



Staff photo by
RON CHENOY

pus, situated between Yamato Road, Military Trail and the railroad just west of Interstate 95, will reduce the number of executive buildings originally planned by three, move the proposed 27-acre lake to the edge of the property on Spanish River Boulevard, and reduce the number and total size of the planned retail centers as well as the number of hotel rooms.

Enlarged landscaped buffer zones along Military Trail and Yamato will shield the retail areas from the surrounding communities and roads will thread their way inside the industrial park instead of being around the perimeter of the parcels.

The size of the retail centers have also been reduced. While the original plan allowed 700,000 square feet of 10,000-square-foot stores, the new plan incorporates between 500,000 and 550,000

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'Man with no face' faces difficulties

Boca fitness trainer tackles life after disfiguring accident

By Marlo Maimone
Staff Writer

Neal Keselica, 31, was the embodiment of health: a personal trainer, a body builder, a motivator for many.

That described Neal, director of personal training and nutrition at Gold's Gym in Boca Raton, just six weeks ago, before a car crash May 2 on Interstate 95 in West Palm Beach.

"All I can remember (my girlfriend) saying was 'Oh my God, your face, where is your nose?'" Neal said, recalling the minutes just after his 1996 Camaro

Z-28 careened into the grassy Interstate 95 median after an 18-wheeler veered into his lane.

His girlfriend was following in another car and was not injured.

"I knew my nose was off my face. I looked down and my nose was in my hand."

Paramedics brought him to the Trauma Center at St. Mary's Medical Center in West Palm Beach where Dr.



Keselica today

Staff photo by JOE MARSHALL



Keselica before the accident

Fred Barr, a volunteer plastic surgeon at the Trauma Center, described Neal's condition as "one of the worst facial injuries I had ever seen."

"His face was crushed in, it was really terrible," he said. "Neal's injuries were so pervasive and extreme we thought there would be brain injuries. We got lucky in his case. He was in unbelievable shape prior to the accident and that helped."

Dr. Richard Kaplan, the

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Face

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oral maxillofacial surgeon who tended to Neal, said "all of the bones in his face were broken."

In the days to follow, Neal, who lives in Delray Beach, found himself in the intensive care unit on life support at St. Mary's. He couldn't see or talk since his cheekbones and both eye orbits were shattered.

Surgeons and doctors attempted to put his face back together again, not an easy task with all the bones of his face crushed, as well as a fractured skull. He lost four front teeth, others were jammed into his gums. Besides a completely severed nose, his tongue had been sliced through to the tonsils and lodged in his throat. Doctors needed to perform an emergency tracheotomy to save him. His jaw and palate were split in two. A metal plate now stabilizes the jaw.

Waking up scared and alone, Neal looked to the doctor for some sign of encouragement.

"I wanted to know if I would be able to have a normal life again," Neal said. "The doctor told me I would never be normal and I would always have a facial disfigurement. I was devastated."

His parents, Pat and Mike Keselica of New Jersey, immediately flew to West Palm Beach as soon as they heard. One of Neal's two older brothers, David, who lives in Atlanta, arrived first. He kept his other brother Craig, who stayed behind in New Jersey, updated on Neal's condition.

Pat and Mike had just been here visiting with Neal in March. They could not have envisioned the condition they would find their son.

"We were horrified when we saw him," Pat said. "It's tough to see a child of yours like that. We were worried about his vision when he came out of surgery because he couldn't see. He could barely speak and I knew he was terrified. He's always been

a great son, very attentive, very loving. When your son comes that close to being gone, it's very scary.

The doctors attributed his survival to his good physical condition and said it probably saved him from a neck or brain injury. I have faith and I know his condition is fixable."

But it will probably take a South Florida community miracle to help him. The trauma center at St. Mary's prevented his death. Now Neal, who has no health insurance, needs financial aid to save his life.

Sally Bosch and Shepard Osherow of Highland Beach are trying help him.

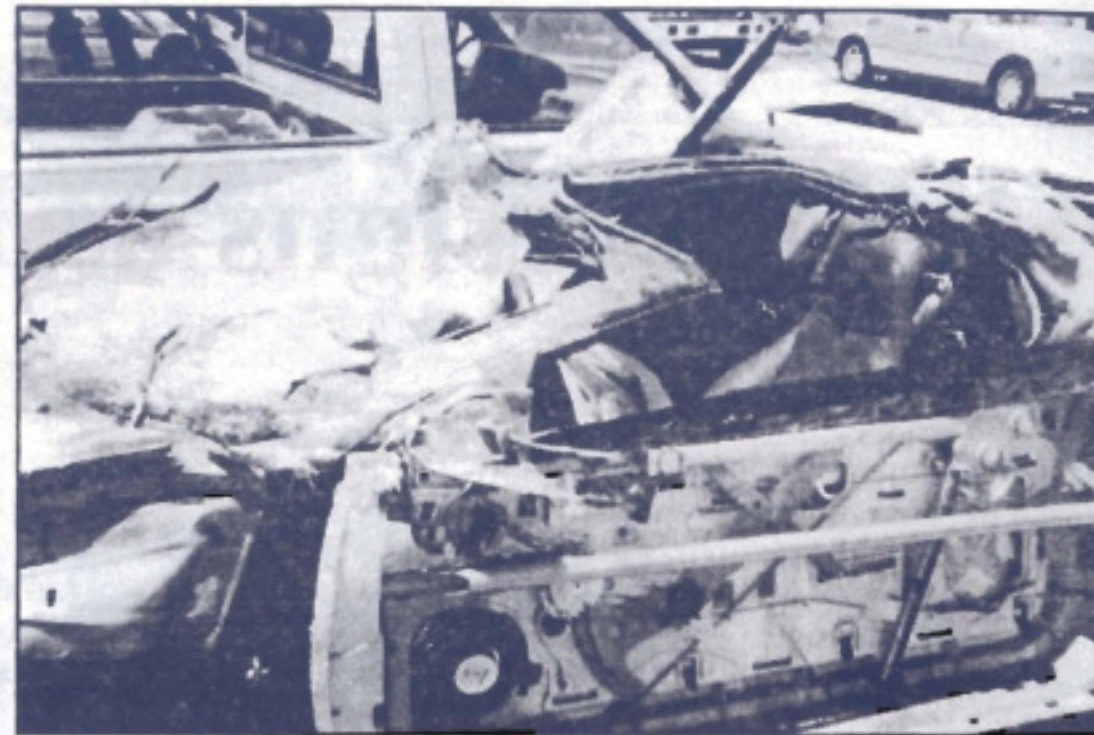
"He's by himself and has no one to turn to," Bosch said. "Shep and I feel we could offer him help and we want him to have someone in his corner. I feel it's the decent thing to do."

Before the accident, Neal was their personal trainer and a mentor to Bosch's son William.

Now Bosch, a former manager and owner of a large Midwest trucking firm, and Osherow, a retired New York financial executive, have tried to pull their resources and personal contacts together on Neal's behalf.

"This is a person who needs help and whom the system probably won't look after," Osherow said. "Besides that, he is a very nice person. Sally and I like to do things for people and we like seeing our efforts actually benefiting someone. God has blessed us and we want to give back. It's the human thing to do. It could happen to anyone of us. In today's world, things have a way of falling through the cracks and I don't want to see that happen to Neal."

According to Osherow, anyone could be in Neal's position and it is scary to think that you might be refused quality care because you



Neal Keselica's Z-28 Camaro after his May 2 accident on I-95.

right up to the plate for us," Bosch said.

Pinnella examined Neal and told him the bones of the face had acted as a shock absorber for the neck which, in this case, explains the massive injury to Neal's face and why his neck was not broken in the impact.

"Putting the bones of the face back together is like a puzzle," Pinnella said. "The blood vessels, the tissues, they all work together."

He assured Neal that it is possible for him to have a normal life again. He told him that he will need a specialist in facial reconstruction, one of whom just happens to be at the University of Miami.

Pinnella contacted Dr. S. Anthony Wolfe, chief of plastic surgery at Miami Children's Hospital, and scheduled an appointment for Neal last week. Bosch, who drove and accompanied Neal to his appointment, said Wolfe's sensitivity was extremely helpful.

"He is an exquisite human being," Bosch said.

Wolfe said Neal is not only lucky to be alive, he is lucky he can see.

"He's lucky he didn't lose one or both eyes," Wolfe said. "With the kind of fracture he had, most patients lose their eyes and bones of the face didn't hav

CENTURA PAINTS
PRESSURE CLEANING RENTALS!

Face

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work is done. Bosch's friend, Dr. Jerry Cuomo of Boca Raton has agreed to donate some services.

"I'm going to do Neal's initial X-rays, restorative dental work and temporary crowns before he goes into his other surgeries," Cuomo said. "Just his dentistry and orthodontist work is into the thousands of dollars already. I've never had a case like this. I'm going to see if I can get labs and other people to work with me on the cost."

In addition to the facial injuries and dental maladies, Neal suffers from mental scars and pain.

Dr. Sami Dagher of Delray Beach is trying to make Neal's pain less devastating. He is a pain management specialist who has agreed to treat him free of charge.

"He's not one of my typical patients," Dagher said. "He ... had severe problems, multiple fractures and was undermedicated. I prescribed him with what was needed for relief, free of charge, and I don't think that's heroic, just humanitarian."

Even though so many are pitching in to help, Dagher said there will be more expenses with the surgeries that lie ahead.

At 6-foot-6 and 270 pounds, (he has lost 30 pounds since the accident), Neal's work as a personal trainer and bodybuilder may have prepared him for his long road to recovery.

He is nationally certified for his personal training career and lectures for youth groups and women's groups. He attended Cornell University for two years and has a bachelor's degree from the Florida Institute of Technology.

Neal's mother, has been "touched" by all the people who are trying to

help him.

One of those friends, John Pavsner, who has known Neal since college and is a lawyer in South Florida, said he is just trying to take care of his buddy.

"I'm just trying to help him take care of himself," Pavsner said. "I go visit him, drive him places, get him things. I'm just trying to be there and play a supportive role."

"As a parent, it's a relief to know he has that kind of support," Pat said. "Right now I'm just anxious for him to be free of pain and we pray that God gives him the strength to heal."

She said it was hard for Neal to talk since his jaw was wired shut after the initial surgeries. He also has to drink through a straw.

"It hurts him to talk, so we use the network system to keep the family informed," his mother said. "I speak to him every day and then I call his brothers to let them know what's going on."

Right now Neal says he's trying to keep his outlook for the future optimistic.

"I think I'm going to appreciate the value of life more than I did," he said. "It's easy when you're a young man, good looking and people look up to you, to fall into the illusion that you're invincible. The reality is, it can all be taken away from you. I don't take things like my health for granted anymore. This has put a new perspective on life for me."

Sally Bosch and Shepard Osherow have opened up an account for donations at NationsBank in Neal's name, account No. 373-406-6087. For more information call Kimberly at NationsBank at (954) 776-8000.



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