The Friday Four: The Man With The Bionic Hand

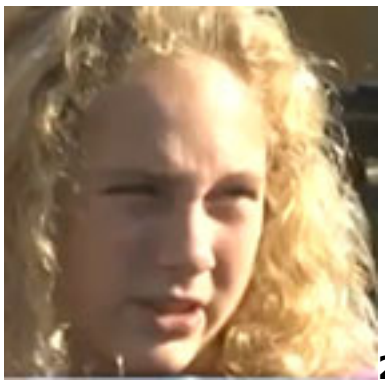
Mike Schmidt, Editor, Surgical Products

The Friday Four seeks to highlight some of the people behind some of the interesting stories I stumble upon during my daily search for relevant content. Happy Friday!

1. Dennis Aabo Sorensen -- I'm somewhat embarrassed to say I've spent more than a handful of minutes of my 29-plus years on this earth wondering if various plotlines from the *Terminator* [1]movies will actually play out in real life. So when I came across this week's news about European researchers creating a robotic hand that returned the sense of touch to a Danish amputee, I immediately thought of one of my favorite action flicks [2].

Whatever your thoughts are about the future of robotic technology or the potential for a world teeming with futuristic Terminators, it's difficult to argue that this particular week-long experiment was anything other than an unequivocal success. Dennis Aabo Sorensen – a man who lost his hand about 10 years ago – was able to use the bionic hand to feel several different objects of varying size, shape, and texture. Furthermore, researchers consider Sorensen's experience with the hand a major step toward finding ways to create better and more useful prosthetics.

It's these kinds of stories that make me wonder about the relationship between humanity and the ever-changing technology it develops and employs. Will the products and devices created over the course of the next several years and decades continue to make the world a better place? Will it always be this way? Were the last three paragraphs nothing more than a thinly-veiled excuse for me to reference the *Terminator* movies? Let's just move on.



2. KatieRose Hamilton -- The worst ailments are both debilitating *and* difficult to treat. Thirteen-year-old KatieRose Hamilton suffers from one of those types of ailments. It’s called trigeminal neuralgia (TN), and it's characterized by significant facial pain that comes on without warning. According to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NIH), the condition can be caused by a blood vessel pressing on the trigeminal nerve as it exits the brain stem. Furthermore, the compression causes damage to the protective coating around the nerve or causes it to wear away. TN is sometimes referred to as “the suicide disease” because living with it can be unbearable. Here’s how Hamilton describes the pain:

“It feels like, you know, those really thick kitchen knives? It feels like someone’s stabbing that in the side of my head for like two or three hours. And there’s nothing you can do.”

Hamilton already underwent one brain surgery in an attempt to alleviate the pain, but her symptoms returned approximately eight months later. Now the Virginia girl hopes an experimental procedure championed by Dr. Mark Linskey and California’s UC Irvine Medical Center will be the solution to her problem. See the video below to learn more:

3. Fanny Fellesen -- A 3D-printed hip implant is changing the life of a 16-year-old Swedish girl named Fanny Fellesen. A rare hereditary hip condition – one which causes tumor growth and skeletal deformities – almost forced Fellesen to spend the rest of her life in a wheelchair. However, a company called Mobelife changed her fortunes. It employed 3D printing to create customized hip implants for Fellesen. They match her anatomy exactly, and they have had a transformative effect on her health. Fellesen is no longer as reliant on others to assist her with daily tasks, she isn't confined to her wheelchair nearly as often as she was in the past, and she's walking more and more as time passes. Check out

more in the video below:

4. Bruce Campbell, M.D. -- I can count on one hand the number of writers whose work causes me to drop whatever I'm doing and read it immediately. Dr. Bruce Campbell, an otolaryngologist at the Medical College of Wisconsin, is one of those writers. A work colleague pointed me in the direction of his blog on the Froedtert & Medical College of Wisconsin website [3] a little more than a year ago. I was stunned by the quality of his writing and immediately asked him to contribute to *Surgical Products* as our "backpage" columnist. Dr. Campbell made his debut with the magazine in the July/August 2013 issue and has contributed four pieces in all. His latest piece, entitled "Suture Removal In The Mid-21st Century," [4] is his best work yet.

It's rare to come across an individual ready, willing, and capable to churn out consistently great writing. Dr. Campbell does just that. It'll be a few weeks before I expect to see another piece from Dr. Campbell, but I'm already looking forward to it. Please check out his work. It's not to be missed.

Have any nominees for The Friday Four? Email me at mike.schmidt@advantagemedia.com *[5]. Check out more news, blogs, and product content at* www.surgicalproductsmag.com *[6].*

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