



My Brother Ron Borelli died suddenly on this day in 2006, 12 years ago. Ron was my only sibling. Older than I by three and one half years, he was my hero, my model to follow and was a tough act to follow. Although I did OK, I never achieved his success. Ron was successful in a number of business ventures but his last was his greatest. As Chairman of the Board and CEO of Aavid Thermal Technologies, in a period of a few short years, Ron grew that company with revenues of 100 million to over 210 million in revenues and nearly doubled the employees to almost 2000 people. In 1998, Business NH Magazine named Ron "Business Man of the Year." and named Aavid at top of their 100 New Hampshire businesses. Ron made the cover of that magazine. Ron was active in several community affairs including serving on the Board of Trustees of New Hampshire Community College as well as being Chairperson of the New Hampshire Community College Foundation. Ron served on New Hampshire Governor's Educational Task Force and was selected by Governor Shaheen to be New Hampshire's Delegate Member to the President's Summit for America's Future. There is a Ronald F. Borelli legacy scholarship for Community Colleges named in his honor and Dartmouth College Tuck School of Business has a class room named in his honor. OK so I touted the successes of my Brother why?

Here is why. For all the above reason to honor my brother what I was made aware of at his Wake would be the most noble to the Ron Borelli I knew and loved. There were a lot of notable people attending his wake as was just. But there was one man that wanted to talk to me in private. He expressed a fondness for my brother and then he said "your brother saved my life". Now I spend a lot of time with my brother but he never once mentioned saving someone's life. The man began telling me his story. He was member of the management team of Aavid and for whatever reason he started drinking. He told me that he became an alcoholic and it was so bad, that his wife took the children and moved back in with her parents. She was going to file for divorce. He lost his home and moved into an apartment. His drinking progressed to a level where it affected his job performance and it was noticeable by his superiors. He was so despondent that he wanted to take his own life. He bought a gun and waited for the last shoe to drop. That shoe being the day he got fired. So that day came, so he thought. Ron called him into his office and this man accepted the fact that this was going to be the last day of his life, but it was not. Ron asked him the simple question of "what happened to you"? He answered Ron's question sobbingly saying, that he was an Alcoholic. What followed from Ron was not that he had no other choice since his work performance was so bad to terminate his employment with Aavid. No what Ron said was that we are going to work this out together. Starting the next day, after work, Ron went back to man's apartment with him and stayed with him for dinner and left around 9 PM. They spend the time playing cards or talking politics or told stories about each other. All Ron's time there was to prevent this man from drinking. Ron also got the man to join AA and went with him to the AA meetings. Ron called him on weekends to encourage him to continue his progress and Ron made himself available to visit him whenever he needed someone. All this was done discreetly and no one at Aavid knew it was happening. It took several weeks of this one on one comradery for the man to break his drinking habit. He told me that today he was still in his managerial position at Aavid, his performance was back to normal, his family is back together, that they bought a new home, and most importantly, he has not had a drink since Ron got involved in his life and in all of this, it was why he wanted to tell me his story. All the notoriety in this world could never compare to saving one person's life and this played out as my brother Ron's greatest achievement. I miss my brother very much but still talk to him and I truly believe he talks back to me.