

THE MISSION: Provide wheelchairs to individuals who do not qualify for other assistance, and who could not obtain such equipment without financial aid.

### Inside This Issue

The Cost of Mobility...Pg. 1  
Meet Crystal...Pg. 1  
Holiday Wish List...Pg. 2  
Go Green...Pg. 2  
Board of Directors...Pg. 2  
Temporary Solutions...Pg. 3  
Swinging for Mobility...Pg. 3  
A New Look...Pg. 4  
eNewsletter...Pg. 4.

## Keeping People Mobile

Keeping people mobile is what we are all about. We don't stop with providing a wheelchair, we go the extra mile and do our best to make all necessary repairs for our recipients who are on very limited incomes.

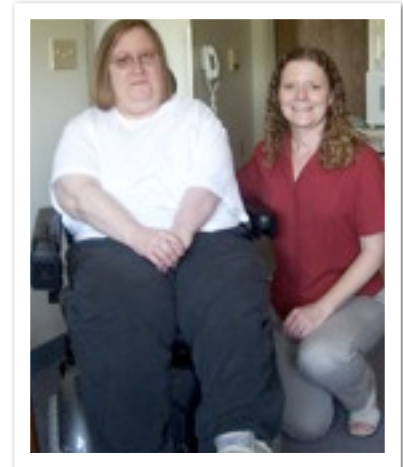
Can you imagine your car dealer doing that?

Though we're committed to ultra-customer satisfaction, doing so puts extra strain on our already tight budget. Without the dedicated support of individual donors these additional services would not be possible. Batteries, controllers, leg rests, seat belts, seat cushions, tires, and chargers all add up. Your \$20 or \$40 donations make a huge difference and are what allows us to continue repairing and servicing wheelchairs to keep people like Tina rolling.

We first assisted Tina in 2004, providing her a power wheelchair so she could safely travel outside of her home worry free. She

recently contacted us about the chair not working so we picked it up and diagnosed the problem. Not only were her batteries in need of replacement but there was also a short in the joystick that runs the chair. We spent \$150 to replace her batteries and were able to "dig-up" a replacement joystick out of our inventory of parts, saving an additional \$500-\$600.

Our staff never takes for granted the contributions made by those who believe in our mission. As we enter this holiday season, please make a year-end tax-deductible donation, and help us continue to move people forward. Donate online at [www.alternativesinmotion.org](http://www.alternativesinmotion.org) or mail your donation to our office. Thank you for supporting Alternatives in Motion.



Tina was one of many individuals who benefited from repair work in 2008.



## Meet Crystal

Crystal and her mother Madeline live in a small second story Connecticut apartment. The wheelchair Crystal uses at school was too large for Madeline to carry up the steps and was often left on the cold damp front porch. At night Madeline would carry Crystal to their apartment where she had to sit in a stroller or crawl around on the floor. Not quite something an independent spirited 9-year-old wants to do at night.

After a few minor adjustments we were able to ship a lightweight collapsible wheelchair to Crystal and Madeline. With the new chair Madeline can easily carry it upstairs or place it in the back of her car to take Crystal anywhere they want to go. Best of all, Crystal no longer has to rely on someone pushing her around in the stroller. Crystal's teacher tells us Crystal feels very confident with her newfound independence and is especially happy the chair is even pink, her favorite color!



## Holiday Wish List

Aside from money, we have needs for other items that allow us to operate more efficiently on a day-to-day basis. Last year we published our wish list and had an amazing response from our readers. If you have something you would like to donate that is not on the list please call our office at (616) 493-2620. Be sure to visit the “How You Can Help” section of our web page to see an updated version of our wish list all year long.

We are currently in need of the following items:

- Upright vacuum cleaner with on board tools for cleaning wheelchairs and the office floors.
- Snow shovels and gently used snow blower for clearing sidewalks around the office.
- Standard and Metric tools for repairing wheelchairs. (Ratchet sets, allen wrenches, pliers, screwdrivers, etc.)
- Portable air compressor with tire inflation chuck and blow gun attachment.
- Plastic tubs to store wheelchair parts. (Small, medium, large, and extra large sizes needed.)
- LCD Projector or television with VCR/DVD input jacks for board room presentations and promotional activities.

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## Help Us Go Green

We’re doing our part to help out the environment too. We recently evaluated our inventory of older and now obsolete equipment and recycled what would have been too costly to repair or reuse. Any usable parts were salvaged for future use on other chairs and all metal was recycled. We also recycled 46 wheelchair batteries and received \$160 cash for doing so. This money is going back to our program to build storage racks for manual wheelchairs and used wheelchair parts.

Donate your used 12-volt lead acid car or marine batteries to Alternatives in Motion and we will recycle them and donate the cash back to our program. Clean out your garage, help the environment, and contribute a little bit to Alternatives in Motion at the same time. Please note at this time we are only accepting 12-volt lead acid batteries, we are not accepting smaller household batteries. Call today to schedule a time to drop off your old batteries.

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	<b>Larry Spencer</b>		

## Temporary Solutions

Carolyn is one of many recent recipients who have called upon Alternatives in Motion to assist with their temporary mobility needs.

Carolyn was referred to us by Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital where she was undergoing rehab for injuries suffered from falling down a flight of stairs. She had multiple broken bones and was told by doctors she needed to be off her feet for three months. Her insurance didn't cover the \$136 wheelchair rental fee so we stepped in to help. We had a chair in our inventory that was exactly what was prescribed for her at the hospital. Instead of being totally bedridden and homebound Carolyn was able to use the chair to visit with friends and travel around the city during her recovery.

We are happy to report that as of November 25, Carolyn no longer needs the wheelchair and gave it back to Alternatives in Motion to be used for someone else. Carolyn is thankful for the chair because she is not a stay at home person. She said she is looking forward to recovering further so she can go ice skating and tubing with friends and family next winter.



## Swinging for Mobility

Participants in the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual "What's Your Handicap?" Golf Classic had an opportunity to see first hand how their participation helped provide the gift of mobility.

This year all proceeds from our silent auction and raffle ticket sales were designated towards the purchase of a new manual wheelchair for Joan Wegner. Joan was one of our first recipients and had recently applied for a new chair through her insurance company but was only granted partial coverage. The chair she had been using was 6-years-old and in need of replacement. Joan contacted Alternatives in Motion to see if we could help raise the nearly \$1,800 needed for her new chair.

While in college Joan was a victim of a robbery gone bad. She was stabbed 27 times and paralyzed from the waist down due to severe blood loss. After spending months in the hospital, Joan learned she could still live independently in a wheelchair. Because of her friendship with Johnnie Tuitel she received her first wheelchair from Alternatives in Motion in 1995.

On Monday Aug. 11, 2008 she joined us at the golf outing and gave a moving and inspiring speech that brought the audience to their feet. She shared her story with our golfers and was thankful for all that Alternatives in Motion has done for her and her family. A special thank you goes out to all of our golfers who participated in this event and made Joan's wish for a new wheelchair come true. To read the rest of Joan's story, log onto our website and click on "Wheelchair Recipients."



## Rolling Out A New Look

We did it! After months of brainstorming, rough drafts, color samples, and site maps, we created a new face for an old friend in the Grand Rapids nonprofit community.

Big changes like this take time and a lot of planning. Our marketing committee met over a year ago to discuss the benefits of changing the logo and building a new more user-friendly web site. Everyone agreed it was time for Alternatives in Motion to get a face-lift and catch up with the times. We enlisted the creative talent of Heather Walters, a local graphic designer and friend of Alternatives in Motion. Heather developed a fantastic new logo that shows what we are all about...**MOBILITY!**



Log on: [www.alternativesinmotion.org](http://www.alternativesinmotion.org)

In March of 2008 we submitted a grant to the Nonprofit Technical Assistance Fund administered by the Johnson Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership at Grand Valley State University. The grant provided the necessary funding to build a new web site and electronic newsletter that incorporates the latest Web 2.0 technology. While we have always been fortunate enough to have a great looking web site, the new site is easier to maintain, highlights the recipients we work so hard to get moving again, and will save valuable staff time and money in maintenance costs.

Christa Blackman and her team at RealWork laid out a beautiful website that is clean and easy to navigate. Her extensive art background and web design experience made the overwhelming task of building a new site as easy as checking your email. We would like to thank both Heather and Christa for all of their hard work moving us forward with our technology improvements.

## Sign Up For Our Free eNewsletter

Receive the latest recipient stories, news, and special event updates in your inbox. We are starting a free eNewsletter to keep our donors and supporters informed of what is happening at Alternatives in Motion. Sign Up today by visiting our web site and clicking on the "Sign up now" button under the news & events section of the homepage. Or you can sign up by emailing [info@alternativesinmotion.org](mailto:info@alternativesinmotion.org) Subject Line: ENEWSLETTER.

While you're on the web site be sure to check out our new blog too! Alternatives in Motion staff plan on blogging frequently about recent recipient stories, upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, and important announcements.