March is Wheelchair Collection Month!
Follow the incredible journey of Kekoa’s wheelchair inside!
I will praise the Lord at all times. I will constantly speak his praises... let all who are helpless take heart.  

PSALM 34:1-3

When our Wheels for the World team returned from Cuba, I was handed a small, folded note written in halting English by Rosita, an 11-year-old Cuban girl with spina bifida. This child had spent most of her life dragging herself through the dirt or being pushed in a rusty, adult-sized wheelchair.  

Then our Wheels team came to her village. We lifted Rosita off the ground and into her new, junior-sized pink wheelchair with streamers on the handles. It was smooth, fast, and she could not contain her joy. Overwhelmed with gratitude for her wheelchair and children's Bible, Rosita was bubbling over. She excitedly asked if she could send me a note. And so, I unfolded it and read her scrawled words...  

I was thrilled that she treasured her new wheelchair, but there was something else. I was moved by Rosita's heart of gratitude. Her family is very poor by America's standards, and knowing that I would personally read her message, Rosita could have asked for many things. But she didn’t. She simply gushed with gratitude, then signed her name, “Without any other thing and much love!”  

This is what makes Wheels for the World so special. The amazing grace of Jesus overflows whenever a person who is full empties himself into someone who is in need. The result? Rosita, and thousands like her, gain a new heart in Christ that brims over with gratitude to God. All of it ignites the Savior's glory, making his goodness shine even brighter with every wheelchair and Bible given!  

Rosita was talking about you when she wrote, “We are so happy to know that there are people that care about disabled in Cuba.” And I hope that makes your heart bubble over with gratitude. As you pray for and support Wheels for the World, you are filling up someone's desperate need. By the way, it’s Wheelchair Collection Month, so donate your used but serviceable chair to Joni and Friends. That said, without any other thing and with much love... God bless you for caring!
Hope Springs Up!

On the day Kekoa was born, doctors told his mother, Joy, that little Kekoa would never survive through the night. But Kekoa, whose name means “Courageous Warrior” in Hawaiian, not only fought through that first night — he lived an incredible life. Severely disabled and medically fragile due to his cerebral palsy, Kekoa finally said goodbye to his earthly family on his 26th birthday, when he went to live forever with Jesus.

Kekoa was never able to speak, but he communicated unending love through his big smile and loud giggles. He was never able to walk, but Kekoa’s mission was to teach others how to walk with the Lord, which he did daily through his life message: “Come as you are. We were all created with value. Jesus loves you and his plan is worth following.”

Through the selfless and back-breaking work that was involved in caring for Kekoa — the lifting, turning and changing of over 70,000 diapers over the course of Kekoa’s 26 years – Joy discovered that there is more to this life than suffering. She now inspires us all to “focus on the good and true instead of on exhaustion and pain.”

Joy’s constant encouragement is to “see beyond the norm into the eternal.”

Cerebral palsy is the most common motor disability among children. 10,000 babies are born with cerebral palsy yearly. One in 323 children has some form of cerebral palsy; 41% with co-occurring epilepsy.

That’s Kekoa’s legacy, and it can be yours, too, as you partner with Joni and Friends. Watch Joy and Kekoa’s inspiring story at joniandfriends.org/kekoa and learn how you can share hope through the donation of a wheelchair.

And that’s why Joy donated Kekoa’s wheelchair to Joni and Friends. “If one person can come to know Christ because of Kekoa’s life in his wheelchair, then Kekoa’s life will continue to have an eternal impact for glory,” explained Joy as she tenderly caressed her son’s empty chair.

But Kekoa’s chair won’t stay empty for long! Because our Joni and Friends team will refurbish it to like-new condition, and it will be given to another disabled child in desperate need. And Joy’s prayer is that “a new child will come to know how much God loves them” through Kekoa’s wheelchair. You see, through Wheels for the World, you’re not just distributing wheelchairs, you’re giving hope to the hopeless.

“A wheelchair changes an entire family’s life,” said Joy. It shows the needy and disabled that “love is real, love is tangible, and love can roll.” And through the gift of a wheelchair, “hope springs up.”
They Came to Know Christ Through a Wheelchair!

Every wheelchair donated is restored and given to someone in need, like 4-year-old Angel, who has cerebral palsy. Angel’s mother, Martha, was so ashamed of her son that for the last four years she would cover him with a blanket so no one could see him. But through your love and the gift of a wheelchair for little Angel, Martha now sees her child with new eyes. Our Joni and Friends team shared the Gospel with Martha. We gave her a Bible, the Joni book, and food so she and Angel could be fed in both body and soul.

Martha once thought her world had fallen apart. But now, through your prayers and generosity – and the simple gift of a wheelchair – Martha and Angel have new hope for a brighter future. Thank you for sharing God’s love in such beautiful ways!

Here is how you can help!

- Donate a wheelchair. Used wheelchairs will be refurbished to like-new condition and given to a needy person impacted by disability along with a Bible and the Joni book!
- Join our Wheels for the World Chair Corps and collect the wheelchairs that other people donate! See what it’s like to be a Chair Corps volunteer at jonifriends.org/bernie.

Visit jonifriends.org/chair-corps or call 818.707.5664 to find a collection site near you!

March is Wheelchair Collection Month at Joni and Friends.

75 Million
People Worldwide Need a Wheelchair*

**Field Ministry Highlights**

**From Texas**

When Andrew and Jeanette adopted one-year-old Ryle from China, they knew he had spina bifida, hydrocephalus, clubbed feet and required several major surgeries, but they weren't prepared for the mental and emotional strain known as “caregiver fatigue.” As Jeanette explained, there were times she was so tired that “my body gave out and I simply couldn’t get out of bed.” But at Family Retreat in Texas, Ryle flourished and his new parents found the support they so desperately needed. “We met other parents who understand what we go through every day; who live with the same pressures. There was an immediate connection that we do not have with family and long-time friends,” shared Andrew. Thank you for strengthening special needs families – all across the country and all over the globe!

**From Missouri**

Having two children with disabilities brings twice the blessings, but also twice the burden. Tony and Kim know this full well. Their son Jonah has autism, and his sister Jaylee has Down syndrome. And over the last 21 years of parenting their two beautiful children, it wasn’t until they found Joni and Friends Missouri that they felt supported in such powerful ways. Kim explains, “It’s the first time a ministry reached out to us personally just to find out how we were doing.” And through Family Retreat at Home, monthly Family Fun Nights for the whole family and the online marriage enrichment groups offered twice a month, Tony and Kim are making real friends during this season of social distancing that will last a lifetime. “We can tell that a lot of love and intentionality go into everything,” beamed Kim. Thank you for ministering to the hearts of parents and children during this trying time of life! Your love holds families together!

**From Pennsylvania**

Stephanie lives with the challenges of a cognitive disability, physical disabilities and an anxiety disorder. These hardships have been greatly magnified due to her father’s death and the coronavirus pandemic, but – praise God – so has the love of Jesus, poured out through you and Joni and Friends Pennsylvania! And as her mom, Denise, shared, “Stephanie smiled more than she has at any time during the entire period of quarantine all because of Family Retreat at Home. We felt so loved!” Denise received the support and spiritual care she needed as a widow and the mom of a special needs daughter through Family Retreat at Home, too. It’s your support and generosity that give families like Denise and Stephanie’s the unconditional love and acceptance they so desperately need. You’re providing hope through hardships!

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. 

*Lamentations 3:22*
More Stories From the Field!

From Chicago

Tony, a young man with Down syndrome and hearing loss, was always known as “The Life of the Party.” That is, until his father died, and Tony lost his joy. Just when the pain of losing his father seemed unbearable, Tony and his mother, Alyce, went to our Joni and Friends Chicago Family Retreat where Tony could work through his pain and begin healing with Jesus. And after Family Retreat, Tony brought out all the photos of his dad that he had hidden in his grief.

Alyce, too, found healing and comfort through Family Retreat and the weekly online support group offered by Joni and Friends Chicago for the moms of children with disabilities. Through Joni and Friends and your ongoing partnership, “You feel like you’re part of the rest of the world,” explains Alyce. “It’s a feeling you just can’t get anywhere else!”

From Tennessee

As a young woman with epilepsy, developmental and cognitive delays, Lindsey has suffered under the strain of COVID-19 restrictions more than most. Her compromised immune system has forced her to live under the strictest quarantine, and as a result, Lindsey felt isolated, alone, and forgotten. But God never forgot Lindsey, and neither did her friends at Joni and Friends Tennessee! Not only is Lindsey able to connect with Family Retreat friends during our monthly Family Plus Zoom calls which have become her “lifeline,” but we also organized a special drive-by visit to lift Lindsey’s spirits. And as she stood safely socially-distanced on her porch, two dozen friends drove by Lindsey’s house cheering her on and giving her hope through these daily hardships.

There are lots of exciting events happening in your area, too!

In addition to Family Retreats and Wheels for the World outreaches, our Field teams are offering Respite Events, Support Groups, Church Trainings and all sorts of Family Fun gatherings.

Visit joniandfriends.org/events today and find out how you can get involved!
God does not choose to display his glory through burning bushes; He chooses you! This inspiring, year-long devotional by Joni Eareckson Tada, focuses on your Heavenly Father, how he cares for you every day, and how his love enables you to live as a spectacle of his glory.

In this devotional, you will find great comfort and encouragement by focusing on the one who longs to lead and guide you every step of the way, every day. Don’t ever think your life is too ordinary, your world too small, or your work too insignificant. All of it is a stage set for you to glorify God.

**Product Details:**
- Padded hardcover
- 4 x 6¼
- 384 pages

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