# Ms. Wheelchair America 2008



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Your Business Is Our Only Business

July 2007

Dear Ms. Wheelchair America Contestants, Families, and Friends,

On behalf of The Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce, we want to welcome everyone from across the country to the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Ms. Wheelchair America Pageant.

We are delighted that you have decided to visit and hopefully will have time to experience a small part of all this wonderful area has to offer. Bethesda-Chevy Chase offers superb accommodations, hundreds of ethnically-diverse restaurants, numerous art galleries, a world renowned music center and several theatres to choose from, just steps away from your hotel.

In addition, named after the "Bethesda Healing Pool," Bethesda is known for being the center of world-class research and health facilities, including the headquarters for the National Institutes of Health, Suburban Hospital, National Navy Medical Center and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. With the spectacular gardens, outstanding specialty boutiques, malls and entertainment centers and historical attractions, you'll never run out of things to do here!

Hopefully, one of your "must do's" on your visit will be to take advantage of the Dreams Inc. National Mobility Tradeshow on July 25<sup>th</sup>, and learn more about many of the new products and services available. You'll also have the opportunity to attend informative presentations, and meet industry leaders dedicated to those with disabilities.

Again, welcome and thank you for visiting us. We hope you experience a few of the many reasons why Bethesda-Chevy Chase *is* the best place to work, live, do business and visit.

Sincerely,

Kevin P. Maloney, Chairman

July 2007



#### Greetings!

I would like to welcome everyone to the 35th anniversary of the Ms. Wheelchair America Program, here in beautiful Bethesda, Maryland.

This year we have 27 states represented. We are experiencing some exciting times and look forward to having all 50 states represented in the near future. With your continued support, I know we can reach that goal.

Robert Watson, Host State Coordinator, joined forces with Judy Hoit, Ms. Wheelchair Iowa State Coordinator, and Jeri Wasco, Ms. Wheelchair DC State Coordinator to organize this wonderful week of activities. They have done a tremendous job and we thank them for their hospitality and hard work.

To our state coordinators I want to thank you for all the energy and enthusiasm you have put forth to keep your state programs going. It is appreciated.

My gratitude goes out to all our delegates and their companions. You make this program. Thank you.

A big thank you to our sponsors. We are grateful for the funds and services they have generously donated to the Ms. Wheelchair America Program. A very special thanks to Schwartz, Zweben & Associates, American Airlines, Dateable, Inc., and Dreams, Inc. our long-time sponsors and friends.

I want to express my personal gratitude to the members of the Executive Board of Ms. Wheelchair America. These people deserve your respect and thanks: Robert Watson, Vice President, Judy Hoit, Treasurer, Ida Esh't, Secretary, Denise DiNoto and Laura Abdelaziz, Executive Director. They work for Ms. Wheelchair America because they love this program and believe in its mission.

Thank you for being here to celebrate the 35th anniversary of the Ms. Wheelchair America Program!

Gail McKoon President Ms. Wheelchair America

July 2007



Dear Friends,

I would like to welcome everyone to the great state of Maryland where within a few hours you can go from the mountain tops of western Maryland to the sandy shores of the Atlantic to the tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay. It is our Honor to host the 2008 Ms. Wheelchair America gala and to also celebrate the 35th anniversary of this great organization.

You have the opportunity to witness the first Ms. Wheelchair America celebration ever organized by a Dream Team of State Coordinators, and veteran volunteers. The three major Ms. Wheelchair programs involved in the orchestration of this venture are Iowa, Washington, DC and Maryland. This is a new pilot concept created to give Ms. Wheelchair America more flexibility when choosing a national site for the gala. This will create better visibility for the organization and assist us in our goal to have 51 state programs represented during Gala week.

On Monday everything will began as State Title Holders start arriving from all across America. We will have a fun day full of laughter and experiences; to educating ourselves with a day of exhibits and seminars followed by two days of intense judging by day, to building extreme comradely at night. On Friday evening each Title Holder will share their passion and drive through their platform speeches.

After a full week on Saturday, a representative for Ms. Wheelchair America will be chosen by our 5 distinguished judges to travel around the country not just to advance her platform but also to be voice for all women in wheelchairs.

It is my pleasure to be a small part of this movement and as we celebrate the anniversary of the signing of Americans with Disabilities Act this week I ask all of you to step out and make your mark on society.

Sincerely,

Robert S. Watson Vice President, Ms. Wheelchair America

# Judges Bios

Matt Kelley - Head Judge

Matt Kelley is an anchor/reporter for state news networks in Iowa and Nebraska and is heard daily on 95 radio stations. Iowa's "Journalist of the year" 2002, he's also worked in radio, TV and newspapers in Alabama, Illinois, Missouri and North Carolina. Matt emceed Ms. Wheelchair America 2003 in Des Moines, IA, and served as judge for the national event in 2004 in Richmond, VA. His hobbies include: racquetball, SCUBA diving, woodworking and guitar.

Tracey L. Kelley

Tracey Kelley is a marketing and communications professional from Des Moines, IA. She is the owner of re: communications, a media solutions company. Tracey is a former communications director for the Eastern Carolina chapter of the March of Dimes and is active in a number of different organizations, including Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Iowa and as an assignments reader for college students with disabilities.

**Denise Thomas** 

Denise Thomas has resided in Maryland for 27 years. She graduated from St. Andrews College, with a BS in Business Management and a minor in Computer Information Systems. Denise is currently employed as a Transportation Program Manager for a DDA provider. She volunteers on the Commissioner of the Montgomery County Commission of Persons with Disabilities, Tutor for the Montgomery Literacy Council, Volunteer at Children's National Medical Center, Member of the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council, and Member of the Americorp's Grant Review Board. Denise enjoys board/video games, movies and decorating.

# Judges Bios

#### Tracy Charlton O'Connor

Tracy O'Connor lives in Spearfish, SD, and has the title Ms. Wheelchair South Dakota 1999 and went on to be crowned Ms. Wheelchair America 2000. She was injured in a tragic motor vehicle crash that left her paralyzed from the waist down, but her national title gave her the opportunity to speak at the Library of Congress and also meet the President of the United States in the White House. Tracy also traveled to several Shriners' Hospitals across the country. She received the Girl Scouts' Woman of Distinction Award and in 2002 carried the torch for the Winter Olympics. Today Tracy is active with the Think First Program, along with being a wife and mother to Cayden, their two year old son.

#### Jill Caruso

Jill Caruso holds the title Ms. Wheelchair Michigan 1987. She has served on the Michigan Handicappers Committee and the Presidents Committee on the Disabled. Jill currently works at the Center for Independent Living in Sylvania, OH as an Independent Living Specialist, and she also works at the Gap Outlet as a Sales Associate. She is also a former athlete bringing home several gold, silver and bronze awards for her participation in wheelchair games. Jill is also the single parent of a 13 year old son and a 2 year old daughter.

#### Linda Jones - Judge Coordinator

Linda Jones is from Columbus, GA and has served as the Judging Coordinator for several Ms. Wheelchair America Pageants, and is active with the Ms. Wheelchair Georgia Program. After receiving her Bachelor's Degree, she worked as Director of Therapeutic Recreation for the Columbus Georgia Parks & Recreation Department for 18 years. This past year Linda retired and now spends her time doing her life's passion, quilting.

# Farwell Autumn

I am honored to have had, and will forever be grateful for, the opportunity to serve as Ms. Wheelchair America 2007. Looking back over this journey, I see that what started with my desire to have a voice for an issue important to me has grown into something so much larger.

My involvement with the Ms Wheelchair America began with my participation in the Ms. Wheelchair Massachusetts pageant. My platform was based on the simple concept of "Independence through Education." I wanted to try to make a difference to help eliminate some of the barriers that people with disabilities face of a daily basis. I chose "Independence through Education" because of the dismal statistics for women with disabilities involved in post secondary education and full time employment. And while I hope I did accomplish this goal, I soon realized that this experience would become much more than me and my goals.



Immediately after the crowning ceremony and learning about my responsibilities for the year ahead, I knew that this would definitely be a once in a lifetime experience. And what a life changing experience it turned out to be! As a woman who had only travelled on the east coast prior to this year, and one who had not been on an airplane in over ten years, I was overwhelmed by the travel opportunities that would lie ahead of me. I must admit that I was most excited about some of the larger events, like attending the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade in New York City and the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, California. While those are experiences I will certainly never forget, what I soon realized was that my travels were less about the "where" I was going, and more about "whom" I met on the way. My fondest memories are of times spent with the wonderful people I met on my journeys.

I began to see my role as Ms Wheelchair America not only as an opportunity to promote my platform, but as an opportunity to promote the goals and visions of the amazing people I have been blessed to meet. Everyone has a story that deserves to be heard, and everyone has goals and visions that deserve to be seen. If I have helped tell those stories, or share those visions, then I have fulfilled a larger purpose as Ms. Wheelchair America.



Along the way I also learned a great deal about myself. Ilearned that I am much stronger and determined than I ever thought I was. I pushed through the exhaustion of what often felt like the equivalent of two full time jobs. I learned that sometimes you have to make sacrifices, like postponing holidays with family members, for a larger cause. I learned that I do not have to

be afraid of the unknown anymore, because with a strong will and determination, I can make anything happen. And I learned that just because I use a wheelchair, there really are very few things that I cannot do. I have shocked many people by telling them about my ski trip to South Dakota, where I proudly experienced my first sports injury ever.

As the year comes to a close, I want to thank all the people along the way that changed my life, starting with the amazing women from across the country that I met last year at the pageant in Little Rock, Arkansas. They likely have no idea how much they influenced me and pushed me to do my best to make them proud. I hope I have served you well. I would also like to thank the members of the Ms. Wheelchair America program, the Board of Directors, and State Coordinators, who offered me guidance and kept me out of trouble for the last year. To the people I have met along this journey that touched and shaped me in some way, I hope I have done your causes justice. And most especially, I would especially like to thank my family and my fiancé Kenny. Without them, and in particular Kenny, none of this would have been possible. Your love and support has allowed me to experience this wonderful opportunity and to begin the transformation into the person that I want to be.

Congratulations to all of this year's contestants. I hope this week will instill the same motivation and inspiration in all of you, no matter who goes home with the crown. You are all winners, and I'm proud to be passing the torch on to you!

Autumn Grant Ms. Wheelchair America 2007







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Wishes the very best to all of the

Ms. Wheelchair America PARTICIPANTS

You GO Girls!!



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#### Ms. Wheelchair Alabama - Xaveria Anderson

- G Lives in Birmingham, Alabama with her husband and three children
- cs Employed as a Graphic Designer for her home based family business Virtuous Printing Services
- Founded XPA Outreach Ministries which provides services to the homeless, sick and shut in, and persons with disabilities, member ADA Board of Birmingham, Board member of Is-able Ministries
- Quadriplegic as the result of an automobile accident
- Enjoys performing community activist work for individuals who use wheelchairs
- Self Perception: Caring, Loving, Ambitious, Sincere, Determined



#### Ms. Wheelchair Arkansas - Jennifer Biggers

- cs Lives alone in Hampton, Arkansas
- es Employed as a Coordinator for CareNet in Calhoun County Arkansas
- Cos Volunteers with the Calhoun Animal Rescue Effort (C.A.R.E.), AmeriCorps V.I.S.T.A. member
- 🗷 Disabled since birth due to Spina Bifida
- es Enjoys traveling, meeting new people, and singing with "Spirit Reign" a community praise and worship band
- Self Perception: Christian, Passionate, Successful, Encouraging, Ambitious



#### Ms. Wheelchair Arizona - Heather Grossman

- Lives in Paradise Valley, Arizona with her children and parents
- Employed as an Office Manager for an automobile dealership
- Founded Heather's Haven of Hope which assists people with disabilities who are victims of domestic violence, mentors newly injured patients for the Arizona Spinal Cord Injury Association
- cs Quadriplegic with vent dependency due to a gunshot wound
- es Enjoys movies, outings/events with family and friends, interior decorating, and cooking
- Self Perception: Outgoing, Compassionate, Patient, Responsible, Determined



#### Ms. Wheelchair California - Susan Rotchy

- cs Lives in Dixon, California with her husband and two children
- es Employed as a Program Manager at Independent Living Resource
- Vice Chair for In Home Support Service advisory Committee for Solano County, board member of
- cs Independent Living Resource of Contra Costa County, member of the Napa Spinal Cord Network
- Spinal Cord Injury as the result of an automobile accident
- Plays the flute and piano. Enjoys quilting, cake decorating, swimming, reading and skiing.
- Self Perception: Inspirational, Advocate, Determined, Positive, Courageous



#### Ms. Wheelc hair Colorado - Melissa Burroughs

- Lives in Greeley, Colorado with her husband and two children
- es Employed as a Receptionist/Intake Specialist for Connections for Independent Living
- Cos Co-Chair of the City of Greeley Commission on Disability, volunteers with various community groups including the Weld Advocacy Network on Disability, the Colorado Cross Disability Coalition
- Quadriplegic as the result of an automobile accident
- es Enjoys advocating on behalf of individuals with disabilities
- Self Perception: Energetic, Happy, Charismatic, Helpful, Empowered



#### Ms. Wheelchair District of Columbia - Katrina Porter

- es Lives in Washington, DC with her husband and two children
- Wife, mother, and homemaker
- volunteers as an Office Clerk at the National Rehabilitation Hospital
- Disabled since birth due to Cerebral Palsy
- es Enjoys advocating for the rights of individual with disability
- Self Perception: Responsible, Dedicated, Loyal, Determined, Trustworthy



#### Ms. Wheelchair Florida - Amanda Baker

- cs Lives on her own in Panama City, Florida
- Employed as a Coordinator/Secretary for the Retired Senior Volunteer Program
- Advocates for individuals with disabilities and provides training in selfadvocacy
- ා Disabled since birth due to Cerebral Palsy
- Loves music; enjoys singing and writing lyrics
- Self Perception: Determined, Intelligent, Friendly, Compassionate, Honest



#### Ms. Wheelchair Georgia - Beverly Watts

- Lives in Grantville, Georgia with her sister
- es Employed as a Receptionist for State Farm Insurance
- Volunteer for various programs in her community including Special Olympics, Shriners, Hosea Feed the Hungry Foundation, the Shepherd Center, and the Fernando Foundation
- Os Disabled due to paralysis
- Enjoys traveling and meeting new people
- Self Perception: Proud, Strong willed, Outgoing, Funny, Caring



#### Ms. Wheelchair Illinois - Alana Yvonne Wallace

- Lives in Chicago, Illinois with her husband
- GS Founder and Artistic Director of Dance>Detour Chicago's first professional physically integrated dance company
- Founding member of "Bodies of Work": Disability Arts and Cultural Festival, a member of Ebony Society of Philatelic Events and Reflections, a consultant for O&L Educational Services
- Post Polio/Scoliosis as the result of contracting the polio virus at the age of 5
- es Enjoys music, theater and dance. Other interest include reading, stamp collecting, interior design
- Self Perception: Grateful, Industrious, Multifaceted, Organized, Maternal



#### Ms. Wheelchair Indiana - Samantha Nicole Smith

- 🗷 Lives in Indianapolis, Indiana with her boyfriend
- Mentors and provides peer counseling for newly injured Spinal Cord Injury patients
- s Spinal Cord Injury as the result of a lawn mower accident
- Enjoys stock car racing, reading, arts and crafts, painting, cross stitching, scrapbooking
- es Self Perception: Big hearted, Sensitive, Intelligent, Hopeful, Adaptable



#### Ms. Wheelchair Iowa - Luvoria Sanders

- E Lives on her own in Cedar Rapids, Iowa
- es Employed as a sorter/floor organizer by the Goodwill Industries
- Volunteers for various community based programs including Peer Action Disability Support, the Brain Injury Group
- © Disabled since birth due to Cerebral Palsy
- প্তে Enjoys advocating for the rights of individual with disabilities
- Self Perception: Kind, Loving, Loyal, Outgoing, Compassionate



#### Ms. Wheelchair Kansas - Lorraine Cannistra

- cs Lives on her own in Lawrence, Kansas
- Volunteer Peer Counselor and Access Task Force Member for Independence, Inc, a member of the Working Healthy Advisory Council, and Volunteer Mediator for the Johnson County Courthouse
- 🗷 Disabled since birth due to Cerebral Palsy
- Enjoys speaking to groups regarding issues affecting individuals with disabilities
- 68 Self Perception: Unique, Funny, Compassionate, Creative, Resourceful



#### Ms. Wheelchair Kentucky - Sherry Hixembaugh

- cs Lives in Louisville, Kentucky with her fiance
- es Employed as a Tutor at a community college
- Public Relations Assistant/Advocate for the Center for Accessible Living, Assistant Counselor for Chaplain Dept., Frazier Rehab, Assistant Social Worker for the King's Daughters & Sons Home
- Quadriplegic as the result of a car accident
- Enjoys cooking and tutoring
- self Perception: Joyful, Resourceful, Knowledgeable, Candid, Achiever



#### Ms. Wheelchair Maryland - Cathy Porter

- Lives on her own in Glen Burnie, Maryland
- cs Retired Security Officer for Arundel Mills Mall
- Volunteers with various community based programs to help raise funds to assist individuals with disabilities and to visit the shut-in at the local hospital
- OB Disabled since birth due to Cerebral Palsy
- 🗷 Enjoys travel and sharing memories with her "wheel" sisters of Maryland
- Self Perception: Determined, Confident, Courageous, Encourager, Adventurous



#### Ms. Wheelchair Massachusetts - Kristen McCosh

- cs Lives in South Boston, Massachusetts with her husband
- es Employed as a Spinal Cord Injury Early Intervention Program Consultant by Spaulding Rehab Hospital
- Volunteer Director for the South Boston Neighborhood House, "Ollie Road Race," on the Board of Directors for Southie Kids Care, a member of the South Boston Arts Association
- Spinal Cord Injury as the result of a diving accident
- An aspiring novelist, enjoys traveling, physical fitness, sports, exercise, interior design, Universal Design remodeling
- Self Perception: Highly Motivated, Positive, Strong, Resourceful, Intelligent



#### Ms. Wheelchair Michigan - Shelly Loose

- Lives in Byron Center, Michigan with her husband and children
- 63 Wife, mother, and homemaker
- Volunteers with her church as a Sunday School Teacher and with her local school as a Classroom/Teacher's Assistant, and a Reading Buddy, Library Helper
- Spinal Cord Injury as the result of a motor vehicle accident
- es Enjoys sewing, reading and scrapbooking
- Self Perception: Committed, Courageous, Curious, Inspiring, Selfless

# Wheels of Dreams ONE-DAY MOBILITY TRADESHOW

# WEDNESDAY, JULY 25, 2007 • 9AM - 5PM Doubletree Hotel • Bethesda, Maryland

- Meet Autumn Grant, Ms. Wheelchair America
- Meet contestants from across the United States competing for Ms. Wheelchair America 2008
- National vendors exhibiting new products
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- Speaker: Jerry Crunk, Sure-Lok, will discuss the importance of wheelchair securement in private and public transportation, plus give demonstrations.
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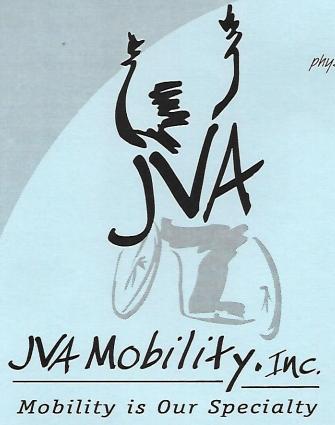
mobilewomen.org is the creation of women in wheelchairs who were having difficulty finding answers to questions about their health, relationships, sex, parenting, and many other issues. Our mission is to bring together current and accurate information on issues of interest to our community.

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This website is made possible through the California Endowment, the Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation, and the W. M. Keck Center for Collaborative Neuroscience at Rutgers University.

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For further information, please contact wendy@mobilewomen.org



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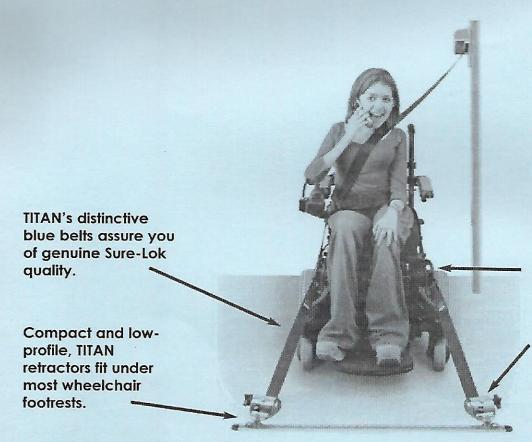
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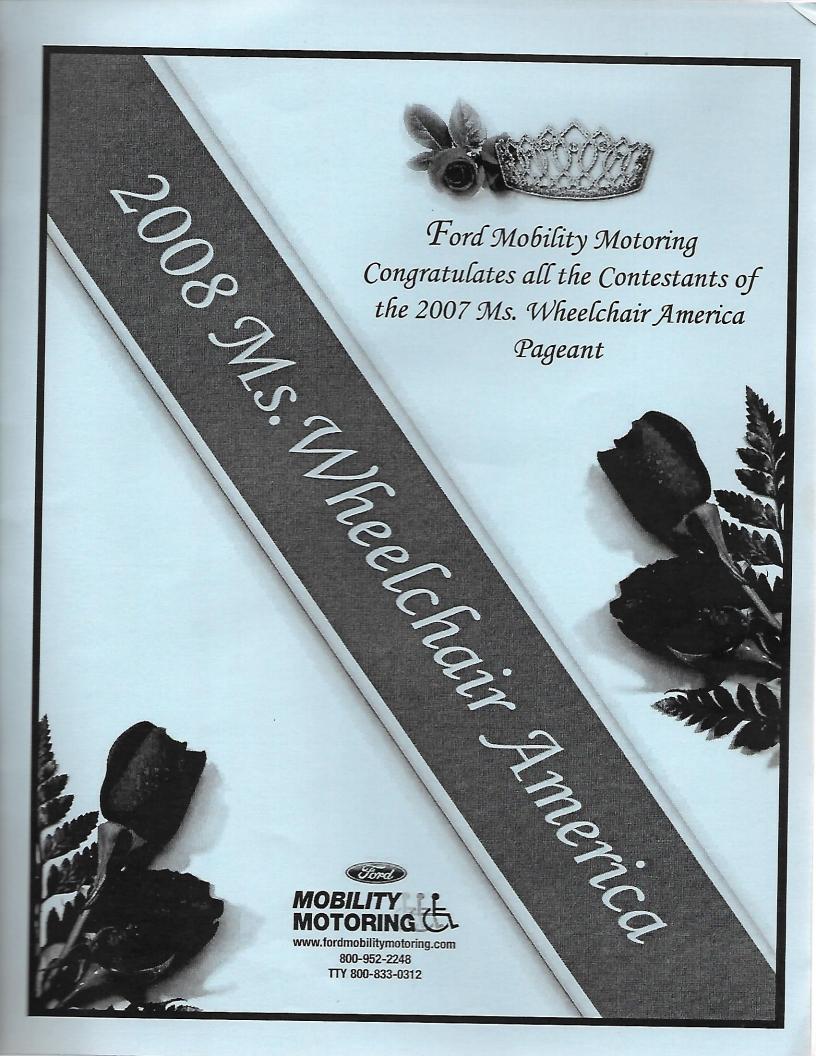
# TITAN

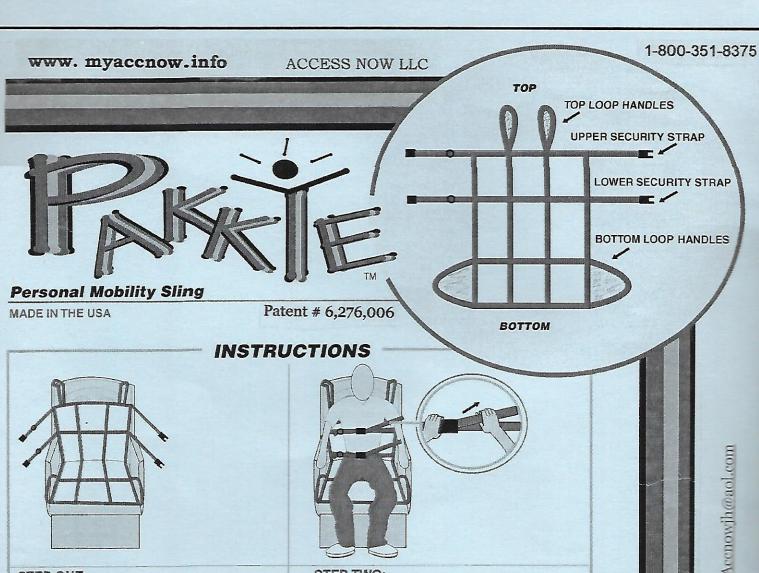
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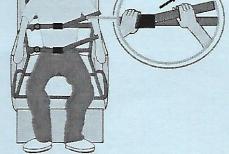




#### STEP ONE:

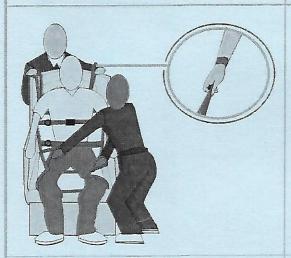
Position Pakkie sling on seat as follows:

- · White side facing up with web straps showing.
- Top loop handles over the top of seat back.
- · Bottom loop handles at bottom edge of seat cushion.



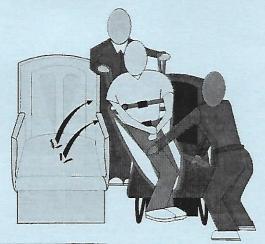
#### STEP TWO:

- Buckle upper security strap under person's arms and adjust snug across chest.
- Buckle lower security strap and adjust snug
- · Adjust to fit using loose straps. (Shown in inset.)



#### STEP THREE:

- One staff member stands behind seat, puts hands through Pakkie's top loops and grasps straps. (Shown in inset.)
- Second staff member stands next to the seat front and grasps bottom loop handles.



#### STEP FOUR:

· At the count of three, staff members lift person up from seat, over arm rests and into second seat.

#### CAUTION READ BEFORE USING

- Inspect straps and hardware before each use.
- Do not use if worn or torm edges are present.
- Larger persons may require more than two staff members to lift.

#### CARE AND MAINTENANCE

- Do not bleach
- Machine wash cold
- Mild detergent
- Tumble dry-low setting
- Do not iron

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#### Benefits:

- No checking luggage
- No screening issues
- No checking your wheelchair (risking damage)
- No waiting to be the last off the plane
- · No waiting for your wheelchair to be brought up
- · No layovers or changing planes
- · Rental car awaits you right next to plane

Taking off - Summer 2007

http://www.iflymat.org

# From One Woman's Dream to Your Reality:

# Seeking Mr. Wheelchair America

You've heard it before. You can be anything you want to be. If you dream it, you can become it. But do you believe it? A Mr. Wheelchair America 2007?

It took me years to dream. In 1991, I published my autobiography, and on the cover I put a picture of myself as a poster child for the March of Dimes, sitting in a high back wicker wheelchair.

I was interviewed by a newspaper reporter about my book, and was asked what I dreamt about as a little girl in that wicker wheelchair.

I was stumped. I really didn't have an answer that day. And that bothered me. After some thought I realized I really didn't have any dreams when I was that little girl.

In the 1950's, and having had polio, we were taught to focus on surviving. As I am sure the medical community had no idea how, or if some people, would survive.

But I did survive and live out many dreams. I married, had children, and worked for a Big 10 University for 25 years. In 1996, I lived out a marvelous dream. I was crowned Ms. Wheelchair Iowa.

Traveling the state of lowa that year and meeting many people, I learned first hand the impact people with disabilities can have upon other people. In 1997, I created a non profit organization to promote and educate the public concerning disability issues. And when it came time to select a name, Dreams, Incorporated was created. Dreams, Inc. became the title, because I've come to realize that everyone has a dream. And people with disabilities should have, and do have, dreams

I know what a national program can do for persons with disabilities. For 35 years women have had their Ms. Wheelchair America Pageant. I became involved with the Ms. Wheelchair America Pageant, and then decided men in wheelchairs should be able to highlight their achievements and accomplishments to inspire others, especially men, to dream their dreams, too.

just like everyone else.

My dream is to see men in wheelchairs have the same experience that women in wheelchairs currently have.

As Ms. Wheelchair America has traveled the nation for 35 years, she's heard it numerous times. Where is Mr. Wheelchair America? So, now it's finally time for you to help us find him...for men to come forward to share their accomplishments and resources with others.

Recognizing men who use wheelchairs for their daily mobility needs is not a new concept. We have recognized men in wheelchairs for many years in this country. Franklin Roosevelt, was our 32nd President of the United States. He ran the country from his wheelchair. Christopher Reeve, was once an able bodied man, but due to a tragic riding accident, he found himself paralyzed and using a wheelchair for the rest of his life. We have farmers across the country who use wheelchairs to ful-

fill their career dreams as farmers. We have senators who represent their states while from a wheelchair. And thousands of men in wheelchairs are fathers, raising children, leading families and assuming all the duties and responsibilities of fatherhood. Although they perform these important jobs a little differently than the rest of the world, they give their best, with passion, and they do it while using a wheelchair.

Dreams, Inc. would like to have men highlight their accomplishments and compete in the first ever Mr. Wheelchair America competition. We are launching a national competition where a man in a wheelchair can serve as a national ambassador for all people with disabilities. We want to provide the titleholder a scholarship to pursue more dreams and to make appearances across the country and speak to civic groups, schools, colleges, and spread the word that even though we use wheelchairs for mobility, we are just like everyone else. We share the same hopes and dreams of all people in America.

Our goal is to have each state represented, and we need your help finding contestants and sponsors. Are you a man between the ages of 21 and 60 and use a wheelchair for mobility? Do you know someone who fits this criteria and has a dream to share with the world? Are you a corporation or small company that believes in people with disabilities, wants to share in this empowerment opportunity and knows a man you can sponsor from your state? Are you a durable medical equipment company who believes in this dream and wants to assist in sponsoring a contestant or many?

We want men to ask for an application form. And we want women to nominate the man in their life, who might use a wheelchair. If you're a reading this article as a mother or father who has a son you think is deserving of the title Mr. Wheelchair America, let us know, as well.

Dreams have to be voiced to become reality. We want to hear from you. Please visit www. dreamsforever.info .....for more information.

This dream is only beginning, and I believe you will help it take shape. One day I even see the combining of the Ms. Wheelchair America and Mr. Wheelchair America events on national television. Ok, I'm still dreaming, but from a power wheelchair this time! So can you!

Judy Hoit is the President of Dreams, Inc., an accomplished author and the inventor of the Pakkie Mobility Sling. Judy can be reached at 800-351-8375.

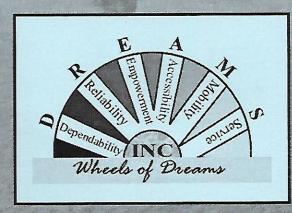
This innovative mobility tradeshow is produced by Judy Hoit, PRESIDENT, and Smokey Spencer, CEO,

Dreams, Inc.

Visit the Dreams, Inc. at:

www.dreamsforever.info

or call 800-351-8375





### Ms. Wheelchair Nebraska – Amber Watson

- Lives in Kearney, Nebraska with her husband and children
- Employed as a Substitute Teacher by Kearney Public Schools OB
- Volunteers on the Kearney City Council, mentors newly injured patients at 03 Madonna Rehab and Good Sam, participates in Heartwalk and KidsExplore
- Spinal Cord Injury as the result of a automobile accident 03
- Enjoys speaking to local school children about Spinal Cord Injuries and other OB
- Self Perception: Courageous, Inspirational, Ambitious, Loving, Funny OB



### Ms. Wheelchair New Jersey - Kelly Rouba

- Lives in Mercerville, New Jersey with her parents CB
- Employed as a Public Relations Project Manager, Freelance Writer, and CA
- Public Relations Chairperson for the New Jersey Chapter of the Arthritis CB Foundation, Vice President of Public Relations for then Kappa Delta Alumni Association of Central New Jersey
- Disabled due to onset of Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis CZ
- Enjoys writing articles that help to make a difference in the health of others CS
- Self Perception: Determined, Intelligent, Advocate, Compassionate, Reliable cz



### Ms. Wheelchair New York - Kimberly A Walters

- Lives on her own in Painted Post, New York
- Employed as an Advocate/Executive Assistant by AIM Independent Living
- Supports various disability organizations through membership including the CE United Spines Association, the N.Y. State Rehabilitation Council, and the N.Y. State Health and Wellness Board
- Disabled as the result of a Spinal Cord Injury
- Enjoys playing and was thing sports, listening to music, traveling, meeting new people, dining out
- Self Percenting Compassionare, Courageous, Confident, Determined,



### Ms. Wheelchar North Cardena - Jennie E. Martin

- Lives in Rosehum, North Carolina with her husband CS
- Œ
- Volunteers to speak at schools during prom time on the consequences of drinkling and driving
- CS
- Enjoys shapping, dinting out, guing to the movies, gardening CB
- ul. Buttilly, Ourspoken, Very Outgoing, Determination



#### Ms. Wheelchair Ohio - Janni L. Mitchell

- Lives on her own in Canton, Ohio
- Employed as an Advocate for persons with disabilities
- Appointed to the Ohio Governors Council on People with Disabilities, Board Member for the Canines Helping Independent People, member of the Canton Women's Club and Access Now
- cs Disabled due to Scoliosis, Spinal Cord Injury, Arachoiditis, Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy
- Enjoys reading, crafts, research, animals, gardening
- Self Perception: Grateful, Passionate, Altruistic, Empathetic, Enthusiastic



#### Ms. Wheelchair Rhode Island - Kathleen P. Leonard

- es Lives in Providence, Rhode Island with her husband
- Retired from Pawtucket School Department
- Vice President of the PARI Independent Living Center, member of the R.I. Developmental
- Oisabilities Council, and the R.I. Irish Famine Memorial Committee, Reader for Insight Radio
- spinal Cord Injury as the result of an automobile accident
- es Enjoys reading, jigsaw puzzles, crossword puzzles, singing, knitting, scuba diving
- Self Perception: Empathetic, Intelligent, Humorous, Articulate, Organized



#### Ms. Wheelchair South Dakota - Shauna Rohan

- Lives on her own in Yanton, South Dakota
- Employed as a People Greeter by Wal-Mart
- Supports the Children's Miracle Network, participated in the Relay For Life marathon
- 🗷 Disabled at birth due to Spina Bifida
- Enjoys being with her family and friends
- Self Perception: Determined, Stubborn, Kind, Funny, Friendly



#### Ms. Wheelchair Tennessee - Amy Saffell

- Lives on her own in Franklin, Tennessee
- es Employed as a Group Telesales and Service Representative by EMI Christian
- Volunteer for various organizations Including ABLE Youth Sports & Independence, Easter Seals,
- Habitat for Humanity, Collegiate Educational Service Corps Book Buddies, Graceworks
- Os Disabled at birth due to Spina Bifida
- Enjoys music, being with her friends
- Self Perception: Dependable, Joyful, Persistent, Persevering, Fun-loving



#### Ms. Wheelchair Texas - Jackie Bartels

- Lives on her own in Grand Prairie, Texas
- Volunteers for various organizations including the American Red Cross and participates in several national campaigns such as the United Cerebral Palsy of Dallas annual Elvis Run
- Spinal Cord Injury as the result of a fall
- es Enjoys painting, drawing, playing tennis, camping, listening to music, country dancing
- s Self Perception: Enthusiastic, Bubbly, Faithful, Loving, Determined



#### Ms. Wheelchair Virginia - Buddy Hayes

- Lives on her own in Chesapeake, Virginia
- cs Employed as a National Motivational Speaker and Wheelchair Athlete. Retired Special Education
- es Preschool Teacher and Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist
- $\mbox{\sc Chairman}$  Chairman of the Chesapeake Mayors Board for Persons with Disabilities, member of the American
- Association of People with Disabilities, and Co-founder of the Obici Kanine Kandy Stripers
- Disabled as a result of onset of Multiple Sclerosis
- Enjoys traveling, movies, sporting events, museums, trying new sports
- Self Perception: Positive, Determined, Motivated, Flexible, Funny



#### Ms. Wheelchair Washington - Sigrid Laegreid

- Lives on her own in Lake Forest Park, Washington
- Employed as a Vendor Relations Manager at Nordstrom.com
- Founding Board member of Teen Hope, Fundraiser, Co-chair for the United Way Campaign, Fundraising Chair for the Washington Cathedral pool project, and volunteer for Think First
- Quadriplegic as the result of being run over by a drunk driver
- es Enjoys fashion, art, music, dining out, movies, sunbathing, shopping
- Self Perception: Empathetic, Resourceful, Creative, Adventuresome, Generous



# "Thank You"

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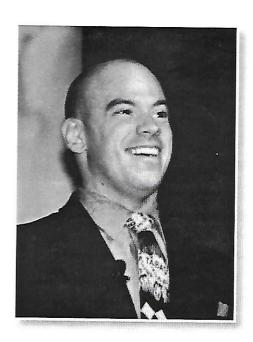
#### Ms Wheelchair Maryland Proudly Presents Ms. Wheelchair America 2008 Celebrating 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Monday July 23	Tuesday July 24	Wednesday July 25	Thursday July 26	Friday July 27 (Contestants)	Friday July 27 (Coordinators)	Saturday July 28	Sunday July 29
12:00 – 6:30 PM Hospitality Suite and Contestant Registration	7:00 AM - 5:00 PM Hospitality Suite open	7:00 AM – 5:00 PM Hospitality Suite open	7:00 AM – 5:00 PM Hospitality Suite open	7:00 AM – 5:00 PM Hospitality Suite open	7:00 AM - 5:00 PM Hospitality Suite open		
53.00	9:00 AM FUN DAY	9:00 AM – 5:00 PM DREAMS	Judging begins 8:30 AM	Judging begins 8:30 AM		Crowning Ceremony Rehearsal 9:00 – 11:30 AM	9:00 AM Queen's Breakfast
Contestants register and set up state displays after 12:00 PM	FUN DAY	TRADE SHOW	9:00 AM Morning workshops run concurrently The ADA and You and judging	9:00 AM Morning workshops run concurrently with judging	9: 30 AM MWA Annual Board Meeting and Elections	Pageant Hair, Make- up and wheelchair cleaning 11:30 AM – 3:00 PM	Contestants break down state displays
		10: 30 AM Judging Interviews begin					11:00 AM MWA 2008 meet with MWA Board of Directors
	12:00 PM Lunch	12:00 PM Lunch for Contestants and Companions	12:00 PM Lunch for Contestants and Companions	12:00 PM Lunch for Contestants and Companions	12:00 Lunch for Coordinators	12:00 PM Lunch on your own	
	1:00 PM - 4:00 PM	1:30 PM Judging resumes	1:30 PM Judging resumes	1:30 PM Judging resumes	2-3:30 PM State Coordinator Workshop		
	FUN DAY continues	DREAMS TRADE SHOW continues	2:00 PM Contestant Workshops resume and judging	2:00 PM Contestant Workshops resume and judging	4-5 PM Independent Delegate Workshop	5:00 PM Contestant line up for Pageant	
6:30 PM Welcome Dinner	6:30 PM Dinner & State Gift	6:30 PM Dinner	6:30 PM Dinner	6:30 PM Dinner	6:30 PM Dinner	6:00 PM	4
Followed by Contestant Orientation	Exchange  "Name that Tune"	Fifties Theme Night	Comedy Night	"9 to 5" Theme Night Contestant	"9 to 5" Theme Night Contestant	2008 PAGEANT	
	8:15 PM Judge Orientation	Sponsored By Dreams, Inc.	Followed by DJ Dance Party	Platform Speeches following dinner.	Platform Speeches following dinner.	7:30 PM Dinner followed by Dancing	

# Rising Above presents MICHAEL ARONIN

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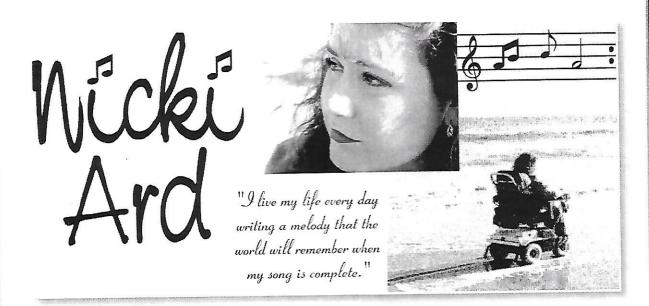


# Nicki Ard Achievement Award

Saturday night during the crowning ceremony for Ms. Wheelchair America 2008, one State Titleholder will receive the Nicki Ard Achievement Award.

Nicki Ard was Ms. Wheelchair America 2001 and passed away in 2002, about a month after handing over her crown. Nicki was born with a debilitating disease called Spinal Muscular Atrophy which resulted in her using a wheelchair. She also developed Scoliosis, and as a result, lost full function in her left lung. Although she was given a predicted life span of 13 years, she faced and conquered her physical challenges She began for almost 30 years. singing at age 6 and in 1999 released her album "Walk With Me".





Jackie, You make the **Lone Star State** shinel **Congratulations!** 

> The Ms. Wheelchair **Texas Foundation Board of Directors**





Best of Luck
Melissa

Ms Wheelchair Colorado Board



Sherry,
Everyone in Kentucky
wishes you lots of fun and
GOOD LUCK!
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# Best of Luck Contestants

Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital would like to wish the best of luck to all contestants at the 35th Annual Ms. Wheelchair America Pageant. Mary Free Bed is a hospital unlike any other in Michigan, because we only do rehabilitation care. And we do rehabilitation like no one else. At Mary Free Bed, meeting the special needs of physical rehab patients is our singular expertise. We are passionate about providing treatment and therapies that help our patients come the farthest in the shortest amount of time.

# Congratulations Shelly Loose

Mary Free Bed would like to congratulate former patient, Shelly Loose, on being crowned Ms. Wheelchair Michigan.



www.MaryFreeBed.com



# American Airlines Proudly Salutes Ms. Wheelchair America 2008. Congratulations On Your Accomplishment!

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