At age 59, Sharon’s life isn’t what she expected when she was in her forties. When stiffness and weakness in her legs progressed to tripping and clumsiness, she needed to see a doctor. The diagnosis wasn’t good.

Sharon was diagnosed with Primary Lateral Sclerosis (PLS), a very rare disease which causes weakness in voluntary muscles such as those used to control the legs, arms and tongue. Sharon has experienced all these symptoms, and the hoarseness and slurred speech gave way to the inability to speak.

In fact, Sharon says, “People often assume I’m deaf and so they shout, or they think I’m just not very smart.” But because of generous people like you, help was on the way.

First, through the Institute On Disability’s (IOD) Assistive Technology Program, Sharon tried out an iPad to ensure it would meet her communication needs. It did.

Knowing that we were on the right path, GSIL could then locate some funding to help purchase the iPad. Now, using the Flip Writer app, Sharon can write her thoughts, and stay connected with those around her. The iPad also allows her to continue to write poetry, a feat nearly impossible with a pen and paper.

Next we tackled the home accessibility piece through our Access Modification Program (AMP). A few changes in the bathroom and kitchen, and a 50-foot ramp on her home (yes, 50 feet!) enable Sharon to live independently and get in and out of her home.

Sharon is no longer isolated by her surroundings or her inability to communicate.

Her thank you note says it all – she is very grateful to you and everyone who has helped improve her life.
What does AMP stand for? An energy drink, you say? A quick way to say amplify? No, AMP is GSIL's Access Modification Program and it amps up our consumers' abilities to stay in their own homes and access their communities whenever they want.

In fact, last year we were able to effect 132 modification projects which included stair lifts, vehicle modifications, ramps, some durable medical equipment and grab bars. But there are so many more needs and our ability to move quickly to meet them is a challenge. (For a great example of work well done, see the article on page 1.)

A major stumbling block is finding two qualified builders to bid on each projects as they arise. Indeed we have a stable of fair and trustworthy contractors who perform this work, but homebuilders are busy people and so sometimes we have to wait. Which means a person with a disability is stuck at home, or can't get to the bathroom, or can't drive his/her car. Sometimes for up to six months.

So, the Development Committee of the Board has “adopted” the AMP program and is looking to raise all kinds of resources for these much needed services. Already they have identified several builders in the Monadnock Region, where the need is high but resources are low, and identified other sources of talent where contractors could be located. They've identified some of the major stumbling blocks to rapid response, and have brainstormed ideas. Stay tuned. Last, they've listed some potential funding resources. But the program needs more help and you could save the day.

If you know a builder who would like to bid on projects, please send him/her to us. If you know of a church that donates funds to help with ramps or stair lifts, please let us know. Or if you know about a business that does tub cuts or other kinds of bathroom modifications, please hook us up!

GSIL’s mission is to help people with disabilities be as independent as they choose. Modifications to their homes are an essential piece of the puzzle. I know our consumers will be so grateful to the board members for their help, and will be equally grateful to you for any help you can provide.

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CONNECT WITH WHAT MATTERS

MobilityWorks
54 Wentworth Ave.
Londonderry NH 03053
603-210-4610

www.mobilityworks.com
Sending Love To Our Consumers

The staff of GSIL participated in its third annual Baked Goods Silent Auction on February 11th. But this year, instead of a Christmas theme, we held our “Silent Sweetie” Valentine Silent Auction.

As usual, this amazing staff jumped in with enthusiasm. Peanut butter pie, kissing frog cookies, truffles, carrot cake… The list goes on and on. It was hard for this writer to choose which delectable goodies to bid on. But I was certainly glad to win both the Blackberry/Raspberry pie and a loaf of Anadama bread.

You can see for yourself the vast array of donations. In addition to food, we also auctioned off perfume, books and jewelry. After all, some of us are watching our waists. Special thanks to the Cupcakery for their donation of 4 giant cupcakes and to Cobblestone Design for their donation of a $25 gift card for flower arrangements.

In all, over $400 was raised which will help consumers overcome obstacles and solve some of those hard-to-meet issues. Oh, and we had fun doing it!
Let's Get Ready To RUUUUUMBLE!

Hoops on Wheels is an all-day basketball tournament where players use wheelchairs - whether they have a disability or not!

You choose your league: Competitive or Recreational

Event Details: Tournament will take place on May 7, 2016 from 8:00am-6:00pm with games beginning every 35 minutes at Pembroke Academy and Three Rivers School (both in Pembroke, NH).

*All proceeds benefit Granite State Independent Living and its mission to promote life with independence for seniors and people with disabilities throughout New Hampshire.

Learn more at www.gsil.org/hoops!

Out With The Old... In With The New!

The Granite State Independent Living (GSIL) website has received a facelift and we’re excited for you to see it! Check out www.gsil.org on your desktop, tablet or smartphone to get a first hand look at our new features:

- Easy to Navigate
- Mobile Friendly
- Highest Level of Accessibility

So take a look and let us know what you think! Visit us online at www.gsil.org to learn more about our mission, services we offer or to subscribe to our monthly News & Events email.