

Pullman Purple Heart recipient severely injured in car crash

Taylor Nadauld/Moscow-Pullman Daily News

The community is rallying around a Whitman County volunteer firefighter and Purple Heart recipient who was seriously injured last week in crash near Colfax.

The Pullman resident, Richard Carson, is currently being treated at Sacred Heart Medical Center in Spokane and will likely require several operations.

"He's had surgery on his neck and right arm," Carson's close friend Eric Gibson said. "Both of those went really well, like they were supposed to."

Gibson said they are waiting on a definitive diagnosis of Carson's spinal injury.

"He's got a long, long road ahead of him," Gibson said.

Washington State Patrol reported Carson, 28, was driving a 2001 Dodge Durango on state Route 27 near Oakesdale at 6:30 a.m. Jan. 30 when he failed to navigate a curve in the road and his vehicle rolled down an embankment.

While serving in the Army, Carson was severely injured by an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan in 2010 and was awarded the Purple Heart and a combat medic badge. He spent three months at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Washington, D.C., where he underwent numerous operations before being transferred to the Wounded Warriors Program through Madigan Army Medical Center in Washington to continue medical treatment.

The Daily News reported in 2015 that Carson had 20 to 30 reconstructive surgeries for his injuries.

"I'm missing about half of my calf on my right leg, and about half of my thigh on my left leg," Carson said in 2015. "The skin on the palm of my hand came off my tricep, and the skin on the back of my hand came off my thigh."

Friends and family are collecting donations to pay for Carson's latest medical expenses.

According to the crowdfunding site set up by Gibson, as of Sunday morning, \$7,065 had been raised by more than 40 donors to go toward Gibson's set goal of \$10,000.

Gibson initially set the fundraising goal at \$5,000. When more than \$3,000 was raised in the first few hours, Gibson said he bumped the goal up to \$10,000.

"(Carson) was shocked at how many people were helping," Gibson said.

People wishing to donate can go to www.youcaring.com/richardcarson-749080.

Gibson said donations can also be made at Columbia Bank branches to the accounts of Eric Gibson or Lester Erwin in care of Richard Carson.

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