



For Immediate Release

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**City of Kentwood and Hanger Clinic's Second
Limb Loss Awareness 5K Set for Saturday, April 27**
Family Friendly Event to Include Educational Opportunities and Fun Activities

Kentwood, Michigan, April 1, 2019 – In conjunction with Limb Loss Awareness Month, the City of Kentwood is again partnering with Hanger Clinic, a local prosthetic and orthotic patient care provider, to offer the second annual Limb Loss Awareness 5K race on April 27.

Open to people of all abilities, the family friendly event will continue to raise funds for Kentwood's adaptive recreation programs, which exist to provide people of all abilities a chance to recreate in a positive and safe environment. The [race route](#) will include sections of the East-West and Paul Henry-Thornapple Trails. Packet pick-up is at 9 a.m. followed by the start of the clock-timed race at 10 a.m.

Jessica Curtis, whose right leg was amputated below the knee five years ago, will share her story before the race kicks off. Curtis was born with one leg shorter than the other and went through numerous leg-lengthening procedures before electing to have her leg amputated. Now fitted with a custom-designed prosthetic leg, Jessica is able to be more active and will be walking the 5K with her family. As a certified peer visitor through Hanger Clinic's nationwide AMPOWER program, Curtis is a supportive listening ear and confidant for others who are on an amputation journey.

"We are honored Jessica will share her story with the community at the Limb Loss Awareness 5K, and hope it inspires others to do the same," said Katelyn Bush, Kentwood recreation program coordinator. "The addition of a speaker is one of several new features planned this year to really set the tone for the event as inclusive, educational and fun for everyone involved."

This year's event will include a one-mile fun run just for kids beginning and ending at [Bowen Station Park](#). Kids who participate will receive a t-shirt and ribbon. Top finishers will be awarded medals. The kids' race will start at 11 a.m. and costs \$5 per child. Also new this year will be a bounce house, face painting, games and food trucks.

At 9:45 a.m., individuals who have experienced limb loss will be encouraged to participate in taking photos for #ShowYourMettle, a social media campaign organized by the [Amputee Coalition](#) that will take place the same day of the race. The Amputee Coalition's "Show Your Mettle Day" emboldens amputees to proudly wear and show their prosthetic and/or assistive devices.

Hanger Clinic Community Care Coordinator Nikki Stoner says the event is a great way for individuals who have experienced limb loss to connect with others in the amputee community.

As an amputee herself, Stoner knows just how important it is to have a strong support network when experiencing limb loss. Since having her leg amputated after experiencing a gunshot wound on the opening day of deer hunting season almost 25 years ago, limb loss awareness and support of fellow amputees has been a passion for Stoner.

“Whenever I meet a new amputee, I always say, ‘welcome to the family!’” Stoner said. “Being able to truly empathize, to say I understand because I’ve been through it, makes a big difference in helping someone through their amputation journey.

“It is incredibly impactful when the limb loss community gathers together for an event like this.”

The day will feature several educational components. Signs with facts about limb loss and amputation will be placed throughout the race course. When participants are not racing, they can learn about amputation at community booths.

Hanger Clinic will have one of Winter the dolphin’s prosthetic tails for kids to look at and touch as an interactive learning experience. Winter is the dolphin that lost her tail after it became entangled in a crab trap in 2005. In 2006, Kevin Carroll, an expert prosthetist and vice president of prosthetics at Hanger Clinic heard her story and offered to fit her with a prosthetic tail that would allow Winter to swim again. Her movie debut in “Dolphin Tale” premiered on Sept. 23, 2011.

In addition, Hanger Clinic will have other prosthetics, as well as orthotics, on hand to show people how they are made and answer questions. Spectrum Health, Advanced Cardiac & Vascular Amputation Prevention Centers and College Park Industries will also have booths on-site.

Race results will be put on display at Bowen Station Park and posted online shortly after the race. Four first place awards will be given to the first adult men and women amputees and nonamputees who cross the finish line. The event is set to conclude at 1 p.m.

Registration for the 5K is \$30 in advance at runsignup.com or \$35 on race day. Registrants will receive a t-shirt and goodie bag.

Race organizers are also seeking volunteers for the event. Those interested may sign up [online](#).

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