

Standing Wheelchair Puts People On Their Feet

By Dee Goerge, Contributing Editor

Ed Bell looks forward to the day when it's common to see people in wheelchairs that allow them to stand up whenever they want. Since he suffered a spinal cord injury in 1982 from a gunshot during a violent attack, he has led by example. He farms, consults, and does motivational speaking while getting around in his own Standing Company wheelchair.

"Most still aren't aware of this wheelchair," Bell says, though the Michigan company has been selling the chairs for more than two decades. "I sat in a wheelchair for 20 years. When I stood up in this chair for the first time it was a 'wow' experience."

Fifteen years later, he continues to consult and speak for The Standing Company in addition to operating his Indiana Bell's Strawberry Farm, where he and his family raise strawberries, asparagus and Doberman puppies.

Thanks to modified equipment, he drives tractor and has always done his own maintenance work. But before the standing chair, he couldn't do one small, but important thing – reach the button to secure the hood on his tractor.

He uses the half-power chair offered by The Standing Company, which is an electric chair with a manual control for standing.

"It uses a set of braces that fasten below the knee caps to hold your legs in place and armrests that slip up when you stand," Bell says. "You just need to have at least one leg or prosthetic to stand on."

The Standing Company also offers a completely manual chair and a full power chair that is all electric.

Besides the extra mobility, being able to stand offers many health benefits – from reducing spasticity, urinary tract infection and pressure sores to improving the cardiovascular and circulatory system. Bell notes that he was able to get off two medications after switching to the Standing Company chair. It's also beneficial for people



Ed Bell gets around and even goes fishing in his own Standing Company wheelchair - an electric chair with a manual control for standing.

in wheelchairs looking for employment, he adds.

Bell says he appreciates that the company is in the U.S. and that it works with clients to fit the right chair and find available funding with insurance and government programs. Company owner, David Maczik, is a veteran who initially developed the standing chair for a friend with MS.

"It's part of my body. I have to have it," Bell admits. "This chair literally puts people on their feet."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, The Standing Company, 5848 Dixie Hwy., Saginaw, Mich. 48601 (ph 800 782-6346; www.thestandingcompany.com; strawberries1983@frontier.com).



With the Action Trackstander, Scott Collier can check on his crops and go over terrain that other manual or power chairs can't handle.

Standup, Tracked Wheelchair Helps Him Farm, Hunt

If it weren't for the Action Trackstander™ it would be much more difficult for Scott Collier to do two of his favorite things - farm and hunt.

"I'm going places I couldn't go before," says the Montgomery, Minn., corn and soybean farmer, who became paralyzed from the waist down after a 2013 farming accident. With assistance from AgrAbility, he was able to modify his tractors and equipment to continue farming. With the tracked chair, manufactured nearby in Marshall, Minn., Collier can check on his crops and go over terrain that none of his other manual or power chairs can.

Being able to stand up makes it possible for him to operate the grain dryer in the fall during harvest and do maintenance work. When seated in it he uses a grabber tool to pick up rocks in his fields, while exercising his hunting dog at the same time.

"I leave it out in my shop. Action Trackchair added some upgrades, including lights and a toolbox," says Collier.

The deep cell batteries last 4 to 5 hrs., depending on the terrain. Collier uses his chair year-round and went through one set

of batteries in two years.

"It does sometimes get hung up in the snow, and it's a little rough because there is no suspension. Adding a softer seat would be beneficial when you're in it for more than two hours," suggests Collier, who added his own seat.

Those issues are minor compared to the chair's benefits, he emphasizes.

The chair has 3 1/2 in. of ground clearance and a zero turning radius. Its joystick controls make it easy to operate, and service from the manufacturer has been good. Collier appreciated the new padding the company added to the metal pipe for more comfortable knee support when standing.

Besides helping him farm, the chair allows him to pheasant hunt with his British yellow Labrador.

"When we go hunting, we transport the chair on a carrier with ramps that hook up to a pickup's receiver hitch," Collier says. "The chair runs great in dirt, grass and weeds."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup Scott Collier (sbcfarms@hotmail.com) or Action Trackchair (www.actiontrackchair.com).

"3-In-1 Feeder" Boosts Pasture Efficiency

"Our new 3-in-1 feeder limits how much your animals can eat. After about 5 to 10 minutes of licking, the animal's tongue gets dry and it can no longer obtain feed. As a result, it ends up consuming small amounts of supplement 10 to 15 times per day, which is more efficient," says Myrna Huber, Huber Ag Equipment, Coronation, Alberta.

Invented in Australia, the 3-in-1 feeder is designed for cattle, sheep and goats. It's called a 3-in-1 feeder because it allows controlled feeding, creep feeding, and free-choice feeding. The feeder is equipped with adjustable skids that can be changed in height to suit different types of livestock.

The system requires animals to lick the feed out of the groove between 2 adjusters. Changing the position of the adjusters changes the ration that animals can consume. The lower side panels have a table to show what the intake of sheep and cattle is at each adjuster setting.

When the lick system is in the most restricted setting, animals lick for 5 to 10 min. between periods of grazing. "The licking period is limited because livestock use the saliva from their tongue to get the feed out of the groove, and the saliva decreases with progressive licks," says Huber.

"The idea is to get the animal's rumen developed so they can use pasture grass more

efficiently," says Huber. "Feeding once a day drastically reduces rumen pH. This decreases forage appetite and limits energy extracted from a livestock producer's cheapest sources of feed - forage and pasture. Limiting intake to small doses ensures the rumen pH stays high, where the microbes that consume forage best operate."

Sheep can be limited to 0.5 lb. per day, and trials have shown that supplement feed can be reduced by 30 percent when fed little and often.

Another advantage to the lick system is that it reduces bossy behavior because it relies on the amount of saliva an animal has, and bossy stock don't have any more saliva than shy stock. "When the bossy stock aren't at the feeder, the shy stock have more of a chance to feed," says Huber.

The smallest 3-in-1 feeder comes mounted on skids. It sells for \$1,080 plus assembly. Two trailer-mounted models are also available - one that holds 108 bu. and the other 51 bu. They sell for \$3,900 and \$3,020, respectively. Shipping charges may apply. Cattle creep gates are available.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Huber Ag Equipment, RR 3, Coronation, Alberta, Canada T0C 1C0 (ph 800 806-0715 or 403 575-1977; www.huberequipment.com or www.3in1feeders.com).



This 3-in-1 feeder allows controlled feeding, creep feeding, and free-choice feeding. Controlled feeding requires animals to lick the feed out of the groove between 2 adjusters (right). Changing the position of the adjusters changes the ration that animals can consume.

