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# THEY CAN'T KEEP LINDA DOWN

CRIPPLING cerebral palsy didn't keep Linda Down from trying to swim in the deep end of the pool as a kid. It didn't keep her from completing last year's New York Marathon either.

"I don't know why my mother didn't just let me drown," she laughed, "the number of times she hauled me out of the deep end."

Brooklyn-born Linda, 26, and her twin sister Laura were both stricken with the disease as children.

"We always did things for ourselves," said Linda. "That was instilled in us by our family. I feel better knowing I can live an independent life."

In August 1981, after getting her master's degree in social work, she decided she'd feel even better if she lost some weight.

With the support of her doctor and financial help from Laura, Linda began an exercise program. Eventually she started running.

"A couple of months later my sister and I were watching the marathon and she said, 'Hey, maybe next year for you?'"

"It was a joke at first, but then I started thinking."

Thinking led to train-

By LINDA STEVENS

ing, and training eventually led to the grueling 26.2 mile run last October.

New York watched in awe as she crossed the finish line, after 11 hours, 54 seconds — on crutches.

"It's nice to know you can beat the odds," she said. "Maybe I showed people there are possibilities. Everyone carries around some kind of disability, but there's always something you can do."

Now a member of the Achilles Track Club

for disabled runners (phone 580-2310) she runs regularly in Central Park.

She'd also like to spend May 15 riding in the Cerebral Palsy Bike-a-Thon, sponsored annually in the park by Reliance Group Holdings Inc. But an equilibrium problem makes bicycle-riding difficult. Or does it?

"Maybe I could do it with training wheels on the bike. People always laugh at bikes with training wheels."

"But maybe I should think about that. Training wheels . . ."



Post Photo by Michael Nordin

Cerebral palsy victim and marathon runner Linda Down jogs in Central Park with two companions.

## Woman found knifed to death

By MICHAEL HECHTMAN

A 48-YEAR-OLD woman was found stabbed to death last night in her apartment in a Queens housing complex for the elderly and disabled.

The woman, whose name was withheld pending notification of her family, had been dead for several days, police said.

Her body was found by the superintendent of the building, New Haven Plaza, at 261 Beach 13th St., Far Rockaway.

He went into the apartment shortly after 6 p.m.

after neighbors became concerned and asked him to investigate.

The victim was lying on the bedroom floor, and had an apparent stab wound in her chest.

Neighbors said the woman, who lived alone, was security conscious, had three locks on her door and was not likely to open the door to a stranger.

Detectives said there was no sign of forced entry to the apartment.

The apartment did not look ransacked and it ap-

peared that nothing had been stolen.

Police had no idea of the motive.

They were trying to determine when she was last seen.

The woman, who was disabled by a bad heart and other severe medical problems, lived alone.

### Husband can't sue for prison killing

ALBANY — The state's Court of Appeals has refused to hear Leo Payant's \$25 million lawsuit against New York state for his wife Donna's

1981 death in Green Haven state prison.

Other residents said this was the first violent crime they could remember in the complex.

"This is a beautiful building," said one resident.

"Everybody is in a state of shock."

The 31-year-old rookie guard was the first U.S. female prison guard killed on duty.