REFLECTIONS ON A HEART ATTACK:
Bill Himmelein survives heart attack with the help of friends, Plainwell EMS and the Borgess Heart Institute

Bill Himmelein admits he was a bit perturbed when he lost a game of pool at Plainwell’s Tenth Street Saloon on that February evening in 2013.

What happened next, however, put it all in perspective.

“They told me I died,” said the 55-year-old life-long Plainwell resident. “I sat down in a chair after the game and that’s all I remember.”

Immediately, however, friends experienced in CPR came to his aid while others made a 9-1-1 call. “My son said there was a ‘thud’ and everybody went to work. It all happened so fast. Thank God it happened so fast.”

 Professionals from Plainwell Area EMS responded immediately

Professionals from Plainwell Area EMS were on the scene in a matter of minutes and took over life support as the ambulance headed to Borgess Medical Center. “I recall only bits and pieces, voices and people hurrying around. It wasn’t scary for me. I didn’t have a clue. Thank God everybody knew exactly what they were doing.”

His next real memory was waking up in a cardiac care room on the eighth floor at Borgess and hearing that he had had triple bypass surgery. Bill marveled at the expert care he received over subsequent weeks at Borgess Medical Center and in rehabilitation at Borgess-Pipp Hospital in Plainwell.

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There was never anything negative," Bill said about the care. "Everybody was upbeat and positive. I couldn't have asked for anything better. They were awesome. "The heart attack was a wake-up call from God. He's got a plan and he lets people know that they've got to pay attention to what's going on. I wasn't paying attention to how I was feeling—tired all the time and thinking that I was having indigestion and that it would go away.

"It's a typical man thing."

Bill had had a stroke a decade earlier and was highly satisfied then with the care at Borgess and Borgess-Pipp. And while he didn't work as hard at his excavating business after the stroke, he assumed that the growing fatigue and lack of energy was merely age. He felt tired for a good eight years, he said, but the change was so gradual that he didn't think much about it.

Getting back into life

"I can't believe how much better I feel now," he said. "I've changed some habits, but there's a balance. You need to change how you live, but you also have to get back into life."

A couple of months after the heart attack, his heart surgeon, Jerry Pratt, MD, Medical Director, Thoracic Surgery, Borgess Heart Institute, asked him what he wanted to do. "I said that I'm bored, and sick and tired of doing nothing," Bill said. "Work is my life. He told me to have a good meal and get back at it."

"I got on the excavator and worked for about six hours. Gretchen (his wife) was worried and was there all the time. But it felt great. I've got a new heart and a new life, and if I still feel this good when I'm 70, it will be great. Borgess took very good care of me, that's for sure."

Dr. Pratt said that the advice he gave Bill to resume some activity is given only in selected cases.

"How quickly they return to activity depends on the type of procedure I do," Dr. Pratt said. "A lot of our patients are Type A personalities and they just can't wait to resume activities. In those cases, I tell them it's OK as long as they follow rules about how much they can lift and other restrictions and what not to do."

"One goal of increased activity is to avoid depression."

Heather Miller, EMS Program Director, Borgess-Pipp Hospital, praised the friends who knew and administered onsite CPR when Bill had his heart attack. "The CPR that was administered within the first 30 seconds is a major reason why Bill is with us today," she said. "I think what a miracle it is and how well the system worked.

"We have a full complement of emergency services and outpatient care, and we're dedicated to preventive care, too. We are supported by the community and we support the community in return. We provide educational programs on CPR, first aid and other preventive measures in schools and throughout the area."

Miller described Bill as a pillar of the community who has friends throughout the Plainwell area. "I didn't know him before the heart attack," she said. "But now he's like family."

For his part, Bill is exceedingly grateful for the expert care and the support from the hospital staff, friends and family.

"I tell people that when I died, what God showed me was fantastic," he said. "But where I am now is still a beautiful place to be."
Borgess-Lee Memorial Hospital receives 2013 Outstanding Campaign Award

Borgess-Lee Memorial Hospital has received The Spark 2013 Outstanding Campaign Award from the United Way of Southwest Michigan.

The award was presented to the hospital during the 2013 United Way Campaign Celebration on Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2014, at the Shadowland Ballroom in St. Joseph. Tammy Yeager, Human Resource & Community Events Coordinator and Campaign Chairperson, and Pamela Grosvenor, RN, PeriOperative Unit Supervisor and United Way Committee member, were on hand to accept the award.

Above and beyond

“We went above and beyond our normal campaign,” said Yeager. “Our associates volunteered for events outside of the campaign. They held several special events throughout the campaign and held the agency fair. Our team worked especially hard for United Way, and we ran a successful campaign.”

The Spark Award is presented annually to businesses in southwest Michigan that achieve at least 50 percent employee participation, utilizing United Way “best practices.”

For information on United Way of Southwest Michigan, contact Retta Curneal at (269) 982.1700, ext. 18, or email retta.curneal@uwsm.org.

Irey and Parashar join ProMed Family Practice

Borgess ProMed Family Practice welcomes Brittany Irey, MD, and Kalind Parashar, MD, at the Woodbridge and Three Rivers locations.

Dr. Irey is a member of the American Academy of Family Physicians. She is also a member of the American Medical Association.

Dr. Parashar holds membership in numerous scientific and medical societies, including the American Medical Association, and the American Board of Nuclear Medicine. He is board certified with the American Board of Nuclear Medicine, and with the American Board of Family Medicine.

Drs. Irey and Parashar are accepting new patients. To make an appointment or learn more about ProMed Family Practice, call (269) 324.8600 or visit familymedicine.borgess.com.

Annual AHA Heart Walk is coming up

The American Heart Association (AHA) holds its annual Heart Walk event on Saturday, April 26, 2014, at the Arcadia Creek Festival Place in downtown Kalamazoo. The event raises money for research and education to reduce the incidence of heart disease and stroke in the United States.

Heart disease is the No. 1 cause of death in the U.S., and stroke is the fourth-leading cause of death. In Michigan, coronary heart disease reaches an estimated annual cost of $5.9 billion. Borgess Health will join in the AHA Heart Walk. Last year, through their leadership and dedication, Borgess team captains and their teams helped raise $21,000 toward AHA’s $25,000 goal.

This year’s event offers even more opportunities for fitness, fun and camaraderie, with the addition of a 5K run. Like the walk, the run has no entry fee unless associates are registered for a timed race ($25 goes toward associates’ fundraising goal). The Heart Walk is perfect for all ages and fitness levels, and includes a miracle mile and VIP area for top walkers. There is also a special recognition for top teams, and family-friendly dogs are welcome.

For information or to participate on a Heart Walk team, contact Debbie DeMatteis at (269).226.6623 or deborahdematteis@borgess.com.

Ash Wednesday

March 5, 2014, is Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent. Lent is a sacred time in the Christian calendar to remember to turn our hearts to God through prayer, almsgiving and fasting.

To begin this holy season, ecumenical services will be held at 7:30 am and 7 pm, Wednesday, March 5, in the Borgess Medical Center chapel. A Catholic mass will also be held at noon in the chapel. Ashes will be distributed at all services. Chaplains will also be available to distribute ashes to patients and staff throughout the day. Anyone requesting ashes is urged to contact Borgess Spiritual Care at (269) 226.4898.
**A Fit-Friendly Worksite**

Borgess Medical Center has always made health and wellness a top priority among associates. The American Heart Association concurs, and has given Borgess a Fit-Friendly Worksite designation for 2013.

Borgess is the proud recipient of the Gold Achievement Seal, as well as the Worksite Innovation Seal, for its promotion of a strong wellness culture among associates.

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**Borgess Health honors its outstanding nurses**

They are part Superman, part Wonder Woman.

They are the nurses of Borgess Health, also affectionately described as the “superheroes who don’t wear capes.” The Eighth-Annual Friends of Borgess Nursing (FoBN) celebration will recognize the many nurses who do heroic deeds every day during two upcoming events that are designed to continue nurses’ healing mission through support of a special endowment fund.

**FoBN Silent Auction**

The FoBN Silent Auction is open to the public, and will be held from 8 am to 5 pm, Monday, March 31, 2014, in the Borgess Medical Center Cafeteria. At the auction, bidding will take place on numerous gift baskets containing several valuable items and gift certificates from area businesses. The FoBN Silent Auction is organized by the Borgess Professional Nurse Council.

**FoBN Awards Reception**

The second and main FoBN event is the awards reception. “Honoring the Superheroes Who Don’t Wear Capes” will be held at 5 pm, Thursday, May 22, 2014, in the Lawrence Education Center Auditorium at Borgess Medical Center. Miller Johnson, Attorneys and Counselors, will again be the event’s Platinum Sponsor. The awards ceremony will honor recipients of the Rising Star Award, Excellence in Clinical Practice Awards, Nursing Leadership Awards, Sisters of St. Joseph Legacy Award, and Friends of Borgess Nursing Certification and Scholarly Project grants.

The reception will also pay tribute to the 2014 recipient of the Borgess Lamplighter Award, honoring those who are dedicated to supporting nurses at Borgess. Reservations for the awards reception are $40 per person if made by May 1, 2014, and online at borgessfoundation.org/fobn. Reservations made after May 1, or by mail or in person, are $50. The deadline for all reservations is May 15, 2014.

Funds raised through the auction and reception sponsorships will support the FoBN Endowment Fund. The funds will be used to continue recognizing nursing excellence at Borgess and to support future nursing education and scholarships. Since the first FoBN awards dinner in 2007, more than $270,000 has been raised for the endowment fund, which has recognized 92 Borgess nurses and community advocates with awards and scholarships.

For information on the FoBN Silent Auction, contact Nancy Mora at (269) 226.4835 or email nancymora@borgess.com. For information on reservations for the FoBN awards reception, contact the Borgess Foundation at (269) 226.8100 or visit borgessfoundation.org/fobn.

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**Financial wellness seminars**

Local financial experts are providing Financial Wellness Seminars to Borgess associates through the end of the year. The seminars are being offered once a month from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm, in the Lawrence Education Center, beginning Wednesday, March 12. The seminars will focus on such topics as estate planning, annuities, and saving and budgeting. Food will be provided. Register in advance by calling (269) 226.5157 or email shelly.mccaul@borgess.com.

*March 12 – Mortgage Basics, LEC 123/124*

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**Women’s Lifestyle Expo**

Borgess Health is a major sponsor of the 2014 Kalamazoo Women’s Lifestyle Expo. The event is $5 at the door and is being held from noon to 6 pm, Friday, Feb. 28, and Saturday, March 1, at the Kalamazoo County Expo Center (Fairgrounds). Borgess is among 80 exhibitors involved and is the only major health care provider. Borgess will offer free health screenings with interpretation, and Borgess providers will also be on hand.

Visit womenslifestylekazooexpo.com/index.html for general information on the Women’s Lifestyle Expo.

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**BorgessConnect:** Like Borgess Health on Facebook & follow @BorgessHealth on Twitter. Visit teamwork.borgess.com for feature stories and current and past issues of Teamwork.