



Cody and Bailey Conrady and their dog, Dixie



## Electrical Accident Impacts Couple's Lives: 'Normal before will not be normal after'

Bailey Edenburn was packing for an unknown destination. She also had to pack for her fiancé, Cody Conrady. Many times, throwing necessities in a suitcase is for something fun. Unfortunately, packing on this day in May was for anything but.

She didn't know how long she would be gone or even where she was going. All she knew is she had to pack. And she had to get to Cody.

After finding out where he was and driving faster than she cares to admit, she reaches her destination: the Level 1 trauma center. She did not know how bad it was. She only knew he was alive.

At that point in time, Cody only knew the same — that he was alive. After nearly dying in an electrical accident, the day was a blur; most of it unetched in his mind.

Earlier that day, Cody had started his next-to-last day as assistant manager for an ag fertilizer company. He said they were shorthanded that day, so it was all hands on deck. To get ahead of the sprayer, he hopped in his truck and got going.

"I had to take loads because we needed an extra truck to take fertilizer," Cody recalls. A sprayer had been broken down for 3½ hours, and when it finally showed up, he was ready.

### What happened next

After the sprayer pulled in, Cody pulled up in his truck to unload fertilizer. "I hooked on like I normally would, and the sprayer was unfolding, which is pretty much standard procedure."

What transpired next changed everything. Those who were there think that when the operator unfolded the sprayer boom, he extended the sprayer tips at the same time, and one of them grazed the power line.

Cody said they believe the sprayer tip was electrified for only a moment, but that the stray electricity moved through the tip, boom, tractor, and down to the ground where Cody was standing. When Cody touched the camlock, which connects the hoses together, 7,400 volts of electricity flowed through his body.

The force of the stray voltage threw him backwards and onto the ground. The person in the cab jumped out and started CPR (luckily the ground was no longer electrified) and called 9-1-1.

## One journey. Two experiences.

As in any journey, two people experience it differently. Cody is matter of fact. He says he doesn't mind talking about it, but that Bailey does. As an outward expression of his love for her, you can tell he worries about her reliving that day.

He says he doesn't remember a lot about the accident, but he does have a few vivid memories that have to do with the stretcher — one was the sound of the collective click as it was being loaded into the ambulance. The other was him being rolled on it to the medevac.

"My first memory after that was probably a week and a half later," Cody said, adding that there were many conversations with Bailey to help him piece the details together, including the progression of his care. He said the medical staff made several attempts to save his hand, but that the damage progressed too far to do so. He also questioned why they had to take his leg.

"What we learned is that tissue is actively still dying over the course of two weeks, so it (the internal damage) just kept moving up (the affected limbs)," he said.

## Bailey's recollections

When Bailey recalls what happened, her words come a bit faster than Cody's.

"Emotionally, I've probably been more of a mess (than Cody). He struggled very early on with just the circumstances (of it all) and just how badly hurt he was. But he's accepted the fact that this is his life now, and (that) he has to make this life as good as he can. I'm not quite there yet," she admits.

As with most significant journeys in life, "there are days that are perfect, (when) the world is right." And there are the bad days, she admits.

After watching Cody experience immense pain, lose two of his limbs, undergo numerous surgeries and learn to walk again, "we knew life wasn't going to be the same," Bailey reflects. "We knew that the 'normal' before was not going to be the 'normal' after."

## "In the beginning, it was just all about survival"

"In the beginning, it was just all about survival," Bailey recounts. Today, their lives include more grey areas.

"I don't know what the future holds," Bailey said. "There are some days when his leg just bothers him... (but) he's not the type to want to sit still for anything. He's had to sit still and learn more patience in the last year than he has his entire life. And it (sitting still) just drives him bonkers."

## The dangling carrot

Bailey recalls how at one of the initial meetings with the medical team, Cody mentioned September 7 of that same year: the day they were to be wed. "It was a giant dangling carrot, really," Bailey recalls. "I mean, he was bound and determined we were not going to put the wedding off."

Not only did they get married, but on the Wednesday before their wedding, Bailey came home to a huge surprise. "I had gone to do chores, and when I came back, he was walking around the house, without a cane, and I bawled, absolutely bawled."

Bailey recalls that Cody had gotten his leg prosthetic 10 days before the wedding. "I didn't think he'd walk down the aisle. I'm not sure in that moment in time he thought he'd walk down the aisle."

But he did, and you can hear in Bailey's voice just how special their wedding day was. "It was just the most perfect of days," she said, smiling.



## The journey continues

Bailey says that the goal was and still is for "Cody to do whatever Cody wants to do."

Cody and Bailey are still packing for a destination. Sometimes figuratively. They adapt to the twists and turns of their life together. Cody navigates the challenges he faces with a different dominant hand than before the accident. Some days he can't do everything he wants to because of his pain. Bailey still struggles at times with what happened that day in May.

But sometimes they pack in a literal way. Lately, they have been busy completing baby registries for a new addition in their lives. Although a bit apprehensive like most first-time parents, bring on the next chapter, they say. The journey continues.