

ROTARY LENDING MEDICAL AIDS, INC.

The initial idea for the development of Rotary Lending Medical Aids, Inc., came as a need by then former Rotary members, Robyn (Wallerich) Turner and Gene Neiges, collaborating after Turner had an auto accident and was recuperating at home. The lack of durable medical goods within the community was quite evident. Gene Neiges' memory of past years, when his teenage daughter was recuperating from an auto accident, was of an organization called The Three Village Garden in New York provided much of the needed medical equipment (wheel chairs, beds, etc.) for the community. After a brief discussion, the idea to have the Wet Mountain Rotary Club sponsor an organization to provide the community with needed medical equipment was set into motion.

In the beginning, it was noted, for such a project to be successful, a clean and accessible storage facility would be needed. After much discussion with the clinic, a deal was made to provide storage space in the ambulance barn. The Rotary club approved the project and moved forward creating a not-for-profit corporation with the 501(c)(3) paperwork being handled by, then member, Jay Printz. The incorporation date for Rotary Lending Medical Aids, Inc. was achieved on October 18, 2007, with the official name and filing number as follows: Rotary Lending Medical Aids, Inc. #20071480157.

The problem of finding needed equipment was solved by member Fred Karsten's (now deceased) relationship with the Silver Key retirement home in Colorado Springs. That organization became an essential resource for the majority of our needs. Those included, wheel chairs of various sizes, crutches for small children, motorized wheelchairs, lifts, walkers, etc. In addition, other resources in Colorado Springs were developed for spare parts and maintenance.

Community member, Lou Kravitz, was one of the first to donate to the cause by providing a much needed "mechanical" hospital bed and new mattress. Electric beds had been offered but they are very heavy and difficult to move with our one or two person moving crew. The first person to use one of our beds was a young child with a broken collar bone and needed to sleep in a upright position.

From this point on, people from the community have donated equipment making the project an enormous success. Rotary Lending Medical Aids, Inc. has never solicited funds for this project but donations from equipment recipients have been used exclusively to fund new equipment and replacement parts. One example of such a need was a community member requiring a knee caddy after foot surgery and the proper piece of equipment was purchased for her.

After several years, Gene Neiges relinquished the leadership to member Nora Drenner along with a binder containing the records and a photograph of local Rotarians demonstrating the equipment in front of the ambulance barn.