

Five Good Samaritans and an AED save a life



At noon on Monday, March 9th, Doug Selwood was driving back home along Highway 9 in Newmarket, Ontario after ending his shift. Not feeling well, he pulled his truck off to the side of the road. After getting out of his truck, he collapsed face first onto the shoulder of the road. Doug had stopped breathing and was in sudden cardiac arrest.

Fortunately for Doug, a series of events transpired quickly that would save his life. A car with two women in it passing by, noticed Doug collapse. They decided to pull over, put on their emergency flashers and get out of their car to see if they could help.

A York Region police officer was heading westbound on Highway 9 at the same time and noticed the cars pulled over, with their hazards on. What the officer found next was extremely unnerving. Laying face down on the shoulder of the road was a man with his arms beneath his chest, not moving.

Roger Hennig, from Barrie, Ontario was driving westbound on Highway 9 at this time and noticed the police officer stopped, suspected the officer might need some help and decided to pull over and offer assistance. Hennig grabbed his CPR pocket mask and gloves as a precautionary measure. When Hennig saw the man down, he could tell he was not breathing and needed CPR quickly. Hennig gave his CPR face shield to the officer and immediately began chest compressions.

Tyler Greenham, another good Samaritan and an off duty firefighter heading home after his shift noticed the scene and stopped to help. Greenham helped the officer hold the face shield tight to the patient's face and tilt the head back, ensuring that the air the officer was breathing into Doug Selwood was reaching his lungs.

After about two minutes of CPR, the King Township Fire emergency response crew showed up with their AED and placed the pads on Selwood's chest. After analyzing Selwood's heart rhythm, the machine gave the "shock advised" instruction. The group stood back while Selwood received the shock from the AED. After the first shock Hennig and the group continued CPR. York EMS paramedics arrived and took over, attached their AED which showed that Selwood's heart was still in a rhythm that needed to be shocked. Selwood received a second shock and CPR was continued until finally, on the machine's third analysis, Selwood's heart had returned to a normal rhythm.

A few months later, Selwood, Hennig and Greenham shared a lunch to recap the events of that day and celebrate Doug's new chance at life with his wife and 11 year old daughter. Doug now has an implanted cardiac defibrillator permanently attached to his heart.

Thanks to several good Samaritans and quick access to an AED, Doug Selwood is a survivor of a common deadly event that affects approximately 40,000 Canadians every year.