

# Student remains center stage



ENTERPRISE (AP) — Brandon Powers hopes that his wheelchair won't interfere with an acting career.

"There have been times when I've really been discouraged and wanted to give up and all that, but I won't," said the 17-year-old drama student.

Powers was paralyzed from the waist down last August when he crashed his pickup truck, throwing him into a ditch and snapping nerves in his lower spinal cord.

"After I got the truck started, I was on the way to get some new wheels and tires put on it. I was coming down the hill, taking the road as I usually do — a little too fast probably," Powers said.

"Then somebody came out of my blind spot. I pulled over to miss them and hit the gravel, and my rear-end swung around on me. I remember going into the ditch, but evidently I hit my head on the steering wheel. I don't remember being thrown out of the truck," Powers said.

Jim McCormack had been changing irrigation pipe when he heard the accident. He ran to the scene and found Powers

**'For the long term, I believe he can do things in the theater.'**

— Jennifer Holmes, Enterprise High School drama adviser

lying only about five feet from the truck, which had burst into flames.

"I knew he was hurt bad," McCormack said. "I didn't know if I should move him or not, but he would have burned up if I hadn't."

Powers said McCormack made the right decision. "Doctors have told me that the damage to my back and spine was already done," he said.

Now he is adjusting to life in a wheelchair.

"There have been a few limitations, which I don't really like, but there's not much I can do about it," Powers said.

"I've always tried to be as independent as I can be. I just don't like to have to depend on people for things."

One place where he feels that he can be independent is on the

stage, an ambition encouraged by Enterprise High School drama adviser Jennifer Holmes.

"I'm not any easier on him," Holmes said. "He is so talented, and I expect a lot of him. And I know he doesn't want people to be condescending. He's been fairly pragmatic about the accident."

Holmes said that, with time and effort, Powers can succeed.

"He has to re-learn and figure out just what he can do. For the long term, I believe he can do things in the theater," Holmes said.

Powers began acting in junior high school. Last summer he had a lead role in the melodrama, *Heaven Will Protect the Working Girl*, produced by the Wallowa Valley Players in Joseph, which had a special benefit performance after his accident to raise about \$500 toward his medical expenses.

"The theater is something I will most likely try to get into — if not acting, then something having to do with theater or movies, whether it be set design or special effects or directing or something like that. I'd just like to be in the business."

"I know it's a hard business to get into," Powers said.

# Environmentalists lay off sea bird issue

SEATTLE (AP) — Environmentalists say they won't go to court to block resumption of logging on 97 national forest sites that could be nesting habitats for a rare seabird.

But still logging can't resume unless the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determines the harvest won't jeopardize survival of the marbled murrelet.

A decision is expected next month.

Timber sales on the sites — 38 in western Washington and 59 in coastal Oregon — have been in limbo since September, when the murrelet was listed by Fish and Wildlife as a "threatened" species.

Most logging of old-growth trees in the Northwest has been blocked by court injunctions to protect another rare bird, the northern spotted owl.

The trees on the 97 sites were among the exceptions. They were sold to loggers as part of a program authorized by Congress in 1989 to override the owl injunctions.

But logging on the sites had not been completed — in some cases had not yet started — when the murrelet was listed as threatened.

Five Audubon Society chapters, represented by the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, had sued in federal court to force the government to make the listing.

Andy Stahl of the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund would not say why environmentalists were passing up the opportunity to block timber sales.

But Larry Mason, executive director of the Washington Commercial Forest Action Committee in Forks, said it's unlikely an injunction would have been granted. He also noted the sales could still be blocked by Fish and Wildlife.



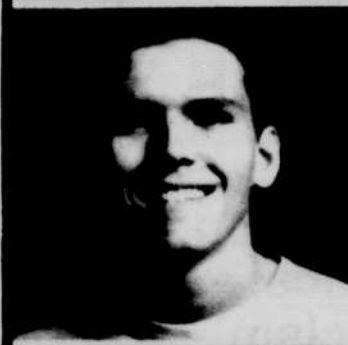
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