Vision:
End immobility in the world

Mission:
Mobility Worldwide seeks to reflect the love of God by bringing mobility & dignity to those in developing countries who are unable to walk.
From the desk of Scott Walters, Executive Director
A Look Back at Fiscal Year 2018:

Year after year, Mobility Worldwide continues to reach greater milestones and fiscal year 2018 bears out that fact. More people who are leg-disabled were helped in 2018 as volunteers handcrafted over 7,000 Mobility Carts. The organization also continued its aggressive expansion into Africa as it equipped and trained Sierra Leonean partners toward establishing a manufacturing site in Bo, Sierra Leone.

We also said good-bye to Earl Miner, designer of the very first PET Cart over 25 years ago. Earl exemplified what it means to be a good and faithful servant and he will be missed.

In 2018, volunteers got their first look at another interesting proto-type of a molded resin cart. The idea surfaced again during the annual conference hosted by the Stow, OH affiliate. Meantime, the Rev. Mel West was recipient of an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from the University of Missouri. Only days after receiving the prestigious honor, West celebrated his 95th birthday with his wife, Barbara and other well-wishers.

Wow! What a year we had and as Rev. West said, “We can hardly wait to see what happens over the next 25 years!”

Scott Walters
Mobility Worldwide Expands in Africa; Opens Sierra Leone Affiliate

“This is a major turning point for Mobility Worldwide as we work toward our goal of becoming truly global in not only our distribution but our manufacturing too.” With those words, Steve Baima, advisor to the board of trustees and chair of the African Initiative, co-signed a memorandum of understanding with representatives of longtime partner Mobility Sierra Leone.

“During our strategic planning process we recognized that the majority of our Mobility Carts are given to those in need throughout Africa. It only makes sense for us to now strengthen our physical presence here,” Baima said.

The Sierra Leone affiliate is the second African based operation for Mobility Worldwide. The Zambian affiliate, one of MW’s very first operations, has been functioning under the auspices of the New Life Center since the 1990s.

Baima was joined by Scott Walters, executive director and Rob Fleming, volunteer general counsel, as they worked through details with Ibrahim Bangura and Lamin Mansaray who comprise the management team in Sierra Leone. Plans call for procuring manufacturing equipment, recruiting and training local staff and producing and distributing a minimum of 100 Mobility Carts within the initial 12 month start-up period.

Mobility Worldwide has collaborated with Mobility Sierra Leone for 10 years by providing the West African organization with Mobility Carts which were assembled by local staff there. The manufacturing site is located on an orphanage that is home to many leg disabled children and adults who comprise the paid staff at the affiliate.
Earl Miner, the creator of the first PET Cart, passed away:
Miner is recognized as one of the Founding Figures of MW

Earl Miner, the creator of the first PET Cart, passed away in April, 2019 at the age of 88. Earl was an amazing man. He was a Christian father, husband, inventor and designer. During his lifetime, Earl contributed many important developments to improve the world including the creation of the PET Cart (known today as a Mobility Cart).

The story is often told of Mel West reaching out to Earl for help in building a sturdy wheelchair. West knew that Earl Miner was the guy to solve a challenge first presented by missionaries Larry and Laura Hills who needed wheelchairs for leg disabled people living in the Congo. Earl designed the ideal solution and a global organization was born.

Earl and his wife believed that helping others was important and their faith included loving as Christ loved. Missionaries, foster children, educators, friends and family all benefited from their generosity of spirit and donations.

Mel West Receives an Honorary Doctorate

Mel West, credited with helping to launch The PET Mobility Project in 1994, celebrated two major achievements in May of 2019. The Reverend West was presented with an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from the University of Missouri for his lifelong commitment to humanitarian work. Three days later, Mel celebrated his 95th birthday, as he regaled birthday guests with his plans and wishes for the future of Mobility Worldwide.

President Jimmy Carter was one of several people who nominated Mr. West for the honorary degree which reads, “You have crafted your life around the needs of others, tirelessly devoting yourself to the welfare of humankind. Through serving in the military, practicing sustainable agriculture, and addressing the safety and mobility of people across the globe, you have readily answered the call of the overlooked and disadvantaged.”

Mel and Barbara West started the PET Mobility Project in their garage and today, the organization that has evolved into Mobility Worldwide, is comprised of 23 locations throughout the United States and Africa.

Cary Loesing Assumes Director of Operations Post:
Loesing Credited with Initiating Atlanta Affiliate

Cary Loesing, the president of the Atlanta affiliate, fully assumed the additional role of Mobility Worldwide International’s director of operations. Loesing replaced Von Driggs who initiated the international logistics and operations program in 2009.

Loesing takes over the role after successfully opening the GA-Atlanta affiliate with an extraordinary leadership team. Prior to joining Mobility Worldwide, Loesing organized logistics, communications & curriculum for international conferences hosted by the World Methodist Evangelism Institute at Candler School of Theology, Emory University.

For more than 25 years, Cary worked with Hewlett Packard’s international customers in improving delivery of critical IT infrastructure & end user services on-site and through migration to global support and data centers. Additionally, Cary is a national & regional leader in Men’s Ministry in the United Methodist Church.
Molded Resin Cart Makes a Splash at Annual Meeting.

Volunteers attending Mobility Worldwide’s 2018 Annual Conference in Stow, OH were treated to the first look of a mock-up of a new cart prototype made with a molded resin body. Tony Ciepiel, CEO of Step2 Discovery, LLC, a leading toy innovator and inspirer of imaginations, rolled-out the new design so attendees could “kick the tires” and provide input as they work to refine and improve upon the model.

John Sinchok, VP of New Product Development at Step2, outlined the mock-up’s features including its storage capacity, adjustability and weather resistant qualities. The budding partnership between Step2 and MWW began when Tony Ciepiel, CEO of Step2 Discovery, LLC, was introduced to Craig Anderson, the President of the Stow, OH affiliate during Sunday church services.

Ciepiel was immediately intrigued with MWW and offered to get his design team involved in the exploration of ideas. The idea of a plastic Mobility Cart has been pored over by affiliates through the years with limited widespread interest. Most notable is Bob Gabrielse’s efforts at the Demotte, IN affiliate as he researched different methods of production.

Many suggestions were brought to the attention of the Step2 team with the board of trustees delegating the project to Mobility Worldwide’s research and development committee for further investigation and recommendations.
Mobility Worldwide’s international network of affiliates collectively manufactured over 70,000 Mobility Carts since its founding. The milestone was surpassed in the early summer months of 2019 and represents all the products in the current catalog including the standard large crank Mobility Cart, the small crank Mobility Cart and the Pull Cart.

Shipping containers bound for low income countries are often filled with different sized carts to ensure everyone’s needs are met. The organization has been tracking its production since the first PET cart was rolled out of Mel West’s garage 25 years ago. Since then, many improvements have been made.

A total of 23 affiliate sites make up the international network which has provided mobility to those in need living in over 100 countries. Each cart is handcrafted using standardized plans and given free of charge to those who can’t walk. Parts are procured with the support of donors. Shipping and logistical expenses are typically paid by the distribution partner.

Before a recipient is sent off with his/her Mobility Cart, data is usually collected on the individual and also the environmental conditions of the person’s surroundings. Partners also take care to ensure that everyone is fitted properly into the cart to ensure their comfort and ease of use.
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Facts:
• The World Health Organization (WHO) reports there are 70 million people globally in need of a wheelchair; as few as 5% have access to one.
• The WHO states that those living in developing countries depend on donations of wheelchairs which are frequently of poor quality and not suitable either for users or their environment.
• Mobility Carts cost about $300 to make but are given to those in need free of charge.
• Mobility Worldwide has been awarded GuideStar’s Gold Seal of Transparency

Finances:
Mobility Worldwide continues to build its infrastructure & capacity through aggressive fundraising and investments as we transition from an organization staffed exclusively with volunteers to one that possesses professional management & leadership.

Total revenue: $354,714
• Contributions & Grants: $344,292
• Program Service Revenue: $3,814
• Investment Income: $6,608

Total expense: $330,214
• Program expense was $243,806 (74%) to include shipping, subsidizing of cart parts & performing national trainings.
• Fundraising expense $22,834 (7%)
• Management & General expense was $63,574 (19%) to include CPA work, office support, phone and travel.

Total revenue: $354,714
Total expense: $330,214

Mobility Worldwide’s financial statements are reviewed by the independent accounting firm Gerding, Korte and Chitwood, PC, CPAs, Columbia, MO

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Mobility Worldwide, an initiative of PET Int'l, is a tax-exempt 501(C)(3) charity.

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