

*behind the*  
**FOUNTAIN**

February 2020

A SOCIAL PUBLICATION EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE RESIDENTS OF RIVERWOOD PLANTATION

**FEBRUARY'S HEART STORIES**

- Hannon's Heart Scare
- Two Valentine's Day Love Stories
- Baking With 11 Year-Old Delaney

**Our Lives. Our Stories. Our Community.**

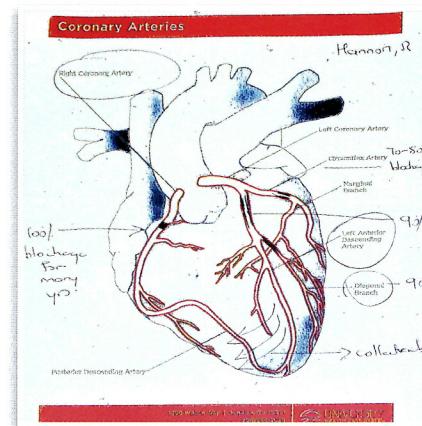
## meet your neighbors

By Gary Kauffman

Photos by Gary Kauffman

# Heart OF THE MATTER

Despite appearing healthy, Rick Hannon had a serious problem inside



Rick's doctor used this chart to show the blocked arteries to Rick's heart.



Rick and Kim Hannon have plenty to smile about after Rick's successful recovery from triple bypass surgery.

ville, Indiana, and planned to again in 2018. But as the time drew closer to the race, he found he wasn't running with the same stamina as before.

"I thought I was just out of shape," he said. "The thing that hit home to me was when I was running and got to Mitchell Park, I had to stop because I was exhausted. That made me wonder, so I took my blood pressure and it was high."

He called his doctor, who had him come in for an examination. At first he thought Rick had suffered a heart attack but subsequent tests showed

Two years ago, Rick Hannon was a portrait of health on the outside – a dedicated runner competing in 10Ks and half-marathons, a healthy eater and administering statins to control his cholesterol. But inside, his body was painting a different picture, one that might have killed him.

Rick, 63, and his wife, Kim, have lived in Amberley since 2011 and are both retired from the military. Rick worked in IT at Eisenhower Hospital and Kim served at the cyber school at Fort Gordon. Rick has always enjoyed running.

"I've always been running off and on," he said. "There would be a few years when I didn't do it, I'd gain 20 pounds and then get back into it. I don't run a lot in the summertime but when it cools off, I hit it a little harder."

In the fall of 2017, a respiratory problem kept him from getting on the trails as soon as usual, but late in the fall and during the winter, he began training for the Indianapolis 500 half-marathon. He'd run it the year before with his daughter, who lives in Evans-

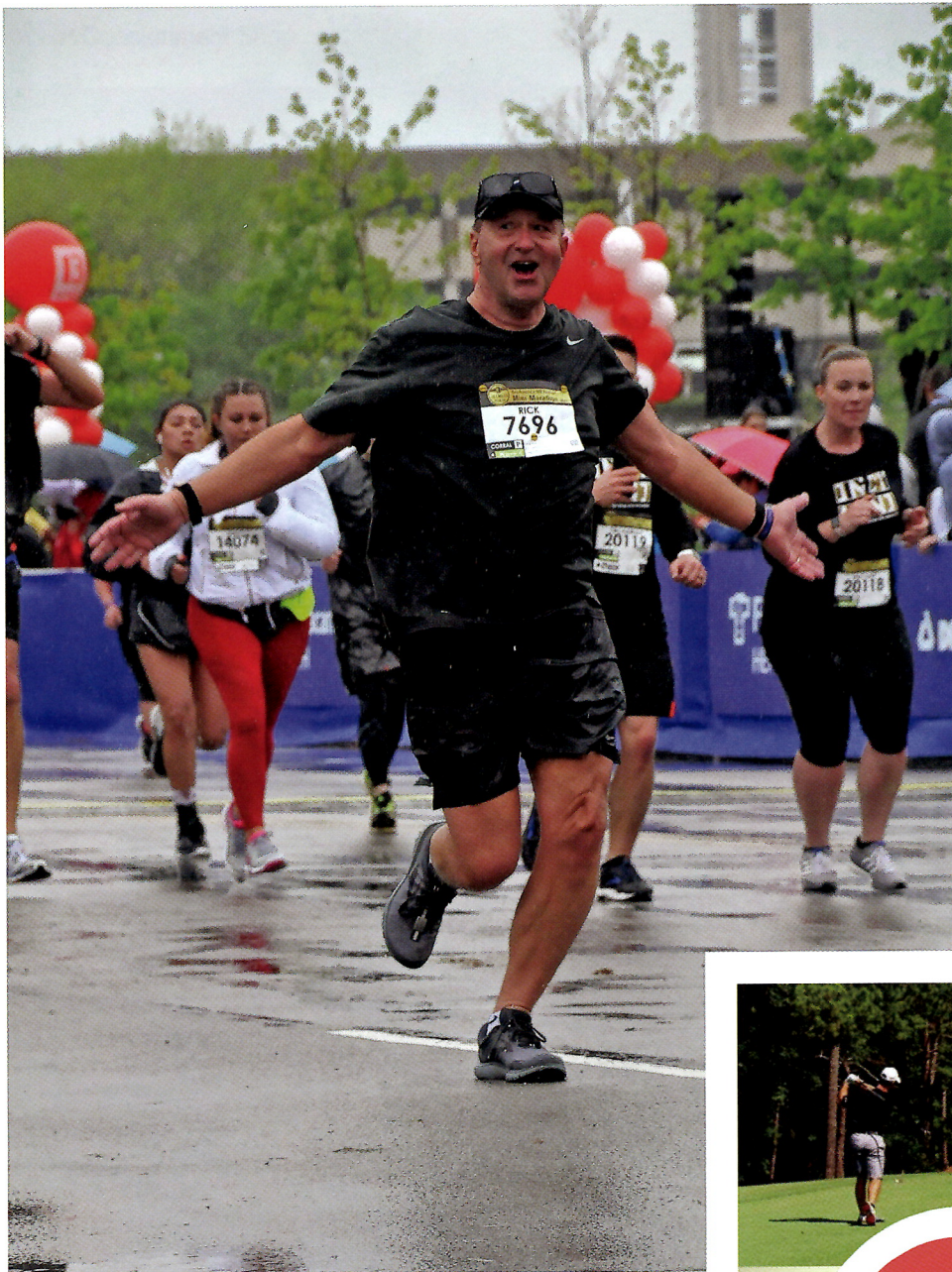
he probably hadn't. X-rays, however, showed issues around his heart, so he was referred to a cardiologist, Dr. Rehman, who decided to do a further examination of his arteries. Because Rick was so healthy, he didn't expect to find much and even the nurses who prepped him for the surgery assured him that these things are often false alarms.

Rick recalled, "When I came to in the bed after the surgery, the doctor was sitting beside me with a chart, showing me that I had 100 percent blockage in one artery, 90 percent in another and 70 percent in another. I needed a triple bypass."

"I was stunned," Kim said.

"Everyone who knows me was shocked," Rick added. "Because I was so active my heart had created collateral arteries and that's probably what saved me."

He tried to convince the doctors that he could still go to Indianapolis to at least walk in the half-marathon but finally agreed to forego that and schedule his surgery. Ironically, his general good



In May 2019 Rick had recovered enough to run the Indianapolis 500 Mini-Marathon.

health delayed his surgery several times as patients in more dire straits were placed ahead of him.

Kim said she didn't have much time to think about her own health at the time because her focus was on Rick.

"I had to think about all the things that needed to be done, what we needed to have at home," she said. "I had to be prepared for the worst and plan for what to do if he doesn't make it through this. Telling people on the phone was the worst. One daughter is in the Air Force in Okinawa; she's a Daddy's girl and I knew she'd want to come back immediately, and our other daughter is in Evansville. Plus telling the grandchildren."

Finally, on the Thursday before Memorial Day, Rick received his triple bypass. By Memorial Day, he was discharged and returned home to begin his rehabilitation. He was deemed to

be an ideal rehab patient and made quick progress.

"It was humbling," Rick admitted. "Just walking from the living room to the front door, I'd have to take a couple of breaks."

But he made quick progress. By Labor Day he was walking five miles a day, then started mixing in a little running. In December 2018, he participated in the Jingle Jam 10K, although more of it walking than running.

Throughout the winter and early spring of 2019 he kept training, and in May finally made it back to Indianapolis where he ran the 13-mile race in a steady rain. This past December he ran in the Jingle Jam 10K.

Everything is looking positive for Rick's future.

"The doctor said, 'I'm giving him another 25 years unless something else gets him first,'" Kim said. ...

The advertisement is a collage of two photos. The top photo shows three people on a golf course; one is swinging a club while two others watch. The bottom photo shows an outdoor clubhouse area with a white tent and string lights. A large red heart with a white outline is overlaid on the center, containing the text "FALL IN LOVE WITH WEST LAKE COUNTRY CLUB". At the bottom, a pink banner contains contact information for Coy Watkins, Membership Director.

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Rick plans to keep running for the foreseeable future, although he will probably cut back on the half-marathons and two-and-a-half-hour daily training sessions. That will give the Hannonns more time for their love of travel; cruises to Alaska and the Mediterranean are planned for this year. But he'll still run 10Ks and other races.

"I'm going to keep on running as long as I can," he said. "I don't have bad knees or hips so as long as my legs allow me to move, I'm going to keep doing it."

### LISTEN TO YOUR BODY'S WARNING SIGNS

Rick Hannon's experience with his heart is a good reminder for people to be consistent in medical checkups, especially if there is already a family history of heart issues.

"The doctor said you can't beat genetics," Kim Hannon said. "People assume that because you're doing all the right things, you'll be fine."

Rick said in hindsight there were some indicators that he was having heart issues. "But it wasn't slap-across-your-face obvious," he said.

"He tired easily but we all attribute those things to getting older," Kim added.

Because of his active lifestyle and taking statins for cholesterol, Rick probably kept a heart attack from happening even 10 years earlier. But the bottom line is to be aware of anything abnormal, even if it seems minor.

"Listen to your body," Rick advised. "If you think there's even the slightest thing wrong, go to the doctor."





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Rick Hannon has found the trails in Riverwood to be ideal training venues.



February is American Heart Month.