

doing more
with less!



Amputee Society

Canterbury & Westland Inc

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Web site: www.amputeeinfo.co.nz

Contents

Editor's Message
Society News
Article of Interest
Chuckle Corner
Web Sites
Sponsors and Contact Numbers

February 2015

Quote of the Month

The secret of a good life is to have the right loyalties and hold them in the right scale of values.

Norman Thomas (1884 - 1968)

Editor's Message

Greetings All from your travelling Editor. I hope you all had a good Holiday Season and welcomed 2015 in with a bang. I was in Canada with my Family and it sure was cold, with temperatures going down to -39C. They say it broke all records for my neck of the woods. Now I am in Florida where it is cool for sure and certainly not swimming weather. I am returning to NZ in a few weeks so hope you save some of that heat for me.

Next month is our Annual General Meeting and Luncheon and look forward to seeing many of you there. Remember, this is the time for anyone to voice your opinions or suggestions and in that way you can help us to make our Chapter the best it can be in serving your needs. Our next issue will contain the President's message and let you know how we have made out in the last year.

We would still like to run profiles of our members and get to know you a little better so if you are interested please contact Mark. It is only a few questions and I'm sure you all have stories to tell.

Now comes the hard part! It is with deep regret and sorrow that I am announcing that I am stepping down as Editor of the Newsletter after nine years. I consider this my Baby and hope that it has informed you, made you laugh, and kept you up to date with our activities.

I will continue to contribute in any way that I can and am always available for phone calls for help and just a chat. I am moving back to the US and Canada in July but will be back periodically to visit and catch up, and certainly will stay in touch.

It has been an honour meeting some of you and getting to know others just on the phone. I want to thank the Executive Committee for their help and even tho things weren't always smooth, the end result made it all worthwhile. (hahaha)

Please take care of yourselves and remember to check your stump each day and if any problems, check in with the Limb Center or your Doctor.



Amputees
Federation
of New Zealand
Incorporated

Annual A.G.M.Meeting and Luncheon

Place: Hornby Working Mens Club,
17 Carmen Road, Hornby.

Date: Sunday 29th March 2015

Time: 11am for social drinks and get together.

A.G.M. Meeting 11.30 am

Meal: 12 Middyay

Cost: \$22 per head.

Speaker: Rachel Fleury, Speaking on Health and Disability Advocacy

Please ring Margaret if you intend to go on 03 349 7585 by the 18th of Feb.

We will pre pay for the meal as we have done in the past.

Pay by Cash to ring Margaret on 03 349 7585 or Ava on 03 382 1873 to arrange a time to drop off

Pay by Cheque to Amputee Society P.O.Box 26 148 North Avon.

Pay on Line 0308 30 026 400 000

Hope to see a good crowd.

Please remember to carry a book of taxi vouchers with you as well as your smartcard when using taxi mobility in case the driver does not have the new equipment.

If you have a change of address or phone number, please let us know your new details.

Remember we now have a For Sale page on the website or you can put an ad in the Newsletter. All contributions greatly appreciated.

To Wear or Not to Wear... A Lower-Limb Prosthesis by Paddy Rossbach, RN

. Whether you choose to or are able to wear a prosthesis after amputation will depend on many things. Most amputations in seniors are the result of circulation problems from diabetes or peripheral vascular disease (PVD). Poor circulation affects all parts of the body, not just the legs. So, you may also be dealing with other problems. These might include heart or kidney disease, memory loss, loss of feeling in your hands and remaining foot, and poor circulation in your remaining foot.

You may not have been active for some time. You may have been hospitalized for surgeries to save as much of your leg as possible. You may be weak, exhausted, and even depressed. But don't lose hope! With good care from your entire healthcare team, the support of friends and family, and a "can do" attitude on your part, it is possible to walk again. Some of you may **choose** not to wear a prosthesis. You may find it easier or feel safer using a wheelchair, crutches or a walker. Or, due to health problems, you may not have the stamina required for physical therapy and using a prosthesis. This is fine as long as you remain as active as possible

Most people who wear a prosthesis also occasionally use a wheelchair and/or crutches, canes or walkers. These devices help them maintain their independence when:

- Their prosthesis is being repaired.
- They are awaiting a new prosthesis.
- They are recuperating from skin breakdown.
- They are fatigued from using their prosthesis.
- They are experiencing balance or coordination problems.
- Safety is a concern.

What Do You Need to Walk Again?

First, you need a team made up of a surgeon, nurses, therapists, social workers and a prosthetist (a person who makes and fits artificial limbs). This team will work together to plan the best surgery, rehabilitation, and prosthetic care for you.

The main ingredients for success are:

Surgery that leaves a well-healed, well-shaped, well-padded limb that is the best length for the type of prosthesis you will use

An appropriate amount of physical therapy that

- Keeps your joints flexible
- Strengthens your remaining limb
- Teaches you how to carry out activities of daily living
- Trains you in using your prosthesis

A certified prosthetist

- Who is experienced in working with older amputees
- Who can fit you with a lightweight limb

– Who offers components (feet, knees, etc.) that will help you walk safely and, most importantly, COMFORTABLY!

A healthful diet to give you the strength to work hard

Appropriate care of any other health problems you may have

Pain control.

Since wearing a prosthesis requires more energy from a person, being in good health is essential. Eating a proper diet and taking care of your other health problems will help ensure that you can manage the additional stress that wearing a prosthesis puts on your body and heart. Finally, if the prosthesis is painful, you will not wear it. It will merely sit in your closet.

Your prosthetist will teach you

- How to put the prosthesis on and take it off
- How to check if it is on correctly
- How to add extra socks or take some off if your residual limb shrinks or swells. (He or she should explain that as you use your prosthesis more, the swelling will go out of your limb.) He or she will either start teaching you to walk using parallel bars or refer you to a physical therapist. (You will walk for short periods at first and check your limb often for pressure.)

He or she will tell you when to come back for another appointment.

Things to Remember

In the beginning, a lot of changes will occur. Your limb will change shape, so your socket must be changed by your prosthetist. This is very important. If the socket does not fit well, you will not be able to walk properly and could get a blister or sore spot. At first, you will need to visit the prosthetist often. As things settle down, the visits will get less and less.

Examine your limb every time you take off the prosthesis. Use a mirror if necessary and massage the limb to get the circulation going. Wash the limb with a mild soap and pat it dry every day. Don't use anything that includes alcohol because it will dry the skin, which may then crack and become infected. Also, wash any socks, silicone liners, and the inside of your socket with mild soap and water (or as the manufacturer advises) and rinse them every day. A buildup of sweat and dirt will cause infections.

Although it is more difficult to walk with an above-knee prosthesis, with the right care it is possible for older amputees. Always use a walker or cane if you feel unsure of yourself.

Remember, eat right, stay active, make sure your prosthesis is fitting correctly, visit your prosthetist regularly, and look after the rest of your health needs. Life is definitely different, but it can still be enjoyable and fulfilling.

A long line leading to the ladies room greeted my friend's wife. Since desperate times call for desperate measures, my friend took her into the empty men's room. Then stood guard outside.

When she exited a few minutes later, a man waiting his turn called out, "I hope you remembered to put UP the toilet seat."

Ah, Marriage. I was standing in front of the bathroom mirror one evening admiring my reflection, when I posed this question to my wife of 30 years: "Will you still love me when I'm old, fat, and balding?"

With no hesitation at all she answered, "I do."

Web Sites

Amputee Society of Canterbury & Westland Inc.

www.amputeeinfo.co.nz

The Amputee Federation of NZ

www.af.org

Amputee Information

www.mossresourcenet.org

International Diabetes Federation

www.idf.org

Parafed Canterbury

www.parafedcanterbury.co.nz

Disability Awareness in Action

www.daa.org.uk

Amputee News

www.amputeenews.com

Disability Rights Commission

www.drc-gb.org

UN Programme on Disability

www.un.org/issues/m-disabl.asp

WEKA-NZ Disability Info

www.weka.govt.nz

Disabilities Information Service

314 Worcester Street, Christchurch

PO Box 32-074, Christchurch

(03) 366-6189

(03) 379-5939

9.00am - 4.30pm

Email: admin@aspirecanterbury.org.nz

Website: www.aspirecanterbury.org.nz

Amputee Coalition (USA)

www.amputee-coalition.org

NZ Limb Service <http://nzals.govt.nz/>

Kipp's Patch www.kipps-patch.com

Nation Wide H&D Advocacy Service – 0800 555050

Motivation Design www.motivationdesign.co.nz

Jobee's Art www.jobeesart.co.nz

Amputee Golf NZ Inc amputeegolfnz.co.nz

newsletter@oandp.com (Edge Magazine)

www.ottobockus.com/StayinginTouch (Dialog Magazine)

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4.30pm

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Graham Flanagan

Office administrator

Pauline Afitu
www.nzalb.govt.nz

Association Bank Info

Westpac 03 0830 026 4400 00

**Burwood Hospital
Hydro Pool**



See you there for a
Relaxing session!
Funded by Lottery Board.
Wed. 4:30-6:30 pm
Sun 1.00-2:30 pm
This is with Parafed and there
is a \$2 charge

Computer Help

Call Joanne Boereboom
Home 942 5320
Mobil 027 2909 246

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