

### SCRIPT-BROADCAST Rural Community Leader: 'I Listened to my Body'

Looking back, Sean Cavanaugh, 48, can't believe that he felt fine on a Monday in mid-July when he went to work at his job as a marketing director for the Warren Achievement Center in Monmouth. By Friday of that same week, he was on an emergency helicopter flight wondering if he was going to live or die.

Cavanaugh had gotten the stomach flu on Tuesday so he decided to stay home, but by Friday he felt like he needed to get back to work so he spent a few hours in the office. But, by the evening he wound up driving himself to the Emergency Department at OSF HealthCare St. Mary Medical Center in Galesburg because he had pain radiating across his back and down his arms.

A chest X-ray didn't reveal anything. However, a blood test showed elevated levels of an enzyme indicating cardiac distress. Doctor Martha Kelley, who was working in the ED that night, was concerned enough that she put Cavanaugh on an OSF Life Flight helicopter to OSF HealthCare Saint Francis Medical Center in Peoria. Cavanaugh admits he suffers from anxiety and it was heightened due to the stress of not knowing his fate.

### SOT-Warren County Board Member Sean Cavanaugh

**"I mean I'm scared, not that I was going to die in a month or a year of a terminal illness, I was scared that I was going to die in a minute ... like right now," he said recalling the terror he felt. "To have people around you, they're expressing their heartfelt care for you means a lot. It meant a lot to me." (:17)**

Twelve minutes later, Cavanaugh was at OSF Saint Francis Medical Center where a team of experts were waiting for him.

An MRI revealed Cavanaugh's stomach virus had affected his heart muscle and gave him the classic symptoms of a heart attack.

### SOT-Warren County Board Member Sean Cavanaugh

**"They explained to me that whether you have a virus in your body, whether it be in your tummy, or your finger, or your throat or an ear that it can – for whatever reason – travel to your heart and that's exactly what happened to me." (:10)**

Doctor Mark Hsu of OSF HealthCare Cardiovascular Institute treated Cavanaugh. He said his patient's story stresses to physicians the importance of knowing a patient's medical history, including recent issues for which they might not have received professional medical care. He said Cavanaugh's case is also a reminder for everyone to pay close attention to symptoms that seem above-and-beyond what a person might experience with a common illness.

### SOT-Cardiologist Dr. Mark Hsu of OSF HealthCare Cardiovascular Institute

**"If the shortness of breath is worse than a typical flu, worse than a typical cold ... if the chest pain is worse, or sharper or more bothersome, then certainly it would be a reasonable thing to get it checked out." (:12)**

Cavanaugh spent a few days at OSF Saint Francis where he felt like, as he put it, “the luckiest guy on the cardiac wing” because he was assured his heart would heal over time. His OSF HealthCare doctors in Monmouth have continued to monitor Cavanaugh and he expects to return to full health.

Despite being in a rural community of a little more than 9,400, Cavanaugh is relieved to have competent, compassionate care and a connection to world-class experts for diagnosis and treatment minutes away.

#### **SOT-Warren County Board Member Sean Cavanaugh**

**“I was fortunate it wasn’t a heart attack. But it was something that could have been very serious ... life-long, altering serious. They took care of business. In a few weeks, I’ll be fit as a fiddle doing one-armed push-ups in the parking lot.” (:16)**

However, the active community leader, who also serves on the Warren County Board, learned that had he not sought treatment immediately, his heart could have suffered permanent damage. In the most severe cases of myocarditis, patients require a heart transplant.

#### **SOT-Warren County Board Member Sean Cavanaugh**

He stressed, **“Everyone should listen to their body. If you think there’s something out of the ordinary then go get it checked out. I have insurance so why not use it, that’s what it’s there for.” But he added, “Even if I didn’t have insurance, the cost of an emergency room bill would be better than the cost of a funeral for my family to bear so I think that’s a pretty good trade-off.” (:20)**