

## Inspired by wife, Peter Lamoureux opens Silver Cross business

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When Peter Lamoureux' wife Ann's mobility became compromised after being diagnosed with multiples sclerosis, he learned first hand the high cost of in-home medical supplies that assist patients with mobility needs.

Multiple Sclerosis is a disease that affects the central nervous system with symptoms including fatigue, loss of balance, poor muscle coordination and vision issues. Ann was diagnosed with the disease 10 years ago. Lamoureux said he did not want his wife to lose access to any part of their two-story Wheaton home, so they installed chair lifts and railings to provide assistance.



**Peter Lamoureux, of Wheaton, and his wife, Ann, attend a walk for multiple sclerosis awareness in Chicago. Lamoureux experienced first-hand how expensive mobility and accessibility equipment can be for a home when Ann was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, so he opened Silver Cross in West Chicago, a franchise that sells used equipment to make it more affordable for those who need it. (Submitted Photo)**

Fast forward a few years to a time Lamoureux, who worked in sales for a pulp company, found himself between careers. Remembering the cost of the lifts and other equipment installed in their home, Lamoureux began to look into the medical supply field. He turned to Silver Cross, a Canadian-based medical supply company that specializes in selling gently used medical equipment – equipment similar to what he installed for his wife in their home. Because the equipment sold by Silver Cross is used, it's available for a fraction of the cost of new equipment, Lamoureux said.

In 2009 he opened the first Silver Cross franchise in West Chicago – one of only four in the United States.

"I was looking for a way to reinvent myself, but I wanted to do something that was rewarding and useful. The whole recycling aspect was something that appealed to me," Lamoureux said. "It seems like it's been a great fit."

Medical equipment such as chair lifts, wheelchair lifts, ramps and railing systems can be quite expensive, which can have a negative impact on someone who needs such a device but can't afford it, he said.

" Oftentimes people will go without the equipment and settle for immobility, or move out of their house into a different environment," he said. "Here we can provide what people need and save them a considerable amount of money. It's a great service to provide people the opportunity to stay in their home."

Medical lifts, ramps, scooters and other devices have a typical "life" of approximately 15 years. Unfortunately, the medical devices often last longer than the patients who use the devices. Families sell the devices to companies like Silver Cross, which then refurbishes the items and sells them at a reduced price. Most medical devices in Lamoureux' store, 1275 Roosevelt Road, are fewer than five-years-old, he said.

He works with customers to find the right products for their needs. He said people think they need a wheelchair ramp, but don't realize a porch lift can be more cost effective.

"We make sure our clients get what they need in order to live a full life," he said.

Since shifting careers, Lamoureux said he is constantly rewarded by seeing the extent to which people go to help out aged family members live a more full life with in-home medical equipment.

"I see a lot of people who build a room for mom, or put in a stair lift for mom to come live with them. You see the love that friends and family members have when they're willing to help their families," he said.

### **Silver Cross**

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