NDAD’S MISSION: Enhance the quality of lives of individuals facing health challenges.

Winter Edition 2018

Mobility retained
With NDAD’s assist, Grand Forks teacher moves past accident, surgery into retirement

Gas cards for Kenadi
Minot family receives NDAD help with travels to trauma treatments

Charitable numbers
Numerical sampling provides idea of NDAD’s helpful reach

PLUS: HELP basics; lake Escape ahead; Gibbens grant update; Giving Hearts thanks
Donna Hansen is on the move in retirement. Relaxing wasn’t her post-career goal.

Finishing her 39th and final year in special education, though, proved more than a small challenge for the longtime Grand Forks special educator.

NDAD helped her move quickly to meet the challenge through its Healthcare Equipment Loan Program (HELP).

Donna Hansen was struck in a crosswalk by car driven by a student. “I saw her three-quarters of a block back, but the roads weren’t slippery so I thought she should be able to stop, and I’ve got a green light and a walk sign.” Donna recalled.

“I remember looking at the walk sign and heading across, and all of a sudden I see a bumper coming at me. I literally went up in the air and did a 180 and came down on my hands and knees.”

Now she chuckles at the irony of the moment. “I spent 39 years teaching pedestrian safety” to children, teens and young adults in special education, she said.

How NDAD helped Donna

Provided short-term loans of durable medical equipment, including a manual wheelchair, scooter and portable ramp, during her convalescence after leg surgery in early 2017.

NDAD help ‘pretty exceptional’ following accident, surgery

Despite new ‘hitch in my giddy-up,’ Grand Forks teacher retires in full stride

ABOUT NDAD INSIDER
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Stories and photos by Mike Brue (unless otherwise credited)

Sign up for the on-line version of the Insider at NDAD.org
Donna’s left leg’s tibia – the shinbone, below the knee and above the ankle – was fractured. Better that leg, she said, “because on the right one I’d just had a hip replacement a year and a half before that.”

NDAD gave her mobility she needed

Though she’s left with some nerve damage from the car’s impact and some pain below her left knee, the reconstructive surgery and subsequent physical therapy were successful.

“I have a little hitch to my giddy-up, but it works. That’s all that matters. I can walk. That’s the most important thing.”

Leg surgery came several weeks after the accident, when the leg’s swelling finally was down.

The down side: the surgeon had to re-break the bone, which had started to heal. Ultimately, she gained a supportive steel plate, held with 10 screws, during the Valentine’s Day leg surgery.

“It was great,” Donna said, chuckling. “My husband was with me all day. It’d been a long time since we had that day together.”

Donna contacted NDAD’s Grand Forks office “almost when I was in having surgery,” she recalled, when she knew what she’d need.

Through NDAD’s HELP, which provides free, short-term equipment loans, Donna borrowed a portable ramp, toilet safety frame and a manual wheelchair.

Donna already owned a cane and walker used after her hip replacement surgery.

About six weeks after leg surgery, Donna borrowed a scooter from NDAD and set up Dial-A-Ride accessible transportation and returned to work.

“They were lifesavers,” she said. “You know, if it weren’t for them, there’s no way I could have gone anywhere.”

NDAD’s Grand Forks staff “is just outstanding,” Donna said. “There was never any question. It was just, ‘if there’s a need, yep, we have it. Yep, you can get it.’”

Retirement life

In better health once again, Donna travels when she’s able. She attended last fall’s famed New Mexico international hot air balloon festival, and she’s spending early March in Dallas for the nation’s second-oldest Irish music festival. In-between, she says, there’s been more trips and lots of joy, especially with husband, David, newly retired after 44 years with UPS; and their nine grandchildren.

“That’s my retirement plan,” Donna said with a grand smile. “They’re very important to me, and I want to be a part of their lives.”

But she isn’t forgetting many other young lives that she’s been able to help in a career capped when she attended Central High’s graduation ceremony in an NDAD manual wheelchair and saw two special needs students from her final class get their diplomas in person.

“I was going to teach ‘the gifted’” Donna recalled of her career, chuckling. “And I think I did, for 39 years.”

Donna won’t be retiring the memories.

“Through the years, you would hear parents and staff talking about some of the services available at NDAD.... You know, it's hard, when you're an independent person, to ask for help. But NDAD, you're pretty exceptional.”

Donna Hansen
NDAD SPOTLIGHT ON HEALTHCARE EQUIPMENT LOAN PROGRAM (HELP)

Short-term HELP for you

NDAD provides access to durable medical equipment for up to 90 days at no charge through its Healthcare Equipment Loan Program (HELP). You may borrow equipment if:

- You are recovering from a surgery or injury.
- You have a short illness.
- You want to try the equipment before you buy it from a supplier.
- You are waiting on insurance coverage or other program assistance.
- You are a resident of North Dakota or a neighboring community.

Borrowing equipment is simple. Just contact your local NDAD office. There’s no application process and no financial qualification. You must be able to arrange pick-up and return of borrowed equipment before or on the date it is due for return.

We invite you to contact us at (800) 532-NDAD, or visit NDAD.org or one of our four offices for more information.

Please contact NDAD first to ensure the equipment you’d like to borrow is available.

NDAD’s HELP inventory

- Bath benches
- Bath chairs
- Canes
- Commodes
- Crutches
- Gait belts
- IV poles
- Knee walkers
- Lift chairs
- Manual wheelchairs
- Motorized wheelchairs and scooters
- Rollators
- Toilet safety frames
- Toilet seat risers
- Transfer benches
- Tub grab bars
- Walkers

... and more!

NDAD NEWS IN BRIEF

Saturday, June 16. Mark that date for this year’s Escape to the Lake adaptive water recreation event organized by NDAD. Once again, it will be held for children and adults with physical disabilities at Nelson Lake Recreation Area near the town of Center.

Escape features adaptive water-skiing, pontoon rides, lunch and a performance ski show by the Aberdeen (S.D.) Aqua Addicts – all free of charge for qualified participants and their families or guardians. Registration will begin in May. Contact NDAD at (800) 532-NDAD for more information.

Applications for the Faye Gibbens Memorial Grant award will be available from NDAD in early spring, with a submission deadline of April 27. Once again, NDAD will award $5,000 to a nonprofit organization or agency for a health, welfare, social service or educational purpose to help at-risk populations. The grant is named for NDAD’s late co-founder and program services leader. A call for applications will be made in late March on NDAD.org and the organization’s Facebook and Twitter pages.

Faye Gibbens
NDAD gas cards help get little girl to shaken baby trauma specialists

Seven airlifts. Ten surgeries. A weight of 19 lbs. at age 18 months.

Kenadi Zappone has lived a fragile life since the Westhope native and Minot resident was diagnosed with shaken baby trauma in November 2016. She was not quite three months old.

For about a year, NDAD has helped offset transportation expenses for scheduled medical trips to see specialists in Fargo and Bismarck. It’s one example of the support the family has received to help meet Kenadi’s special needs. She’s grateful to NDAD and others for their help, she said.

Partly for that reason, Mom has not lost hope for her daughter. Quite the contrary.

“She’s good,” Brittany Zappone said. “She’s finally doing stuff in therapy that she could never do before.” Kenadi would miss therapy for scheduled or emergency medical matters, “then she’d get behind. She’s just now learning how to hold her sippy cup. . . . She’s rolling over finally. She’s happy. She’s a very happy baby. She’s always laughing.”

Brittany says Kenadi’s development levels are delayed roughly 11 months, based on the most recent assessment.

The little girl has a wheelchair which will expand to accommodate her physical growth until about age 5. Kenadi apparently has at least some vision; her mom once was told she would have little to none. Her hearing is excellent, Brittany said, and she “says Mama, mostly” among her babbling. “She can’t say it, but she does know her name,” Brittany said.
A suspect has been identified and charged in Kenadi’s shaken baby trauma case, which is proceeding through the criminal court system.

On a day in November 2016, Kenadi had been napping in an upstairs room of the family’s Westhope residence. She started crying when she lost her pacifier, Brittany said. When the baby eventually was brought downstairs, Brittany recalled, “she was moaning, crying, very lethargic. Her eyes rolled back into her head.”

Brittany ended up bringing Kenadi to the emergency room at Minot Trinity Hospital, roughly 60 miles away. Kenadi was diagnosed with hydrocephalus – excessive accumulation of fluid in her brain, which can create harmful pressure on brain tissues.

The next day, Kenadi and Brittany went by air ambulance to Sanford Health facilities in Fargo, where an awaiting Fargo neurosurgeon quickly looked at Kenadi and her Minot brain scan and said, in fact, it was blood that was pressuring her brain tissues, Brittany recalled.

Following surgery to drain that blood from her skull, Kenadi experienced multiple seizures. Brittany said further examination revealed a closed skull fracture, rib fractures in multiple stages of healing, brain and eye hemorrhages, a sinus clot and more.

“She was a mess,” Brittany recalled. At the time, I didn’t know what was going on. I was just scared. I was just scared the whole time. I didn’t understand any of it.” She paused. “I do now.”

Kenadi was in ICU until just a few days before returning home in mid-December.

She recalled some medical staff telling her “they don’t often see shaken babies make it.”

Since then, Kenadi has overcome a variety of health complications, from hydrocephalus to various infections and gastroenteritis.

“I just take it day by day,” Brittany said. “I just kind of go with the flow just because of her fragility right now.”

NDAD: By the numbers

Slightly more than $2 million dollars – nearly 93 percent of total expenses – was spent by charitable nonprofit NDAD on various program services to help people with disabilities and health challenges in calendar year 2016.

Here’s a by-the-numbers sampling of some of NDAD services and how we serve people:

12 people who had received a transplant were assisted by NDAD with a variety of medical-related expenses through the North Dakota Organ Transplant Fund. NDAD administers the fund on the state’s behalf.

42 people participated in NDAD’s adaptive water-skiing or wheelchair basketball programs.

2,618 rides were provided for people with physical disabilities to jobs, shopping and other community activities in Grand Forks, Minot, Bismarck and Fargo.

321 prescriptions for a variety of medications were provided to NDAD clients.

102 physician-prescribed, long-term durable medical equipment items and various medical supplies were provided to NDAD clients.

1,296 people received short-term durable medical equipment loans through NDAD Healthcare Equipment Loan Program (HELP).

2,482 durable medical equipment items were loaned through HELP from NDAD.

2,609 physician-referred trips to regional medical facilities were assisted with NDAD funds.
34 people in Williston with a serious mental illness were provided assistance that allowed them to live outside an institutional setting.

53,355 people received information through NDAD’s quarterly Insider newsletter, plus the NDAD.org website and the organization’s social media feeds, including Facebook and Twitter.

Thanks to our Giving Hearts for aiding NDAD’s mission

Giving Hearts Day 2018 included NDAD’s participation for the second consecutive year. Based on preliminary figures, the Feb. 8 event raised $13,122,400 overall through 63,586 donations from 28,044 Giving Hearts. It helps 401 charitable causes in North Dakota and northwest Minnesota, including NDAD.

Thank you to all of you who donated to NDAD on Giving Hearts Day. Your generosity will help our organization continue to help people with disabilities and health challenges meet a variety of needs as they strive to live mobile, independent and healthy lives.

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NDAD’s Insider newsletter no longer is available by mail. We invite you sign up to get email notifications so you don’t miss a single online edition. Please go to our website at NDAD.org and click on the “Get the Newsletter” link to add your email address. You also may contact mbrue@ndad.org, or call (800) 532-NDAD.

Visit us online at NDAD.org

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WILLISTON
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NDAD is a nonprofit, charitable organization founded by concerned citizens to assist mentally and physically disadvantaged people in North Dakota, many of whom are not eligible for services from other agencies.

NDAD provides financial assistance through funds generated by both the organization and community projects. NDAD also provides information and referral services to help people receive assistance through other agencies, when possible.

It’s AMAZING what people can do when there’s help.