

Jacoby's recovery surpassing expectations

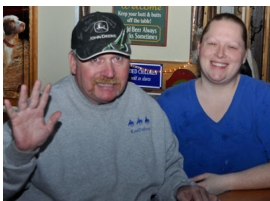
Written by Kyle Arnoldy

The past year has been a trying time for Dale Jacoby and his family.

Jacoby was critically injured in a two-car collision a mile east and two miles south of Holyoke last March. The crash resulted in a severe traumatic brain injury for Jacoby from the lack of oxygen to the brain.

Following the crash, he spent eight days in the intensive care unit at North Colorado Medical Center in Greeley. From there he was transferred to long-term acute care at Kindred Hospital in Aurora for three weeks.

He returned to Holyoke for hospice care at home but was transferred back to Kindred Hospital after two months. Less than a month later he moved to Craig Rehabilitation Hospital in Englewood.



Enjoying some time away from daunting rehab exercises, Dale Jacoby, pictured at left, spends some time at KarDale's with his stepdaughter Nicole Barron. □ □

—Enterprise photo □

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When admitted in Craig in late July, Jacoby was still unresponsive, unable to talk or walk.

"Greeley and Kindred both told me to just take him home and let him die," Dale's wife, Karen, explained. "He graduated from hospice and went to Craig. Miracles do happen."

Days have been filled with extensive rehabilitation exercises aimed at strengthening Jacoby's mind and body. The long healing process did not slow down once Jacoby returned home after two months at Craig.

He entered more rehab in Haxtun for three months, and for the past three months has continued to rehab at home with the help of his wife and stepdaughters, Nicole Barron and Heather Huffman.

At home he works on walking, using the stairs and riding an exercise bike, along with swallowing and speech. Progress is often slow and his left side is still pretty weak, but Jacoby is now able to talk, express himself and help with house chores.

Karen noted that his long-term memory is good but his short-term memory isn't as sharp.

"We have come a long way, and we still have a long way to go," Karen said. "You learn to appreciate what you have and to just take one day at a time, because you just never know."

Being home is a nice change of pace for Dale. Returning to regular daily routines in a familiar place with friendly faces has helped with the recovery.

On a daily basis, Dale has been able to see many of his 12 grandchildren, along with his 1-year-old great-grandson, born just prior to the accident. He still enjoys going down to KarDale's once a week and seeing everybody, visiting and having a meal with people he hasn't

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seen in a while.

With warmer weather right around the corner, the couple is looking forward to getting out and enjoying some of the activities they couldn't do during the winter months.

Dale received an adaptable fishing rod from Craig Hospital, and he is anxious to break it in. Karen also mentioned they may try some gardening and get together with family for a number of picnics.

Through all of the trials of the past year, Dale and Karen remain optimistic and appreciative of all the help they have received.

"My daughters Heather and Nicole have been our rock," Karen said. "They have helped us get through this."

Karen extended her gratitude to the Holyoke community.

"The community has been great with all the prayers they have given us," Karen said. "People come and talk to him and shake his hand; you can just see the support of the community. We couldn't make it without all you guys. I am very proud to say we're a part of this community."

Although Dale left Craig in September, he wasn't officially released until early March. Doctors told Karen that his progress has been tremendous.

"It's going to be a slow process," Karen said. "It's not something that's going to be overnight. With traumatic brain injuries, you are going to be healing for years.

"To me, he is an amazing man. He has fought hard, and without his determination, he wouldn't

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be where he is at. He is definitely a miracle.”

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