Amputee Organist to Perform at Crystal Cathedral

September 8, 2004

GARDEN GROVE, Calif., Sept. 8 /PRNewswire/ -- On Friday, September 10, 2004 at 8:00 pm organist Mark Thallander will perform in a Keyboard Benefit Concert held in his honor. Thallander is one of many renowned organists and pianists scheduled to perform at Friday's benefit; the only difference is Thallander plays the organ with a computerized prosthetic arm.

Friday, September 10, 2004 - 8:00 PM
Keyboard Benefit for Mark Thallander
at the Crystal Cathedral
12141 Lewis Street
Garden Grove, CA 92840

On a rainy night in August 2003, Thallander's car hydroplaned off a Maine turnpike and rolled over. The Southern California organist and music instructor lost half his blood and sustained major injuries necessitating the amputation of his left arm at his shoulder.

After a year of rehabilitation, Thallander has resumed his musical career, playing with his natural right arm and a computerized prosthesis to replace the functionality of his left arm. He has been fit with two prosthetic arms by Hanger Prosthetics and Orthotics Upper Extremity Specialist, Randy Alley, CP. Both of Thallander's prostheses are myo-electric, which means the prosthesis is powered by residual limb muscle control. The patient adjusts his muscle movement to operate the arm naturally. One of Thallander's prosthetic myo-electric arms is suitable for daily use, while the other prosthetic arm is an adaptive prosthesis designed especially for playing the organ.

"Mark's adaptive prosthesis allows for his thumb to move from side to side in order to play the keys, while the middle fingers stay still," Alley said. "His adaptive prosthesis is truly unique and one of a kind, designed especially for a truly unique one of a kind individual."

"They've never done this before," Thallander said. "This is a new creation. They'll take a mold of my right hand. It's quite an artistic thing."

About Hanger

Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, Hanger Prosthetics & Orthotics, a division of Hanger Orthopedic Group, Inc (NYSE: HGR), owns and operates some 600 orthotic and prosthetic (O&P) patient care centers nationwide. Staffed by nearly 900 certified practitioners, Hanger Prosthetics & Orthotics provides patients with convenient, consistent, high quality care.

SOURCE Hanger Orthopedic Group, Inc.
CONTACT: Media Contact: Desiree Voinche, +1-301-280-4581, dvoinche@hanger.com, or On-site Contact: Randy Alley, +1-310-291-4543, both of Hanger Orthopedic Group, Inc.