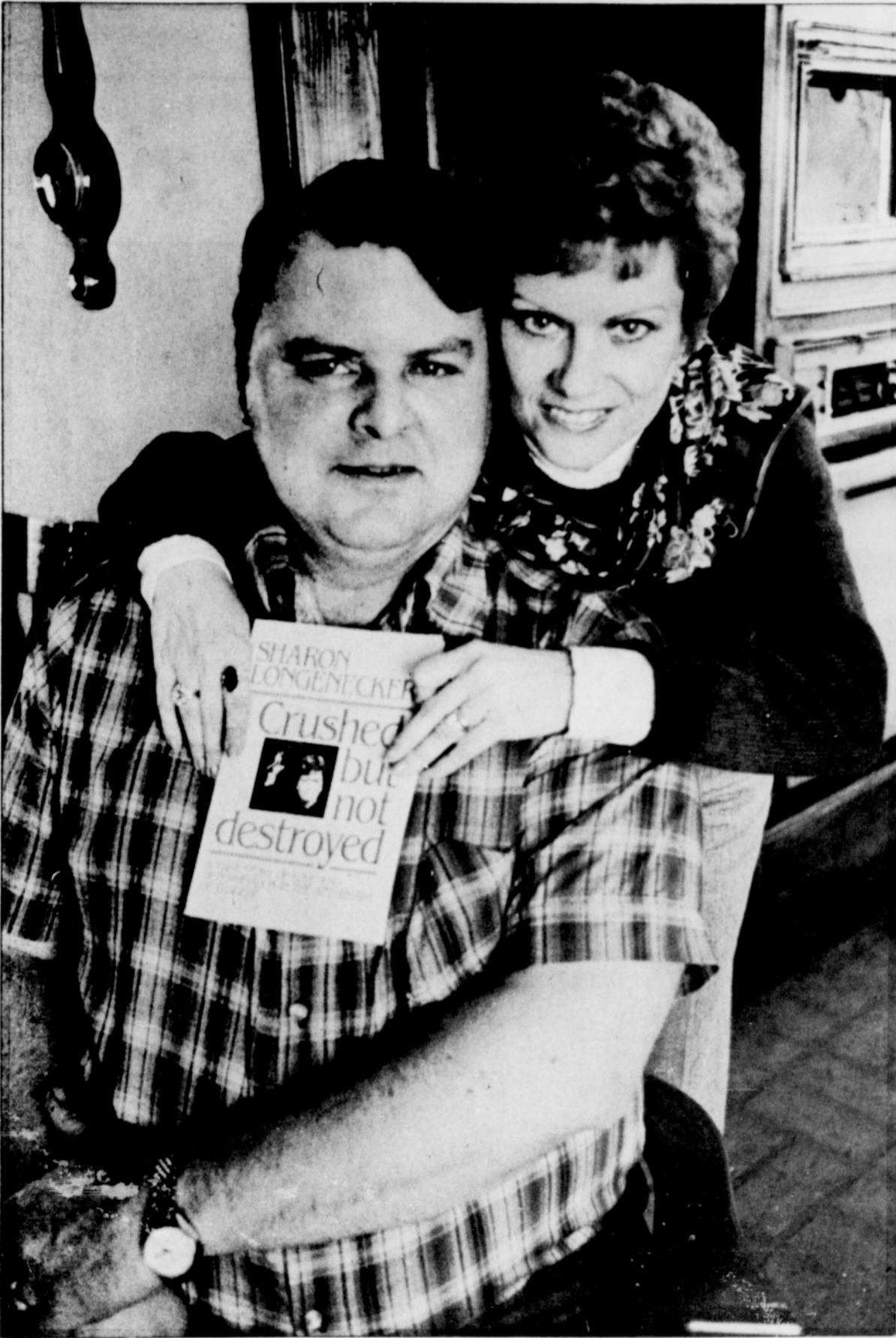


'Crushed' tells story of a family's survival



Sharon Longenecker wrote a book about her husband, his accident and long recovery.

Photo by Lori Callister

by LORI CALLISTER

Sharon Longenecker picked up the telephone 13 years ago, expecting to hear her husband say he was on his way home from work.

Instead the voice on the other end of the line was a doctor telling her to come to the hospital. "Don't come alone," he added. "Have someone bring you."

It was the beginning of 13 years of struggle for Sharon Longenecker of Boring, her husband, Dave, who had to climb back from a coma, paralysis and personality changes, and for their children, Steve, then 10, Lisa, then 9 and Jan, then 7.

From the struggle, Sharon Longenecker decided to write a book, "Crushed, But Not Destroyed." It is the story of how the family survived the accident along with Dave.

And, says Sharon, "it's the book I wish I had when I was going through this."

She searched for a book to help her with what her family was facing — the pain of husband and father near death for months and then inching his way back to health, both mentally and physically.

When Dave Longenecker was driving home from his all-night truck driving job in February 1972, he was met by a car that careened into his lane on Interstate 84, just before the Wood Village exit. The crash, later found to be the mechanical fault of the other driver's car, left him with a depressed skull fracture, bits of his skull embedded in his brain and a crushed right side of his face.

Sharon kept meticulous notes on the long days and nights spent in the hospital and later when her husband came home. She kept track of the mish-mash of insurance hassles and the lawsuit against the other driver's car — which the family finally won. That make of car was recalled just two months after the accident for motor mount problems.

And she kept track of the emotional upheavals the family endured.

"I rewrote the book 12 to 15 times. After that I lost count. Each time I wrote it at a level I could face," she remembers.

The book was published with part of the family's lawsuit settlement — a way to pay back the community for its generosity after the accident, Sharon says. Money and food and favors poured in from family, friends and even strangers.

"So many people in this community I don't know and will never know were praying for us and helping us," she says.

Her book also chronicles the painful year when her husband had reached a plateau and was told by

doctors he would not progress anymore. At that time, his personality was dramatically different than before the accident and he had become dependent on his wife for all his needs. By then, she had been caring for the family for more than two years.

It was then she decided her husband had to move out.

"My marriage was nothing like before the accident. Driving in the driveway from work I knew I would face problems as soon as I was inside the door," she remembers.

So her husband lived with his sister and in a halfway house until she "recharged my batteries," she says. "It freed me from that 24-hour-on-duty requirement and let me step back and get a fresh perspective."

A year later Dave returned home. He had risen above that supposedly unbreakable plateau and the family began to settle back into their lives.

Sharon Longenecker has since gone back to Mt. Hood Community College and become a medical transcriptionist. "That built my typ-

ing speed, which helped me write the book." She now works on an on-call basis. Dave Longenecker continues to make progress a tiny snip at a time. The family still wishes they had known better how to face their tragedy.

Doctors have "such an ability to save people's lives but often after discharge, they get lost through the cracks," she says. "When someone dies, people grieve and the pain never goes away, I know. But when someone is hurt, there are similar pains and you have a changed person with changed physical capacity and you have to deal with changes day after day," she says.

Longenecker has begun to market the book and it is available at the Rainbow West Book and Bible in the Oregon Trail Shopping Center and B. Dalton's in Clackamas Towne Center.

"I had no blazed trail for me. I hope this serves that purpose for some people. Also it is a way to tell the many people who continue to ask about us, how it is going."

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Sunday school 9:30 a.m.
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Evening Service 6:30 p.m.
Pastor Robert F. Scheifers
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Pioneer Blvd., downtown Sandy
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Evangelistic Service 6:00 p.m.
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Wednesday 7:00 p.m.
Dale Edwards Church
Pastor Phone 668-5589

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Discovery (Sun. School) 9:30 a.m.
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For KMJK DJs, listeners

Plan to move Mt. Hood snowballs

by JAN COOLEY

Moving Mount Hood to Gresham, an idea that began as idle chatter on a morning radio program, has become the babble of the block.

Disc jockeys Alan Budwill and Kent Phillips, hosts of KMJK's "Magic in the Morning Program," began talking about moving the mountain to Gresham to make it more convenient to skiers. Their listeners liked the idea so well that the DJs decided to continue the whimsical spoof.

"The idea has gotten bigger than both of us," says Budwill. "We tried to stop, but people won't let us. It's destined to happen so we're going ahead with the official groundbreaking."

They have chosen Main City Park as the ideal location for Mt. Hood's new home and have scheduled a groundbreaking ceremony for 2 p.m. Friday with Mayor Margaret Weil presiding.

The mountain will be moved during the weekend at a cost of more than \$1 trillion. That's a rough estimate.

Gresham Little League will save a bundle on baseballs if the DJs have their way. The league can use snowballs instead. In fact, the baseball field on the west side of the park will benefit from the mountain in many ways, says league

president John Wilson.

"It would probably allow us to have more spectators watch the games," he says. Wilson. And with Mount Hood to shade them, the fans will keep cool on hot summer days.

All that snow will reduce the ice bills run up by the league's concessions stand, says Wilson. And the chair lifts could be used for displaying championship banners the league has won. The mountain also would be a landmark for visiting teams trying to find the park.

Wilson concedes there could be problems.

"We probably would have a parking problem, but I'm sure if they're going to move the mountain, they're going to move the parking lot."

Moving a parking lot will be nothing compared to what Phillips and Budwill have gone through to move the mountain. The two have contacted everyone from Oregon Sens. Mark Hatfield and Bob Packwood to representatives of the U.S. Forest Service for help.

"It's getting big," boasts Phillips.

One of the problems the pair has faced is moving Mount Hood's trees. Some of them are at least 200 years old and will be difficult to transplant. The entire root system of the moun-

tain's plant life may have to be moved.

"That will just add to the cost," says Phillips off-handedly. He estimates the relocation will cost more than a trillion dollars, so a few more won't make much difference. He and Budwill plan to turn over the bill to the Bonneville Power Administration or the federal government.

Time is more important to them than money. To shorten the moving process, they contacted Airborne Freight Corp., an overnight air freight service that advertises, "We move mountains."

Because it considers moving Mount Hood a public service project, Airborne agreed to discount its rate to \$1.25 per pound. But the disc jockeys had to turn down the offer. Airborne could not, in this particular case, guarantee overnight delivery.

Instead, Mount Hood will be moved a truckload at a time by Ross Island Sand and Gravel Co. The convoy will charge \$130 a load.

"We want to be cost competitive," explains Budwill.

The move will take place this weekend. Don't blink or you might miss it.

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