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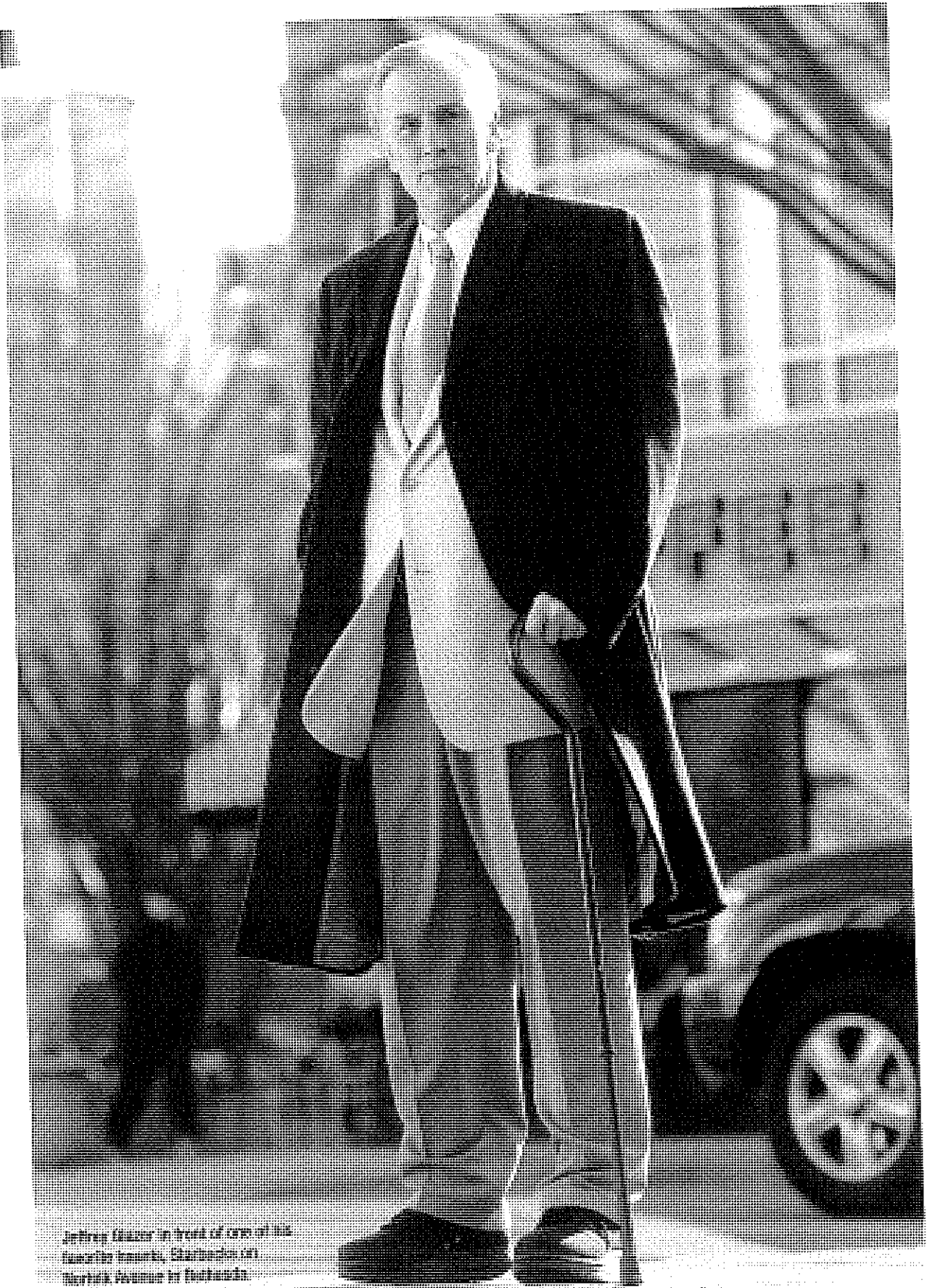
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# Walking Tall

A 40-foot fall left Bethesda's **Jeffrey Glazer** paralyzed and despondent. But his will to live—and walk—prevailed

By Johanna Neuman

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**He is a regular** at the Starbucks at Norfolk and Woodmont avenues in Bethesda, a handsome man with chiseled features and a quiet dignity who walks with a cane. In the late 1960s, he was a star athlete at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School. With height—nearly 6 feet 2—and heart, Jeffrey Glazer seemingly played every sport invented, and played them well. He was on B-CC's baseball, football and basketball teams. He swam in Montgomery County leagues, and hitchhiked to Candy Cane City to test his mettle against inner-city basketball players.

Jeffrey was so naturally gifted—with perfect vision and remarkable hand-eye coordination—that he could join a game in a sport he had never tried before and be in the hunt within a half hour. Even in his 40s, with a family and a business restoring historic buildings, Glazer was a competitive athlete, qualifying as a swimmer in the 50-meter breaststroke and the 50-meter backstroke for the 1997 Maccabi Games in Israel.

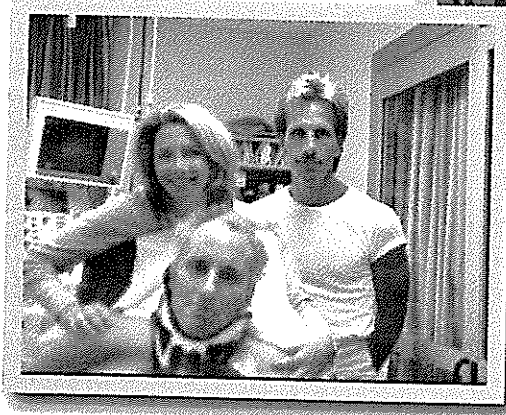
Then came July 27, 1998, the day of the accident.

Jeffrey does not remember the fall, 40 feet from a manlift while working on the exterior of a building in Prince George's County, nor the landing. He does remember trying to get up. The manlift had

run over a curb, catapulting him out of the bucket and into a ditch. Dr. William Llope, a physicist at Rice University in Houston, calculated that Jeffrey must have been falling at a velocity of 35 mph, hitting the ground with a force of between three times and eight times his body weight of 190 pounds. He landed on his upper buttocks, the impact throwing his head back. That's when he broke his spine and suffered a head injury.

Still, he tried to get up. And when he couldn't, when this consummate athlete and fierce competitor couldn't lift his head, dust himself off and return to work, Jeffrey prepared to die. An ambulance arrived, and its crew found him mumbling over and over, "Bari, Jay, Bari, Jay." Crew members asked what he was saying, and Jeffrey barked at them. "Leave me alone," he said. "I'm saying goodbye to my children."

Jeffrey woke up from a coma three weeks later at the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center at the University of Maryland Medical Center in Baltimore. A halo secured his head, and he was strapped to a metal slab that was flipped regularly, leaving him face down at times. He woke from a dream in which he and another creature—not a



Photos, from left: Jeffrey with his sister, Shirley, and brother, Paul; Jeffrey shortly after the accident that left him paralyzed; Kay Glazer feeds her son.

human—were trying to swim into the darkness to escape being trapped in a casket. Amid the chaos of this dream, he felt something grabbing his shoulder, and he heard a voice say, “You’re not going to die, Jeff.” Was he feeling pain in his shoulder from the injury to his scapula? Or was it a doctor touching him, telling him he was going to live? Perhaps the voice of God? Jeffrey would always wonder. For the moment, the only certainty was that he was awake.

His brother, Paul, was at his side.

“What are you doing here?” Jeffrey asked.

Paul told him there had been an accident.

A Chevy Chase resident, Paul Glazer was short where Jeff was tall, pugnacious where Jeff was calm, passionate where Jeff was aloof. But during the six months of Jeffrey’s hospitalization and beyond, when he moved from the trauma center in Baltimore to National Rehabilitation Hospital in Washington, D.C., and then to an outpatient house in Bethesda, during all the painful months of recovery and re-discovery, no one was more constant, more loyal, than Paul. He visited every day, with Paul’s wife, Judy, at his side. He pursued doctors in search of answers. He stood vigil. Once, while still on a catheter

and living in the outpatient house in Bethesda, Jeffrey ran out of tubes. He called Paul, who drove from his house in Chevy Chase to National Rehab downtown to get the catheters, and then back to Jeffrey in Bethesda. All in rush hour traffic. Paul still smiles at the memory. “I made it in an hour and a half,” he says. “Damn good.”

Just a few weeks earlier, with Jeffrey still in a coma, the hospital had convened an ethics committee meeting attended by doctors, administrators and relatives to discuss which life-saving measures to contemplate. Jeffrey’s spine had been smashed. There was no movement in his legs. Doctors didn’t know if he would ever wake up, and if he did, there was no certainty about the prognosis. Was the spinal injury severe enough to eliminate any chance that he could use his legs again? Or, once the swelling subsided, would some tissue still be connected, giving hope for movement? No one at the hospital could say for sure. The family was left to weigh Jeffrey’s chances against the knowledge that this proud athlete would not want to live without his core functions.

Paul was among those who insisted that his brother, older by two years, would overcome the odds. He knew Jeffrey’s physical strength and mental toughness, and the

inner courage that made it possible to contemplate a miracle. Their sister, Shirley Glazer, a speech therapist in Seattle, agreed, as did their parents, Jerome and Kay Glazer, who often were at Jeffrey’s side. And so did the doctors. As Dr. Amiel Bethel, Jeffrey’s surgeon, explained later, “The spirit is something we don’t exclude. That’s what keeps us all going.”

It was harder for Jeffrey’s children to absorb what had happened. Bari was 9, Jay 6, the day their father fell from the sky. They had grown to believe their dad was Superman. When they were younger, he would tease them, promising that if they closed their eyes for 10 seconds, he would run to the North Pole and return with some ice. When they opened their eyes, he would be standing in the kitchen, a bit winded, with outstretched hands offering each a piece of melting ice obtained from a less exotic source.

Their mother, now Jeffrey’s ex-wife, told the kids what had happened to Daddy. The children didn’t go to the hospital often, but when they did, Jay frequently hid behind his mother, afraid of all the contraptions, the needles and tubes and straps. Jeffrey told Bari not to give up on him, and she promised to keep believing. But the North Pole seemed so far away. Superman was gone.

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# Walking Tall

## A grim prognosis

The spinal cord is made up of nerve fibers that deliver messages from the "head-quarters," the brain, to "satellite offices" elsewhere in the body. An outer layer of bones stands guard against damage to the communications center. When bones break, they can be fused back together. But trauma to the sensitive cord is often permanent. Swelling damages nerves. Cells are destroyed. Nerve fibers, pre-wired with individual assignments, atrophy. Above the site of the injury, nerves perform their normal communications job. Below, they can no longer deliver messages.

Actor Christopher Reeve suffered the most severe level of spinal cord injury in 1995, when he was thrown from a horse and landed on his head during an equestrian competition. His spine broke at the cervical spine's 1/2 level, near the top. Jeffrey's injury was lower, at C-6/7, the sixth

spot down on the cervical spine. His situation was complicated by a head injury, and by unusually low blood pressure, 75/58 at admittance, a legacy of family history. Bethel, the neurosurgeon, waited three days before operating so doctors could get the hypotension under control. In the meantime, doctors put Jeffrey on a ventilator to help him breathe and implanted a filter in his body to prevent blood clots. They injected him with corticosteroids to reduce swelling, and put his neck in traction to prohibit movement.

"The back was inflamed and very angry," Bethel says. "I fixed the building. There was nothing I could do about the electrical system."

Word of Jeffrey's injury spread quickly across the Darnestown community where he and his family lived, through the North Chevy Chase neighborhood where he'd grown up, and throughout the Bethesda

area. Everyone seemed to know Jeffrey—or know of him—through sports. That he could be wounded was incomprehensible. That he might die was chilling.

"I remember seeing him in Shock Trauma, strapped to a table," recalls Lisa Shofnos of Potomac, whose husband, Ricky, went to visit daily. "I knew his injuries were life threatening, but I never thought he would succumb. I knew Jeff Glazer was a fighter."

The prognosis was grim. Before antibiotics, most patients with spinal cord injuries (SCI) died of urinary dysfunction, respiratory infection or bedsores. Even now, according to Bethel, 60 percent of all SCI patients die within the first six months. "Medicine has made many advances," he says, "but some people give up."

Jeffrey often was in a foul mood. During recovery, his friend and business partner, Leonard Mullar of Olney, vacuumed

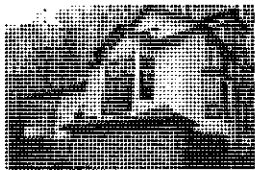
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## Walking Tall

the mucus from Jeffrey's mouth and nose. At one point, Jeffrey was so pumped up with steroids Paul said he looked like he weighed 300 pounds. And the food, juiced into a soft mush and dyed blue so doctors could track its progress through the digestive system, was ghastly. Once, Jeffrey's sister, Shirley, admonished a nurse's aide for swirling it all together—the pulverized peas with the pulverized meat with the pulverized potatoes.

"Would you eat that?" Shirley asked the attendant.

Shirley, a popular cheerleader at B-CC five years after Jeffrey had created memories on the football field, went to college in Idaho before becoming a speech therapist in Seattle. She often worked with stroke victims to help them recover language. She understood the soothing comfort of normalcy for such patients, or life as close to normal as physical limitations allowed. She made the attendant go back down to the kitchen and bring a new plate upstairs. Jeffrey says he felt helpless, and despondent.

### Despair

About six weeks after the accident, Jeffrey left the Shock Trauma Center still on his back. There was still no movement in his legs, and doctors were not optimistic that he would walk again. It was beautiful outside. The leaves were starting to turn, and Sammy Sosa was chasing Mark McGuire for the home run crown. Jeffrey wondered if he would ever swing a bat again.

His next stop was National Rehabilitation Hospital. Ed Eckenhoff, the hospital's founder, president and CEO, knew on a personal level that recovery involved more than muscles and nerves. A football and track star in Kentucky, Eckenhoff went for a ride in his college roommate's MG convertible in 1963. The car crashed, killing the roommate and leaving Eckenhoff, then 20, with a broken spine. His legs paralyzed,

Eckenhoff redirected his life toward health care. He often visited Jeffrey wearing the heavy leg braces he still needed to walk.

Despite the quality and empathy of the staff, there were early setbacks. Once, Jeffrey found a button on the hospital bed that allowed him to lift up the mattress. After months of lying flat, it felt joyous to be on the move. So he held his finger on the button, going higher and higher until the button locked and the mattress kept moving, doubling over and finally depositing him at the bottom of the bed, scrunched in a pile. He was too weak to reach the stop button, too weak to call for help. He stayed there for hours, until the morning nurse came in and summoned help.

Jeffrey didn't want to see anyone. He was angry at himself for falling (in an effort to save money, Jeffrey had been working alone on the manlift, without someone watching from the ground). Mostly, it was just too difficult to talk with anyone. His short-term memory was shot,

he had no sense of time or place and it took too much effort to respond.

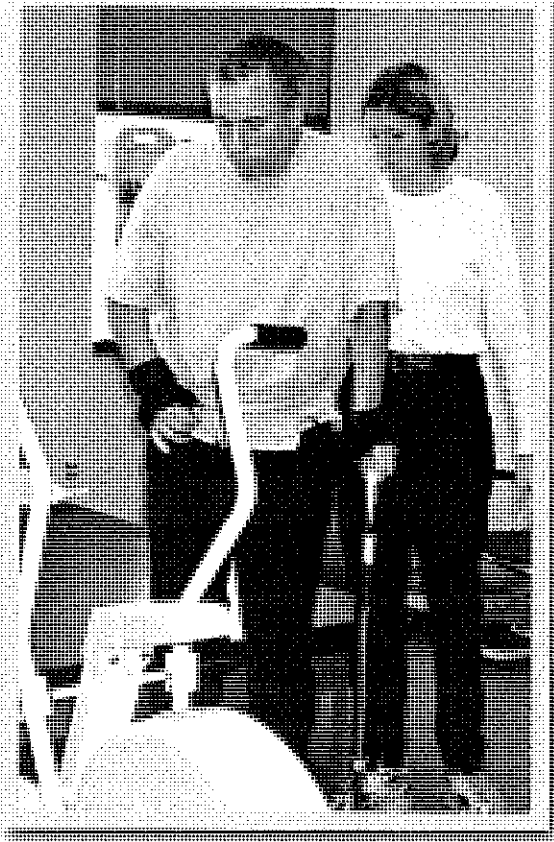
Jeffrey's lead therapist at National Rehab was Sherry Mumma, who had recently graduated from the University of Scranton. She had been a therapist for a little over a year. At 24, she was eager for the challenge that a case like Jeffrey's presented. Jeffrey was her first experience with a tetraplegic, someone with paralysis in all four limbs. He was her first chance to test what she had learned from academics on the twisted physique and angry emotions of a real patient. Neither could imagine the bond that would develop between them.

"Over the past 10 1/2 years, I've seen many patients," Sherry says. "Only a few have tested me—and touched me—as much as Jeff did."

At the beginning, Sherry and the other therapists made Jeffrey sit on the side of the bed for five minutes, then in a chair for 10. Eventually, they made him sit for 30 minutes, then for an hour. It was torture for someone who had been bedridden for weeks, someone whose injuries radiated pain from the bottom of his back to the top of his neck. If the nursing staff left him there for even a minute past his hour, he screamed until someone acknowledged his pain. Then they would take him back to bed. All he wanted to do was sleep.

Once, a psychotherapist visited. She asked Jeffrey if he was depressed. Jeffrey thought the question inane. The children were moving to California with their mother. He was handicapped and in constant pain. He had lost his ability to earn a living. Yes, he was depressed. Sherry would ask him to do his exercises, and he would shrug. What was the point—so he could graduate to a wheelchair?

Ten years later, Jeffrey's mother still has trouble talking about the accident. A redhead with green eyes, Kay Glazer was only 17 when she married, 18 when she gave



Jeffrey and his therapist, Sherry Mumma.

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birth to Jeffrey. By the time she was 23, she had three children and a new perspective on adulthood. A few years earlier, she had relocated to Aspen. After Jeffrey's accident, she moved back to Chevy Chase to be near her eldest son.

When he transferred to National Rehab, Jeffrey was still having breathing problems, so doctors sent a tube directly into his lungs. No air passed over his voice box. Always soft-spoken, Jeffrey now was silenced. A roommate had taught him to click his tongue—one click for yes, two clicks for no. Sometimes when he was mad he gave a series of clicks. During a visit to the hospital one day, his mother asked if he wanted to say something. He clicked once. Kay found a clipboard. With his left hand, which had recovered some movement, Jeffrey took a pen.

"I want to die," he managed to write.

"You can't do that," she replied.

He scribbled some more. "It's OK. I won't be mad at anybody."

"You can't do that," Kay said. "We're not ready to let you go."

Whenever Jeffrey asked about the future, the staff shied from answering.

"One moment I'll never forget is early on during a family conference," Sherry recalls. "It was way before he was able to tolerate sitting up for very long, so we were all hovering around his bed."

Jeffrey asked the doctor when he was going to start walking again. "At that point, it seemed very unlikely, so the room became uncomfortably quiet and we all deferred to the doctor," Sherry says. "It was one of the most difficult moments."

### Slow progress

Slowly, Jeffrey's legs began to show signs of life. Sherry said it was like they were thawing. He would report progress every few days. A left toe moved. He felt something in his right thigh. To improve blood flow and encourage muscle memory in his legs, nurses pushed from behind and forced him to stand, positioning clamps on his legs to hold him up. It was excruciating, especially when they clamped the

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## Walking Tall

**“I figured if I couldn’t do it, it couldn’t be done. I knew my strength. That’s when I decided to try.”**

metal too tight. September passed mostly in such therapy.

In early October, Sherry asked Jeffrey to receive a visitor. A gentleman in his early 60s came to his bedside, approaching slowly, walking with a cane. He also had injured his spine. With dedication to therapy, the man had retrained himself to walk. For Jeffrey, it was the first sign of hope, a glimmer of possibility. By mid-October, he decided to push against fate, telling Paul, his brother, “I can do this, I can walk again.” Jeffrey knew his strength was in his legs from all those years of running and playing sports.

Most patients with an injury at C-6/7 lose function from the chest down. They may use their arms, but rarely their legs. His injury was incomplete, allowing the possibility of movement, but as Dr. Bethel said, the spirit often tipped the balance between life and death, between movement and disability. Jeffrey decided he could test the limit, see what role heart played in recovery.

“When Sherry showed me the older man who was on a cane, it gave me hope,” Jeffrey recalls. “I figured if I couldn’t do it, it couldn’t be done. I knew my strength. That’s when I decided to try.”

A jubilant Paul told their sister, Shirley, that Jeffrey would walk again. She counseled caution. “How much you want to bet?” Paul asked.

But at the precise moment when Jeffrey had decided to test the limits of physical possibilities, at the moment when the will and the body joined forces and the head injury cleared enough for him to see the future, his insurance company threatened to cut him off. Claims adjusters had decided that if the patient was still not walking two months after the accident, it wasn’t going to happen. As one agent put it, “Why throw good money after bad?” Eck-

enhoff, the head of National Rehab, was furious, working all his connections to hold off the insurers. Jeffrey told his family: “Get me until January. I know I can do this. Just get me until January.” They did.

First, the therapists taught him how to roll onto his side, hoist himself up with his elbow and then use his hand to push away from the bed. It was difficult, but if Jeffrey could learn to pivot like that, he could position his legs and transfer himself to a wheelchair—and freedom. He could roll.

Jeffrey began to work hard, even when no one was watching. His right hand was gnarled into a ball, virtually attached to his side. So he would work the fingers with his left hand, slowly pulling them apart and forcing them to lie flat on a surface. He did this when he watched TV or when he looked out the window. Sometimes he did it when he woke up in the middle of the night with nothing to contemplate but the challenge.

Then Sherry took him to the pool, hopping the warm water would soothe his pain and his fears. It was shaky at first, awkward for a man who, at the age of 14, had won five competitive swimming races on the same day. He managed to move his leg a bit. The pain was intense. And the achievement was uncertain. Yes, he had moved. But that was in the water. Taking a step on land was more of a challenge.

In November, Sherry hooked Jeffrey to a mechanical device designed to help him stand erect, attaching belts around his legs and his waist. Then she told him to push his chest against the machine. He tried it for a few seconds and then leaned back, exhausted. His body felt so weak.

“Sherry, I don’t think I can do this,” he said.

“He was screaming in pain at the top of his lungs,” Sherry recalls. “Everyone in the gym was wondering what I was do-

ing to him.”

But Sherry knew her patient, knew that she could appeal to his higher nature with a calm demeanor and a soft-spoken presence. She grew quiet, speaking in little more than a whisper.

“Jeff, do you want to walk?”

That’s all she said. That’s all he needed.

“She was a friend, a professional,” Jeffrey said. “I could rely on her to tell me the truth. And she knew just when to push me, without being pushy.”

After that, he worked diligently, 90 minutes in the mornings, and again in the afternoons. To Jeffrey’s dismay, progress usually came on Fridays, just before the therapists went home to their families for the weekend and he was left to wonder what was possible.

One day, Sherry put a belt around him while he sat on the padded table in the therapy center, so she could hold onto his waist from behind. She moved a walker in front of him.

“Get up,” she said.

“Get up?” he asked.

Several therapists and nurses gathered to watch as Jeffrey tried to hoist himself up. After all the agony of sitting in a chair and the challenge of rolling out of bed, they wondered if he would be able to stand without the braces. So many patients came through the room and never made it out of the wheelchair, not even for a moment. He clenched his muscles, clutching the handles of the walker. Sherry pushed from behind. The room was silent.

Then he stood. It was the breakthrough Sherry had been waiting for.

### An emotional goodbye

The scene when Jeffrey left the hospital was emotional. He had been there for almost five months. The night before his release, the doctors and nurses came by to say



# Walking Tall

goodbye. But the therapist who had helped him defy the odds was running late and Jeffrey was not about to leave without a farewell. He kept stalling the transport personnel. Finally, Sherry arrived.

His vow had been to walk out of the hospital, a dream that he and Sherry shared during agonizing moments in the gym and the pool, when the goal seemed so far away. Six months after the accident, Jeffrey wondered if he could find the grit. He stood next to the walker and started. One step. Then another. He had to stop after each, his legs shaking, to regain his focus. He made it through the door and to the van. His eyes brimmed with tears, and so did hers. He looked back, and Sherry was at the door, watching him. Even after the van pulled away and he looked back again, she was still standing there, watching him. Maybe, he thought, she would be watching over him forever.

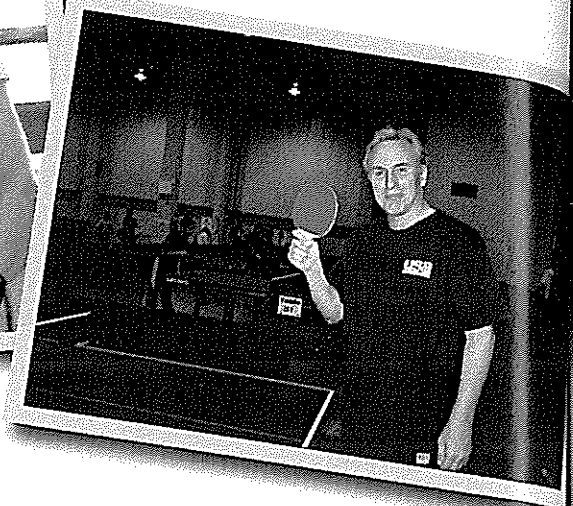
Jeffrey spent six weeks at the Centers for Neurorehabilitation in Bethesda, which no longer exists. It was the wrong place for him. He missed the physical therapy; missed Sherry. After that he stayed with friends, first Ed and Sharon Amatetti of North Potomac, and then Leonard Mullar. Finally, in September of 1999, a little more than a year after the accident, Jeffrey moved into an apartment on Bradley Boulevard in Bethesda, behind Strosnidars. He had found a home and he was on his feet. Now he had to figure a way to fashion a life.

Jeffrey read Christopher Reeve's book, *Nothing Is Impossible: Reflections on a New Life*, wondering how much progress he could make if he had resources like Reeve's. Occasionally, someone would take him grocery shopping, but he did little during the week. His big adventure came on Saturdays when he would leave his apartment about 11 a.m. and walk to the movies at what is now Regal Cinemas on Wisconsin Avenue. It took more than 90 minutes, step by step with the walker, with frequent rest stops. After a movie, he'd go to Uno Chicago Grill for lunch and then make the long



COURTESY JOHANNA NEUMAN ©

Left: Jeffrey with Johanna Neuman, his girlfriend and the author of this story. Below: Ace Jeffrey playing disabled ping pong. Right: Jeffrey and daughter, Bari Leigh Glazer.



trek home. With its colorful shops and friendly people, Bethesda became, in a way, part of his therapy. Physically, the day's outing was exhausting. Emotionally, it was exhilarating.

A month after he moved into his apartment, Steve Karr, a friend from high school and college, offered Jeffrey a job answering the phone at Zoom Delivery Service on Woodmont Avenue, a way to make a living. Steve paid for taxis to and from work. At first, Jeffrey worked two hours in the afternoon. But it wasn't long before he could work a half shift, and then a full day.

Eighteen months after his accident, Jeffrey decided to try a cane. He just woke up one morning and decided he was done with holding on. He hasn't used the walker since.

## A new life

The first time I saw Jeffrey, he was standing on Woodmont in front of Black's Bar & Kitchen. Walking up the street, I noticed this gorgeous man smiling at me. I smiled back. He spotted a silk flower on the lapel of my jacket and told me it was pretty. I thanked him and stopped to chat. I no longer remember what we talked about. I imagine I asked him about his injury.

"I'm enjoying this conversation," he said. "Would you like to continue it over

coffee at Starbucks?"

"I'd love to," I answered, "but I'm late for my astrologer's." I gave him my business card and suggested he call sometime.

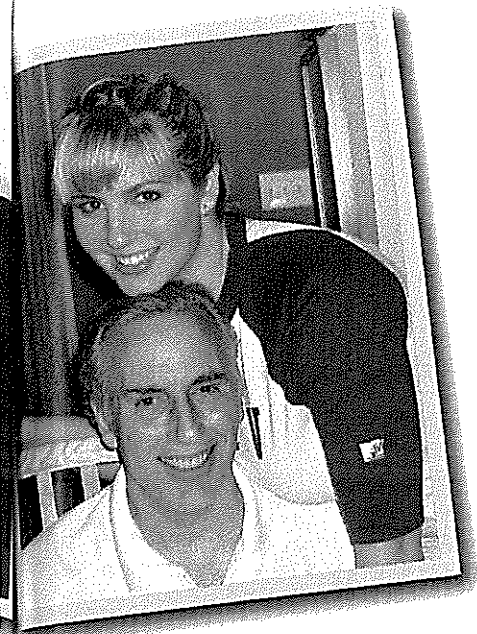
No man I knew had much patience for astrology, so I held out little hope that I'd ever hear from him again. A girlfriend had recommended that I see her astrologer the day before my birthday, so he could forecast my year. I still have the tape of our session. What a gift that astrologer conferred. He suggested that on the day of your birth you should fill the time with representations of everything you hope will happen in the coming year. If friendship is important, meet a friend. If charity matters, do a good deed. Take care of your mind, your body, your soul.

"And in your case," he added, "we'll need a little romance."

Unknowingly, I had arranged my day with mind, body and soul in mind. As for romance, I figured I'd call my friend Richard, a natural flirt. He could take me for drinks and tease me and maybe that would presage love. Instead, the first thing the next morning, Jeffrey called. Not knowing it was my birthday, he asked to take me for tea that evening. That was five years ago. We have been together ever since.

In the years I have known him, Jeffrey has tried many forms of therapy, from

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acupuncture to cranial sacral touch therapy. One night, a wonderful therapist in Silver Spring named Ron Murray arranged for eight pairs of hands to cover Jeffrey's body, sending their energy through him. The therapies always helped, but never for more than a few days.

For a while, Jeffrey searched for a sport, trying disabled ping pong. A world class studio in Gaithersburg became his training ground, and coach Hsu, a former player in China, his trainer. Jeffrey became a terrific player, but at an international tournament in Las Vegas, he met his match. The players from Russia, Croatia and Germany were subsidized by their governments to practice ping pong five and six hours a day. They could see that this tall American had remarkable gifts, and he would win the first five or six points. But then they would figure out that he couldn't move to the corners, and they would bury him.

For the last few years, Jeffrey has tried to find a job that would make better use of his background in the trades, one that would provide health care and a 401(k). He hired a facilitator to penetrate the federal jobs bureaucracy, but little came of it. A business venture failed when one of his subcontractors stole the contract from him. So he went back to Zoom, above

Black's. He lunches often in the neighborhood, at the Taste Diner or at Foong Lin, and usually takes coffee or hot chocolate at Starbucks.

Frank Long, 58-year-old manager of the Taste Diner, calls Jeffrey the unofficial mayor of his corner of Bethesda. In fact, Jeffrey is so frequent a figure in the neighborhood—and at the diner—that Long teases him when he's doing the payroll, chiding Jeffrey for forgetting to submit his time cards. "Everyone knows him, everyone likes him," Long says, noting that Jeffrey never seeks special treatment because of his disability, nor seems to feel sorry for himself. "He's a gem."

Lorraine Rendleman, who works at Random Harvest Furniture Store across the street, agrees. "He's a fixture in the neighborhood, whether he's walking by or sitting outside Starbuck's gathering friends," she says. "He's so friendly, always in a good mood. Sometimes he comes in to tell us a joke."

Jeffrey and the guys at work talk often about sports. Sometimes he wishes he'd used his education degree to become a coach. At the end of the day, Jeffrey is a fan, the only person I know who reads the *agate*—that tiny print in the sports pages—to follow the local teams. He is a Redskins fan, and a Navy man, and a devotee of University of Maryland teams. Sometimes on weekends he comes with me to a Nationals game—baseball is more my sport—and as we climb the ramps to our seats, a kind staffer will invariably rush over to see if Jeffrey would like a wheelchair.

"No," he says, smiling, "I was in a wheelchair once."

For my part, it pains me that he still wakes from dreams in which he was jogging. I don't know if stem cells could help him, or some other miracle of medical science, but that is my hope. He is an athlete, and I have never seen him run.


For his family, the image of this onctaut athlete hobbling on a cane remains painful. They thought he was Superman, thought he would recover, somehow,

miraculously, completely. Jeffrey's sister, a speech therapist, knew better. Still, it tugged at her heart. Once, when she was watching him from the back as he negotiated the steps at National Rehab, Shirley burst into tears. "I saw my very athletic brother using everything he had just to get up those stairs," she says. "It was gut-wrenching for me."

Now 56, Jeffrey delights in walking, at a loss for why his story would be of interest to anyone. He does not consider himself brave, instead seeing as gutsy the guys in wheelchairs with injuries worse than his who wake up every day and cope with life at belt level. Sometimes, after he has been sitting for a while, his left foot tingles, as if waking from sleep, and it hurts. But it only slows him a little. He talks about the accident to anyone who asks, but in a detached way, as if it had happened to someone else, someone he describes as "that poor guy." He does not think of himself as handicapped. Despite all he has been through, the trauma of the injury, the struggle to recover, Jeffrey is a man who sees the glass half-full. And if you ask him, he will tell you that the accident has in some ways made him better—less apt to judge others, more open to the people around him.

"The accident has left me a quieter person than I was before," he says. "I was always a calm person, but now there is even less reason to get upset. As Christopher Reeve said, 'Who am I to judge others?' And I agree with that."

His daughter, Bari, says the accident has quieted all of them. Bari and Jay have moved back to Maryland from California, and once again are fixtures in their father's life. "I think we're all stronger inside," she says.

Perhaps his brother, Paul, summed it up best: "He went through hell and back again and lived to talk about it. And that is a rare thing." 

*Johanna Neuman is a reporter for the Los Angeles Times who has lived in the Bethesda area for 20 years.*

## our contributors



### Meredith Carlson Daly

Meredith Carlson Daly of Silver Spring is a freelance writer who was born in South Africa and moved to New York with her family when she was 9 years old. In this issue, Daly reminisces about her father, Joel Carlson, a civil rights lawyer who worked to abolish apartheid in his native country during the 1950s and '60s, until the family's safety was jeopardized.

Daly, media relations coordinator for The Children's Inn at the National Institutes of Health, has chronicled her personal story in magazines and newspapers, including *The Hartford Courant*, and is writing a book about growing up in a political family. She says her strength and confidence, as well as her belief that people can do good things in the face of overwhelming opposition, come from her father, who accomplished much under great adversity.

### Michael Ventura

Photographer Michael Ventura is a Bethesda native—born at Suburban Hospital when they still had a maternity unit—and has been a photographer since he graduated from Walt Whitman High School.

He began freelancing in 1986, taking photos across the Caribbean for travel magazine features. In this issue, Ventura's expertise in capturing people can be seen in the striking photo of Jeffrey Glazer, who has overcome incredible odds to walk again.

Ventura loves the variety of his work. "I was telling a chef I was photographing one day that it must be hard when you make a masterpiece of a meal. You have to create it over and over. Somebody might say 'can you take a picture like that one?' But I don't have to create the same picture, over and over."



### Johanna Neuman

Johanna Neuman is a journalist who specializes in writing about people. Celebrated for her obituaries of Ronald Reagan and other public figures, the Bethesda resident has covered the White House, the State Department and U.S. Congress for *USA Today* and the *Los Angeles Times*, her hometown paper. Her piece for this issue, about the recovery of Bethesdaan Jeffrey Glazer (her boyfriend) from an industrial accident, was a labor of love. "I wrote this one from the heart," she says. "Jeffrey is a person of few words. When asked about the accident, he gives a short version, along the lines of 'I fell, now I can walk.' I wanted to do justice to his story, to chronicle the arc of his journey, so others would see him as I do: a profile in courage."

## coming in May/June: THE RESTAURANT ISSUE

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The best dishes of 20 Bethesda-area chefs.

### SUSHI SHOWDOWN

Who has the best sushi?

Plus...

### REBUILDING AVENEL

The challenges and tribulations of remaking one of America's most storied golf courses.