



Plain Brown Rapper



News for the Tandy and Grace Brown Family

March/April 2000



THE WILD BUNCH IN PHOENIX

Recently, Several ladies of the Brown family (June, Leah, Nancy & Dolfe) traveled to Phoenix Arizona on the pretext of visiting Orpha and taking in a fashion show. Actually, I now believe, after trying to get through the Airport Security, we were in reality on some other type of mission.

My Bob drove us down to Denver International Airport and dropped us off. From there we proceeded through Airport Security who must have thought we looked like some kind of Gangster Molls and gave us the once over. Leah set off the buzzer when she tried to get through the metal detector and was pulled over to the side. The hand held detector quickly found two pieces of Hershey's candy wrapped in foil. Leah quickly handed them over to Nancy and I and we just as quickly ate them — ha! — They won't find the evidence. From there the Security Guard kept up her vigil and upon running the detector down Leah's back soon found the hooks on her Bra. Well, Leah stood her ground and refused to remove her Bra!!! The security guard let us through, but we were somewhat taken back by the encounter. Remember — no sneaking in candy wrapped in foil or wearing a bra. (You may think I'm just being funny, and I am, but this is the absolute truth!!!) June laughed about her shoes setting off the alarm. She had on a pair of pretty silver toned loafers, evidently there was metal in the coloring on the shoes, just enough to set it off. Don't you wonder how anyone ever gets a pistol or any weapon through?

We arrived in Phoenix (late, of course) and were met by the best of all Chauffeurs, our wonderful brother, Dick. He picked us up in his "Red Cadillac" and we went around to Terminal Two and picked up June. Now he has four of the lovely "Brown" girls with all of our luggage in his car and as we left the airport you could see all the people looking upon us and smiling. Surely because we were so beautiful, not because the back end of the car was dragging bottom!!!

We arrived at Orpha's new house (very classy digs) for the beginning of a fun filled weekend. Great supper that night and the next day helped Orpha with the last details of the Fashion Show. We worked on the table decorations and I must tell you they were very nice. On Saturday, we dressed up in our finest and attended what was to be the highlight of our time. Orpha's Fashion Show is



Orpha and Nancy doing a little Song and dance routine.

so exciting and we enjoyed everything from the silent auction to the models walking down the runway. Carefully skipped the part about lunch lest you think we only went to eat.

In case you haven't heard of this worthwhile venture. The show is one of several fund raising ventures sponsored by the Assistance League of East Valley. They will be giving the money made at this event to four charities: The **Operation School Bell** (provides school clothing, shoes and hygiene kits to at risk K-6 students), **Assault Survivors Kits** (just as the name implies, items of clothing and hygiene given to victims of sexual or physical assault), **Senior Birthday Parties** (twice a month parties held at three adult day/health care centers) and the **Adopt-a-School Program** (assisting K-6 graders with improving their reading skills).

This year, Orpha was the Chairperson for the event and I am happy to announce (she is happy to announce) over \$50,000 was raised!!!! Pretty great fund raising skills for a girl from Wildrose, North Dakota!!!! Our congratulations to you and all your efforts. We are very proud to say we know you.

On Sunday, we traveled to Rio Verde to Dick and Marty's house for sight seeing and lunch at the Tonto Verde Country Club. Wow, you should see their house. Its on the fairway of the 15th hole of the Rio Verde Golf Course. And the house came equipped with a "Golf Cart!" A pretty little red and white stripped number. He has a patio that stretches the length of his house and the view is the well kept fairway. He said the only requirement is that he play golf everyday. Such a deal!!!

Monday came and we tried to locate all our belongings we had strewn about the house so we could get packed. Nancy, June and Leah made a trip over to Orpha's old house to rob the lemon and grapefruit trees. I understand Nancy is a pretty fair tree climber.



Nancy checking the chocolate display in the Shopping Mall!!!!

On Tuesday, we returned to the Airport lugging our two huge boxes of fruit. Got checked in and flew home. Bob once more picked us up and brought us safely home.

We have put our feet up so we could rest up from the adventure. I'm sure Orpha sighed a sigh of relief, she had lots of finalizing from the Fashion Show and reports to file. Orpha's new house is so pretty and she has it decorated with her special touch. We couldn't ask for a more wonderful hostess and just hope she knows how much we love her. Thanks Orpha, you are a terrific lady!!!!

Brown Family Trivia: Our brother Charles was born in 1927, the eleventh child of Tandy and Grace Brown. June tells us he was named after the President (Calvin Coolidge) and Vice President (Charles Dawes) who were serving at that time. Charles Calvin Brown!!!

Another not so trivial item: The birth of Dolfe, the fourteenth child of Tandy and Grace Brown was quite an event because of the happenings surrounding the day. According to June, we lived on what was called the "Bergman Place" a farm type home West of Cheyenne and Fort Russell. On the day in question, June 28th 1932, when mother was busy giving birth, Roy was assigned to walk Nancy around on the old horse. Evidently Roy got tired of the job and handed the reins over to Leah (who was barefoot at the time) and when the horse decided to walk out to the pasture, Leah dropped the reins and let him go. She didn't want any stickers in her feet. Nancy was only 4 at the time. When everyone panicked the horse began to run. Grandma Eidam got into her old '28 Chevy and began to chase after the horse honking the horn. The more she honked the faster the horse went and the saddle began to slide. Needless to say, Nancy was soon upside down, holding on for dear life and after a time let loose and was promptly planted in a cactus patch. Everyone forgot about this darling little baby girl who should have been the main attraction and spent the afternoon picking stickers out of Nancy's fanny.

The following is from Mike and Nanette's son Bill Brown. Bill worked in Oregon for a Tree Service and had the misfortune to be injured and consequently paralyzed from the accident. The road back to recovery has been a long and tortuous journey and he has written the following, hoping you might gain some insight and I must say, admire him for his efforts to regain his life. Thanks Bill, this is great.



MY ACCIDENT AND THE ROAD BACK TO LIFE AFTER SPINAL CORD INJURY

July 8, 1997 my 34th birthday. Went floating that day, didn't end up doing a lot of rowing, more interested in looking at pretty women, and drinking beer. That night April, my fiance, and the guys took me out for dinner at a restaurant overlooking the Rouge River, The GALICE RESORT. This was where we stopped to have a drink on the way home from floating the river. They served very good food, and had a good band playing on the weekends. It was a nice hang out for the rafters, and there were a lot of tourists. Couldn't have been a better birthday.

The next trip was to be a four-day rafting trip down the lower Rouge River, only a week away. I remember being very excited about this trip. This would be my second trip down the lower Rouge River. The first trip was great I have some pictures from then, they are still in Oregon with some of my other things. When I get them back I will post them on the "myfamily.com" Web Page. I spent two weeks preparing my raft and getting all my equipment ready. Another four-day trip down the quiet serene Rouge River with nothing to worry about except what was around the next bend, how I was going to take the next rapid, and how many steelhead trout I was going to catch. Wow what a weekend!! Floating, fishing, drinking beer, and talking about other rafting trips. In other words, a whole lot of B. S. going on around the camp stove, since we were not allowed to have a campfire.

July 15, 1997, I guess my mind really wasn't on work that day. All I was thinking about was the four-day trip down the Rouge River. From what my work mates tell me about the accident, I was up topping a big pine tree. I had just finished 'topping' the tree and since there were no limb's to hang my rope on, I was forced to cut a wedge in the tree for my rope to slide through. I was up about 65 feet. I started to come down the tree; got about 8 to 10 feet down and gaffed out. (That means that my foot spikes slipped out of the tree and I fell.) I landed about two feet from a chain link fence. One of the guys I was working with came over to me. He told my folks I said I couldn't breathe. He lifted my head and held it until the ambulance arrived. I was taken to the emergency room at Grants Pass, where x-rays taken and because of the extent of my injuries I was air lifted by helicopter to the Rouge Valley Medical Center 35 miles from Grants Pass. I was stabilized in the emergency room. Because of the extent of my injuries I was put on a ventilator and a halo was applied to stabilize my cervical injury. Once stabilized I was transferred to the intensive care unit. My neck was broken at two levels, and an incomplete fracture at C-2, which means it didn't damage the spinal cord. My spine was also fractured at C-5, which was complete and caused the paralysis from my chest down, which at that level I was unable to breathe on my own. My spine was also broken at T-12 and my pelvis was shattered when I fell on my chain saw. I was in a coma and fighting for my life. This is how Mom & Dad found me when they arrived the next day.

I was placed on a bed that rotated from my back to my front, this was to prevent bedsores and for circulation and to help clean out my lungs. Because of my asthma and the level of my injury I was expected to remain on a ventilator. A tracheotomy was performed for permanent ventilation. A feeding tube was surgically placed in my stomach for long term nutrition. There was a lot of discussion between the doctors as to whether they should fuse my neck or keep the halo on. The doctors made the final decision to eliminate surgery and keep

the halo on until the bones healed on their own. This would eliminate problems with my next treatment later down the road.

The next thing I remember was waking up in the hospital, not being able to move any of my lower extremities, wondering what the heck had happened. I was scared. I do remember Mom and Dad being there and trying to reassure me everything was going to be all right. Because of the tracheotomy I could not talk to tell anyone what I was feeling or what I wanted. It was really frustrating. The staff at Rouge Valley Medical Center were great to me. Couldn't have asked for any better care. When I get back to Oregon I hope some of them will still be there. Would really like to thank them for all the good work they did. I was in intensive care for 6 weeks.

I was beginning to come out of my coma before Mom and Dad left. Mom & Dad were in Oregon for 2 weeks, but had to get back to their jobs. Because of my tracheotomy I could not talk and was unable to communicate my fears and questions about what had happened. Mom & Dad did tell me that I was in an accident and had no feeling in my legs. I was really unsure about them leaving as I did not know what would happen to me.

Had a lot of visitors while I was in intensive care. April, who was pregnant with my son Cody, came to see me a few times a week. Nancy, my daughter Becca's mother and her two sisters also came to see me. My friends in Grants Pass came and tried to tell me about the accident. I have no memory of what happened. My Becca was a little afraid to see me at first but she never let me know that she was scared for me. Becca and I have a special relationship. When she was just two years old she loved to float the rivers with me. While I would row, she would stand or sit in between my legs, it was a little awkward to row that way but she had to be right there with Dad. She still talks to me about floating the rivers; she can't wait until we can float the river again.

The doctors discussed with me that I would wear the halo for a period of up to three months. It was kind of an odd looking thing, I kind of felt like I was in jail with the bar's around me, but I got used to the halo after all I had to wear it for three months. The worst thing about the halo was having it tightened every week, but that wasn't as painful as when they took it off. When they were unscrewing the screws, it felt like they were screwing them in.

Amy, Katie and Jenni came to visit me for a few days. I really enjoyed seeing them and they tried to give me lots of encouragement. I could see in their eyes some hope that I could be at least somewhat normal. While Amy, Katie and Jenni were in Medford the nurses began to wean me off the ventilator and put a button in my tracheotomy tube so I could talk. Now that I was out of my coma I had some extremely difficult decisions to make. When I would be released from the hospital for my rehabilitation where would I go? Medford had a small rehabilitation clinic or I could go to Colorado to Craig Hospital. My sisters, Mom & Dad really encouraged me to come home and go to Craig. We were told Craig was one of the leading rehabilitation hospitals in the country. That meant leaving my daughter Becca and April. I really wasn't sure of what the future would hold for me, or how far I could go.

I made the decision to go to Craig and on August. 27, 1997 I was transported in a leer jet air ambulance to Centennial Airport and then by ambulance to Craig Hospital. The flight there was something else. I really wanted to see the scenery but because of the halo and not being able to sit up I could not see anything. I was nervous about going to Craig, but I knew it was the best thing for my rehabilitation. Mom and Katy met me when I arrived at Craig. The Sunday after I arrived at Craig Dad brought my grandma to see me. It was the first time she had seen me after my accident. The staff at Craig really knew how to care for me. They had me up and in a wheel chair within a week. After being in Craig for a while it felt like home, the staff and other patients and their families made me feel welcome. We were all in wheel chairs.

I was ready for the physical challenge of rehabilitation. I knew rehabilitation was going to be something very difficult, but I had no idea of how painful it was actually going to be. I did get a taste of it, in the hospital in Medford Oregon, but the real pain and agony came when I got to Craig Hospital Denver.

The next five months I spent in Craig hospital were probably the toughest months of my life. Since I had a lot of muscle contractions, most of my time was spent trying to get my arms as straight as possible. I had a lot of pain and did a lot of yelling when the physical therapists worked to straighten my arms. Even with all the painkillers they were giving me it still didn't seem to help much.

Mom stayed with me the first 5 days at Craig and then Dad came down and stayed another 5 days. Mom and Dad tried to come down to see me as often as possible, mostly on weekends. My rehabilitation was done during the week so they didn't really see much of my rehabilitation. I showed myself and my physical therapist and occupational therapist one could actually go beyond the boundaries of an injury, to become something more

than the average.

Katie and Jenni came to see me quite a bit while I was at Craig. They did see some of the agony I went through in rehabilitation. Amy and Megan, came to see me for a weekend. I guess I was a little jealous of the other patients, as their families were there with them every day. But I know my family all had lives of their own, with their own problems.

Mom & Dad were trained in my care and how to transfer me from my wheel chair into the car. They did end up almost dropping me when they were putting me into the car, they felt bad and all I could do was laugh. I thought it was pretty funny. Mom and Dad took me on a trip up to the mountains; it was a beautiful day. I couldn't help thinking how small the trees in Colorado are. It was a nice little trip; we went up 287 to Conifer. I had forgotten how beautiful the Rockies really are.

Had a lot of time to think of the future, especially after April came to see me in October. April did want to move to Colorado and take care of me and a new baby. What a slap in the face that was! But I picked myself up and got plugging away at getting myself as far as it was physically possible. Having to do this, pretty much, by myself was real rough but I had to do it not only for me, but for my kids and all the others who would follow behind me.

My Occupational Therapist, Susan, was a big help to me even though I did play dirty tricks on her. I had just come up from having a cast put my arm; this was a procedure to help straighten my arm so I would have more use out of it. We got to the gym, that is where the occupational therapist and physical therapists did all of their work, some friends of mine asked what happened when they saw me in a cast. I told them; with Susan standing there, that Susan had broke my arm by trying to straighten it. You should have seen the look on her face when I told this story. Of course I told them the truth.

Met a lot of good people at Craig, in fact there were a few of us who got to be good friends. We try to get together once a year for our Re-eval' s. We talk about what problems we have come across and how we deal with them. This is very helpful for all of us. We usually end up figuring out how to fix the things we are having problems with.

A week before I was to be dismissed, I was sent to the East Wing of Craig Hospital. The rooms in the East Wing are much like an apartment, you have a refrigerator, stove, etc.; this is to help the patients do things for themselves and if needed the nurses aids are there to assist. Mom and Dad had to be there with me as they had to learn to care for me just as the nurses and nurses aids did. Because of their schedules Dad came down the first part of the week and Mom came down the last part of the week. This training has enabled my family to have me home and be comfortable knowing how to care for me.

Now to see what the world holds for me? When I first got out of the hospital everything was great, then I started to find out how terrible the health-care industry is. I know there are a lot of good hard working people in the field, but boy there sure are a lot of idiot's out in the field too. I guess you have good and bad in every field. The only thing about living in the system (health care) is there is a lot B. S. I just cannot wait until I can get my own place, hire my own people, and be able to run my own life.

Dec. 22, 1997. Greeley, Colorado, Camelot 1, my first apartment after the accident. I really liked this place, having all the independence I needed. Yet still having nurses aids around to help me with tasks I was unable to do. I continued on with my rehabilitation in Greeley, my occupational therapist was very good. I learned to cook again, how to be more independent and that I could do anything. It was just a matter of figuring out how. This brought me a long way, every day I figure out how to do something I was not able to do before.

Christmas, 1997. I spent a few days in Greeley to get used to my own apartment before my trip to Cheyenne for Christmas. I was anxious for Christmas, but the rough part about Mom and Dad's house is that I had to be in my manual chair as their house is too small for my electric chair. So for that week, since I was not used to my manual chair, I spent a lot of time lying in bed watching TV. I did have a great time. As time goes on I have spent a lot more time in my manual chair trying to build up my muscles, it is real good exercise but after three or four hours I am plum tuckered out. Mom and Dad had a family gathering Christmas Eve a lot of the family in Cheyenne came to visit. It was sure nice seeing all of you.

After Christmas I returned to my apartment in Greeley. It was great, until some of the nurses aids did not want to do their jobs and I developed three bed sores, two on my elbows and one on my lower back. My elbows did heal but the sore on my back would not heal so I ended up having to move to a facility that could manage my care 24 hours a day. I moved to Denver, into a nursing home (The Spearly Center). But now, looking back I never had it so good.

May 1998 the nursing home, it was a nice place; the staff was good and very helpful. I just could not handle being around the people there. I lived at the nursing home for a year. Because my bed sore on my back was so severe I had a skin flap done on my back. I went into Craig Hospital the middle part of November 1998 and was flat on my back for six weeks. Just about the time I was to be dismissed to go back to the nursing home I developed a blood clot in my leg so I spent Christmas 1998 at Craig Hospital. Mom & Dad and Katy had Christmas dinner with me. I was finally dismissed from Craig the first part of January 1999.

Spearly wasn't all bad; it was just a hop skip and a jump from downtown Denver. There were lots of things to do in downtown. While I was there a nurses aid and I went rafting (Whitewater class 4 plus) I had a ball. The rafting company had seats made up for quads to sit in. It's amazing what they are made out of, all they are is a piece of rafting material cut into a triangle with the D rings on each corner. With straps to hook around the D ring and around the raft or the raft frame. My goal is that I will some day be able to row a raft again. Because of my injury they say I will never have full use of my triceps. I have been working on strengthening my triceps and shoulders. The nursing home did have a nice weight room to work out in. I took full advantage of this.

I have spent quite a few weekends in Cheyenne; most of them were for the holidays and of course for Frontier Days. Mom and Dad were pretty overprotective back then. I did finally talk them into letting me go visit some friends who lived about three miles away. I could see why they didn't want me to go, but I ran all over Greeley without any problems. So running around Cheyenne was a piece of cake. After all my chair will go 7.5 mph and when it is fully charged up I can go up to 33 miles. Running around the park was fun; it seemed like people would just moved out of your way. Maybe they thought I would run them over.

Super Bowl Sunday, **BACK TO BACK SUPER BOWL CHAMPIONS, GO BRONCOS**. Nobody thought it could ever be done, the donkeys not winning one but back-to-back Super Bowl's. I spent those two days with some old climbing buddies in Denver. Andy, Diane, Fritz, Dan and his friends all do quite a bit together since I moved to Denver. We've been camping a few times, tried my luck at fishing to no avail until just a few days ago. Fritz and I went to the Aurora reservoir it was windier then ever. But I still ended up pulling in a rainbow trout 20 inches long and weighed three pounds. I was very excited, and I did it all by myself.

Surgery again, this time I had a bone infection in my little left toe so I had to have it amputated. I spent a few days at Craig for that surgery. Wasn't a big deal, can't use the dang thing anyway, Ha! Ha! Then if there wasn't enough trauma to that foot, my big toe started to curl under. So in for another in and out surgery, this time to graft my bones together. They tuck the cartilage out and screwed a screw into my toe. The bones ended up fusing together good but my body did not like the screw being in their so I had to go back and have it taken out. This was just another in and out surgery, no big deal.

June 1999, moved into a boarding house, Holly House, it seemed to be fine. After about a month I arrived the help changed and we got a bunch of foreigners who thought they were above doing any of my care. They came and they went, but nothing seemed to change. Here I was in another bad situation. So I got out of there. The nurses aids, again, would not do their jobs relating to my care.

July 1, 1999. April and her family were moving to Ohio, so they stopped in Cheyenne for a day. It was quite the experience, seeing my son Cody for the first time. He was almost one year old. He did warm up to me pretty quickly. We had Katie, her son Mark, Jenni and her two kids Brandi and Destin. So there were plenty of kids. Watching them play was enough to wear me out. Kids, it's a wonder where they get all their energy! All the kids got along great, watching them play ball reminded me of when we were kids. Cody was so full of energy I couldn't believe it, all that energy in such a little guy. He ran around all day long, I bet he slept most of the way to Ohio.

Dec. 1999, moved into another boarding home. This one seemed to be fine but as things go, things have changed here to. It seems that I won't be happy until I get my own place. The reason why I moved in here was because there were younger people. But he ended up getting kicked out. Now I am back living with the elderly people I have nothing in common with. I am still trying to find an apartment in an assisted living place. This may take a while.

Things are starting to turn around for me. The insurance company had promised me a van and a computer, but we all know that they say these things and you end up having to fight for them. Well now it looks like I will be getting a van at the expense of the insurance company (and all of the modifications to it for me to drive it). With any luck I will get a nice settlement. This will allow me to get into a lifestyle more to my liking. I'm really not asking for much, just to have a normal living environment. The insurance company has been good to me. I just hope getting my settlement won't be a big battle. If I do get a nice settlement, I plan on moving to

Cheyenne. I'm not to sure of Denver anymore; it has grown too much for my liking. At least in Cheyenne I won't have the hustle and bustle of the big city, yet be close enough that I will still be able to get to support from Craig. Mom, Dad, Katy, and Jenni are there and can check on me during the day and I like the fishing and hunting in Wyoming better anyway.

Since I have been in a wheel chair, I have been thinking of better ways for the handicapped to have more mobility especially in the area of recreation. I am using my computer to start on a few of my ideas. I have run into some problems but thanks to the Web, I think I have figured out ways to overcome them. One of my ideas is something that any outdoorsman would love to have. It is called a TRACK CHAIR. I hope to have everything organized and possibly have it built it a few years. A few of my friends are helping me with it, one is a welder, other is a wheelchair mechanic.

Editors note: As we go through our lives "hell bent on election" maybe we should stop and take a few minutes to think about how fragile our lives really are. We take each day for granted as we go along our way and forget that in the blink of an eye everything we have or were can be taken from us. Put on your seatbelts, running to the store is easy and close, but it only takes a minute. Safety glasses when you work on a project are easy and can safe your beautiful eyes. Mowing in sandals is comfortable and makes the toes all the more inviting for those fast blades. Take time to use common sense and most of all, say a prayer for Bill and his continued work towards a better life. What a brave young man. — Dolfe

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

ROY AND ALICE — 58TH ANNIVERSARY — APRIL 4TH
NANCY AND BOB — 52ND ANNIVERSARY — APRIL 25TH

FRANK BROWN — HAPPY BIRTHDAY — APRIL 8TH
MARILYN BROWN — HAPPY BIRTHDAY — APRIL 19TH
PAT WHITE — HAPPY BIRTHDAY — MAY 31ST

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TRY THESE WEB PAGES

WWW.CHUCKBROWN.ORG - Charles
WWW.PRIVATEINFO.COM - Mike Wheelless
WWW.MYFAMILY.COM - Brown Family

WELCOME TO NEW E-MAIL USERS:

Mike's son Bill Brown
wtbrown0708@aol.com
Frank's granddaughter
Jenny Brown (Tandy's dtr)
frogtwo@concentric.net

NEW ADDRESSES:

Orpha is in her new home at
13045 S 46th Way
Phoenix, AZ 85044

Also, the area code for Dick and Orpha is now 480. You might want to make that change.

As I'm sure all of you are now aware, I use these addresses to notify you of any changes in the family situation. Sure makes life easy for me. Please keep me updated on any changes and any new listings are welcome.

Thanks, Dolfe