



Mobility  
Worldwide®

TX – San Antonio



*"It's not right that human beings crawl  
on the ground all their lives."  
-- Rev. Mel West, Founder, Mobility Worldwide*

December 2019

## DISTRIBUTION PARTNERS

We can make Mobility Carts all year long but they will never get into the hands of the disabled people in other countries who really need them if it were not for our Distribution Partners. We often receive requests for Carts but we need assurance that our donor dollars and volunteer building hours are being well spent. The process to become a Distribution Partner requires an application and thorough vetting process so we are sure the potential recipients of the Carts have their government's agreement and an approved agency "on the ground" who can provide feedback, statistics, stories, photos, and routine maintenance on the Cart as needed.



One of our more successful Distribution Partners is "Partners for Care," in Nairobi, Kenya (Africa). Their goal is to eliminate preventable diseases, malaria, HIV/AIDS, waterborne illnesses and malnutrition;

educate children and adults; and solve the problems of hunger, malnutrition, unsafe water, and preventable death of



children. Partners for Care works with several nonprofits from various countries in order to help the citizens of Kenya become more independent and productive. The Kenyans are not asking for others to do something for them -- their goal is to receive resources so they can do things for themselves. Thus far, Partners for Care has received over 1,800 Mobility Carts from Mobility Worldwide. Their mission emphasizes the importance of their programs being "designed to help the people we serve through innovative, sustainable, Kenyan-led solutions to the problems we face."

Mobility Carts not only provide a vehicle for personal transportation, but also a means to get to school and to transport goods to market so that a disabled person can earn a living to support himself

and family. Partners for Care employs 40 Kenyan staff members who serve in their native county.



## BUCKET LIST



This issue of the "Mobility Worldwide TX-San Antonio Newsletter" marks the end of the 12 year producing the newsletter for the San Antonio Affiliate Workshop. It is my hope that the pictures and stories in those newsletters have recognized the dedicated work of our volunteers, the generosity of our supporters, and the inspirational lives changed by this specialty wheelchair we call a "Mobility Cart." I know my life is continually challenged and blessed as I read the stories and view the videos of disabled people no longer having to crawl as their only means of "transportation," and I am always looking for stories of changed lives to pass on to you.

I never had an official "Bucket List." However, having been involved with Mobility Worldwide for 12 of the 15 years of the existence of the San Antonio Workshop, I had heard and read enough about the founder of Mobility Worldwide to know that someday I wanted to meet this person who started it all.

As the story goes, Rev Mel West, a retired minister in Columbia, MO, was contacted in 1994 by a missionary, Larry Hills, serving in the Congo, Africa. Missionary Hills expressed the great need for a sturdy, three-wheeled, hand-cranked wheelchair, since regular hospital wheelchairs could not navigate the unpaved, rocky terrain there. Rev West sought the assistance of Earl Miner, a product designer, and the prototype of the Mobility Cart was developed. In 1997, in Mel West's garage, an all-volunteer production team got into action and began building and shipping the Carts to Africa. Now, age 95 and some 25 years after the first prototypes were built and field tested, Rev West is still very much active in the leadership and continued development of this life-changing wheelchair.



So for the past 12 years, I heard stories of Rev West and what he started, and what has grown to over 80,000 Mobility Carts built by 29 Affiliate Workshops in the US and Africa, distribution in 106 countries, and over 70 distribution partners. And I just wanted to walk up to this man,

shake his hand, and tell him what an inspiration he has been to me. And on September 27, 2019, I got my chance!

Rev West was the keynote speaker at the Annual Mobility Worldwide Conference held in Austin, TX. I wore my favorite "BC" cartoon T-shirt, depicting the character riding the first-ever wheel. Rev West noted the shirt as I shook his hand, and I informed him, "This was the wheel before Mel West got hold of it!"

*--Rob Remig, Editor*

## PRODUCING WHEELCHAIRS FOR 25 YEARS!

Over 80,000 Built!

Since that day in 1994 when Rev Mel West received a request to build a wheelchair suitable for unpaved roads in developing countries, some 29 Affiliate Workshops across the country have sprung up and caught the vision of helping disabled people with their mobility. The 25th Anniversary of Mobility Worldwide was celebrated at the Annual Conference held in Austin, TX this year. Five members of the San Antonio Affiliate attended the Conference, including Richard Baldwin, Roger Galloway, Marge & Carl Coppock, and Rob Remig.

### A SNEAK PEEK INTO THE FUTURE

Next to the highlight of the Conference of Founder Rev West's presence and keynote speech, several prototype "new and improved" features for the Mobility Carts were introduced for our evaluation and consideration. Some of the informational sessions included new adaptations for increased safety and durability, while trying to reduce the weight of the Cart. Some of the other proposed changes are major in concept and construction, one utilizing a molded plastic body, and another with redesign of the front fork assembly to operate more like gears on a bicycle and the ability to "coast" instead of having to continually operate the hand crank.

The plastic molded seat seems to have a lot of interest and is under study by the Mobility Worldwide Research & Development team and members of Design & Standards. The seat is being proposed to us by "Step 2," a design and



manufacturing company that constructs all kinds of children's indoor and outdoor toys and playground equipment. Once a mold is made, many seats can be easily made from that mold, speeding up production and providing improved comfort to the user. Four Mobility Worldwide workshops across the country have been selected to begin building and field testing these seats. More information will follow as evaluation continues.

---

### USAA KNOWS WHAT IT MEANS TO SERVE

USAA is a private Fortune 150 financial services company that provides banking, insurance, and investment to the military community. With headquarters in San Antonio, TX, USAA has over 10,000 employees. Fortunately for Mobility Worldwide, many USAA employees are very active in the community, providing valuable volunteer service to many





agencies. Five USAA employees from their Information Technology Department came out to our workshop on November 15 and worked,



mainly cutting, drilling, and grinding steel parts for the frame and cranking mechanism for the Mobility Cart. We thank Chris #1, Chris #2, Chris #3, Rusty, and Brad as they continue to serve others.

## RAISING FUNDS

While the volunteer Cart builders of Mobility Worldwide TX-San Antonio greatly appreciate the generous support from donors, we are also pleased whenever we have the opportunity to work to raise funds to continue our mission. For several years, we have been the designated charity by the Alamo Ranch Artists League of the Del Webb Hill Country Retreat Fall Arts and Crafts Festival. We were in charge of operating the Raffle, where each of the 60 artisans donated one of his pieces of art to the Raffle.

Another fundraising activity at this October 19-20 event was our sales table, featuring handmade wooden trays, chessboards, serving platters, clipboards



Thanks to the support from the Arts & Crafts Festival organizers, we raised enough funds during the two days to buy materials to build 14 more Mobility Carts!

and several lathe-turned bowls and vases. And we were given the responsibility to prepare and sell lunch on both days.



Members of Jazzy J's Dance & Fitness also assisted us at the Del Webb Hill Country Retreat Fall Arts and Crafts Festival. Several of their members baked homemade cookies and candies, and then came out to the Festival on Saturday and Sunday to sell these items. Just by this one creative activity, Jazzy J's was able to raise funding for Mobility Worldwide for the manufacture of about 2 1/2 Mobility Carts! Thank you, Joslyn Campbell, owner, and those who assisted you.

As a thank-you to Jazzy J's, we had a metal plate engraved and attached it to the tailgate of Mobility Cart, serial number 1435. Now, wherever that Cart is shipped, the name of Jazzy's J's Dance & Fitness will go with it.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

For volunteer opportunities or to request a presentation to your group, please contact Tom Martin, President of Mobility Worldwide TX - San Antonio, at (210)596-4584, or send him an email to [mwsanantonio@gmail.com](mailto:mwsanantonio@gmail.com).

For more information about us, please visit our website: [mwsanantonio.org](http://mwsanantonio.org). You can visit the international office of Mobility Worldwide at [mobilityworldwide.org](http://mobilityworldwide.org).

If you have a change of address, would like to switch to receive the newsletter by email, or if you no longer wish to receive the Mobility Worldwide TX-San Antonio quarterly newsletter, please send your request to [mwsanantonio@gmail.com](mailto:mwsanantonio@gmail.com).

*Thank you for your support!*

*A Donor Receipt will be sent for all donations. Mobility Worldwide TX - San Antonio is a faith-based, 501(c)(3), tax-deductible, all-volunteer organization.*

*We are also able to receive your donation on our webpage at [mwsanantonio.org](http://mwsanantonio.org).*

## NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN HOLIDAY FAIR



Once again this year, the organizers of the Northminster Presbyterian Church invited Mobility Worldwide to participate in their November 16-17 Gift Fair. Our presence at the Gift Fair gave us the opportunity to sell hand-made, fine wooden objects. such as cutting

boards, serving platters, Lazy Susans, clipboards, and lathe-turned wooden bowls and vases.

We were among several non-profit organizations selling handmade gifts as a fundraiser to support their charitable work. Our thanks goes out to Sandra Parrish and the mission outreach team at Northminster, and to Ken McGinnis, pictured here, who is a member of this church and also a volunteer and member of the Board of Directors of Mobility Worldwide Texas-San Antonio. The gifts sold raised enough funding to manufacture an additional 6 1/2 Mobility Carts to be shipped to developing countries.



## PRODUCTION REPORT, 2019

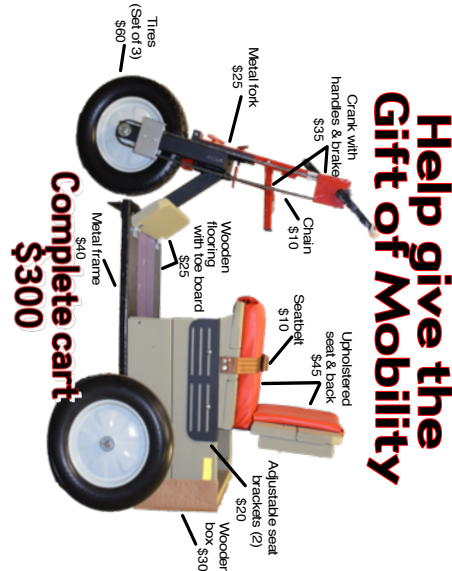
We are pleased to report a summary of our efforts for the Year 2019. The number of "regular" volunteers has remained constant over the past several years at 15, with almost all of those working in the shop four hours a week and several working eight hours. The average time required to build one Cart has improved (been reduced) over the past couple of years to 16 hours, and that takes into consideration cutting the raw lumber, drilling, painting; cutting, drilling, welding and painting steel parts; and assembly and test drive.

Our volunteer building hours were supplemented by several outside volunteer groups who enjoy going out into the community and working on service projects. These groups this year have included the Windcrest Lions and Leos; Rackspace; USAA; University of the Incarnate Word; WellMed; Trinity University; and Bexar County Juvenile Probationers. Overall, we logged in 3,461 work hours, which represents the highest number of volunteer work hours ever for the San Antonio Affiliate Workshop.

Our production of 175 Mobility Carts represents the third largest number of Carts built in one year, only missing tying the second largest year by one Cart.

Shipping Carts this year has been limited to two countries. We shipped 10 Carts to Honduras with our distribution partner, AMIGA (A Mission in God's Amor). Another 65 Carts were shipped to the Mobility Worldwide Brazos Valley Affiliate Workshop to combine with their overseas shipment to Zambia (Africa). We have been working all year with an agency in Mexico that is trying to pave the way for us to meet their government's requirements so we can ship additional Carts into that country.

We are looking forward to the challenges and successes of the New Year!



Yes! I want to partner with Mobility Worldwide TX-San Antonio to sponsor the building of Mobility Cart specialty wheelchairs.

\$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ Cart(s) at \$300 each

\$\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ Cart(s) at \$400 each, which includes a personalized metal plate on the Cart

\$\_\_\_\_\_ toward production of a Cart

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Business \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

My gift is \_\_\_\_\_ in honor of / \_\_\_\_\_ in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Please send an acknowledgement in my/our name (withhold disclosing the amount of our gift) to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable and mail to:  
Mobility Worldwide TX-San Antonio  
P.O. Box 701172, San Antonio, TX 78270