

would provide comparable function. In both these cases, the amputee insisted a funding request be made to The War Amps even against the clinic team's recommendation.

Every professional involved in fitting amputees will run into the difficult issue of saying "No" to a fitting at some point. It is the responsibility of the expert team assessing amputees to ensure that the amputee's best interests are met, even if that means saying "No." Facilities invest a lot of time with amputee clients to explain their reasoning and this must be shared with funding agencies like The War Amps. Only if we are aware of your specific concerns and observations can The War Amps ensure we are judging each request fairly, by taking **all** the circumstances into account.

Any comments or questions concerning the funding issues outlined above or others you may encounter can be addressed to Adele Fifield, Director, National Amputee Centre or Suzanne Brûlé, Manager, Adult Amputee Programs call 1-877-NAC-CIPA or E-mail nac@waramps.ca.

Custom-Made Crutches

Gary Kingsley, a former member of the CHAMP Program, has designed a heavy-duty set of crutches which can be customized for individual activity levels, weight and height. Gary, who does not use a prosthesis, uses crutches every day and conceived the idea for his custom-made crutches when all of the other crutches he tried kept breaking (which was obviously a safety issue for him). The crutches that Gary designed and has used for the last three years have very successfully met his needs for durability, stability, and ease of use. The design specifics are:

- ✓ made from titanium, a strong and light-weight material;
- ✓ double-tips provide a safer "foot print" and provide maximum stability - one tip is always firmly on the ground to minimize slipping or sinking into soft surfaces;
- ✓ underarm and hand holds made from tough plastic;
- ✓ foam filled to keep water out of the interior ensuring no mess when crutches are laid down after getting wet;
- ✓ individual customization is available - for example, the addition of a hook for holding packages or a built-in flashlight.

To make a custom pair of crutches Gary requires the following information: height; weight; measurement from top of underarm support to the centre of the hand support; measurement from centre of hand support to the ground; measurement from top of underarm support to the bottom ("tips" of present set of crutches) and any additional accessories required.

Price varies depending on individual requirements, starting at \$550 Cdn., and include a life-time warranty on all titanium and plastic parts.

To order a pair of crutches or obtain further information call (506) 636-9086.

