

Tuesday, November 25, 2008

## Longtime visitor finds niche for prosthetics/orthotics in Sauk Centre *Charles Kuffel has been coming to Sauk Centre for 40 years and will now see patients on Saturdays*

By Bryan Zollman

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Charles Kuffel holds a prosthetic while at St. Michael's Hospital recently. Kuffel will provide his experience in the field to patients beginning Dec. 6. HERALD PHOTO BY BRYAN ZOLLMAN

Prosthetics at 763-755-9500.

That means he'll still make the drive on weekends to his favorite summer getaway. But that's fine by him. Since his parents retired and own a lake home on Sauk Lake, he can still revisit his old traditions, and provide a much-needed service to people in the area.

After spending recreational weekends in Sauk Centre as a child and young adult at the family cabin, Charles Kuffel fell in love with the town. Now, a grown man, father of four and a certified orthotist and prosthetist, Kuffel is still making the drive from his home city of Minneapolis on Saturday mornings. But starting Dec. 6, it will be to see patients at St. Michael's Hospital.

Kuffel is the owner of Arise Orthotics & Prosthetics in Blaine, but is expanding his services to the Sauk Centre area for those requiring orthotics and prosthetics. Orthotics consist of devices that brace the body while prosthetics consist of devices that replace body parts.

An example of an orthotic is a diabetic shoe or insert or a cranial remolding orthoses for infants with asymmetric head shapes. An example of a prosthetic is a artificial hand or arm.

Kuffel, 41, attended the University of Arizona where he earned a degree in exercise physiology.

"That's where I became interested in rehabilitation and the many different disciplines available," said Kuffel.

After graduating from Arizona Kuffel attended Northwestern University's orthotic and prosthetic programs and has worked in the field for the past 14 years, most recently with Gillette's Children's Specialty Healthcare in St. Paul. He is board certified in both areas and as a fellow of the American Academy of Orthotics and Prosthetists, is one of only a handful of practitioners with the highest level credentials in the state.

Kuffel said the field of orthotics and prosthetics encompasses a wide range of areas in the rehabilitation process.

"Being certified in both disciplines has given me the opportunity to be involved in all areas, from managing patients who have sustained severe tissue burns to children with asymmetric head shapes, to patients who wear diabetic shoes and amputees who wear microprocessor prosthetic devices," Kuffel said.

Kuffel will hold appointments Saturday mornings at St. Michael's Hospital beginning Sept. 6. Appointments can be made by calling Arise Orthotics &