

# Back on their feet

Couple give amputees their independence back

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**H**ONOKAA — Kevin and Tina McGill are in the business of making people walk again.

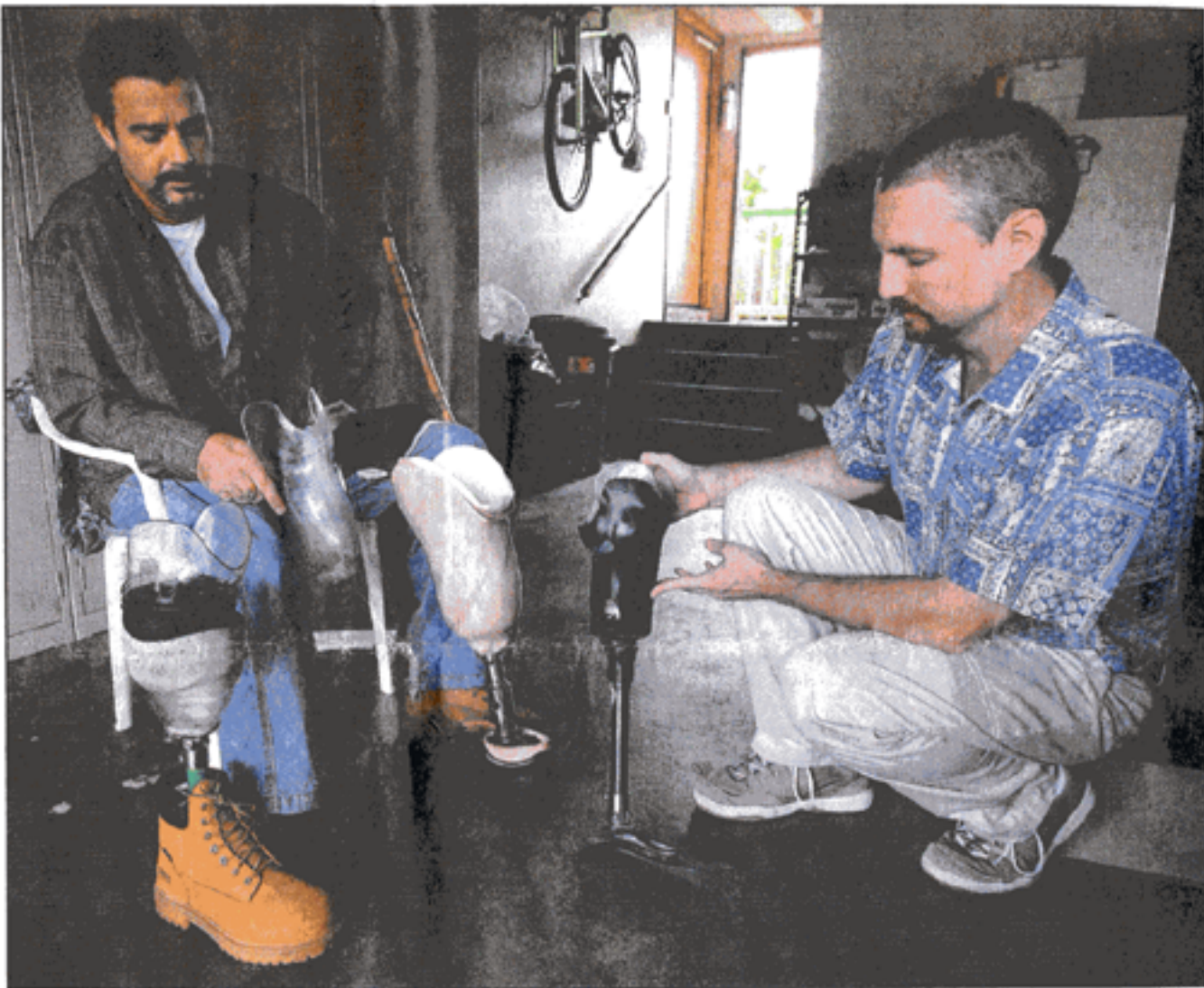
The couple run Hawaiian Orthotics Prosthetics Enterprises. HOPE is one of four companies in the state dedicated to legs and braces for amputees and other disabled patients.

Last week Monday, Kevin McGill was busy fitting a Hilo man with a prosthetic right leg. The man was in a vehicle accident last June in Honolulu. Although McGill usually meets with patients in his

Hamakua Medical Center Office, he worked on the leg in his garage so the Tribune-Herald could inspect the workshop.

The workshop was filled with an array of saws and winches used to craft the prosthetic and orthotic devices. It could have been any garage-based tinker shop — except for the dozens of plaster casts of

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Kevin McGill, right, prepares to fit a plexiglass socket, attached to a Flex-Foot and Timberland shoe at left, onto the right leg of patient Stephen Bendell, who lost his limb below the knee in a traffic accident. Also displayed are a flesh-colored prosthetic limb similar to those used since World War II, and, at right, a Flex-Foot, a component used in the prosthetic leg worn by Bendell.