

about people

Burn victim recovering with family's love

by SCOTT NEWTON

It was just over six months ago that Jim Dasher of Alder Creek got burned lighting a barbecue.

He's been home now for about three weeks and is on his way back to living a normal life.

His daughter Julie, 16, said he'd spent the night at home four times before moving back, and she especially enjoyed celebrating his birthday July 5.

"It was so neat to have him home to blow out the candles and everything," she said. About two months ago he was home for a night for the first time. "I was kind of floating on clouds for a couple of days," Julie said. "It was nice to have both parents there when you went to bed at night, and then when you got up in the morning."

"It was something for a while I thought I'd never attain. It feels great," Jim said of being home, adding his recovery has been more rapid since he moved back home.

He was at the Oregon Burn Center at Emanuel Hospital until June 6 when he transferred to Kaiser Sunnyside, where he will remain an outpatient for a time.

Reportedly he was the first burn patient at Kaiser Sunnyside, and the Dashers feel he was "kind of a catalyst" for creation of burn unit facilities there. Julie said the chances for a complete recovery are unknown, though her father is "really determined, really stubborn."

Getting back to a normal life will be "no problem," though, she said. There was a time when he was undergoing surgery every Tuesday and Friday, which included about 11 skin grafts.

He still has to undergo surgery to release skin contractures (in post-burn patients the skin often starts



Jim and Julie Dasher

to shrink), and faces additional surgery on his elbows, where calcium or scar tissue may be the cause of a problem he has bending his elbows.

After six months the family is able to joke a little about the incident, and Julie points out that all those scars are evidence that her father picked "a tough way to burn off calories."

Jim wears a nylon body suit which applies slight, but constant, pressure and is supposed to help reduce scarring.

He was one day short of staying in the Burn Center five months, where his wife Sandi visited every day but one. On that one day Jim got a ride home from other relatives.

The difference six months has made is considerable, and Julie adds, "If he had been burned that bad a couple of years ago he wouldn't have survived."

She said of the Oregon Burn Center, "The nurses there helped out a lot. They're really good nurses. They provided a lot of mental support."

Last Jan. 7 Jim was lighting charcoal briquettes with white gas, "which is really stupid, and he wants everybody to know it's stupid to do that," Julie said.

If Julie's summation of the incident sounds harsh it's probably because she got it from her father, who was constantly warned by his wife not to use gas. But he didn't listen, just as some people still don't heed his warning. Gas is much more volatile than starter fluid.

"It's just a fool thing to do," he said. "If it happens to you, you damn sure will wish you'd listened to somebody."

He was holding the can of gas when he lit the char-

coal, and when it exploded the flames knocked him back about 10 feet.

He was thinking well enough to roll on the ground to try to put out the flames, but the gas had soaked into his skin. He ran past two bodies of water, a large puddle in their yard and a small pond in the neighbor's.

Maggie Rands doused the flames with a wet door mat after he'd jumped her fence, having run about 100 yards on fire.

"I'll never forget it the rest of my life," he said. "It doesn't bother me. I don't have nightmares or anything."

He received burns over 80 percent of his body, with burns three inches deep in places. He was burned the worst from his lower chest to the lower stomach, where the can of gas exploded.

He said at the Burn Unit

they "cringe" at the thought of the holiday season, when many people barbecue. Jim said many of their friends have electric starters for their barbecues now.

That is a much less expensive alternative than the nearly half million dollars the Dashers expect their medical bills to eventually total. Much of that was paid by insurance. The Dashers also received help from numerous benefits held by the Immanuel Lutheran Church of Sandy.

"There's no way I can ever repay all the people who've given gifts and prayers," he said.

He said it's necessary for him to gain something positive from the experience, and he may eventually work counseling fire victims or work in fire prevention.

Jim used to like to raft the Deschutes River, and Julie said this summer he was supposed to take her along. That doesn't matter much now. She's just glad to have him home.



Mr. and Mrs. Gary Maples

Snell, Maples wed

Louise Snell and Gary Maples were married June 25 by the Rev. John Van Lierop at the Community Presbyterian Church in Sandy.

The bride's wedding dress was worn by her mother 37 years ago.

The bride is the daughter of Lloyd and LaVerna Snell of Boring. She graduated in 1970 from Sandy High School.

The groom, a 1968 graduate of Benton City High School, is the son of Carol and Hazel Maples of Benton City, Wash. Mabel Linafelter of Boring and Mary Phillips of Gresham, grandmothers of the bride, were in attendance, as was Edna Maples of Benton City, grandmother of the groom.

Matron of honor was Gayle Alexander of Boring, sister of the bride. Larry Maples of Benton City, brother of the groom, was the best man.

Gena Maples of Benton City, daughter of the groom, was the candle lighter. Ushers were Ross Snell of Boring and Bob Pruitt of Bellevue, Wash.

Soloist was Shan Davis of Portland, cousin of the bride. The flower girl was Whitney Alexander of Boring, niece of the bride.

The couple is now at home in Lacey, Wash., where he works for Wood Specialty Products.

Conibear wins trip

Statewide honors have come to a local 4-H member for outstanding achievement in 4-H, the youth program of the Oregon State University Extension Service.

Angie Conibear was selected for her honor on the basis of her overall 4-H record, including leadership and community.

Conibear, 16, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Conibear of Boring, is Oregon's nominee for a trip to Chicago and 1983 National 4-H Congress for her work in home management. The trip is sponsored by Beatrice Foods.

In 4-H for seven years, she started out in the beef project but decided to concentrate on home economics projects after she decided that farming wasn't for her. She leads her own 4-H clothing club and also concentrates on 4-H foods and home improvement projects.

The Sandy High School student feels she has learned how to use "money and time" through her 4-H work in addition to sharpening her decision-making skills.

In addition, she serves on the Clackamas County 4-H home economics and teen retreat committees. She is active in music and student government at school.

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