

Family Rejoices

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doctor, a stand-in for their personal, vacationing physician. The doctor told Fred after the examination that his condition was the worst of the 70 patients he'd seen that day. It was the hospital for Fred, and now, ordered the doctor.

Fred hesitated. There were the cakes he'd bought on impulse, en route, waiting to be delivered to Bruce and his buddies over at the bowling alley — Bruce's birthday surprise and a token for saving Fred's life.

Not impressed, the doctor said to forget the cakes and get to the hospital.

The doctor said bluntly that without hospital care Fred would die in his sleep that very night. He said that the gases in his blood would continue to build while the life-giving oxygen would be squeezed out.

Scared at last, Fred went willingly into the highest level of care

unit in the local hospital, about 18 miles from his home.

Next morning, Fred learned from the doctor that his heart had gone into full cardiac arrest. Evidence gathered from his blood samples that were tested and examined in the lab proved it.

Fred was released after the second night and after achieving a good report on the treadmill the next morning. His orders were to take it easy the next few days.

Miraculously, Fred's heart had no permanent damage but soreness from the awkward fall lingered in his legs.

The Shankles, who say they've always revered God and attended church, add that they have since found in themselves a new respect for life.

We respect life a little more now than we did, said Fred. "It made us realize how fragile life really is. You think it won't happen to you."

Fred, who regularly preaches silo caution everywhere he goes, admits the error was his. The distributor at the end of the pipe, instead of being down in, was sticking straight out, he explained, allowing the air to only blow across.

"It made me sick recently when I heard five big (successful) farmers say they didn't know (that high moisture corn produces deadly gas). It takes about 10 seconds to kill you," Fred said, re-emphasizing that the warnings must be spread to all farmers.

Monroe said, "If it (the silo) isn't full, it still has gas in it."

Only 12 hours had elapsed from when the men put the corn into the silo until Fred climbed the chute the following morning, they said.

The Shankle brothers and their father, proprietor of the land, cultivate some 600 acres, 333 of their own, to raise mostly corn and hay for their own feed.

Fred is also the vice-president

of the Bedford County Farm Bureau and vice-president of the Shawnee

Valley Fire Department's relief fund.

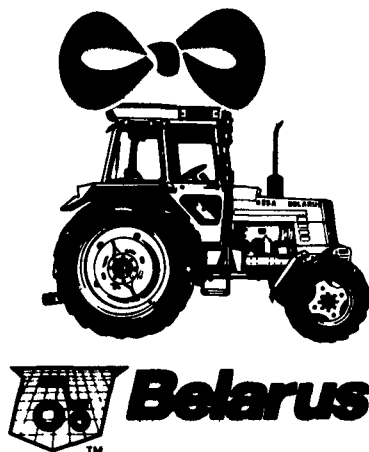


Fred Shankle and his wife Susan have a new respect for life and for each other since Fred nearly died recently, after being overcome by methane gas in the high-moisture corn silo.

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