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**Cardiothoracic surgeon Mark M. Suzuki, MD, FACS
John Otto of Indiana County and his grandsons Keith and Jacob**

**BYPASS SURGERY ANSWER TO HUNTER'S DISTRESS;
MINIMALLY INVASIVE VEIN HARVESTING SPEEDS RECOVERY TIME**

GREENSBURG, PA, January 9, 2012... John Otto's earliest symptoms masqueraded as the flu and remained hidden in the complications of hernia repair. It wasn't until the avid hunter experienced tightness in his throat while stalking a deer in 2008 that his heart health came into question.

Excela Health cardiothoracic surgeon Mark M. Suzuki, MD, MBA, FACS, found five blocked arteries and performed quintuple bypass surgery.

Otto relished his time in cardiac rehabilitation, learning how to regain his active lifestyle through proper nutrition and physical activity. Given his age, now 75, he decided to trade in a free-wheeling bicycle for a stationary bike, and continues to rack up the miles pedaling away in his Homer City, Indiana County home. That's when he's not out and about at some musical activity on the IUP campus, or having lunch with a widening circle of friends.

Contributing to the recovery was the minimally invasive surgical technique employed by Dr. Suzuki to harvest the leg vein used for Otto's coronary artery bypass graft or CABG. Rather than a two- to three-foot incision from the ankle to the groin, Dr. Suzuki made several small incisions, about an inch in length, at the knee. This minimally invasive procedure produces less post-operative pain and discomfort, speeds recovery and reduces leg wound complications – all of which contribute to greater patient satisfaction.

Excelsa Health's cardio-thoracic surgical program continues to be ranked among the top 10 percent in the nation by the Society of Thoracic Surgery. To maintain this gold standard, Excelsa's program has been measured against national benchmarks for overall performance, survival, complications and other quality measures.

Always one to set a good example, the retired maintenance worker with Westinghouse Airbrake is quick to dispense some fatherly medical advice to keep his three children on the straight and narrow. "I don't smoke, drink or swear and I made sure the kids were in Sunday School and they turned out great. Now I'm watching what they eat. When my son, John, Penn Township's chief of police, orders those chicken wings, I tell him that's the part we used to throw away. I hope he listens. My dad died of a heart attack at age 54. I don't want that family history to be repeated."

To learn more about The Heart Center at Excelsa Health or to find a cardiologist, visit www.excelsahealth.org or contact the Excelsa Health Call Center, 1-877-771-1234.