



BESPOKE PLUS

"Enhancing Quality of Life"

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Have you got your new VARILITE™ binder yet?

If not, please call (866) 827-4548. The binder was produced at the Seattle factory and distributed with recent orders. It goes out complete with the new Canadian retail price list and promotional material for the product line.



VARILITE™ in Alberta

Alberta Aid to Daily Living (AADL) program requires all new cushion and back products to be presented by the manufacturer to the seating clinics around that province. Although VARILITE™ is not new to the market (celebrated their 15th year in 2003) we have not had a distributor for the product line in Canada. Now, with RGK Wheelchairs, Inc., as the national distributor, and cushions and backs ready for same day shipping in Canada, we are eager to have AADL product listing to enable us to provide the highest quality of product and services to all Canadians. **Trudie Read**, OTR/L Education Specialist for VARILITE™ will be joined by **Chantal Benoit** for a tour of the seating clinics in Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Calgary, Red Deer, Ponoka, Edmonton, and Grande Prairie February 1-6, 2004!



Titanium Versus Chrome Moly

The positive and negative aspects of using various materials in the construction of wheelchairs have been an item of interest for years. RGK commissioned a study through Manchester University, which revealed some interesting results. This survey was conducted with athletes that were involved in wheelchair basketball and in top physical condition. It was designed to get some concrete data on the performance factors of titanium wheelchairs versus those in chrome moly. It also included information pertaining to fabric wheels over steel wheels. The end result was a titanium product that had 25% improvement in acceleration, 5.5% increase in speed, -26% weight reduction, and -15% reduced energy requirement! Other factors that favor titanium over other material relate to corrosion resistance, ride quality, and metal fatigue.



The everyday user has to study the data to determine the extent of benefit he/she would realize from titanium, but we offer the following information for review: Titanium frames are 50% the weight of an equivalent chrome moly steel frame. This will give a weight savings of 5-6 pounds in the complete wheelchair. The effect of the extra weight cannot be under estimated when taking into consideration the likelihood that it is being lifted with only one hand by the end user, and at arms length. The extra leverage multiplies the weight resulting in an effective pound differential that becomes much more significant when being lifted a number of times per day.

"Six pounds of weight difference does not seem like that much when a lot of us would be better off losing that much around the waist! However, when that six pounds is at arms length and you have to lift it 10 to 30 times a day, 300 to 900 times a month, 3600 to 10,800 times a year, my shoulders tell me go for it and reduce the weight of the product as much as possible. That six pounds three feet away becomes closer to sixteen when the laws of physics get done with it unlike that six pounds around my stomach. Although, I should also consider losing that sooner than later! Seriously, the danger of repetitive strain injury is very real and should be of utmost concern to the user," quotes Dan Weber, Metrologist and 25 year wheelchair user.



Titanium frames are 50% the weight of an equivalent chrome moly frame!

ALACD News

The Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability in partnership with [Pfizer Canada Inc](#) is pleased to announce the 2004 Youth Exchange will be June 29-July 4 in Ottawa.

This is the 4th year for the program supported by the [YMCA Youth Exchanges Canada](#) and the [Department of Canadian Heritage](#).

Fifty (50) delegates from all regions of Canada will be hosted this year. For more info click here: www.ala.ca

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Unlike other metals, titanium is a non-ferrous metal, meaning it does not oxidize and break down as both aluminum and steel. Titanium is completely immune to corrosion, even from salt water!

Titanium naturally absorbs vibration thus any shock from uneven sidewalks or other surfaces is dissipated by the frame resulting in a smoother, less jarring ride for the user. This effect eliminates the need for heavy suspension systems and can even reduce the effect of vibration, such as leg spasm.

Titanium has a high strength to weight ratio, hence titanium wheelchairs can be built stronger without sacrificing the weight advantage over chrome moly. Titanium does not work harden, unlike aluminum for example, which causes frames to become brittle over time.

Building in America

We have mentioned previously that we hope to be able to dot the I's and cross the t's in our desire to manufacture RGK wheelchairs here in Canada in the second half of the 2004 calendar year. To that end, Camalor senior engineer, Mark Fortin joined Reg McClellan for a trip to the factory in the West Midlands of England the third week of January. The trip went well with great discussions and complete review of the job at hand. The numbers are being crunched and we will have more to relay in the next issue of **BESPOKE Plus!**

Camalor Manufacturing, Inc. is dedicated to excellence and good corporate citizenship in all of its operations. It serves its clients through the reliable delivery of a high-quality product at a competitive price with a dedication to the manufacturing process. Camalor is situated in Brockville, Ontario and resident in the Black and Decker building off highway 401. More to come on these discussions in the next issue of **BESPOKE Plus.**

Bits and Bytes

MEDiChair Feb Show Sold Out in BC! Congratulations Scott and Stan!

ALACD announces exchange dates June 29 – July4, 2004 in Ottawa.

Do you know the difference between the regular cover and incontinence cover? The latter has a polyurethane coating between the top layer of the breathable four way stretch material and the reticulated foam, and the mesh cover does not have this. You can see it at the seam where the foam is stitched to the cover. This prevents liquid from going through to the foam, so if the user has an incontinence episode and it hasn't reached over the edge of the cushion, then the liquid does not come in contact with the cushion. But, the cushion is a sealed unit and is waterproof. Regardless of whether the end user has a regular cover or an incontinent cover they would probably wish to wash both the cover and the sealed, waterproof, air and foam cushion.



RGK BESPOKE Plus

BESPOKE PLUS is a free communication vehicle focusing on people, products and services associated with RGK Wheelchairs, Inc., in North America.

If you have an issue, concern, or question that you think we should be expounding on, please contact us at your convenience in the manner of your choice.