



Newsletter 147th Edition

November 2025

OUR MISSION

To reach out and empower people affected by limb loss to achieve their full potential through education, support, and advocacy, and to raise awareness of limb loss by becoming actively involved in our community.

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### **EDITOR'S NOTE** – by Elaine Skaggs

We have successfully arrived in November, and just now are beginning to see some of the beautiful fall colors. I must say it's later than usual, and something I've been looking forward to all summer. We had a very successful October also. We had a great turnout for the Walk and Roll Picnic, we couldn't have asked for better weather, and the food was fantastic! I think everyone really enjoys being out in the fresh air. On October 18 we had our second very successful Yard sale with over \$530.00 raised for the group. And we were blessed with more good weather for that! We did something a little different at the Louisville meeting last month, we all learned a little about yoga. Watching a video about Yoga for Amputees, we worked along with the instructor Stephanie, with everyone participating. It was a great workout, and we all left feeling better than when we came.

However, the month was filled with sadness for many of our members. Michael Portman, one of our founding members of Moving Forward, passed away after a 2 year battle with cancer. Mike's life was one of service to others, whether it be family, his countrymen, his neighbors, his church family, or members of the amputee community. He was a great encourager for everyone who crossed his path. And I'm guessing that he loved seeing people happy and smiling, judging by the way he always had a joke to tell, good and some of the best bad jokes I've ever heard! We will miss Mike tremendously, and wish his wife Sue and all the family comfort and peace through the difficult days ahead.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**MONDAY November 17, 6:30pm - 8:00pm** The IN meeting will take place at PAM Rehabilitation Hospital, 2101 Broadway Street, Clarksville IN.

**SATURDAY November 22, 2:00pm - 4:00pm** The Louisville meeting will take place at Baptist Encompass Rehab Hospital, 11800 Bluegrass Pkwy, Louisville KY.

**SATURDAY December 6, 5:00pm - 8:00pm** Our annual Christmas Party will be held at PAM Rehabilitation Hospital, 2101 Broadway Street, Clarksville, IN. We're still in the planning stages, but this is going to be a blast! Santa will be there with gifts for the kiddos, there'll be food, raffles, crafts and singing. Save the date on your calendar, you won't want to miss it!

**REMEMBER, THERE ARE NO MONTHLY MEETINGS IN DECEMBER!**

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**



# *In Memory of Michael "Mike" David Portman, 1954-2025*



I'll best remember Mike from all the years of working together in building our local amputee support group, starting in 2012. The group started in a local prosthetic company, but quickly ventured out to include any and all amputees, no matter who they used for their prosthetics. Mike was a founding and very proud member and supporter of this group from the very beginning. His laugh was big, his hugs were warm and his passion for family, friends, firefighters, country, church and amputees was always present in the forefront of his mind. I'm thankful for the friendship and trust I had in him. It's hard to imagine him no longer being on this Earth, but I know he wouldn't be too happy with me if I only cried tears of sorrow for him.

I could see him telling me to dry the tears because he's no longer in pain and he's happy to be reunited with those who passed before him. He'd tell me to focus on the laughs we had from his (sometimes terrible) jokes or the fun we had sharing our amputation pranks. He'd tell me to remember all the computer and technology skills he helped with throughout his time with the group. I wouldn't be surprised if Sue found a video of him to all of us in the future stored somewhere in all his computer collections. I'm sure he's creating more jokes and walking around on his restored leg up on the streets of gold. Mike held a huge space in my heart, I'm sure in yours too, if you were lucky enough to know him. Now with him and Belinda to both look down over us, we will forever keep their spirit alive by MOVING FORWARD with our sharing our own passion and mission to keep his memory and this group for many years to come.



I'm forever grateful to have called him my friend. Much love, Kelly



## **Five Benefits of Being Thankful**

Have you ever wondered how to make life better? How can you be happier, healthier, or more fulfilled? Having an attitude of gratitude could be one answer. You may have heard this little catchphrase before. It's possible you just rolled your eyes, too. But does being thankful work? What is gratitude anyway?

Gratitude is the state of being thankful. It's showing appreciation for what you have or receive.

Dr. Robert Emmons, the gratitude guru, takes the definition further. He describes it using two key components:

Gratitude is "an affirmation of goodness. We affirm that there are good things in the world, gifts, and benefits we've received."

Gratitude is our recognition "that the sources of this goodness are outside of ourselves."

So, how can being thankful benefit your life?

Here are 5 benefits of gratitude:

1. Gratitude can help relieve stress.

We all deal with stress daily. Research has found that being grateful might keep our minds from getting so worked up worrying about things. When you're in the middle of a stressful situation, refocusing on what you're grateful for can calm the body and mind. This reduces the symptoms of stress. When you choose gratitude over negativity, you also feel less emotionally charged. A sense of gratitude allows you to respond rather than react in the moment.

2. Gratitude can make you more positive.

According to psychologist Dr. Catherine Jackson, gratitude causes the brain to increase the production of dopamine and serotonin. Dopamine is the "feel-good" neurotransmitter. It's associated with pleasure and reward. It contributes to focus, motivation, and happiness. Serotonin is a chemical that is considered a natural mood stabilizer. It helps reduce depression, regulate anxiety, heal wounds, and maintain bone health. So, a grateful mind allows you to feel more positive emotions.

3. Gratitude strengthens your relationships.

Relationships, whether romantic, family, or friends, can be full of disappointments. As we grow closer to others, we see their flaws. It can be easy to dwell on these. But an attitude of gratitude



allows us to focus more on the good qualities. The more we focus on the good, the more positive attributes we'll find. A series of 2012 studies found that gratitude also increases empathy and reduces aggression. Gratitude motivates people to express sensitivity and concern for others. Aggression, however, is just the opposite and is reduced among grateful people.

#### 4. Gratitude can make you healthier.

The more grateful you are, the healthier you feel. Research supports that, too. Those who practice gratitude tend to have better psychological health. Grateful people also involve themselves in healthy activities and are more willing to seek help for health concerns. Additionally, grateful people are more likely to take care of themselves.

#### 5. Gratitude reduces your risk of depression.

Regularly expressing gratitude can lead to fewer symptoms of depression and anxiety. Being grateful reminds us that not everything is bad. There are positives that we can focus on. Gratitude can make you feel more motivated, which pushes you toward your goals and dreams. A sense of hope helps to protect against depression.

Approaching life with thankfulness can have positive effects across all aspects of life. It's good for you, and it's good for your relationships. Choosing to be thankful and expressing gratitude for what you have can be a wonderful thing. And in case you didn't know, gratitude is contagious. Your attitude of gratitude can create a ripple effect throughout your friends and family, and it isn't restricted for just one day but all year long.

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gratitude  
CHANGES  
everything

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## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

- **Email:** moving4wdamputeegroup@gmail.com
  - **Website:** www.ampmovingforward.com
  - **Facebook:** Moving Forward Limb Loss Network & Social Group
- 
- ***Kelly Grey-Parker***, Co-President / Facebook Editor, kjgrey79@gmail.com 502-235-3146
  - ***Elaine Skaggs***, Co-President / Newsletter Editor, elaineskaggs@ymail.com 502-548-6419
  - ***Brianna Heitzman***, Secretary KY, briannaheitzman@yahoo.com 502-650-6085
  - ***Latisha Judkins***, Secretary IN, tishfrogs@gmail.com 502-345-7467
  - ***Billy Parker***, Treasurer, 1lendingahand@gmail.com, 502-415-2504
  - ***Cedric Griffin***, Member at Large, mrcdgriffin89@gmail.com, 502-830-8481
  - ***Mallori Puchino***, Member at Large, mallori.puchino@yahoo.com, 502-296-3560

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1404 Browns Lane, Suite C  
Louisville, KY 40202  
Phone: 502.895.8050  
Fax: 502.895.8056  
Web: [www.louisvilleprosthetics.com](http://www.louisvilleprosthetics.com)

742 East Broadway  
Louisville, KY 40202  
Phone: 502.584.2959  
Fax: 502.582.3605  
Web: [www.louisvilleprosthetics.com](http://www.louisvilleprosthetics.com)



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**Chris Luckett, C.P.**  
1404 Browns Lane, Suite C  
Louisville, KY 40202  
Phone: 502.895.8050  
Fax: 502.895.8056  
Web: [www.louisvilleprosthetics.com](http://www.louisvilleprosthetics.com)

742 East Broadway  
Louisville, KY 40202  
Phone: 502.584.2959  
Fax: 502.582.3605  
Web: [www.louisvilleprosthetics.com](http://www.louisvilleprosthetics.com)

### Lending A Hand LLC

Keeping Limbs And Lives Safe In The Workplace

**Billy Parker**

Owner/Keynote Speaker

PO Box 94721

Louisville, KY 40091

502-415-2504

[slendingahand@gmail.com](mailto:slendingahand@gmail.com)

Facebook & YouTube: BillyPAmputee




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**R. Wayne Luckett, L.P., L.Ped.**  
1404 Browns Lane, Suite C  
Louisville, KY 40202  
Phone: 502.895.8050  
Fax: 502.895.8056  
Web: [www.louisvilleprosthetics.com](http://www.louisvilleprosthetics.com)

742 East Broadway  
Louisville, KY 40202  
Phone: 502.584.2959  
Fax: 502.582.3605  
Web: [www.louisvilleprosthetics.com](http://www.louisvilleprosthetics.com)



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**David Kaufer**  
CPOA, COE  
Clinic Manager  
1931 West Street, Suite A  
New Albany, IN 47150  
Tel: (812) 941-0966  
Fax: (812) 941-0938  
Cell: (812) 786-5350  
[dkaufer@hanger.com](mailto:dkaufer@hanger.com)  
[HangerClinic.com](http://HangerClinic.com)



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