

Colorado

UnLimbited Connection Amputee Support Team



Fall 2005



Upcoming Events

Thursday, October 20th 6:30-8:00pm

Insurance Issues and Options

Guest Speaker: Michael Robinson, Director of Managed Care, Children's Hospital

Russell Pavilion (behind St Joseph Hospital) – Volunteer Room

1950 Lafayette St ** free parking

main entrance, pass information desk, turn right to pass waiting area, take elevator up 1 level (to "1st Fl")



Saturday, November 19th 10am-12noon

Our annual "Time for Thanksgiving"!

An opportunity to share our thoughts and what we are thankful for!

Location to be determined – watch for information in November



Sunday, December 11th, 5 – 8pm

UnLimbited Children Christmas party

All are invited to celebrate with the kids' group & hopefully Santa too!

Horizons at Rock Creek Community Center, 2200 South Tyler Drive, Superior

Please bring a "potluck" dish to share, your own table settings, and a wrapped gift for Santa to deliver to each child you bring. Light beverages will be provided. (No alcohol is permitted there.) Call for further details and please

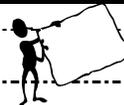
RSVP to 303-380-3898



Note: no regular CUCAST meeting in December



Announcements!



|| Meeting Recap: In June, we enjoyed a nice summer day in the park as a fun group met for a brown-bag lunch and good support and social time... In July we again met outdoors on a beautiful day for our 'almost-annual' picnic! Many thanks to Lynn & Vi Andrew for hosting us at their place in Longmont. We were joined by several folks from the Amputee Support & Outreach organization in Fort Collins and hope to partner with them for some future events... August's topic was Emotional Wellness and a big thank you to Jennifer Kirk, Psy.D., a rehabilitation psychologist at Spalding Aurora for facilitating this meeting and sharing some good information and strategies. There are good resources available for anyone who missed this discussion – just call! September brought folks together to share various "tips & tricks" - and just good information and support. We've welcomed quite a few "new" folks through the summer – it's been great to meet those of you who made it to events, look forward to meeting those who haven't yet, and we welcome your input!

|| Although the date was correct, it came to our attention that the August meeting flyer we faxed and attached to e-mails had the incorrect day listed (postcards sent by US mail and the e-mail message itself were correct – phew!) – sincere apologies for any confusion this caused!!

|| Colorado UnLimbited Connection, Inc is a volunteer-run 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Fundraising efforts are ongoing... please share names & contact info of any individuals or businesses you feel might be willing to make a tax-deductible contribution at any level. When donating through the United Way, you can specify Colorado UnLimbited Connection, Inc. and support your organization! Thank you!

(More announcements on page 3....)



"When you forgive, you in no way change the past - but you sure do change the future."

~ Bernard Meltzer

**Colorado UnLimbited Connection, Inc. is a volunteer-run 501(c)(3) non-profit organization not affiliated with any medical, rehab, or prosthetic provider
Donations are tax deductible and greatly appreciated!**

Note: we received this flyer from ABC and agreed to share the information (edited for space) for anyone who might be interested:

Extreme MAKEOVER

ABC's Extreme Makeover is seeking a deserving person in need of a new state of the art prosthesis and an Extreme Makeover, which may include multiple plastic surgeries, dental work, fitness training, hair transplants, Lasik, dermatology, and finishing touches by the best in the country. *All candidates must be U.S. citizens and in good physical health

*We need upbeat, inspirational individuals, preferably between the ages of 21 and 40, who are willing to share their story on national TV

*All applicants must be able and willing to spend 2 to 3 months in Los Angeles, CA to tape the show

For all people who are interested in applying for this phenomenal opportunity, please contact Sara at: sara2@exmcasting.com

Thank you for your time! (More info, visit abc.go.com/primetime/extrememakeover/casting.html ~ or call CUCAST if no internet access)



Caught Left-Handed!

By Cindy Charlton, written Summer 1998

I was standing in a one commode, unisex public bathroom, knowing that other people were waiting in line for their turn. I had practiced the art of buttoning buttons with one hand and my hook, many times before I was in my present situation. Unfortunately, I never imagined myself, in those practice runs, buttoning under pressure. After struggling for what seemed an eternity with no success, and streams of perspiration running down my face, I fastened my belt, tightly pulled my jacket around me, and desperately hoped that my zipper would stay zipped until I could get my button buttoned. ☹️

I walked back through the restaurant to our table, certain that everyone would notice my prolonged absence. Much to my delight, no one seemed to notice that I had spent most of my 42nd year in that bathroom.

I lost my right hand below the elbow in February 1997, due to complications from a deadly bacterial infection, called Necrotizing Fasciitis. I never imagined in my wildest imagination that something so terrible could happen to me. But seemingly within a blink of an eye, I was without my right hand. The suddenness of the loss coupled with the emotional and sometimes physical pain of the loss can be overwhelming. For me, grieving for my amputated limbs was very healing and helped get me back on track for recovery.

Out of complete frustration, and determination, I found out very quickly that the more I could do with my left hand, the better off I was. I had to learn how to eat left handed almost immediately. I was pretty surprised that I could accomplish this act with relative ease. I must admit that food is a big motivator for me, so practicing this task was highly rewarding. Brushing my teeth, and eventually learning how to apply make-up was a bit more difficult. I went around with a mouth of half clean teeth and looking a bit clownish for a few weeks, but as I continued to practice, my skill level increased rapidly.

Getting my prosthesis was a huge event in my life. Because of medical issues, I didn't get my arm until June of 1997. I was thrilled to be able to use two "hands" once more. It didn't take much time for me to adapt to my prosthetic device. Although I admit that two and a half years later, I'm still learning new uses for it. I did go through occupational therapy (OT) for a few weeks to learn how to do the skills I use daily. I got the basics down pretty well, but am still fine tuning many skills that require more fine motor movement, such as buttoning buttons. I still have frustrating moments, but for the most part, I find that I can do pretty much anything a two handed person can do. 🙌

Being a mother of two young children, I often find myself surrounded by children. Children have a great attitude about prostheses. They are amazed by the way they look and operate. My own children refer to my prostheses as "robot parts". I have often been stopped by children and asked to explain what happened to my hand and how my prosthetic arm works. Through their innocence and amazement, my self-acceptance has soared. I don't find it uncomfortable being in public, and am very open about my illness and amputations with all who have a desire to know about that part of my life. I have found that the best recipe for success with my prostheses is to revel in the accomplishments, no matter how small, and to down play the failures, no matter how large.

I fight the feelings of defeat and helplessness daily. I find strength by looking back at how far I've come, and I look to the future with new goals waiting to be accomplished. Living life with amputations is not easy, but it's not insurmountable either. The bottom line is I feel very fortunate to be alive, with my family, with or without all my parts.

"It's not what happens to you, it's what you do about it."
~ W. Mitchell





We think you should meet Tom Abbott!...

Tom Abbott has been a member of CUC since soon after it started and this year was a participant in the PALS (Promoting Amputee Life Skills) class that was a part of the national research study by Johns Hopkins Univ. and the Amputee Coalition of America, and where he contributed greatly to the discussions! Tom is a candidate for Mayor of Wheat Ridge and with the election right upon us, we wanted to introduce him to you... Tom served in the US Navy for 6 ½ years, and then from 1969-2002 served on the Denver Fire Department, working his way from firefighter to Division Chief. During his time with the fire department, Tom was injured in an accident at Needles-Eye Tunnel on Rollins Pass and has a below-knee amputation. Tom has been and is involved in *many* community organizations and activities. Married for 38 years, he and his wife Isabel raised two children in Wheat Ridge and now have three grandchildren. Tom and his son operate a small business called "Water Whispers", creating custom outdoor water garden features including waterfalls and ponds. *To learn more about Tom, visit www.tomabbottformayor.com and www.waterwhispers.com!*



Tom would sure appreciate your telling any friends and family living in Wheat Ridge about his campaign!

A little more about our October guest speaker...

Michael Robinson received his BA in Economics from UCLA and MBA from CA State Univ. He has 14 Years experience in health care as Director of Finance with Kaiser Permanente in California, Network Manager with Pacificare of Colorado, Senior Administrator with University of Colorado Hospital and is currently Director, Managed Care for The Children's Hospital in Denver. He lives in Aurora with his wife and three young children.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, CONT'D FROM
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➤ **Inclement weather policy...** Since many of us prefer not to be out on slick roads & sidewalks, if there is any question in your mind as to whether an event might be cancelled due to weather... it most likely is. "Weather" or not, if ever in doubt as to whether a meeting has been changed, or for last minute communication any time, do check our voicemail at 303-380-3898. We will make every effort to place a message there advising of any necessary changes – and we'll also try to be available for direct contact, if while listening to the announcement you press "0" to be forwarded to us. Please always CALL 1ST TO VERIFY before leaving home.

||We're working on making CUCAST an even better resource for all and getting more folks involved... This organization is for **you** – we want to hear your needs and ideas, including suggestions for meeting locations, day & time, and topics!

"Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending."
~ Carl Bard

- CUCAST offers:**
- ✓ Peer support through hospital, home, &/or phone visits
 - ✓ Resources, including a lending library of books, magazines, and videos and information on other related organizations
 - ✓ Monthly gatherings with varied topics covered (except in December and some summer months)
 - ✓ Opportunity for recreational and social activities
 - ✓ What can CUCAST do for you... and what can you do for CUCAST

Join the Amputee Coalition of America!

for information, resources, and InMotion Magazine, go to www.amputee-coalition.org or call 1-888-AMP-KNOW



"Patience and perseverance have a magical effect before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish."
~ John Quincy Adam

∞ Mission ∞

To promote, encourage, and enhance personal growth, self-esteem, and wholeness to all people with limb loss through education, empowerment, and fellowship in a safe, caring environment.



To reach CUC, Inc:

 **Info Line** **303-380-3898** 

E-mail **UnLimbited@casteam.com**

Website **www.casteam.com**

Wishing you a safe and happy holiday season!



Colorado UnLimbited Connection
Amputee Support Team
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(Contact CUC to be added to mailing list!)