

Jan/Feb/Mar 2008

# UEA-Life.com

Dedicated to

Upper Extremity Amputees

Life Without Limbations –  
An interview with the foundations leaders

More Ride like the Wind –  
Motorized options for a UEA rider

You Have A Choice!

Welcome to ***UEA-Life.com***

**UEA-Life.com** is dedicated to bringing information and inspiration, along with life experiences to Upper Extremity Amputees

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## Opening Thoughts



Welcome to the latest issue of **UEA-Life.com**.

Well it's a New Year and with the New Year comes changes.

On a personal level I am approaching the 100 lb. weight loss club (92 as I write this) and other personal changes have occurred, as well. These changes remind me, again, that lives can change very quickly and we should strive to tell those people who share our lives how important they are to use every opportunity we get. We never know how our lives may be re-shaped in the future!

I promise I will update the picture that heads this section as soon as I can. Believe me I look a little different now!

This is the time of year that many people make (and hopefully keep) resolutions and mine, this year, is to accept what changes come in my life (the one's I can't control) and do try to do what makes my life enjoyable.

I, also, resolve to improve **UEA-Life.com** and make it the number one source for **USEFUL** information for UEAs everywhere. I have many ideas and would welcome your input, as well.

I want to take this opportunity to apologize for the tardiness of this issue but, the previously mentioned changes in my personal life have contributed to that. I guess better late than never!

Enough about my life. I hope you enjoy the issue and know that I had fun researching and putting together the articles.

As always, I welcome any comments you may have about the ezine. Please let me know what you liked (or didn't like) or any ideas you may have for an article. I have many ideas for the future of **UEA-Life.com**, but, I want **UEA-Life.com** to be "from a UEA for UEAs". Not just my ideas but yours as well. Please submit your comments/ideas to me at:

[mailto:comment@uea-life.com?subject=Ezine comment](mailto:comment@uea-life.com?subject=Ezine%20comment)

I hope you enjoy this issue of **UEA-Life.com**.  
We'll meet later for a few closing thoughts.

## A Little Help from Our Friends??...Questions from our readers

*UEA-Life.com* received the following question(s):

Hello, Don't know if you can help, but I am trying to source a type of machine / device that can be from the back of her desk pedal operated to cause an arm to hold down envelopes, paper and alike - so as the device holds the form and the person can then fold it ready for mailouts, so as the device holds envelopes and paper steady to write on and hold envelopes steady whilst her one hand inserts pay slips or mailouts.

This device would have a rod that comes up from the space at the back of the desk (attached to its foot operated, spring loaded pedal) and is linked to another rod (at approx right angles) that comes towards her, with some type of good holding capacity plate or alike at the end. She would then place her paper under the plate, push down on the pedal with appropriate pressure and the connected rods would force the plate down with sufficient force to hold the paper etc in place. I imagine the device would need to be attached to the desk somewhere for rigidity and stability of performance.

Any ideas if this type of device exists or any ideas of other ways to assist this amputee would be appreciated.  
Regards, Brian.

To help our readers with this question, or ask another, submit your response to the address below.

<mailto:uea-life@uea-life.com>.

## Readers Thoughts:

*UEA-Life.com* received the following comment(s):

Dave,

I enjoyed reading the recent issue of UAE Life - I just happened upon it on the web. I was particularly interested in your article on cycling. Prior to becoming an BE amputee in 2004 I was an avid recreational cyclist. I gave it up after my accident but, with the encouragement of friends, got back on the bike in 2006 and have never looked back. I spent my first year as, again, a recreational cyclist, but now devote most of my time to racing (or training for racing). I race almost exclusively against able bodied racers, but I did compete in the Paralympic National Championships this year. I am hoping to earn a spot on the national team to compete in the Paralympics in 2008.

The most important elements for my participation in cycling have been an innovative prosthetist and innovative bike mechanics. I ride a standard road racing bike (as well as a time trial bike), and have had the braking and shifting moved to my good side. I have also had my prosthetist fabricate a self-suspending socket and passive td for riding. The setup works great. I do like your brake lever idea, and I think I will get one for my mountain bike.

If you ever want to a more in-depth article on amputee cycling, let me know. I'd be happy to contribute

Rob McLaughlin

*UEA-Life.com* enjoys hearing from our readers. Your comments and/or ideas for ezine content are welcome.

To submit comments to *UEA-Life.com* send an email to the address below.

<mailto:comments@uea-life.com>

## Why UEA-Life.com...

**UEA-Life.com** is the result of a goal of mine that began in March 1996 when I became a UEA. I started searching for information, for myself and my family...assurance that life wasn't over. As many UEAs do I felt that the life I knew before was gone and I couldn't get it back. I found myself focusing on what I thought I could no longer do.

What my search found was very little information and, certainly, no inspiration concerning my new life. My desire to help provide the needed information and inspiration took me on another path. Due to disagreements about the direction of that path **UEA-Life.com** was born!

**UEA-Life.com** will focus on life as a UEA but will also reflect on life as a whole. I want **UEA-Life.com** to be a publication "for UEAs by a UEA".

Please feel free to contact me with ideas that you would like to see in **UEA-Life.com**. Use the link below to contact me.

Dave Hersher  
LBE Amputee

Contact me: <mailto:dave@uea-life.com>

**Remember...**

"We did not all come over on the same ship, but we are all in the same boat."

--Bernard Baruch

## Life Without Limbitations – An interview with the foundations leaders

**R**ecently UEA-Life.com became aware of a foundation called Life Without Limbitations. LWL exists to help those who can't afford prosthetics (particularly children) get prosthetic care. The foundation is located in Lake Bluff, Illinois. LWL's leaders, Michael McDonough, chairman and Dana McDonough, executive director, granted an interview to UEA-Life.com. Following is the text of that interview.

*UEA-Life.com: What was the driving force for the formation of "life without limbitations"?*

**LWL: My father, John McDonough, lost his leg to diabetes. My uncle watched him struggle trying to find a good prosthetic and after several attempts, my dad finally found one that is perfect for him. Fortunately, my dad is in a financial position to be able to afford the best. My uncle began to think of others who are not in that same position and how they must struggle to afford just a "decent" prosthetic when they deserve a good prosthetic. Thus, the foundation was formed.**

*UEA-Life.com: Are you a 501c3 organization and how long have you existed?*

**LWL: We are a 50c3 foundation and have been since 2006 when the foundation was formed.**

*UEA-Life.com: What is the goal of the foundation?*

**LWL: Please see attached mission for our goal (mission statement printed below).**

*UEA-Life.com: What measures or programs do you have to meet those goals?*

**LWL: We are a small foundation and currently would like to keep it small. We are the lucky recipients of private individual fund raisers and have also hosted a dinner to announce the foundation. We receive many donations from people who give gifts in honor of others and we are currently talking about a golf tournament for 2008, which may become our annual fund-raiser.**

*UEA-Life.com: Approximately how many amputees have you helped receive a prosthesis?*

**LWL: We have helped 3 applicants receive prosthesis thus far. One recipient is a young woman who lost both legs in a train accident. Because of the severity of her loss, her fittings have been quite difficult and unusual. Her Prosthetist feels very confident that she will be able to walk again. We also have several other applicants who are currently under consideration.**

*UEA-Life.com: Do you provide assistance to amputees world-wide or only in the U.S.?*

**LWL: We currently only assist people in the U.S.**



*UEA-Life.com: Can you review the process of requesting/receiving assistance and the timeframe?*

**LWL: Requesting assistance is simple. We ask that the applicant send us a letter telling us about their situation. The more we know about the individual, the better! We want to know about their hopes, desires and goals. Our focus is principally on children, so we encourage the child and parent to write a letter. As soon as we receive a letter, an application is sent to the individual. As soon as we receive the application, we conduct a background check and the board reviews the application. A decision regarding the request is usually made within 3-4 months.**

*UEA-Life.com: What type(s) of assistance is/are available?*

**LWL: Currently we provide only financial assistance. We do provide assistance for partial payment and complete payment, depending on the situation.**

*UEA-Life.com: Have you considered (or do you currently) providing assistance for training in order for an amputee to return to the workforce?*

**LWL: At this time, we have not considered providing assistance for training an amputee to return to the workforce.**

**UEA-Life.com would like to thank Michael and Dana for taking the time to answer these questions and would also like to commend them for their work and offer my support to their mission. If you would like to help Life Without Limbitations, or have any questions, the contact information is below.**

**Life Without Limbitations is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing prosthetic care for individuals, principally children, who cannot otherwise afford it and raising awareness of the challenges facing amputees. Our principle goals are to provide a comfortable and fully functional prosthetic to qualified applicants, thus enabling them to contribute fully to their families and society, and to provide public information to schools, colleges, civic groups, and businesses about the challenges and opportunities facing amputees.**

**You may contact Dana McDonough by phone at 847.946.8306, by fax at 847.735.0521 or by e-mail at [limbitations@comcast.net](mailto:limbitations@comcast.net).**

**By mail contact LWL at:**

**P.O. Box 96  
Lake Bluff, IL 60044**

**Life Without Limbitations web site:**

**<http://www.lifewithoutlimbitations.org/index.html>**



## More Ride like the Wind –

### Motorized options for the UEA rider

Last issue we learned a little about modifying a bicycle for use by a UEA.

This issue we're going to learn about riding options, for a UEA, that include a motor (after all, some of us aren't interested in peddling)!

There are a couple of options, for the UEA, besides the obvious one of modifying a standard motorcycle. There is also a possibility of riding an unmodified motorcycle.

The first option is a motor scooter. While not as glamorous as a motorcycle the new scooters provide plenty of power and, since they have automatic transmissions, the absence of a clutch makes it very possible for a UEA to ride.

All the major motorcycle manufactures (Honda, Suzuki, and Yamaha etc.) make several models of scooters. The various models have different levels of horsepower and options which allows the UEA to find one that suits his/her needs.

The only lever on the handlebars is the front brake lever and it should be possible to have this lever moved from one side of the bar to the other to accommodate a right/left UEA.

The same should be possible for the throttle, as well.

Scooters are, not only, economical to ride but a lot of fun, as well! The handling is great and they are, not surprisingly, very comfortable.

Below are pictures of models from each of the previously mentioned manufacturers.



If a more traditional motorcycle is your choice you're in luck!

There is an American manufacturer that makes a great looking motorcycle that has an automatic transmission, as well.

The name of the manufacturer is Ridley.

Ridley motorcycles are similar, in design, to scooters. The only handlebar lever is the front brake and moving that, and the throttle control, should be very easily accomplished.

Ridley motorcycles are manufactured in the United States and the company has dealers and service centers around the country.

There are several different models made and many options are available.

Below is a photo of just one of the Ridley models.



## You Have A Choice! - By Adebola Oni

Life, to me, is a funny mystery. Imagine two children, of the same parents, brought up in the same environment and under the same condition, turning up to become different beings while fully grown.

There is this story of two boys brought up by an alcoholic father. One of the boys grew up to become a judge while the other became just like the father. The interesting part of this story is that both of them attributed what they became to their father. The first said with a father like theirs, he is not expected to become anything different from what he is and the same was said by the second.

Whenever I go out, on the streets I see a lot of people living different lives. While there are some in posh cars, some are even driven by their drivers, there are others struggling to eke out a living. Whenever I see this, I used to wonder why this is so.

After pondering so much on these issues, I realized a fact I want to share with you today. I realized that this world is built on choice. In the story shared, the first son chose to learn from their father's mistake and

decided to turn out well while the second chose to follow the path of their father.

Whatever result you are getting in your life today, is as a result of the choices you took yesterday while your choices today will definitely determine your tomorrow's result. If you are not happy, it is because you have chosen to be unhappy and vice versa. The same goes for success.

Remember,

**THE CHOICE IS YOURS!**

Your being successful in life, will depend on your daily choices. *You have a choice to believe you can achieve your heart desires and you also have a choice to follow your dreams and you also have the choice not to. Setting a goal for your life is also a choice you can take or ignore.* The choice is always yours.

Those who quit after they suffer a setback are excising their power of choice while those with a never-give up-attitude are also choosing a choice they have.

I want to enjoin you that if you are ever going to choose any choice, let it be the one that will take you to where you want to be in the future.

Nobody is going to choose for you, before you are placed different choices. Which one are you going to choose?

Article Source: <http://EzineArticles.com>

Adebola Oni is the Author of "The Lessons Of Life". So many lives have been touched by his newsletter, Life Lessons Digest. You can have a copy delivered to you every week by visiting his website: The Lessons Of Life You can also read so many life-changing articles on his blog at: Motivational Blog

Recent events, in my life, have once again reminded me how quickly our lives can change. Things we thought would be forever turn out differently.

In the past weeks I have learned that we can't control what others do or say but we have to control our own reactions to those people.

Our pride and self respect are, sometimes, all we have and those two things can not be taken away by anyone.

As members of the human race (I assume all of us are) our time here is limited and much too short to spend it unhappy.

We can't allow others to make us unhappy by their words or actions. This includes those people who find it necessary to stare or make comments about our physical differences.

One thing I have realized recently is that we can't allow others to dictate our happiness or lack of happiness. We, each one of us, are responsible for our own peace of mind and our own happiness.

True happiness comes from within. It comes from a sense of pride and self respect. Knowing that we may, physically, be different but our hearts are just the same is the key.

In the end knowing, that no matter what someone else has said, we did the right things is the most important piece of knowledge we can have.

Treat people honestly and fairly and it will be returned to you many times over.

“Pay it forward” is not just a movie title it's an excellent way to go through life!

## Manufacturer's Forum

The forum is a line of communication from companies that manufacture or distribute products for upper extremity amputees or researchers searching for UEAs to be part of the development process.

This forum is used to communicate new ideas for products, gain valuable feedback

on existing products or recruit testers for new products specifically for arm amputees.

**UEA-Life.com** does not endorse or promote these companies. Any company who wishes to post in this section may do so for no charge.

**UEA-Life.com** does reserve the right of editorial control.

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### Amputees embracing world's first bionic hand

Touch Bionics, major U.S. clinics fitting patients with breakthrough new prosthesis  
Veterans of Iraq conflict among first to receive i-LIMB Hand

EDINBURGH, U.K. - July 17, 2007 - Touch Bionics, developer of the world's first commercially available bionic hand, today announced that its i-LIMB Hand and ProDigits partial hand prostheses are now generally available and have been successfully fitted to a significant number of patients across the United States and in Europe.

Touch Bionics' i-LIMB Hand looks and acts like a real human hand and is the world's first widely available prosthetic device with five individually powered digits. In another industry first, Touch Bionics' ProDigits product is adapted for patients who have a partial hand, due either to congenitally missing fingers or fingers lost through an accident. Partial hand is an area of prosthetics that has been without suitable powered products in the past.

The i-LIMB Hand and ProDigits will be formally unveiled later this month at the 12th World Congress of the International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics in Vancouver, Canada. But Touch Bionics' technology is already changing the lives of patients with its prosthetic products, working with leading U.S. clinical partners including Advanced Arm Dynamics, Benchmark Orthotics and Prosthetics, Hanger Prosthetics and Orthotics, LIVINGSKIN and Scott Sabolich Prosthetics and Research.

Sergeant U.S. Army (ret'd.) Juan Arredondo of Universal City, TX, who lost his hand in Iraq in 2004 after his patrol vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device, is one patient who today is living a different life after being fitted with the i-LIMB Hand.

"Everyday that I have the hand, it surprises me," said Sgt. Arredondo, who was with the 2nd Infantry Division, 1/506th Destroyer Company. "Now I can pick up a Styrofoam cup without crushing it. With my other myoelectric hand, I would really have to concentrate on how much pressure I was putting on the cup. The i-LIMB hand does things naturally. I can just grab the cup like a regular person."

John German, a 40-year old medical salesman and clinical technician from Altoona, PA, who lost his hand in 1987, was recently fitted with the i-LIMB Hand. He is excited about the i-LIMB Hand's "extensive, real-world capabilities," compared to other prostheses he has used over the past 20 years.

"My previous hand was no better than a wireless mechanical hook, whereas the i-LIMB Hand is a dynamic hand," Mr. German said. "Instead of a c-shaped pincher, with the i-LIMB hand, I have a full range of grips that allow me to do everything I want to do with the hand."

Lindsay Block of Oklahoma City, OK, has had a lifetime of experience with prosthetics. Born missing the lower part of her left arm as the result of a birth defect, Ms. Block, now 26, has used almost every new generation of prosthetic technology since being fitted with her first one when only six months old.

She is particularly impressed both by the life-like look of the i-LIMB and by its extensive range of motion.

"When I'm wearing the i-LIMB Hand, I'm pretty sure that someone who doesn't know me wouldn't even guess that it wasn't my own hand," she said. "It's cool how it can adjust to whatever it is grabbing on to. With this new hand, you don't have to strategize so much about what you do with it because you realize it's not limited and will adjust depending on what it's gripping on to."

The technology behind the i-LIMB Hand has come of age after many years of research and development at Touch Bionics.

"We are delighted to be the company that moves bionic hand technology from the research and development phase into the real world, and to lead a generational advance in bionics and patient care," said Touch Bionics CEO Stuart Mead. "We have always existed to change the lives of patients with severe injuries and disabilities, and it is thrilling to feel that we are now able to accomplish that goal."

The i-LIMB Hand offers a unique, highly intuitive control system that uses a traditional myoelectric signal input to open and close the hand's life-like fingers. Myoelectric controls utilize the electrical signal generated by muscles in the remaining portion of a patient's limb. This signal is picked up by electrodes that sit on the surface of the skin. Users of existing, basic myoelectric prosthetic hands are able to quickly adapt to the system and can master the device's new functionality within minutes. For new patients, the i-LIMB Hand offers a multi-function prosthetic solution that has never before been available.



The i-Limb Hand alongside a "real" hand

Photo courtesy of: Touch Bionics

"I was amazed by how quickly I could learn to do things with the i-LIMB Hand, even only an hour after being fitted with the hand," said Donald McKillop of Kilmarnock, Scotland, one of the first patients to be fitted with the i-LIMB Hand. "The most important thing is the movement of the fingers, that's what really makes the difference. It's truly incredible to see the fingers moving and gripping around objects that I haven't been able to pick up before. The hand does feel like a real replacement for my missing hand and it is now very natural for me to pick up all sorts of objects. It makes everyday activities much easier."

Touch Bionics has developed a custom cosmesis, or covering, for its products. i-LIMB Skin is a thin layer of semi-transparent material that has been computer-modeled to accurately wrap to every contour of the hand.

"Cosmesis is a hugely important area in prosthetics, both for appearance and for durability reasons. It is a vital component of our solution and brings an added dimension of personal comfort and satisfaction to our patients," said Mead. "Some patients, especially soldiers, love the more robotic look of the i-LIMB Skin, but others like their device to blend anatomically with the rest of their body, and prefer to have a life-like covering for the i-LIMB Hand and ProDigits."

For those patients who desire a more life-like appearance for the hand, Touch Bionics has partnered with some leading companies in the development of cosmesis for its products. ARTech Laboratories and LIVINGSKIN work at the forefront of high-definition cosmesis - these companies are collaborating with Touch Bionics to offer patients a life-like solution to compliment the life-like motions and performance of the hand.

The i-LIMB Hand and ProDigits products are being shipped today and patients are being fitted at all of the clinics mentioned above in addition to other US clinics, as well as at Touch Bionics' new state-of-the-art facility in Livingston, Scotland.

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## UEA Links

ARM-AMP: A Web site For Arm Amps by Arm Amps	<a href="http://www.arm-amp.com">http://www.arm-amp.com</a>
OADH: One Armed Dove Hunt- fellowship and helping recent amputees is the primary focus	<a href="http://www.onearmdovehunt.com">http://www.onearmdovehunt.com</a>
Helpful Tips For Arm Amps	<a href="http://loricase.com/tips4arm-amps">http://loricase.com/tips4arm-amps</a>
MTB-Amputee - amputee mountain biking and cycling enthusiasts	<a href="http://www.mtb-amputee.com/index.htm">http://www.mtb-amputee.com/index.htm</a>
Amputee and Disability Resource Directory inc.	
Phantom Pain Support Group, Humor, Stories, News and more for the active or new amputee	<a href="http://www.amputee.ca">http://www.amputee.ca</a>
The Global Resource for Orthotics and Prosthetics Information	<a href="http://www.oandp.com">http://www.oandp.com</a>

## Links for Veterans

Department of Veterans Affairs	<a href="http://www.va.gov">http://www.va.gov</a>
Disabled American Veterans	<a href="http://www.dav.org">http://www.dav.org</a>
VA Rehabilitation Research & Development Service	<a href="http://www.vard.org/rehab.htm">http://www.vard.org/rehab.htm</a>
Walter Reed Health Care System: Walter Reed Army Medical Center	<a href="http://www.wramc.amedd.army.mil">http://www.wramc.amedd.army.mil</a>

## UEA Language

UEA	Upper Extremity Amputee
Residual Limb	Extremity Remaining After Amputation
Dis articulate	Amputate or separate at a joint
LAE/RAE	Left Above Elbow/Right Above Elbow
LBE/RBE	Left Below Elbow/Right Below Elbow
BBE/BAE	Bi-Lateral Below Elbow/Bi-Lateral Above Elbow
LWD/RWD	Left Wrist Dis articulate/Right Wrist Dis articulate
LED/RED	Left Elbow Dis articulate/Right Elbow Dis articulate
LSD/RSD	Left Shoulder Dis articulate/Right Shoulder Dis articulate
Socket	part of the prosthesis where the residual limb fits
Cable	connects terminal device and harness. A separate cable connects elbow joint lock to harness contact (on myoelectric prosthesis) located inside the socket which detects muscle activity to open and close the terminal device
Electrode	straps which cross the back and shoulder, attaching to the cable and elbow lock. Used to open and close terminal device and lock/unlock elbow
Harness	
Prosthesis	a device to replace the missing portion of arm
Prosthetist	person who designs prosthesis
Terminal device (TD)	a hand, hook, or specialty device attached to the wrist unit of the prosthesis
Wrist unit	attaches the terminal device to the socket



**UEA-Life.com** is looking for writers!

*If your spouse, significant other, brother, sister or any family member (or even your friends) are interested in contributing please use the contact information below.*

*Your article about coping with someone's loss may just change someone's life!*

## Parting Thoughts

Here we are again! Thanks for being here. I hope you've enjoyed the latest issue.

I hope this issue contained a lot of useful information for UEAs.

Again, I want to apologize to the readers of **UEA-Life.com** for the tardiness of this issue. The time and the energy to work on the ezine has been very limited as of late. I assure you the next issue will be ready on time!

I hope you will do some investigating and, possibly, give some support to the Life Without Limbitations organization. The cause is very admirable. The work is very necessary.

We learned a little about the possibilities of motorized riding for a UEA.

I hope you enjoyed this issue and I look forward to our next meeting. Please forward this issue (or the link to <http://www.uea-life.com>) to anyone you feel may benefit from reading this publication.

Please send any comments on this issue to: <mailto:comment@uea-life.com>. I welcome your comments or suggestions.

The publication schedule is quarterly; the next issue will be April 1, 2008

**Thanks for reading UEA-Life.com**

If you would like to become a guest columnist in **UEA-Life.com** use the link below.

The message text should include your name as well as the topic you wish to write about.

<mailto:uea-life@uea-life.com>

## Just for Fun

Two confirmed bachelors sat talking, their conversation drifted from politics to cooking. "I got a cookbook once," said one, "but I could never do anything with it." "Too much fancy work in it, eh?" asked the other. "You said it. Every one of the recipes began the same way - "Take a clean dish."