

# WALKIN', TALKIN'

## Hospital bids farewell to near-amputee

By SUE EPSTEIN

A 37-year-old Union Beach man walked out of Bayshore Community Hospital yesterday, four months after he was rushed to the hospital, his leg almost severed in an accident.

Smiling, nervous and surrounded by the medical staff that took care of him for his four-month stay, Arthur Slover accepted the bottle of champagne and balloons given to him by the hospital administration and walked to a limousine, also provided by the Holmdel hospital for his trip home.

"I have butterflies, but I feel great," he said before he left. "I waited for this moment for a long time."

Slover, accompanied by his sister, Donna Cochran, thanked the nurses and doctors who came to see him off, but he added, "You'll still see me five days a week"—when he comes for his physical therapy.

Slover was one of three men in the cab of a garbage truck when one of the rear tires blew out, causing the driver to lose control of the truck on Route 36 in Union Beach.

The truck went over the highway's barrier as a front tire also blew, pinning Slover, who was in the middle of the front seat and couldn't get out of the truck as it flipped over.

Dr. Marshall Allegra, Slover's orthopedic surgeon, said his left thigh was crushed and the lower part of the leg had a compound fracture.

The doctor said the leg was missing a large piece of skin and muscle in the front part, exposing the entire thighbone in many places.

"The blood supply to the lower leg was interrupted, and the nerves were stretched, but not severed," Allegra said.

Within an hour of Slover's arrival at the hospital, his condition was stabilized enough for Allegra and Drs. Sergio C. Villa and Franklin Hernando, the attending physician in the emergency room, to begin



Photo by Jeff Huntley

Arthur Slover of Union Beach leaves Bayshore Community Hospital in Holmdel after four months of treatment on his leg which was nearly severed in a truck accident

the marathon six-hour operation that would reattach the leg and begin to repair the damage.

Villa and Hernando, both vascular surgeons, reconstructed the leg's blood supply through vein grafts, and Allegra stabilized the fractures, using a large metal frame with pins, known as an external fixator, to let the bones heal.

Allegra and Hernando called yesterday "a happy day,"