

Former Paralympian, army veteran gets new Casper home

[Star-Tribune \(Casper, WY\)](#) Allison Allsop

Dec 6 • 12:00 AM

Bryan Price was injured in Iraq while serving with the 101st Airborne Division of the United States Army. He went on to be a two time Paralympian for Team USA in biathlon and cross-country skiing despite having never competed in the events prior. Price said shooting and sports were how he dealt with his PTSD, and its eventually what brought him to Casper.

Former Staff Sgt. Bryan Price was injured in Iraq while serving with the 101st Airborne Division of the United States Army.

He returned home paralyzed from the waist down.

But that didn't stop Price from trying to live life to its fullest. He went on to be a two time Paralympian for Team USA in biathlon and cross-country skiing despite having never competed in the events prior.

"I pretty much completely upended my whole life so that I could just be better at it," Price said. "My wife and my kids supported me while I trained and went after that."

Price said shooting and sports were how he dealt with his PTSD, and its eventually what brought him to Casper.

Price was attending the Veteran Wheelchair Games to play basketball and softball. While there, he participated in a wheelchair obstacle course.

It was after the obstacle course that he said he was approached by Robert Rosser, the coach of the Paralympic team, who asked him if he had ever done a biathlon.

Price said he did not know what Rosser was talking about, so all he asked was whether it was hard. Price said Rosser told him it was the hardest winter sport.

"And I go 'I'm in,'" Price said. "I'll try it if it's hard, if I feel like I'm going to feel challenged."

The biathlon is a competition that combines skiing and shooting. Competitors are racing to finish the course while making stops to shoot at targets.

"I went to a training camp," Price said. "And I absolutely loved it, and I came back and emptied my savings account buying equipment. And then I started training daily."

Because Price's coach lived in Casper, Price would travel here multiple times a year, especially before competitions.

Eventually, he was able to convince his wife to move to Casper. That was eight years ago.

After the 2014 and 2018 games, Price would retire from competing because of a shoulder injury and the needs of his family. Despite being able to compete on the largest stage for his sports, surviving an IED explosion and being a father to two, Price was not without his struggles.

New home

Price relies on his wheelchair 24/7. Although he can partially stand for very short periods of time with the help of his upper body, it is not safe.

He can't do laundry in his own home.

He has no room to turn around in the bathroom.

His son will hide from him by going down the stairs.

He can't take the trash out without rolling into the street.

These are daily struggles that Price faces in his current home as it is not designed for a wheelchair user.

It's a struggle for both Price and his wife, Siqi, who is not able to leave him and their son alone hardly at all because of problems Price may encounter while she is away.

That's why Price reached out to Homes For Our Troops, a nonprofit that builds homes from the ground up for disabled veterans.

"Building an adapted home for Bryan Price enables him to access his entire home from his wheelchair, and will restore some of the freedom and independence he lost when wounded serving our country in Iraq," Bill Ivey, executive director of Homes For Our Troops, said.

"Bryan chose Casper to be the location for his forever home, and his home is the 426th home that Homes For Our Troops has built around the country, and the first in Wyoming, bringing the total number of states in which we have built to 46."

Price said he first contacted the organization during the pandemic, which led to a much longer timeline than usual.

After a couple of interviews, Price and his family were surprised by the organization while in Boston that they had been chosen to receive a home.

The four bedroom, two bath house has been completed and Price's family will move in after the Key Ceremony Saturday, Dec. 6.

Price said he and his wife had been involved in the process from the very beginning. The first step in the process for the Prices was finding a lot to build the house on.

Price said Homes For Our Troops required lots and homes to meet accessibility requirements for the VA. This proved slightly difficult in Casper as it required a piece of land that was really flat.

But, eventually, they settled on some land outside of town toward Alcova.

The new home has larger rooms for easier movement, no need for a ramp, only one floor, lower counters in bathrooms and the kitchen and a roll-in shower.

The organization even takes yard maintenance struggles into account. The front of the house, Price said, will be made up of rocks while the back will have AstroTurf for his son to play in.

Price said the organization made sure to stay in contact with them often, even when there weren't any new developments to share.

"Even if there's a period of time nothing is going on with the project, they'll still email or call to just check on us to see if everything is all right," Siqi Price said.

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