

Invention of golf helper likely to open doors for others

3/23/2009 7:50:02 AM

[Comments \(0\)](#)

By Jeff Kiger

Post-Bulletin, Rochester MN

LAKE CITY -- Doing chores like mopping, shoveling snow, raking and washing dishes is not a treat for most people.

But Sue Seeger smiles when she gets a chance to rake or mop.

"I don't mind it at all. For me, it is getting back to living," she says.

She survived a stroke 16 years ago that left her right arm and right leg partially paralyzed. Those changes left her unable to do many things -- work or play.

That is until three years ago when she went to inventor Mike Duncan of Lake City to see if he could make her something to help her play golf. He came up with a device to strap to her arm with a pocket to hold a golf club.

It wasn't long before she was hitting a golf ball about 100 yards down the middle of the fairway and playing a few holes with her husband.

While he had done what Seeger wanted, Duncan was not finished. The creator of three other inventions -- the Bumper Caddy, the Cooler Jacket and the Easy Par golf GPS system -- he started to think about other uses for his adjustable club holder.

That led to an improved version of what he now calls Lend-A-Hand, which can be used in a variety of ways by different people with needs similar to Seeger's.

Made of durable nylon, it can be used on a person's left or right side. It comes with five sizes of arm straps with tabs that allow for people to use their teeth to tighten them.

"It is very simple," says Duncan.

Multiuse device

The device allows for people with many different physical situations to be able to adapt it for their use.

By the end of the month he hopes to have a manufacturer chosen with the goal of having the first of the patent-pending product running off the assembly line by May. It is expected to cost less than \$100.

Excitement about Lend-A-Hand reaches far beyond Lake City. Duncan and Seeger recently traveled to Savannah, Ga., to present early models to D.J. and Kenny Gregory, who both have cerebral palsy.

D.J., 31, recently became well-known for walking every golf hole played in the PGA's 2008 tour. His ability to walk is limited and he uses a cane to get around.

When Duncan saw an ESPN report about Gregory, he called the family to talk about Lend-A-Hand. Don Gregory, D.J.'s father, was very interested for both D.J. and his older son, Kenny. Kenny, who is 37, does not have full use of one arm.

"When you see somebody put it on and enable them to do things, some of these things that we take for granted, it gets you excited as well, especially as a parent," said Gregory about watching his sons use it. "I can see it helping a ton of people. There are so many people that this can help and change their world."

Kenny was able to play golf for the first time with Lend-A-Hand. Soon he was asking his father to put together a set of clubs for him to use at a driving range.

"I was thrilled. He has shied away from a lot of things, because he thought he couldn't do them," said Don Gregory. "Now, this opens up a lot doors, so that he can do these things himself now."

Providing options

And that's what Duncan hopes Lend-A-Hand will do for many people.

He is talking to chiropractic offices, rehabilitation centers and hospitals about getting Lend-A-Hands. Golf retailers and athletic equipment chain stores like Dick's Sporting Goods are also interested.

Meanwhile, the tinkerer in Duncan is thinking. What about other sports like tennis? What about children? What about accessories to use for eating or other everyday tasks?

Seeger laughs and says Duncan is a unique individual as he starts envisioning future projects.

"He has given me my life back. I now have no limitations," she says.



Sue Seeger and Mike Duncan

A stroke 16 years ago left Sue Seeger right arm and right leg partially paralyzed. About three years ago, she went to inventor Mike Duncan of Lake City to see if he could make her something to help her play golf. Now Duncan is looking for other uses of the device.