a Class III medical device to a Class II medical device. “Being a Class III device meant we couldn't change anything about the original iBOT, from seating system to joystick controller, without starting the FDA approval process

**Inventor Dean Kamen demonstrates seeing eye-to-eye while using the iBOT.**





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The iBot's claim to fame is it can climb stairs under the proper conditions.



all over again — from submittals to clinical trials — for any change,” says Kamen. With the Class II rating, Kamen plans on making the iBOT as a power base so it can work with a variety of seating systems, from pediatric to custom. The change also means that the new iBOT can be fitted with different types of controllers under

the same FDA process as other power wheelchairs on the market.

Class III devices are considered the highest risk and subject to the highest amount of FDA control. Class II devices (power wheelchairs are in this class) are considered to have less risk. “The FDA was great,” says Kamen. “I explained to the FDA that they were appropriately cautious with the Class III rating when the chair was introduced, but now the original fleet of iBOTS have delivered 10-million-hours of operation, and electronics and sensors are more sophisticated, so we would like a reclassification to Class II. They looked at all of our data and in 2014 granted the iBOT a Class II rating.”

Funding for the next generation iBOT is another reason reclassifying to a Class II medical device is important, explains Kamen. The change to a Class II device should open the door for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to fund the iBOT, and most insurance carriers tend to follow CMS's lead.

The new iBOTS will be designed by DEKA and commercialized by Mobius Mobility LLC, a new company in Man-

chester, New Hampshire, with the support of Toyota. “We are excited to be backed by Toyota, the largest transportation company the world has ever seen,” says Kamen. He adds that the future potential for this collaboration is exciting because each company could bring a lot to the table in terms of advanced control, sensors, and technology. Some of the technology for the iBOTS can be used in Toyota robotic devices, and there are lots of things Toyota robotics is working on, like motors and batteries, that could potentially be used in iBOTS in the future. In addition, the connection to Toyota's supply chain and management and service organization around the world could be invaluable for sourcing iBOT components from electronics to tires.

When will the new iBOT be available to consumers? Kamen says he is aiming to supply the next generation iBOT sometime in 2017. “DEKA is working really hard to be ready to submit a new iBOT for the FDA testing, and approval of all power wheelchairs submitted as medical devices must go through in early 2017, as close to January 1 as possible,” says

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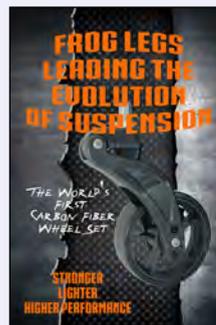


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Kamen. "Since it is a predicate (similar) device and the FDA has moved it from Class III to Class II, we are hoping that it will get a quick review and approval."

As far as retail cost of the next generation iBOT, Kamen says at this time he has no idea. However, he feels he can reduce the price considerably and provides three reasons this can happen:

1. Advanced technology is much less expensive than it was when the original iBOT was built.

2. DEKA's design for manufacturing and supply chain capability has advanced.

3. Support from Toyota's world-class supply chain.

At the moment an unknown in regards to retail cost is how to get the chairs to consumers — which has a significant effect on wheelchair price.

What about service and repair options for wheelers still using the original iBOT? Support for the original machines is difficult because replacement parts are no longer made, explains Kamen, but the nonprofit Operation Onward [see resources] has been trying to provide some support services. The good news is DEKA, Mobius, and Toyota are working to create a trade-in program for owners of original iBOTs to get them into a new iBOT.

"I explained the idea of a trade-in program to Toyota and they said, 'Let's try to come up with a plan like that. It will be fantastic to show that we are supporting all the people who are depending on this machine for their independence and their lifestyle,'" says Kamen. And although Johnson & Johnson is no longer involved in the iBOT in any way and has no plans to be involved, the company has been extremely supportive of the efforts to re-launch the iBOT. "I went to J&J and said, 'I know you left the business and I know it cost you a fortune, and you continued to support iBOTs because it was the right thing to do. But now I need your help again.' And the chairman and CEO of Johnson & Johnson said, 'You've got it, Dean, we are turning over the keys to the kingdom. We will transfer every-

thing you need."

It is clear that Kamen's enthusiasm goes beyond building the next generation iBOT. His goal is to make it attainable. "We understand we need to make these available. There are so many ways to justify building this device. It is like building a high performance hybrid of a robot and a car. We understand we have to find ways to make this available to people that need it, and we will do that." M

## RESOURCES

- FDA Medical Device explanation: [www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/ResourcesforYou/Consumers/ucm142523.htm](http://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/ResourcesforYou/Consumers/ucm142523.htm)
- iBOT Press Release: [pressroom.toyota.com/releases/toyota-deka-research-partnership-may21.htm](http://pressroom.toyota.com/releases/toyota-deka-research-partnership-may21.htm)
- Operation Onward, [www.operationonward.org](http://www.operationonward.org)
- Still Dreaming of an iBOT, [www.new-mobility.com/2009/04/still-dreaming-of-an-ibot/](http://www.new-mobility.com/2009/04/still-dreaming-of-an-ibot/)

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### LIFTKAR PT

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# THREE MOBILITY PRODUCTS TO MAKE TRAVELING EASIER



Designer Andrew Slorance is shown with his Phoenix Instinct luggage.

BY IAN RUDER

The wheelchair travel gods may have finally heeded the prayers of all the wheelchair travelers frustrated by the difficulty of hauling their luggage while on the road. Meet the Phoenix Instinct travel luggage — a slick looking, two-bag set of luggage specifically designed to hitch to the back of your wheelchair to help make traveling easier.

Designer Andrew Slorance, who also designed the Carbon Black wheelchair, has used a manual chair for 34 years. He hatched the idea of innovative luggage years ago when he got tired of lugging heavy equipment for a job as a video editor. When he interviewed wheelchair users, he was shocked to find that 75 percent said the difficulty of lugging their bags dissuaded them from traveling alone. He could identify.

“I know how difficult it is, not just to

move your stuff, but to lose your independence and be sitting struggling at the car rental, trying to get your luggage from there to the transfer bus and into the terminal,” he says. “It’s not very doable.”

“It seems crazy that those of us in the wheelchair world are living in the dark ages when it comes to luggage,” he says. “I wanted to make something that was going to solve a problem for wheelchair users traveling and carrying stuff.”

He originally designed a trolley that he could pull behind his chair, but has since dramatically improved the product. The new model, which was available in a limited-time Kickstarter and now via his website, uses omnidirectional wheels and a custom-designed hitch that allows you to click the bag onto the back of your chair. The combination keeps the bags aligned whether you go up a curb (yes,

you can still wheelie), over bumps or in reverse. That means less resistance and easier pushing with no change in tippiness. Right now, the product only connects to chairs with a bar on the back, but Slorance is working on adaptations for folding chairs and power chairs.

He says he was caught a little off guard by the viral response to the first video he posted on Facebook showing the product in action. Within four weeks the video had been watched almost 200,000 times.

“I thought, OK, wow, this is something that really means something to people,” he says. “It’s a much bigger problem than I anticipated.”

## ‘CARE E ON’ LETS WALKERS HITCH A RIDE

Judi Chapman invented the Care E On

## MOBILITY & SEATING



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### TILITE TR

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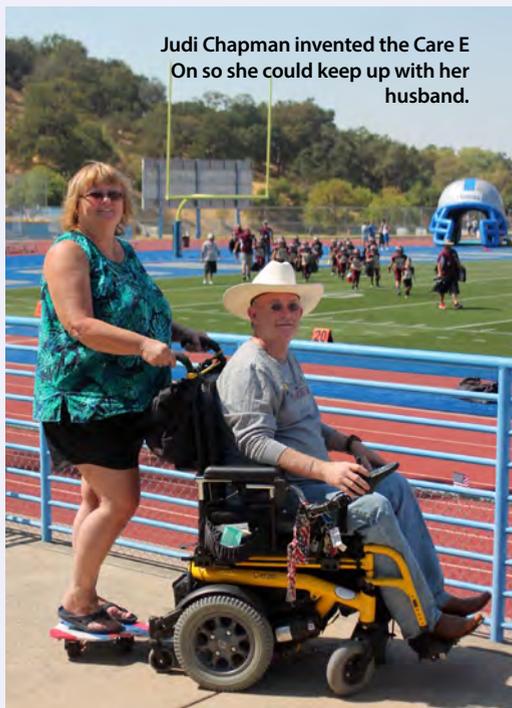
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because she simply couldn't keep up with her husband Byron's power wheelchair. A history of ankle problems had slowed Judi down, and when Byron started using a power chair, he got faster and she kept getting slower. As his independence grew, hers shrunk.

"We would do all of our errands in the morning hours because my wife could only walk so far," says Byron. "By 2:30-3 in the afternoon, it was time to give her leg and herself a rest, so we would be home."

That's when Judi, "the one with the brains" in the relationship according to Byron, had the idea for the Care E On: a trailer-like platform that someone could stand behind the wheelchair and ride with the wheelchair user. It took four years and "tons of tweaks and turns," but they eventually devised a solution. The final model consisted of a 10 by 13-inch platform with three wheels under it that easily mounts to the back frame or battery case of most power chairs and flips up when not in use.



Judi Chapman invented the Care E On so she could keep up with her husband.

To test the Care E On, the couple took a trip to Washington, D.C. On day one Judi effortlessly rode around the Capitol for almost 16 miles. What had started as a personal project to improve their lives

quickly evolved as people kept stopping them and asking where they could buy one.

"We went, 'Wow, maybe we've stumbled onto something other people need,'" says Byron. "We did some homework and we realized there wasn't any type of device like this out there."

Since 2008 Byron estimates that they have sold around 700 Care E Ons, relying mostly on their web site, Abilities Expos and word of mouth. Barbara Brown has been riding on a friend's Care E On for five years and swears by the product. "I love it," she says. "My friend uses a power wheelchair and I can't walk fast enough to keep up with her on the beautiful bike trails around Sacramento." After a long hike, Brown can just hitch a ride home. As an added benefit, if her friend gets tired, Brown can drive the chair using the auxiliary controls. "It's a win-win. It gives her more independence and I get the benefit, too."

Despite what you might think, Byron says the drain on the chair battery

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## MOBILITY & SEATING



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### TiLite ZRa Series 2

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Available from SpinLife, 800/850-0335;  
or [www.spinlife.com](http://www.spinlife.com)



is minimal and that he has had no users encounter safety problems as long as they don't do anything they wouldn't normally do in a chair anyway. The Care E On is available for \$375 at [www.thecareon.com](http://www.thecareon.com). A larger, 13 by 15-inch version is also available for \$100 more.

## EASILY-ASSEMBLED PORTABLE COMMODE AND SHOWER CHAIR

The viral video for the WheelAble portable commode and shower chair from Seatara is one of the more effective 49 seconds of marketing you will see. In the video, available on YouTube, a man and a woman sit beside two WheelAble chairs, one fully assembled, one disassembled. To show how easy the chair is to assemble and disassemble, they proceed to do both over the course of about 30 seconds. Making it even more impressive, neither leaves their seated position, and the man disassembles his using only one hand. Neither person needs any tools. Assembled, the WheelAble is a good-looking chair that can maneuver in tight spaces;



disassembled, it is compact and easily slides into the travel bag it comes with.

A large, spoked center wheel with small front casters and slightly larger rear casters that align vertically with the back rest allow for pinpoint turning and

for the user to back up closer to walls or toilets than some other chairs. WheelAble is 26.4 inches long and 21.3 inches high. When collapsed, it is 9 inches wide and it expands to 18.9 inches, allowing it to fit over a 14.5 inch-wide toilet. It weighs 25.5 pounds.

When you add in push up arm rests, a removable commode pot and an easily-attachable closed seat (to replace the commode seat), the WheelAble has pretty much everything you need for any travel situation.

With that blend of style, ease of use and functionality, the WheelAble appears to be a highly qualified entrant into the growing market of portable commode/shower chairs. Designed by Israeli engineers, the WheelAble is now being distributed in the United States by Clarke Health Care and retails for \$995. **MI**

## RESOURCES

- Phoenix Instinct, [www.phoenixinstinct.com](http://www.phoenixinstinct.com)
- Care E On, 530/979-0115; [www.thecareon.com](http://www.thecareon.com)
- WheelAble, [www.seatara.com](http://www.seatara.com)

## MOBILITY & SEATING

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Available from VIPAMAT, 832/516-8125 or [www.vipamat.com](http://www.vipamat.com)

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# AUTOMOTIVE RESOURCES

Adaptive vehicles, whether we drive or ride, are essential to our independence. Here you will find the tools and products that make our lives easier and more fulfilling.



## WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VANS

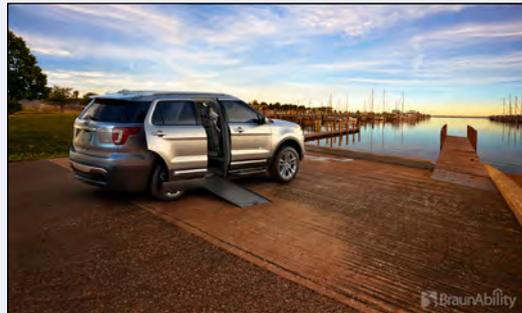
We service, sell, rent and buy wheelchair accessible vans at our 13 locations in Arizona, California, Nevada and Oregon. With over 200 vans in stock, we have used, new, side-entry, rear-entry, powered and manual conversions.

Available from Ability Center, 866/405-6806 or [www.abilitycenter.com](http://www.abilitycenter.com)

## BRAUNABILITY MXV®

The first mobility vehicle on a Ford platform combines style with innovation in the BraunAbility MXV. Say goodbye to mobility van solutions of the past and hello to the best technology the industry has to offer.

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## BORN FREE MOBILITY RV

Born Free has been manufacturing RVs for 47 years. Every mobility RV is custom built to meet the specific needs of the individual with mobility requirements so you can enjoy traveling with ease of access to your own bed and bathroom.

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# AUTOMOTIVE PRODUCTS & SERVICES

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# WHAT'S NEW IN ACCESSIBLE VEHICLE PERIPHERALS

BY MIKE COLLINS

The conversion vehicle business is not easy, as extensive testing needs to be done before the products can arrive in showrooms. The business also serves a market with an income level that is often lower than the rest of the public, so helping to arrange financing can take much ingenuity. Despite these obstacles, improvements and new vehicle options keep coming. As one example, Vantage Mobility International announced at the end of August that they were introducing the first Chrysler Pacifica van with a side entry. Several other newer vehicles were listed in a recent *NEW MOBILITY* issue [Motorvation, August 2016].

Besides offering new vehicles, there are also companies introducing new or upgraded accessories that allow most types of vehicles to be enjoyed by people with a variety of disabilities. Without such “peripherals” those vans, sedans and pickup trucks would not be able to safely transport people who use mobility devices. Items such as wheelchair tie-downs, hand controls, transfer seats, assistive technology and wheelchair lifts or ramps are the features that differentiate a conversion vehicle from an unmodified car or

truck of the same make and model.

Due to the number of companies that manufacture and sell peripherals that make vehicles accessible, combined with the ongoing efforts to make products even better, the information that follows is likely missing a few new products. Readers who check out the resources list at the end of this article and follow up with an internet browser search should be able to find all products in a particular category in a reasonable amount of time.

This article does not endorse any one product over others of a similar nature. They have not been tested by this writer or other NM staff, and a product that is not listed may be equal or better in quality, but is simply left out of the listings for a variety of reasons. Some of the longtime, and perhaps best, products available for use in making transportation accessible may not be mentioned either; that is only because this article is intended to identify some of the newer offerings.

## WHEELCHAIR SECUREMENT

For the past several years, the fixed tie-down devices sold by **EZ Lock** and designed to hold mobility devices stationary in an accident have been the standard method for securing those who travel or drive independently while seated in their wheelchairs. They can be operated with the push of a button to release the device when desired, and can withstand the forces present in a vehicle rollover accident. While the EZ Lock is still in widespread use, some other interesting types of fixed securement devices have been introduced recently.

The use of the EZ-Lock requires the installation of a tie-down bolt on the bottom of a wheelchair in order to match up with the device. Those bolts sometimes interfere with the passage of wheelchairs over obstacles,

even as low as some doorway thresholds, but **B&D Independence** has come up with a new approach to electronic securement that keeps the bottom of the wheelchair free of bolts or other protrusions.

The company points out that its High-Tower securement system is the first that is side-mounted on a wheelchair, with a matching port mounted on the vehicle floor. Part of the device mounted on the wheelchair consists of a long rod that slides into a receptacle on the fixed docking device and locks securely in place. It can be released by the push of a button, or by an emergency release within reach of the operator.

B&D Independence also manufactures the Speedy Lock, a restraint system designed for power scooters. It is not recommended that anyone ride in a scooter while a vehicle is in motion, and this device assures that an unoccupied scooter will not become a dangerous projectile in the event of an accident.

**Q'Straint** has introduced the Quantum wheelchair securement system for transit systems worldwide. This product utilizes two movable arms to surround and cradle both sides of a rear-facing wheelchair in a bus or train, along with a solid backing that protects the passenger in the event of a collision. Unlike most earlier securement systems that utilize retractable tie-down straps and require the operator to hook them to the wheelchair, the Quantum system can secure the wheelchair without requiring the operator to leave her seat. When the destination is reached, a single touch of a button from either the driver's seat or the wheelchair location will release the system so that the passenger can disembark.

**AMF-Bruns** manufactures and sells several products for securing wheelchairs and stabilizing passengers in the event of a collision. The FutureSafe is a height-adjustable head and backrest with a certified shoulder belt integrated. Mounted on the side or floor of a wheelchair van, it can swing into position behind a wheelchair once the wheelchair is in place. The



HighTower securement system is the first that is side-mounted on a wheelchair.

company also manufactures the PRO-TEKTOR system, which consists of fortified retractors that fasten the wheelchair or its occupant's seat belt to the floor of the vehicle for added security.

## HAND CONTROLS

The majority of people with disabilities who operate vehicles use hand controls. They are available in a variety of configurations, from fully electronic to simple rods extending to the accelerator and brake pedals. **Guidosimplex USA** has introduced a floor-mounted hand control similar to the levers that operate a motorboat. The GT2 combines an electronic accelerator with mechanical brake, and can be customized for the needs of the individual driver. The company also offers steering knobs, pin grips and secondary controllers to meet most accessibility needs. Its hand controls are used by several professional race drivers who can keep a grip on the steering wheel while operating some models of Guidosimplex hand controls.

Another electronic accelerator is offered by **Kempf** — the Darios — a digi-

tal accelerator ring installed on the inside perimeter of the steering wheel. This configuration is more touch sensitive than a traditional lever-operated accelerator, and it is an effective way for drivers with good hand function to drive any vehicle they want to with hand controls, without taking hands off the steering wheel.

For those who desire to operate their vehicle with full electronic capabilities, **Paravan**, a European company, has introduced the Paravan II. It can be set up to operate with a full array of input options, and can even be driven from the rear of the van by utilizing the wheelchair's controller. It is available in several countries for use in everything from wheelchair vans to commercial trucks.



Guidosimplex's hand controls are used by professional race car drivers.

## ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Some drivers who are disabled are unable to use the many controls needed to drive without some type of assistance — everything from turn signals to gearshifts. Thankfully there are products on the market that assure safe operation of the vehicle despite decreases in reach, strength or function as a re-

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sult of a disabling condition.

Drivers who need extension controls and steering aids in order to drive safely have relied on **Mobility Products & Design** to meet their needs since the company was founded in 1976. The company has always offered a complete selection of products for both hand and foot-controlled operation of a vehicle. Today, as a division of **Veigel Rehamotive**, its products are available internationally as well as throughout North America.

## TRANSFER SEATS

Drivers who are able to transfer into a vehicle's seat rather than remaining in their wheelchairs have a variety of options available to help with that transfer. One of the most basic is a simple transfer board from **Veigel Rehamotive** that is mounted on the side of the seat — either driver's or passenger's — and facilitates movement across the gap between the mobility device and the seat.

Some transfer seats are designed to swivel and slide backwards in order to allow someone to transfer from their mobility device directly onto the seat, and then swivel as it slides forward into the normal configuration for driving or travel as a passenger. Other designs are more complex, allowing the user to transfer onto the seat from ground level and then be lifted into a position for travel. The mobility device can then be stowed by another party or placed in the back of the vehicle by the person who is transferring.

**Adapt Solutions**, a Canadian company, has come up with a new transfer seat called the **Link**. This transfer seat allows a wheelchair user to make the transfer at

ground level, then be lifted up and into the driver or passenger position while remaining seated.

**Autoadapt** accomplishes the wheelchair-to-vehicle transfer with its **Turny** series of transfer seats and bases. The company advertises solutions for most sizes of vehicles, depending upon the type of vehicle and the needs of the user.

## WHEELCHAIR LIFTS OR RAMPS

**BraunAbility** has introduced a new lift, the **BraunAbility Cassette Lift**, as an international public-use wheelchair lift. It is currently available only through their sister company, **Autoadapt**, based in Sweden.

**Euroramp**, by **AMF-Bruns**, is an entry ramp option for rear loading wheelchair vans. The **Euroramp** extends out the back of the vehicle for loading the mobility device, then folds up for travel, either behind the passenger or on the side panel inside the van.

**Harmar** has introduced a unique stars-and-stripes pattern in all of their platform lifts in honor of the nation's

## AUTOMOTIVE PRODUCTS & SERVICES



### MOBILITY VENTURES MV-1

The **MV-1** is the first factory-built vehicle designed specifically to accommodate wheelchairs and mobility aids. Each **MV-1** is built from the ground up to be universally accessible, meeting or exceeding the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The **MV-1** is made in the USA by **Mobility Ventures LLC**, an **AM General** company.

Available from **Mobility Ventures**, 877/681-3678 or [www.mv-1.us](http://www.mv-1.us)

### ACCESSIBLE VANS

For nearly four decades **Rollx Vans** has been the nation's premier manufacturer of accessible mini, full-size, and previously owned vans. **Rollx Vans** is a direct manufacturer with an inventory of over 200 vans in stock. Check out [www.RollxVans.com](http://www.RollxVans.com) to find out the latest inventory, pricing, and rebates or call 800/956-6668.

Available from **Rollx Vans**, 800/956-6669 or [www.RollxVans.com](http://www.RollxVans.com)



military veterans. The Harmar lifts mount on the rear of a vehicle and are designed to transport mobility devices like scooters that usually weigh less than 350 pounds.

**Vantage Mobility International** advertises that its Northstar Access360 in-floor ramp used in its new Chrysler Pacifica conversion van “is the easiest to use and most accessible mobility solution in the world.”

Once the desired brand or model of accessible peripheral is identified, it is important to take the next step. Local mobility equipment dealers are trained and licensed to match drivers or passengers with the proper equipment that allows them to drive or be transported safely in the vehicles of their choice. They also know whether something is compatible with the vehicle where it would be installed, or with a particular type or level of disability. Mobility equipment dealers are also available for purchase, installation and servicing of these products.

## RESOURCES

- AMF Bruns America, [www.amfbrunsamerica.com/](http://www.amfbrunsamerica.com/)
- AutoAdapt, [www.autoadapt.com/](http://www.autoadapt.com/)

- B&D Independence, [bdindependence.com/products/](http://bdindependence.com/products/)
- BraunAbility, [www.braunability.com/](http://www.braunability.com/)
- Bruno, [www.bruno.com/about/](http://www.bruno.com/about/)
- Carospeed Menox, [www.autoadapt.com/en/products/hand-controls/carospeed-menox/](http://www.autoadapt.com/en/products/hand-controls/carospeed-menox/)
- EZ Lock, [www.ezlock.net/index.php](http://www.ezlock.net/index.php)
- GuidoSimplexUSA, [www.guidosimplexusa.com/](http://www.guidosimplexusa.com/)
- Harmar, [www.harmar.com](http://www.harmar.com)
- Kempf, [www.kempf-usa.com](http://www.kempf-usa.com)
- Mobility Products & Design, [www.veigel-na.com/main-veigel-north-america/rehamotiver/products.html](http://www.veigel-na.com/main-veigel-north-america/rehamotiver/products.html)
- National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association, [www.nmeda.com](http://www.nmeda.com)
- Paravan, [vancitymobility.com/paravan-space-drive.html](http://vancitymobility.com/paravan-space-drive.html)
- Q'Straint, [www.qstraint.com/en\\_na/Sure Grip, www.suregrip-hvl.com/](http://www.qstraint.com/en_na/Sure Grip, www.suregrip-hvl.com/)
- Vantage Mobility International, [www.vmivans.com](http://www.vmivans.com)
- Viegel North America, [www.veigel-na.com/main-veigel-north-america/front-page/products.html](http://www.veigel-na.com/main-veigel-north-america/front-page/products.html)

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## AUTOMOTIVE PRODUCTS & SERVICES

### WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES

NMEDA, through its Quality Assurance Program, supports and validates providing safe, reliable wheelchair accessible vehicles and modifications to enhance accessibility for people with disabilities. NMEDA members include mobility equipment manufacturers, QAP accredited dealers, certified driver rehab specialists and other professionals.

Available from National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association, 866/948-8341 or [www.NMEDA.com](http://www.NMEDA.com)



### VMI IN-FLOOR RAMP

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Available from Vantage Mobility International, 855/864-8267 or [vmivans.com](http://vmivans.com)

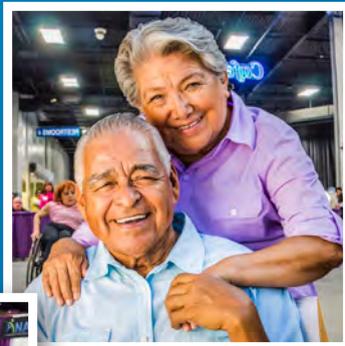


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Dec. 2-4, 2016

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January 20-22, 2017

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May 5-7, 2017

Chicago  
June 23-25, 2017

Houston  
August 4-6, 2017

Boston  
September 8-10, 2017

# DISABILITY SERVICES

All of the adaptive products and tools in the marketplace are useless to us without the services and organizations that bring them to us. Here is where and how you can get them.

## ABILITIES EXPO

Abilities Expo is the go-to source for the disability community, veterans and health care officials to see the latest products, services, attend informative workshops and participate in fun, inclusive events: adaptive sports, wheelchair dancing and more! Every event features new technologies, new solutions and new opportunities to increase independence.

Available from Abilities Expo, 310/450-8831  
or [www.abilities.com](http://www.abilities.com)



## AFFILIATE SERVICE PROVIDER DIRECTORY

United Spinal Association's Affiliate Service Providers provide the full spectrum of clinical care, products and services, with an emphasis on spinal cord injury and disorder. Search our valuable directory to discover service providers near you that can help optimize your health, independence and quality of life.

Available online at [providers.spinalcord.org](http://providers.spinalcord.org)

## AAHOMECARE

AAHomecare is the national trade association representing home medical equipment providers, equipment manufacturers, and other organizations in the homecare community. The Association engages in legislative, regulatory, and public relations campaigns that strengthen the home medical equipment community.

Available from American Association for Homecare,  
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## DISABILITY SERVICES



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# ABILITIES EXPO: A DISABILITY DISNEYLAND

BY MAUREEN GAZDA

September 16-18 may have been a typical New England fall weekend for most people in Boston, but for those with disabilities, Christmas came early. The annual Abilities Expo was in town and for three days the convention center and exhibition hall in the heart of the Massachusetts capital was transformed into a disability Disneyland filled with vendors, exhibits, demonstrations, speakers, high tech adaptive equipment, workshops, resources and information catering to all types of disabilities.

Established in 1979 in Los Angeles, Abilities Expos were started as a way to provide information, support and engagement for people with disabilities all under one roof. Whether you have a mobility impairment, progressive disease, visual or hearing disability, there are a plethora of workshops, products, fun events, exhibits and much more aimed at people with

Houston to Miami, the Abilities Expo has blossomed into a nationwide event, traversing the country every year holding expos at virtually every big city in the continental United States. Wheelchair dance performances and yoga, service dog demonstrations, expert speakers and cutting edge assistive technology are just a few of the countless features at the Expo.

Catering to today's technology-obsessed society, the expos feature all the latest adaptive products to hit the market. JACO Robotic Arm demonstrations, Focus Braille displays, and workshops showcasing the latest state-of-the-art power and manual wheelchairs as well the latest models of adaptive transportation are a handful of the highlights. Some other workshops include Traveling with a Disability, Emergency Preparedness for People with Disabilities, Intensive Pediatric Physical Therapy, Living with Chronic Pain, Care for the Caregiver, Exoskeleton Technology and many more. "There are always new things at each event," says Korse. "We always have new exhibitors, returning exhibitors are always

introducing and launching new products, there are always new demonstration activities in each expo's Event Arena, and there is always new content in our onsite consumer workshops."

And the entertainment is not lacking, either. Wheelchair basketball and tennis, face painting, learning how to handle a service dog, interacting with therapy horses and monkeys, adaptive video gaming, and freestyle dance workshops are just a few of the hands-on interactive events to take part in.



Abilities Expos provide a place to shop for products, try new activities and connect with peers.

A brand new highlight at the expos this year is the debut of "The Meet Up Zone" where people can gather and share their experiences with each other as well as mingle with vendors to chat about products being shown, garner advice and information from experts in the disability profession, and meet speakers and performers. "This is a large area on the show floor where folks can gather to chat, network, post to their social networks, etc.," says Korse. "We have a 'step and repeat' banner for selfies and we encourage all of our speakers and Event Arena performers to visit the zones after their events to meet folks, answer questions, sign autographs, and pose for photos."

After almost 40 years, Korse says the expos continue to see larger and larger crowds each year with people of all generations attending. "In 2015 we had over 30,000 adults and over 6,000 kids under the age of 18 that attended at least one of the expos for at least one day," says Korse. "Nearly every segment of the disability community was represented with the largest representation from those with mobility challenges."

The next expo takes place in the San Francisco Bay Area November 18-20, followed by the D.C. Metro Expo on December 2-4. For a complete list of the upcoming expos as well as information on all the events at each expo, visit [abilities.com](http://abilities.com).

NM



Why not take a dance class while at the expo?

more than 50 types of disabilities — as well as their families, friends, caregivers and medical professionals. "The concept was to provide a venue for the gathering of the local and regional disability community where folks could network, source information, experience 'hands-on' new products and services and get an education," says David Korse, president and CEO of Abilities.com. "I'd like to think we're staying true to that mission today, we just have a bunch more events!"

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## DISABILITY SERVICES



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# 'EASY DOES IT' PROVIDES EMERGENCY CAREGIVERS AND REPAIRS

BY ALEX GHENIS

*I was in a bind. It was a Thursday night, around 6 p.m., and I had just wrapped up at the gym. As I rolled through the exit, I saw a text message from my evening attendant: He wasn't feeling well and said he couldn't come over to help me into bed. "Can you find someone else? I'm really sorry I can't make it." Finding a last-minute replacement would be tough. My roommates were out of town, and there wasn't much time to call friends and see if any of their attendants were free. Luckily, Berkeley has a backup service that means I'll never be left solo. "Rest well and no worries," I replied. "If I can't find anyone, I'll just call Easy Does It."*

## A WISE MEASURE

In 1998, the disability community in Berkeley, California, ran a campaign to promote independence. Many others had been in situations just like mine but had nobody to help them out, and they were forced to sleep in their wheelchairs or even call 911. They knew that there was a better way, so they drew one

up in the form of the groundbreaking Measure E, which proposed establishing Easy Does It, a backup personal attendant service for Berkeley residents with disabilities for when they just couldn't fill a shift or needed help unexpectedly. The plan was to fund EDI through a small property tax adjusted for inflation — about \$800,000 in today's dollars.

Blaine Beckwith was one of the founding members of EDI and is currently president of the board. Beckwith moved to Berkeley in 1980 and has spinal muscular atrophy. He uses personal attendants himself. "There were some people in pretty bad situations," he said. He knew a lot of people who fell out of bed and had to call 911. "If you're stuck in bed and the paramedics show up and they aren't trained by way of attendant care, it's not their fault." Beckwith was one of the foot soldiers who worked to raise awareness about why the measure was needed. The ballot measure had the support of the police and the fire department, who were overstressed by excess calls when they didn't quite know what to do.

"People were having to call 911 to help them get out of bed or put them into bed. There was no other choice but to call 911," says Nikki Brown-Booker, EDI's acting executive director. That situation is bad for the person with a disability, but it also can take up valuable resources and cost a lot of money. "So actually," by providing on-call attendant care, "we are helping the city out by not stressing out the 911 system by having a service like this." This was a big selling point to city council members and others in the original Measure E



A personal care consumer himself, Blaine Beckwith is one of the founding members of EDI.

campaign. The measure passed and quickly became a huge success.

## ONE OF A KIND

Today, Easy Does It has expanded and is well-known among people with disabilities in this city. "We currently serve about 300 clients a year on average," says Brown-Booker. "And Easy Does It not only does emergency attendant care services, but we also do wheelchair repair and emergency transportation services for people who live in the city of Berkeley." The organization also provides a registry of personal attendants looking for work and is beginning its "supporting independent living" program, where staff help clients directly with finding, hiring and managing personal attendants. It has a \$1.2 million budget funded through Measure E and Measure B, which was passed several years later for extra transportation services. "We have four dispatchers, one case manager, three administrative staff including me, five drivers, two repair staff and 15 attendants. We have a total of 28 employees," she says, explaining there is some

Thanks to EDI, you won't be stuck hungry in bed if your attendant doesn't show.



overlap on numbers due to staff also working as attendants. It is a relatively large organization, and it is the only one like it nationwide.

The 24-hour backup program is the most widely known, and most widely used, service provided by EDI. A 15-attendant staff works shifts throughout the day and night, and at least two of them are on at any given time. Berkeley residents can call a 24/7 dispatcher and be put in touch with one of the attendants, who can come over for meal prep, transfers, or assorted personal care. Clients pay \$14/hour for the help directly to the attendant, and the attendants are paid a smaller wage to be on-call for an 8-hour shift. People use the service in a number of situations: when somebody calls in sick, when they are in between staff and can't fill a shift, or when one of their attendants goes out of town. I've even used it a couple of times when I wanted to stay out late with friends but couldn't find somebody to come help me out at 1 a.m.

Brown-Booker knows of a client who has a live-in caregiver who just can't be

there 24/7 and needs a break every now and then. "She knows all of the EDI attendants. She knows everybody that comes to her house," she says. "She's worked with them at least three or four times. So she feels comfortable with us." Other clients include students at UC Berkeley who are just getting used to doing attendant management, or even people who had to fire one of their regular attendants. It's a one-stop shop for backup care.

Portia Lemmons is one of Easy Does It's clients who has been with them from the beginning. She regularly uses each of their services, including backup attendant care, transportation, wheelchair repair and case management. She receives special attendant funding, which usually requires recipients to go through a supportive living agency and have a facilitator who manages support staff and even doctors' appointments. Instead, Lemmons has a memorandum of understanding with Easy Does It that allows for some case management: They help find attendants and do fingerprinting and background checks, while she does her own direct attendant manage-

ment. She explained the level of support she needs to the case manager at EDI, and the case manager helped her find the right attendants for her whole schedule. "Easy Does It allows me to facilitate my own life and Independence," she says. "It gives me the freedom to live my life the way I want to."

## MORE THAN JUST ATTENDANT SERVICES

The wheelchair repair and transportation programs are another huge part of EDI. John Benson is the transportation and wheelchair repair guru at EDI. He has built up a whole warehouse of wheelchairs and replacement parts. The warehouse walls are stocked floor-to-ceiling with spare wheels and tires, and there are easily 30 wheelchairs of all stripes sitting on the floor. There's a wooden loft with a ton of other spare parts.

"This is something we've worked hard to have," he said. "It's all donated equipment, and there's been a number of trial and error attempts at how to make this work, but this is a result of about 15 years

## DISABILITY SERVICES



### MIAMI PROJECT TO CURE PARALYSIS

The Miami Project is dedicated to finding more effective treatments and, ultimately, a cure for paralysis resulting from spinal cord injury. To participate in research, please visit our website or call and request an intake packet.

Available from University of Miami, 305/243-7108 or [www.themiamiproject.org](http://www.themiamiproject.org)

### VETSFIRST

VetsFirst is a program of United Spinal Association that assists America's veterans with disabilities, their spouses, dependents, survivors and other eligible family members receive health care, disability compensation, rehabilitation and other benefits offered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. VetsFirst connects with thousands of veterans and active military servicemen and women annually through its call center and online help desk, Ask VetsFirst.

Available online at [www.vetsfirst.org](http://www.vetsfirst.org)



of me squirreling away nuts and bolts and wires and joysticks.” The warehouse itself has been around for about five months now, operating out of an old city warehouse that was shut down. Wheelchair repair services come in many different forms. The repair staff are often called out on pretty simple issues that take all of 15 minutes to fix but would otherwise leave somebody stranded for half a week until the local wheelchair shop has a schedule opening. During a massive Northern California fire several months ago, EDI worked with the Red Cross to donate parts and spare wheelchairs for the people who lost their equipment, until they get replacement chairs delivered. The service even provides wheelchairs to homeless citizens who otherwise would be left on their own.

Benson says the services save the city money and resources. “If somebody was stuck on the sidewalk, they would typically call the paramedics, the fire department, the police department,” he said. “That cost taxpayers hundreds of dollars for a call like that. Why not send a person who is very familiar with



The author surveys the warehouse where wheelchairs are stored and repaired.

chairs and familiar with disability culture in general, who may actually know the client and show up for \$13 and help them back on track. It just saves the taxpayers a lot of money.”

Easy Does It is currently looking to expand to other nearby cities in the San Fran-

cisco Bay Area and hopes to work with cities and taxpayers to spread its model as far as possible. They’ve made a massive impact in the lives of people in this major hub of disability community and activism. And with enough work, many more EDIs can sprout up nationwide. **MM**



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We have never been better informed than we are today. From print to images to the latest in apps, our media products keep us in the know and increase our independence and efficiency.



## DISABILITY MEDICAL ADVOCATE

The Disability "Medical" Advocate (SDI SSDI SSI) by Judith White-Larkins and Michael D. Moore tells the reader how they may get their disability benefits approved the first time without a lawyer. This practical companion guide may vastly shorten time for your disability claim to be approved.

Available on [www.createspace.com](http://www.createspace.com), [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) and [kindle](http://kindle.com).

## FACINGDISABILITY.COM

FacingDisability.com was created to connect families who suddenly have to deal with a spinal cord injury with people like them who have already "been there" and "done that." Its website contains a wide collection of videos, as well as a robust listing of community resources. Its library of over 1,500 videos features people living with SCI, their families and experts.

Available online at [FacingDisability.com](http://FacingDisability.com)



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Models of Diversity is the campaign for more diversity in the models we see every day. We call on the fashion, beauty and marketing industries to recognize the beauty in people of all races, ages, shapes, sizes and abilities. Our mission is to change the face of fashion and modeling.

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# THREE FREE AND USEFUL SMARTPHONE APPS

BY JOSIE BYZEK

Every year there are more smartphone apps designed to make an aspect of living with a disability a little bit easier. Here are three free and useful offerings available from Google Play and the iTunes App Store.

## REPORT ACCESSIBLE PARKING VIOLATORS

A GPS-based smartphone app, Parking Mobility puts the power in your hands to report violators parked illegally in accessible spots. It's easy to use. Just open up the app, click on the plus symbol and click on "report."

"Once you're on there, we suggest you take photographs," says Mack Marsh, project director for Parking Mobility. "Click on front window, the rear of the vehicle showing the license plate, and the vehicle parked in appropriately marked space." Then click on the violation type, and data is sent to law enforcement. "If you're in one of our partner communi-



ties, it's reviewed by one of our law enforcement partners and the offender is mailed a ticket." When the offender gets the ticket, they either pay it or agree to take a class. "And that class is most important, as it changes their behavior," says Marsh.

If you're not in a partner area, it's even more important to use the app so that Parking Mobility can collect the data. "It's important to help us educate city officials to get them on board with the program," says Marsh.

Parking Mobility is a nonprofit created by people with disabilities who re-

alized they needed data to prove to their communities that people parking illegally in accessible spots is a huge problem. For more information, visit the website at [www.parkingmobility.com](http://www.parkingmobility.com).

## FIND OUT WITHIN MINUTES IF YOU'RE ELIGIBLE FOR MEDICAID

The Medicaid Advisory Group, a consulting firm that assists people applying for the government benefit, has created the free Medicaid App, which lets people know within minutes whether they qualify. If a person does not qualify, the app gives them ideas of actions they can take in order to qualify.

"Medicaid is a mess. The qualification process has, over the years, become so complex and stressful that most people I encounter choose not to enroll at all because they don't even know where to begin," says Ginalisa Monterroso, CEO and founder of the Medicaid Advisory Group. "You can have a law degree and still get lost in the government bureaucracy. The Medicaid App gives consumers a quick look at whether they may or may not qualify for this government service."

Twenty years ago Monterroso's daughter was born with a disability, and the new mom quickly discovered a Byzantine system that continuously denied her daughter benefits for which she was eligible. Seeing a need for health advocates for people like herself, Monterroso founded the Medicaid Advisory Group.

## HEALTHLINE'S MS BUDDY

Created by Healthline.com, the free MS Buddy app for smartphones connects people with multiple sclerosis who have similar interests or styles of dealing with the disease.

Every day the program connects you with a new buddy based on the profile you create after downloading the app. It's up to you whether you want to contact that person or not, and usually the person has



an icebreaker question. For instance, today's connection asked, "How do you explain to your kids that Daddy just doesn't have the energy to play with you?" This resonates with most people with MS, since fatigue is such a major MS symptom. It's nice to have a conversation about something affecting both people with MS that many people just can't understand.

I myself have MS. Days can go by before I open up the app, but when I do, I find myself being emotionally honest with complete strangers, something I cannot be with just anyone in my life since the disease is hard to explain. It is a relief to be able to talk about what is happening to my body, even if it is in the form of text messages to people I will never meet.

The system is encrypted so that Healthline can't see what messages people send to each other, but can only record the number of downloads and interactions. Learn more at [www.healthline.com/health/multiple-sclerosis/ms-buddy](http://www.healthline.com/health/multiple-sclerosis/ms-buddy).

# DISABILITY MEDIA

## DISABILITY BOOKS

We publish books about disability, with emphasis on psychological and emotional issues. Our newest title, *Life Among the Walkies*, out next spring, tells of our ability to survive with the walkies, those who are often blind to the beauty and (sometimes) despair of our lives.

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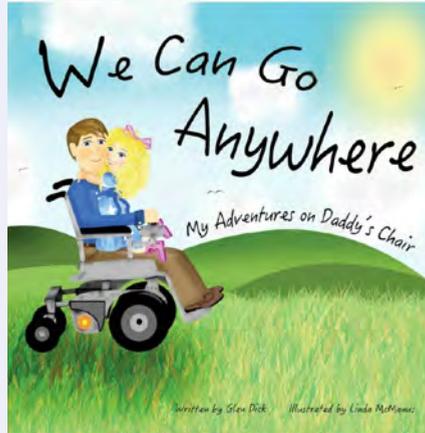
## WE CAN GO ANYWHERE: MY ADVENTURES ON DADDY'S CHAIR

WRITTEN BY GLEN DICK, ILLUSTRATIONS BY LINDA MCMANUS

In a word, the new children's book, *We Can Go Anywhere: My Adventures on Daddy's Chair*, is delightful. It's also full of life, energy and the loving bond between a precious little girl and her adventurous Daddy, who takes her to the moon and back on his power chair.

Written by Glen Dick, a C5 quadriplegic who lives in Chalfont, Pennsylvania, with his wife, Monica, and daughter, Elaina, this book should not be niched as some sort of "special needs" offering. Any young child can relate to Elaina's travels to the moon and back with her Daddy, and all young children want to be cuddled in their father's arms while exploring the world.

NEW MOBILITY first met Glen and his family in 2011, when he generously shared with our readers how he and his



wife finally conceived Elaina in 2009, after years of perseverance and commitment ["Fathering Elaina," February 2011, [www.newmobility.com/2011/02/anything-for-baby](http://www.newmobility.com/2011/02/anything-for-baby)].

As he reported at the time, Glen sa-

vors fatherhood. "I find myself staring at Elaina's little hands, how she is able to manipulate her fingers," he said. "And I watch her walk. She used my wheelchair as her first walker. It's neat to see her abilities quickly surpass mine. Elaina is very fortunate because she will have to learn her independence. ... She loves riding on my chair and in my lap and I realize that she sees me as just Dada, not Dada in a wheelchair."

Elaina is 7 now and still loves riding with Daddy on his chair.

*We Can Go Anywhere: My Adventures on Daddy's Chair* can be purchased through Amazon. For more information, go to [www.facebook.com/WeCanGoAnywhereBook](http://www.facebook.com/WeCanGoAnywhereBook).

— JOSIE BYZEK

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## DISABILITY MEDIA

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### DISABILITY BENEFITS 101

This website helps workers, job seekers and service providers understand rules for health coverage, benefits and employment programs used by people with disabilities. Currently serving seven states and with plans to expand to other states as well, this project of the World Institute on Disability includes eligibility for available programs, benefits calculators, case studies and more.

Available online at *Disability Benefits 101*, [www.db101.org](http://www.db101.org)



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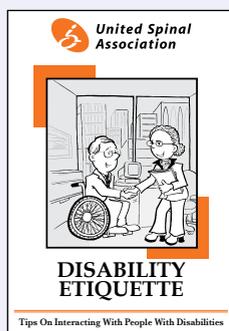
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Available at [www.unitedspinal.org/pdf/DisabilityEtiquette.pdf](http://www.unitedspinal.org/pdf/DisabilityEtiquette.pdf)





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To be considered for current and future research studies, you will need to complete a short Intake Form. This can be done online at <https://registry.med.miami.edu/intakeform> or you can call 305-243-7108 and request an Intake Form be mailed to you.

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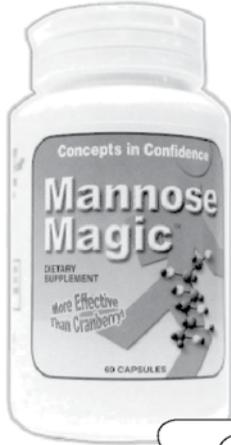
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## Help is Just a Click Away!

When faced with the challenges of living with a spinal cord injury or disease (SCI/D), the right resources and support can make a world of difference.

United Spinal Association's Affiliate Service Providers provide the full spectrum of clinical care, products and services, with an emphasis on SCI/D. Search our valuable online directory at <http://providers.spinalcord.org/> to discover service providers near you that specialize in optimizing the health, independence and quality of life of people with SCI/D.



The screenshot shows a website titled "Affiliate Service Providers" with a search bar and a list of providers. The website has a blue and green color scheme and the slogan "Sharing The Journey".

Visit our directory at <http://providers.spinalcord.org/>

If you have any questions, contact our Resource Center staff at <http://www.spinalcord.org/ask-us/> or call (800) 962-9629.

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**Allergan: The LLS (Lower Limb Spasticity) Approval press release is at the link:** [www.allergan.com/NEWS/News/Thomson-Reuters/U-S-FDA-Approves-BOTOX-onabotulinumtoxinA-for-the](http://www.allergan.com/NEWS/News/Thomson-Reuters/U-S-FDA-Approves-BOTOX-onabotulinumtoxinA-for-the)

**Astellas Pharmaceuticals**, [www.astellas.us](http://www.astellas.us), 800/888-7704

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For more information on how you can support United Spinal and become a business member, please contact Megan Lee at [mlee@unitedspinal.org](mailto:mlee@unitedspinal.org) or 718/803-3782, ext. 7253.

*Acknowledgements on our website, in NEW MOBILITY, in United Spinal e-news or any other United Spinal publication should not be considered as endorsements of any product or service.*

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE A NEWLY INJURED PERSON?

NPR's All Things Considered featured Tim Flynn, 55, who has been paralyzed for 35 years, sharing advice with Austin Beggin, a recent college graduate who was injured last year. We asked our Facebook followers what advice they would give a newly-injured person:



Austin Beggin



Tim Flynn



**Ardetta Harrington, 43 years post-injury:** Watch your sports activity because those shoulders are needed to push and transfer yourself.



**Luis Nok Outumuro, 35 years post-injury:** Eat and drink healthy. Come up with a dietary regime to keep your intestinal tract, bladder and bowel, and kidneys healthy to minimize bowel issues, urinary tract infections and to deal with overuse of meds that cause kidney damage.

Stay active and fit, but take care of your shoulders, elbows, and wrists to prevent repetitive motion injuries. Do sports, but more than one — mix it up, don't do the same thing year over year unless you use a coach or trainer. If you get an injury, get it checked out — like all things, don't let it go. What you have left was never meant to replace what you've lost, so be smart about taking care of your abilities. Find a peer mentor and a support group. You're not the first, the only one, or the last with an SCI. Figuring out SCI on your own is not heroic, it is a waste of time. You have a life to live and redefine. Learn the lessons some have already learned, and pass them on to the next generation of people with SCI. Give back, because you will be needed.



**Kathy Lawrence:** Don't ignore red skin on your butt, deal with it before it becomes a life long issue.



**Charles Anthony Hunt, 8 years post:** I have a standing frame at home. If you can get one I highly recommend getting and trying to stand as much as you can. It helps so much!  
I'm a C7, I've had three major flap surgeries for wounds and I'm very active. I have 10 screws and three plates in my neck, I utilize a manual and power chair, and God has done miracles in my life.

CONFLICTING GAS PUMP POLICIES

In answer to Patrick Hughes' question, we found three. How many did you find?



**Patrick Hughes, Jr. @patrickhughes**

Can you find all of the various/conflicting policies at this one pump for drivers with disabilities? Which one to follow?



Listen to the episode here: [www.npr.org/2016/10/11/496574121/after-paralysis-a-life-of-a-different-10-000-things](http://www.npr.org/2016/10/11/496574121/after-paralysis-a-life-of-a-different-10-000-things).

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