



NDAD

helping others to help themselves

Insider

Increasing Independence

NDAD helps a Martin, ND man with a ramp for his home

Ronnie Wagner of Martin, North Dakota has first-hand experience with the positive outcomes that happen when people and organizations team up to help people with disabilities lead better lives. With the help of NDAD and the Rehab Accessibility Program, Wagner was able to make his home wheelchair accessible and allow him more independence.

Wagner faces a number of health challenges that limit his mobility. Due to poor circulation related to diabetes, he has lost most of the feeling in his feet. He also has severe arthritis in his hands. In 1992, a car accident left him needing a knee replacement. About eleven years later, the knee replacement deteriorated, causing the joint to become crooked and painful. After his second knee replacement, his doctor told him that using an electric wheelchair would help him become more mobile and independent.

Wagner had difficulty obtaining a wheelchair through Medicare. That's when a good friend stepped

in and helped him to buy his own electric wheelchair. The wheelchair Wagner bought had the important features that Wagner needed, such as battery power and portability. However, he couldn't use the wheelchair because his home was not accessible. The home had no entry ramp and narrow doors made it impossible to move from room to room.

NDAD teamed up with the Rehab Accessibility Program to assist Wagner in modifying his home to make it wheelchair accessible. The improvements included a wheelchair ramp to his front door, widening doorways throughout the home, and making his shower accessible.



Ronnie Wagner with the new wheelchair ramp into his home.

Wagner appreciates the everyday things he is able to do with his ramp and wheelchair -- like being able to go out to his own mailbox and drive the wheelchair around in his yard. Wagner will also be able to accompany his family on outings, including an upcoming trip to the Fargo Zoo. "I really enjoy the ramp. I can get around a lot better", he said. In fact, he

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NDAD MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of NDAD is to enhance the quality of lives of individuals facing health challenges.

A Helping Hand

NDAD gives a Fargo man a wheelchair lift and hitch

Sam Frodge of Fargo, ND is living proof that a disability can affect anyone at any age. Frodge, a Vietnam veteran and professional chef, worked multiple construction and maintenance side jobs for many years. Prior to his disability, Frodge worked at two to three jobs a day, often with little sleep in between.

About seven years ago, Frodge came home from work and found that he could not straighten his back. Chiropractic treatment offered temporary relief, but the pain returned after one or two days. Frodge was diagnosed with chronic nerve degeneration. Although doctors could not pinpoint a cause, they suspected this condition was caused by many years of strenuous activity and not enough sleep.

Frodge's nerve degeneration is progressive and the condition is expected to worsen over time. Frodge also has fibromyalgia and is on a medication regimen. Inside his home, Frodge uses a walker, cane, and shoulder crutches to move around on his own. But outside the house, he must use a wheelchair. Because using a manual wheelchair caused him to tire quickly, Frodge missed out on activities he once enjoyed, such as window shopping with his wife Connie.

NDAD helped Sam and Connie Frodge by installing a wheelchair lift and a hitch on the Frodges' van,

enabling Sam to use an electric wheelchair. With the electric wheelchair, he is able to get out more and be more independent. Sam and Connie are now able to enjoy grocery and window shopping again, and Sam can make trips to do almost anything.

Sam uses video games as part of his therapy to keep his hands limber and maintain good eye-hand coordination. He and Connie also enjoy movies, embroidery, and computer games together. As a former chef, Sam's real passion is cooking, and he cooks at home as much as he is able. Connie says that Sam's ragdoll cat, Cookie, is "a comfort and a joy" for her husband.

Connie, who applied for assistance on her husband's behalf, heard about NDAD on television and also received positive word-of-mouth from friends. She said that NDAD's staff was "very knowledgeable and very pleasant" to work with. "If NDAD can't help you, they will find someone that can," she said.

Connie believes that it is vitally important for community members to support services for the disabled. "You never know when it might be you," she says. "It might be a car accident or a motorcycle accident, and you may be the one to need the wheelchair."

Increasing Independence

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was recently able to participate in the annual Diabetes Walk-A-Thon held in Harvey, North Dakota. He went four and a half miles in his wheelchair with his friend's granddaughter riding in his lap.

Wagner was referred to NDAD by another organization that was helping to conduct energy efficiency improvements in his home. He describes NDAD as a good organization and a good place to get help, and he says being able to get around his home has made a big difference in his life. "I appreciate all the help I've gotten," he said.

To donate to NDAD, go to our website at www.ndad.org and click on the Donate Now button or mail your donation to NDAD 2660 S. Columbia Road, Grand Forks, ND 58201

New Hips

A Real Life Bionic Woman in Grand Forks



DeLaine McGurran of Grand Forks has lived for most of her life with congenital hip disease. Having endured pain and surgery since childhood, McGurran says she has a very high pain tolerance. But the pain she experienced in January 2010 was different. “It felt like an axe cutting into my muscle with every step.” McGurran was initially misdiagnosed with a sciatic nerve injury. After a month of severe pain that did not improve, she went to the emergency room for an x-ray and was referred to Valley Bone and Joint for an MRI. In March, Valley Bone and Joint made the correct diagnosis – hip dysplasia. The condition occurs when the ball of the femur does not fit properly into the hip joint, and is associated with the hip dislocation, disabling arthritis, and severe pain of congenital hip

disease. She was referred to Mayo Clinic for total hip replacements. The surgeries took place in June 2010 and October 2010.

McGurran’s mother happens to be an acquaintance of NDAD ambassador, Mike Gibbens. When Mike encouraged McGurran’s mother to talk to her daughter about NDAD’s services, McGurran applied for assistance. NDAD helped McGurran with medical travel expenses and loaned her the equipment she needed after her surgeries, such as accessible bathroom equipment. McGurran especially appreciates having been able to borrow equipment that she only needed temporarily. “I got to use them, but I didn’t have to buy them.”

Now something of a real-life Bionic Woman, McGurran laughs when describing how her titanium hip replacements set off metal detectors. “I started carrying an X-ray in my purse” she said. Although she has a more difficult time running or walking long distances, neither congenital hip disease nor hip replacement surgeries have slowed McGurran down. When asked how her disability affects her daily life, she responded quite simply, “I haven’t

let it.” She works full time at the University of North Dakota’s Children’s Center. “Limitation is not a word I’m familiar with,” she said, “my family never let me think of myself as being disabled or challenged.” Her family has been supportive in other ways, too. Her sister Julie supplied the transportation to Rochester for both surgeries and check-ups that followed, and her “plumber brothers” Kevin and Terry installed a hand-held shower device. DeLaine stayed at her mother’s apartment for six weeks after each of her surgeries. As part of her post-operative treatment, McGurran needed to wear special supportive socks to prevent deadly blood clots in her legs. McGurran’s mother assisted her daily with putting on and removing the socks. “She was a godsend” McGurran said.

McGurran describes NDAD’s staff as friendly, efficient, and informative. She said that completing paperwork for the application process was well worth it. McGurran’s advice to people with disabilities is to take advantage of any services they can get. “The services are there for a reason, take advantage of them.”

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We're Working For You

NDAD is a nonprofit, charitable organization founded by concerned citizens for the purpose of assisting the mentally and physically disadvantaged within our state, many of whom are not eligible for services from other agencies.

Often, disabling conditions can be very costly. NDAD believes people with disabilities can live more satisfying, productive lives if they have the opportunity. Many times, this requires the purchase of specialized equipment, medical treatment, or other services.

NDAD provides financial assistance through funds generated by the organization and through funds raised by community projects. NDAD also provides information and referral services to assist people in receiving help through other agencies whenever possible.

During its history, NDAD has helped thousands of people with disabilities live fuller, more independent lives. NDAD clients can tell of new found freedom after receiving services they desperately needed. If you would like more information on NDAD's services, please contact one of our offices nearest you.

www.ndad.org

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