EWAITING ROOM



Good News after Bad News

n one horrific instant, ABC anchorman **Bob Woodruff** went from reporting the news to becoming the news: While covering the war in Iraq, he was severely wounded by a roadside bomb last January, sustaining head and brain injuries as well as broken bones.

Less than five months later, he remarkably returned to ABCs New York City newsroom, surprising colleagues in June with his first visit since the ambush attack.

"I missed you all," he told coworkers gathered around him, then alluded to his 36 days of unconsciousness following brain surgery after the blast. "I woke up in this hospital and I looked up and I just thought about you guys and I thought about everything I wanted badly to come back to. Man, it's good to be here."

Looking fit alongside his wife, Lee, the 44-year-old father of four was welcomed back with a spontaneous round of applause and not a dry eye in the newsroom. He returned to spend two July afternoons in the newsroom after morning physical therapy sessions.

He has been undergoing therapy aimed at restoring cognitive functions, his broth-

er David had revealed a few weeks before, calling it "exercising the brain." Earlier reports tracked his recovery as Woodruff began walking again and speaking again (in several languages). "I am still fighting hard through the challenges that were set in front of me when that roadside bomb exploded," he said in June. At least he hasn't experienced the kind of "alterations" that afflict many with traumatic brain injury, his brother said.

An ABC spokesman said that while Woodruff is "recovering rather miraculously" and was seen tossing a football around the newsroom, he "clearly has a long road to recovery."

While still a long way from returning to full-time work, Woodruff contributed to a "Nightline" telecast, recording a few lines by phone as a voiceover for a July report on North Korea.

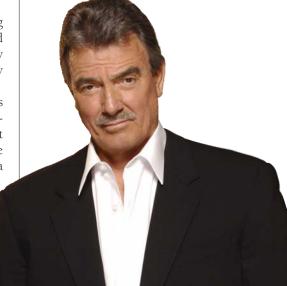
His former co-anchor on ABC's "World News Tonight," Elizabeth Vargas, recently was quoted as saying that Woodruff sounds just like himself. "We are so lucky that he is making such a great recovery," Vargas said, "but it is a long recovery."

The Moral of a Soap

or 26 years, Emmy-winning actor **Eric Braeden** portrayed his character on "The Young and the Restless" so convincingly that CBS might as well have renamed the popular soap opera The Young and the Ruthless.

All that, however, changed recently along with the personality of the character, ruthless businessman Victor Newman. After being carjacked, Newman suddenly turned over control of his company to spend time charming his wife with dance lessons and doting on his grandchildren. Everyone chalked up his uncharacteristic behavior to a new appreciation for life—until his blackouts and hallucinations were finally diagnosed as temporal lobe seizures resulting from a head injury sustained in the carjacking.

The July episode spotlighting the diagnosis was followed by "CBS Cares" public service announcements that Braeden filmed in cooperation with the Epilepsy Foundation to raise awareness and to help viewers cope with the condition. The Epilepsy Foundation hopes the top-rated soap's continuing storyline will "help bring epilepsy out of the shadows."





Uplifting Comeback

o player was less likely to hoist the Stanley Cup, the most hallowed of all trophies, than **Erik Cole**. Just 3½ months after suffering a broken neck on the ice, he came back for the last two games of the hockey playoffs. Though his two fractured vertebrae had healed only 90 percent, a CT scan convinced doctors to clear his return.

"I've dreamed about playing in the Stanley Cup finals since I was a kid," he explained. "And if I had the opportunity to go out and play at minimal risk, and the risk is going to be with me the rest of my life, I'm willing to take the chance to do everything I can to help our team win."

Which is precisely what the Olympic forward did in helping the Carolina Hurricanes capture their first Stanley Cup championship.

Action Hero Fights Real-life Foe

en Affleck has long been known as a tough action hero, but that was on the silver screen as star of Hollywood blockbusters from Armageddon to Pearl Harbor.



Now, he's playing the

role of an action hero in real life—inspiring millions as a tough guy who had to be hospitalized with a migraine.

Affleck recently spent two hours in the emergency room getting treated for a painful migraine attack. He had to be driven to a Boston-area hospital by his concerned wife, fellow action star Jennifer Garner, and then recuperated at the home they're renting with their baby daughter while he's filming his directorial debut.

Thanks to his ER visit, Americans—13 percent of whom suffer from migraines—are now more aware that anybody can be stricken by such debilitating headaches. Even tough action heroes.

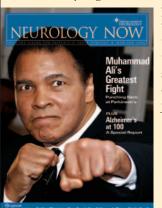
An Open Letter to Muhammad Ali

Dear Champ Ali,

his letter is a long time coming because I've been a loyal fan of yours for many years. When local radio stations wouldn't carry your fights, my childhood friend Marion and I would get in my little red Falcon, drive until the radio picked up the fight, then sit on the roadside punching the air as Howard Cosell described the action.

Now, at 67, I am recuperating from multiple strokes and find you still my inspiration for "hanging in there." The *Neurology Now* cover story on you and your battle with Parkinson's has lifted me higher and higher. Come on, my brother, we are heading for our 80s because we are champs for a cause: to be survivor and motivator.

I'm sure you get mail from millions of adoring fans. My letter is to tell you how much



your stamina has meant to me for many years. I was working for the Army when you refused to go to war. On the job at Fort Hood, my coworkers quickly learned that I'd do your "Ali Shuffle" and rhythmically say, "I am soaked, dyed and fried in Ali," so they backed off and cautioned others not to tease me about you. And I'm still just as mad about you today.

With sincere love, appreciation and admiration,

Myrtle L. Captain Temple, Texas