



New Era Photo by Marty Heisey

Earl Barley and his wife, Della, are happy about Barley's fast and remarkable recovery from a life-threatening farm accident. Barley

was run over by a tractor in January. He is now able to walk with the help of a cane.

Tractor Crushed Earl Barley, 75, But He's Walking Today

Faith, Family Help Tough Farmer's Amazing Recovery from Accident

By ED KLIMUSKA
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Earl Barley had worked nearly 50 years on his farm and never had a serious accident.

But in January, years after retiring from farming, Barley, 75, suffered a body-crushing accident that, according to medical experts, was severe enough to kill most people his age.

Not only did Barley survive, but his doctors say they're amazed at the strength of his recovery.

The accident happened when Barley, a Lancaster R2 farmer, was pulling logs with his tractor.

A limb on one of the logs hit Barley, knocking him off the tractor. One of the tractor's wheels ran over him, crushing his pelvis.

He was rushed to Lancaster General Hospital, where doctors and family feared for his life.

"They didn't expect him to pull through at his age," says

Della Barley, his wife. "Not many people at his age have a tractor run over them and live to tell it."

But tough Earl Barley fooled them.

Not only did he pull through, he has had a remarkably fast and strong recovery. He needs a walker or cane to get around, but he does just fine. He eagerly anticipates getting back to one of his great joys, doing volunteer work with Mrs. Barley.

His family thinks his recovery is a miracle. His doctor marvels at it.

"I think he has done remarkably," says Dr. Richard Gayeski of Millersville. "He went through a very serious, multi-trauma accident which broke several bones in his pelvis and caused him to be really bedridden, which in itself created another set of complications."

"He is a very strong individual. I think his ability to look on

things from the positive aspect, and the support he got from his family, allowed him to go through what I consider a very life-threatening injury and prolonged hospitalization.

"I think many people his age without that will and without that family support would have found it very difficult to cope with that situation that good."

Of the accident, which happened January 7, Barley recalls, "I was pulling a log and I just don't know what happened. I just didn't cut that one limb off and that caused the trouble."

He was working with his grandson, Tony Bitz, 14, who rushed off to get help and summon emergency crews.

Barley says he farmed for 50 years and never had a serious accident. He was lucky. Farming is considered a high-risk occupation