

CELEBRATION: CPR is critical to survival for cardiac arrest

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“Ed was clinically dead at that point,” Fire Chief Roger Johnson recounted.

Morrell jumped into action — despite the fact that he didn’t actually “know” CPR.

The career Navy veteran told *The Nugget*, “I’ve seen a lot of training tapes, but I never had a course. I was kind of flying by the seat of my pants.”

Immediate action was critical, though, if his friend was to have a chance. Morrell knew he was on the verge of death. Not acting was not an option.

“I figured if I didn’t do something, he wasn’t going to be around,” Morrell said.

While Morrell performed chest compressions, his friend Stan Kunzman ran to the neighbor’s house. As Chief Johnson noted, the neighbor wasn’t just any neighbor; “he was the dream neighbor” — a volunteer captain with Sisters-Camp Sherman Rural Fire Protection District.

Captain Doug Myers ran to the scene and took over CPR while calling for additional help over his radio. Firefighters from the nearby Squaw Creek Canyon station responded with an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and an ambulance was dispatched from downtown Sisters. When the AED was placed on the patient, it indicated a shock should be delivered. Personnel defibrillated the patient and continued CPR. Shortly after the CPR resumed, Pond began to breathe on his own and the responders could feel a pulse.

Shortly after that, “the cavalry” arrived in the form of the ambulance crew and other units from Sisters, with eight more personnel

and the capability to administer advanced life-saving techniques.

Pond was transported by the Sisters-Camp Sherman RFPD ambulance to a helicopter landing zone near the scene. The patient was transferred to LifeFlight personnel who treated the patient as he was flown to St. Charles Medical Center in Bend.

Pond not only survived his ordeal, he is thriving. He told *The Nugget* that he is “98 percent back to normal — and I’ve lost about 20 pounds, which doesn’t hurt anything.”

Chief Johnson presented Morrell and Kunzman with Citizen Life Saving Awards for their quick action that helped pull their friend back from the brink.

Johnson told *The Nugget*, “This is a textbook example how bystander CPR and professional rescuers with an AED can save a life.” (*See sidebar.*)

Fire District Board President Chuck Newport told the assemblage that the district’s personnel train hard and work hard.

“Tonight we get to see how that pays off,” he said.

The ceremony brought home the extensive and intricate web of personnel and capabilities required to save a life at the ragged edge of *in extremis*.

There were Deschutes County 9-1-1 call-takers Christina Rodenbiker and Sara Cima, and dispatcher Steve Ward, who also volunteers with the district. And there was a LifeFlight helicopter crew and an emergency room staff that ensured that the first responders’ success would be sustained.

From the Sisters department, Chief Johnson recognized the crew of Engine 723, the first on the scene: Captain Doug Myers; volunteer firefighter Roy Dean and volunteer firefighter Mike McLaughlin, who was presented with a special medal

for his efforts.

The ambulance crew of Unit 771: Fire Medics Matt Millar; Pat Burke; and Lt. Cody Manzi, along with volunteer firefighters and EMTs Christi Davis and Graham MacDonald were also recognized, along with the crew of Unit 791: Shift Commander Thornton Brown; volunteer firefighter EMT Andrew Blake. Deputy Chief Tim Craig was also recognized.

The evening stirred emotions in many of the attendees, in part because it is surprisingly unusual for a lifesaving crew to get the opportunity to meet with and receive the gratitude of someone whose life they saved. It may be all in a day’s work, but it’s a day’s work that carries profound significance for everyone involved.

CPR can be critical life-saver

Ed Pond’s friends helped to save his life when he collapsed in cardiac arrest last April (*see story, page 1*).

Sisters Fire Chief Roger Johnson says that knowledge of CPR is a critical skill that can mean the difference between life and death. In fact, effective bystander CPR can double a person’s chances of survival.

About 75-80 percent of out-of-hospital heart attacks occur at home, so knowledge of CPR may save a loved one’s life.

CPR help maintains vital blood flow to the heart and brain and increases the amount of time that electric shock from a defibrillator can be effective. In sudden cardiac arrest, the victim collapses, becomes

unresponsive to gentle shaking, stops normal breathing and after two “rescue breaths” still isn’t breathing normally, coughing or moving.

Brain death starts to occur four to six minutes after cardiac arrest if no CPR and defibrillation occurs.

Sudden cardiac arrest is lethal; about 95 people who go into sudden cardiac arrest die before reaching the hospital. Death is not inevitable, however. If more people knew CPR, more lives could be saved, according to the American Heart Association.

The Sisters fire district offers basic CPR classes on a monthly basis. For information call 541-549-0771 or register online at www.sistersfire.com — click CPR.

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