

The Care Digest

"Improving the Quality of Your Life is Our Primary Concern."



Vol 1. Issue 4 2007

The Care Digest ... keeping you informed about what's going on in the prosthetic and orthotic industry right here in St. Louis and around the world!

P&O Care's "The Care Digest" Blog Site Receives Gold Star Award

P&O Care was recently awarded the Gold Star Award for The Care Digest Blog (<http://caredigest.blogspot.com>), by Elizabeth Mansfield, a marketing consultant with Outsource Marketing Solutions LLC in Hartford, Conn.

A "blog" (short for web log) is an interactive website where readers can post their own entries (commentaries or news) on a certain subjects in a chronological format. The P&O Care blog features news events and stories about people involved with the prosthetic and orthotic community in St. Louis and around the world. It is a forum where P&O Care patients and health care professionals can connect with each other.



"We hope patients will take the opportunity to share their own commentaries, pictures, videos and unique stories with others," says blog creator Bill McLellan, Director of Sales Marketing for P&O Care, Inc.

P&O Care is dedicated to educating the general community about prosthetic and orthotic issues and to facilitating the crucial relationships among patients and their doctors, nurses, therapists, prosthetists and orthotists. Together, the blog and newsletter reach over 1,100 people in St. Louis and enable P&O Care to connect better with patients and referring health care professionals.

To sign up for the e-mail or snail mail versions of The Care Digest, or to become a contributor on this blog, contact Bill McLellan at BMcLellan@PandOCare.com.

Missouri Parity Update

Supporters of better insurance coverage for artificial limbs continue their cause in Missouri.

In Missouri, the effort to get a prosthetic parity law on the books is being led by a committee of amputees. Of course, patients who have been denied coverage by their insurance companies are leading the push. The Missouri Coalition for People with Limb Loss plans to hire a lobbyist with money raised from supporters across the state including prosthetic companies like P&O Care. P&O Care plans to support the cause.

We take issue with the perception that prosthetic parity is a traditional "mandate." Less than ten years ago, insurance policies used to all cover prosthetics on their own.

Limb loss is a tragic, sudden (even when caused by diabetes) medical condition, the kind of thing that health insurance exists to cover. No one will cut their limb off to benefit from "mandated" prosthetic coverage. We will simply see more amputees going back to work and fewer depending on Medicaid for their prosthetic coverage.

She Glides on Ice Video a Hit!

Earlier this year, P&O Care profiled Janetta Rogers in *The Care Digest*. Since then, two videos of Janetta have been posted on the YouTube website for viewing. So far they have been viewed over 16,000 times online! Always adventurous, Janetta is continuing to experiment with new activities, the latest being soccer.



Parity Push in Virginia

In Virginia, a local prosthetic company, Virginia Prosthetics, took the fight for better limb-loss insurance coverage to Richmond with a bus load of supporters, including amputees, willing to testify before state legislators as part of a rally to show support for the passage of a state bill that would help amputees get more coverage from insurance companies.

The Virginia bill would mandate higher payouts for artificial limbs and force private insurers to match the benefits already offered by Medicare, the nation's federal program for insuring seniors and people with disabilities. For more in the Virginia parity initiative visit <http://www.roanoke.com/business/wb/wb/xp-132817>.



Josh Sundquist
Founder LessThanFour.com

CNN Hero: Josh Sundquist

CNN Recognizes Josh Sundquist, Creator of "Less than Four" Website

CNN recently profiled Josh Sundquist, creator of the online amputee network "*LessthanFour.org*," or <4. The website provides a place for amputees to meet, talk about their prostheses or other interests, and create a blog about themselves. According to CNN, it has over 200 members and 10,000 viewers, but judging by the number of calls we've received from people who saw the clip, it might have many more soon.

When Josh was 9 years old, cancer was discovered in the bones of his left leg. He was given a 50/50 chance of living. He underwent a year of chemotherapy and his leg was amputated at the hip.

Josh refused to be limited by his disability and continued to pursue the sports he loved with determination. He even tried new sports.

He became an accomplished skier and skied competitively in the Paralympics. Josh claims that becoming a competitive ski racer was a turning point for him. He now had an outlet in which to compete, to train and to work towards something- and he was able to meet so many other amputees. He soon realized there wasn't really any central place for amputees to meet other amputees and share information.

To meet that need, Sundquist launched *LessthanFour.org*, a social networking online community website. The website provides amputees a place to vent and share, and to reach out to one another for hope and support as they navigate the unique experience of living without limbs.

"You can drown in devastation, isolation and fear," Sundquist said. "It's the thrill of risk and the humor involved in trying that makes you feel normal. And sometimes it takes seeing others doing it that gets you over the self-pity stage. It allows you to sort of feel not like the odd man out. ... And I think that's pretty cool."



We Want to Hear From You!

We at P&O Care are eager to hear from our patients and colleagues in health care. Anyone can leave a comment on our blog, either anonymously or with your name if you have a Google account.



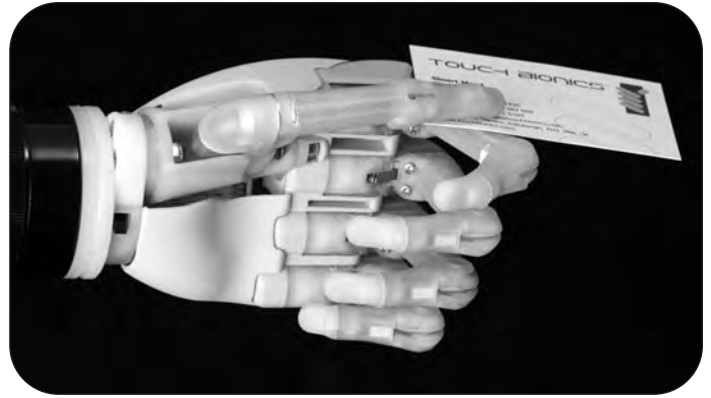
www.CareDigest.Blogspot.com

Get a Grip... First Prosthetic Hand with Moving Fingers

The first prosthetic hand with individually moving fingers is now on the market. *Think:* Luke Skywalker at the end of *The Empire Strikes Back*.

Myoelectric prosthetic arms and hands have sensors that pick up electric impulses from the muscles of the arm. Until now, those impulses have been able to open or close a hand, control grip strength, and rotate a wrist or elbow.

The i-Limb hand by Touch Bionics in Scotland has tiny motors for all four fingers and thumb. With it, amputees can pick up a coin, turn a key, punch keys on a cell phone, or lift a coffee mug.



The i-Limb hand by Touch Bionics

Touch Bionics released the i-Limb July 29, 2007 in Vancouver, British Columbia, at the World Congress of the International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics. There's no word yet on whether Medicare or insurance companies in the US are going to pay for the i-Limb hand, so unfortunately, distribution is limited to people who want to pay out of pocket.

Practitioner Profile.....

John Lartonoix, ABC Certified Orthotist

John Lartonoix (a French name pronounced Lar-ton-wah) became an ABC Certified Orthotist in 2001. To prepare him for this exciting career, John earned a bachelor degree in Exercise Science and an associates degree for Physical Therapy Assistant from Appalachian State University. Then, he interned with an O&P company in the St.Louis area where he met Jon Wilson, now P&O Care's Clinical Director.



John Lartonoix
ABC Certified Ortotist

John and Jon attended Northwestern Medical School's Orthotic Program in 2000, and often talked about the possibility of working together in the future. However, after graduation, Jon Wilson returned to St.Louis and co-founded P&O Care, and John Lartonoix took a residency in Columbus, OH, at Columbus Orthopedic.

Columbus Orthopedic was an extremely respected practice that serviced all local hospitals including the renowned Children's Hospital and the Ohio State University Hospital. Columbus Orthopedic was later purchased by the Hanger Corporation.

In his residency, John says he was lucky enough to be exposed to most aspects of the orthotic field. "I worked closely with several doctors from the Children's Hospital developing a strong pediatric background. In 2006, P&O Care had an opening for another certified Orthotist and I was looking for new career experiences. After meeting with Jon Wilson and Jim Weber, CEO of P&O Care, I found what I was looking for. P&O Care is a group of wonderful people who make for an amazing team. I see such a variety of patients each day, which allows me to help people in many different ways. Being part of the P&O Care team enables me to do my job with care and pride."

*Resident Profile.....***Maggie Ware-Smith, Resident**

P&O Care's newest prosthetic resident is the super-talented and friendly Maggie Ware-Smith. Maggie graduated this year from Northwestern Medical School in Chicago with graduate certificates in both prosthetics and orthotics. She grew up in Clayton, MO and attended the University of Virginia where she graduated with a bachelor of science in mechanical engineering in 2006.

This past July, Maggie started her year-long prosthetic residency, seeing patients and building limbs under the supervision of Jon Wilson, CPO, LPO. She plans to do an orthotic residency after she gets her ABC certification in prosthetics next year. Maggie hopes to practice as both a prosthetist and an orthotist, capable of providing patients with artificial limbs and custom bracing.

P&O Care is lucky to have such an ambitious rising star!



Maggie Ware-Smith
Resident



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