

No More Baling Wire & Duct Tape for Vinita Amputee

By: Carrie Philpot

Staff Writer for Liberty Publications

They say duct tape and baling wire can fix anything. But a prosthetic leg? Determined to continue walking, Ronald Edwards had resorted to using the two staples when the ankle of his “worn out” leg broke.

This incident occurred about ten years ago. During that time, Ronald said he was receiving treatment from a local rehab service. The process was slow to construct and receive a new leg, so he engineered a solution.

“I was using a couple rolls of duct tape, some wire coat hangers and

baling wire to hold the thing together and hope for the best,” he said. “Then they referred me to Dave and Beverly Helms. I don’t think they had seen anybody do this before, but I was determined to walk.”

This incident occurred about ten years ago, and Ronald has been a client of Grand Prosthetics in Grove, Oklahoma, ever since. A 1971 lawn mowing accident caused Ronald to lose his right leg below the knee when he was six years old, so he’s spent most of his life adjusting to new prosthetics as he grew and matured. His problem, he explains, is not so much with the actual prosthetic limb, as much as it is with Ronald himself. Medical conditions

cause his weight to fluctuate, therefore resulting in changes in the “fit” of the leg.

“I quite smoking, too, and gained 50 lbs. in one month,” he added. “Putting on that kind of weight that fast changes your fit.”

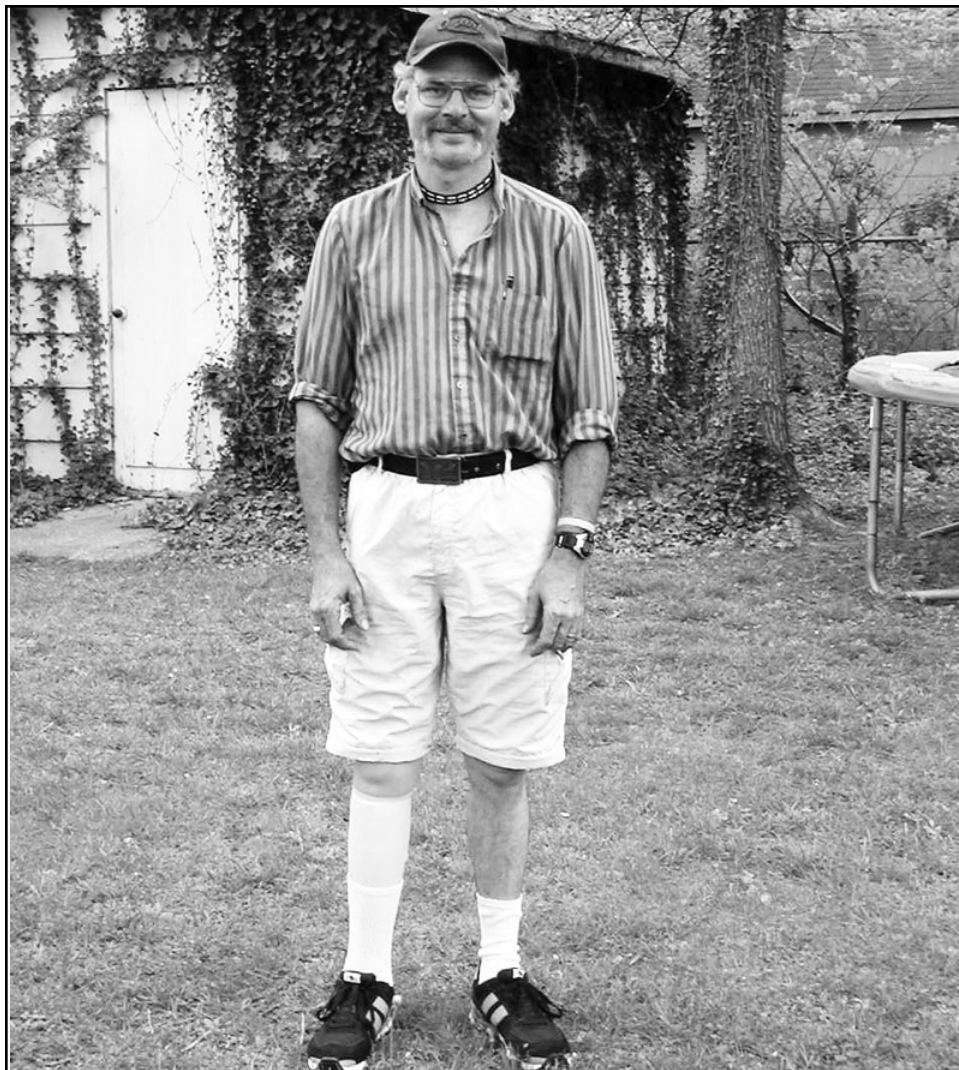
Labeling himself as rather shy and an introvert, Ronald said Dave’s “easy-going” attitude and style of treatment makes visits to the Helms’ clinic pleasurable. Ronald has had problems in the past with his knee dislocating during the casting process to fit a new limb.

“Dave is so gentle. It used to scare me (to get casted), it was so painful when my knee dislocated,” he said. “But not anymore. I trust him completely.”

The limbs designed by Grand Prosthetics are more comfortable and fit better than those Ronald has used in the past. He enjoys fishing, camping, and even bike riding, plus keeping up with his two daughters, Alana, age 9, and Rhawunny, who just turned one.

Currently, Dave and Beverly are helping Ronald with techniques to straighten his back. Years of wearing an improper fitting prosthesis caused him to have a slight curve to the spine. But even with these issues, Ronald doesn’t seem to slow down.

“My friends consider me a person with two human legs. My wife Kim thinks of me that way, too,” he said. “And I owe it all to Dave and Beverly.”



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