

ROCKY MOUNTAIN  
HYPERBARIC  
ASSOCIATION FOR  
BRAIN INJURIES

OUR MISSION:

*The mission of the Rocky Mountain Hyperbaric Association for Brain Injuries is to improve the quality of life for people suffering from brain injuries in the Rocky Mountain region by providing financial support and logistical assistance to individuals who are seeking rehabilitation through hyperbaric oxygen therapy and to promote education and understanding to the community of the benefits regarding hyperbaric oxygen therapy.*

INSIDE THIS  
ISSUE:

**The Beginning** 2

**From couch to the bottom of the world** 4



# JUST BREATHE

HEALING... ONE BREATH AT A TIME

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

## Support From Legion Family

In our last issue, we had mentioned that the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Colorado and the Sons of the American Legion Detachment of Colorado chose RMHABI's Healing our Heroes Program as their project for the year for 2012-2013. Under the leadership of Auxiliary



President Karen Boehler and Sons Commander Mike Kirschner, Colorado Auxiliary units and Sons squadrons

raised funds throughout 2012 and 2013 to help provide hyperbaric oxygen treatments to brain injured veterans.

On Saturday, June 22, 2013, President Karen and Commander Mike presented RMHABI with

the funds that were raised by both groups. The monies raised will help provide HBOT treatments to brain injured veterans as well as food and housing to the veterans who will be staying in the veteran house while the veteran is receiving his or her HBOT treatments.

Eddie Gomez, RMHABI



president stated, "We are very honored to have been chosen as the 2012-2013 project by both the Auxiliary and Sons. The support and commitment by both President Karen and Commander



Doris Ann Werlinger, Northwestern Division Vice President, Mike Kirschner, Detachment Commander and Department President Karen Boehler present RMHABI with the proceeds raised by the Auxiliary and Sons.

Mike has been overwhelming. We are humbled by the generosity that the entire Legion family has shown to our organization; particularly to our Healing our Heroes Program."

## Upcoming Fundraiser

Join us at 6:30 PM on August 17 at The Melting Pot in Louisville, CO for our 5th Annual Fundraising Dinner. General Manager Adam Baker and his team at The Melting Pot will once again host our fundraising dinner and have a great meal planned for our evening. The evening's dinner includes Cheddar and Fiesta

Cheese Fondue appetizers, your choice of House or California salads, dinner entre consisting of filet mignon, shrimp, sirloin AND chicken and Flaming Turtle and Ying Yang Chocolate Fondues for dessert.. Tickets for the event are \$50.00 each and can be obtained by calling 303-442-4124.



# The Beginning

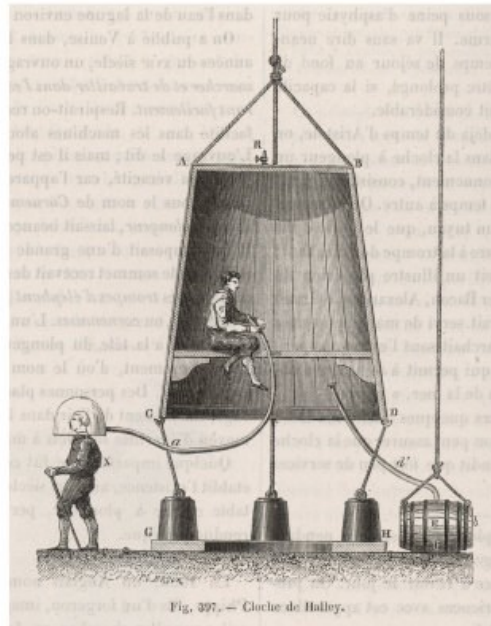
I don't know how many times we hear that the hyperbaric chamber is new age, new technology or high tech. Like other little known devices, when we learn about hyperbaric we are inclined to think it's a "new" thing. The fact is hyperbaric chambers have been around for a long time and they are one of the oldest forms of medicine.

Hyperbaric chambers have been around for hundreds of years. Over one hundred years before Joseph Priestley discovered oxygen, Henshaw build his "Domicilum" in 1662. He compressed his chamber with air and could achieve pressures by having a man operating organ billows. He conjectured that exposure to increased pressure would promote wellness and used it to treat afflictions to the lungs. In 1775 Joseph Priestley discovered oxygen.

In the early 1800's came the bell shaped caisson which would allow divers an air filled vessel where they could venture out and conduct deep water activities on bridges and tunnels. Immediately a mysterious by-product appeared—"The Bends" or decompression sickness. Decompression sickness describes a condition arising from dissolved gases

coming out of solution into bubbles inside the body on depressurization. It was a perplexing issue and motivated French doctors and engineers. By 1830, chambers were appearing in cities across France.

Then in 1879, the crazy Dr. Fontaine converted a hyperbaric chamber into a surgical suite. Nearly a hundred operations were conducted in his 12 person tank. Patients experienced quicker recovery from



anesthetics, less vomiting, with no cyanosis or asphyxia. Fontaine drew plans for a 300 person surgical theatre. His dream was never realized and the circumstances of his "accidental" death are unclear and he is known as the first Martyr of hyperbaric oxygen.

At the turn of the last century, chambers started getting larger and larger and more common place. One such chamber stood 6 stories high and was compared to a 5 star hotel. Sadly, not everybody was in love with the chamber. A report released in 1933 warned the public of the dangers of Oxygen Toxicity—a condition that can occur in a chamber but is very uncommon and not a concern if treatments are being properly

monitored. This report caused a decline in the field of hyperbaric medicine and many of the large chambers were dismantled and sold as scrap. It was not until the mid-70's that the public realized the value of hyperbaric medicine and the field started to grow in popularity again.

It's strange how something as simple, safe and well tolerated is a mystery and like one of my patients said, "Most doctors can even spell it (hyperbaric)." The hyperbaric chamber gets brushed off as new technology. The truth is

it's been around for a long time and has a great safety record. Never has an effective, safe, simple treatment been so misunderstood.

Ryan Fullmer,

Program Director

# HBOT for Brain Injuries Update

July 15, 2013

Dear Rocky Mountain Hyperbaric Institute and Rocky Mountain Hyperbaric Association for Brain Injuries,

First let me than you for accepting David Riley into your therapy program and for providing financial assistance that made it possible for him to participate. With three treatments left, I am excited to report that we have seen significant changes as a result of hyperbaric oxygen therapy.

As stated in David’s application, he was born with an anoxic brain injury and has displayed developmental delays since birth. It was our hope that HBOT would strengthen his intellectual, verbal, problem-solving and social skills and help him think at a higher level and lead to in-

creased potential for a higher position in his work as a teacher’s assistant for children and greater independence in finances and daily living.

Some of the changes we attribute to HBOT:

1. Increased eye contact, especially when speaking to unfamiliar people.
2. Increased verbal skills (with us, at work, with parents of children at work, with Ryan and others at RMHI, at church).
3. Better problem-solving skills that enable him to deal with a bad housemate situation.
4. Increased social skills that helped him have his best year yet as a volunteer at Adam’s Camp where he works with children with disabilities.

Some notable events we attribute to HBOT:

1. David spoke at his grandfather’s memorial and showed emotion.
2. He got a promotion to ‘modified teacher leader’ at work, along with a raise.
3. David regularly speaks during our small group sessions at church—something he had never done before.
4. He calls friends on the phone now—something he has not done much in the past.

Overall, we are very thankful we committed to this program and thank you once again for supporting us.

Best regards,  
Martha

*“I am excited to report we have seen significant changes as the result of hyperbaric oxygen therapy,” Martha, client’s mother*

# Healing our Heroes Program Accepting Applications

We are currently accepting applications for our Healing our Heroes Program. Applicants must have served in Operation Enduring Freedom and/or Operation Iraqi Freedom and applicants need to have sustained a service related Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and/or Post Traumatic Stress (PTS). The program consists of 40 hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) treatments, 12 counseling sessions and, if the Veteran is from outside the Denver Metro area, room and



board is provided.

The participant will also be enrolled in the National Brain Injury Rescue and Rehabilitation (NBIRR) study. While enrolled in the NBIRR study,

the Veteran will receive cognitive and quality of life testing before he or she starts HBOT treatments and again upon the completion of the 40 HBOT treatments. The goal of the NBIRR study is to get HBOT for traumatic brain injury on the list of insurance-reimbursable conditions. To apply for the Healing our Heroes Program, go to [www.rmhabi.org/healing\\_our\\_heroes](http://www.rmhabi.org/healing_our_heroes) and download the application or call us at 303-442-4124.



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**Healing...One breath at a time**



# From Couch to the Bottom of the World

Margaux Mange was the fourth participant in the Healing our Heroes Program. After receiving 40 HBOT treatments in Louisiana, she was referred to the program by former Army Wounded Warrior (AW2) advocate, Robert Alvarez.

After suffering concussive events while deployed in Iraq, including having her head slammed into a gun turret during an IED attack, Margaux developed severe headaches and she also suffered from Post Traumatic Stress. Margaux tried many different healing options while searching for relief from her symptoms, including surgery on her brain. Nothing seemed to work.

Margaux's days were spent on the couch in dark rooms. After HBOT? Margaux updates us on what her life



is like since receiving hyperbaric oxygen therapy.

“Since HBOT, I have been able to start living again. I have competed in three Warrior Games where I competed on the Army team in volleyball,

track & field, and cycling. I have rode my bike all over the country as well as Italy in Ride2Recovery events. I have climbed a 19,000 ft. mountain and I am about to go to the South Pole. But my biggest achievement since HBOT would be finding myself again. I don't thin I would have ever truly been happy if I couldn't have been physically able to do all the things I am able to do. And that makes me happy and I am truly proud of that.

My headaches are still here but they are NOTHING like before.

To the donors who help support the Healing our Heroes Program—**THANK YOU!** You are changing Veterans' lives, whether they know it now or in five years, we couldn't do this without you.”