

## Cicero heart attack victim, Ann Maria Young, thanks her rescuers

Posted by

[tleo](#) January 22, 2009 14:00PM



Li-Hua Lan / The Post-Standard Paramedic Dale Smith shows Ann Maria Young and her husband, Carroll Brown (behind her), of Cicero, a breathing tube and other lifesaving measures used to save her life on Nov. 13 as they come to meet and thank medics and firefighters, including paramedic Jim Baxendale (left, half the body), Dave Pangaro (right, with white shirt) and firefighter/EMT Ralph Howe (behind Brown), at Cicero Fire Department Wednesday.

Ann Maria Young says she shouldn't be alive. Young, 60, went into full cardiac arrest in her Cicero home Nov. 13 and collapsed in her bedroom. She had stopped breathing. "I was dying. I was absolutely dying," she said.

Her husband, Carroll Brown, began giving her cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

Cicero rescue workers arrived within minutes. They performed CPR and shocked her heart to keep her alive until paramedics arrived.

Young, who was unconscious, was rushed to a hospital.

Dave Pangaro, Cicero's deputy fire chief who was at the scene, was told by a paramedic there was little chance she would make it.

About two weeks ago, Pangaro got a message -- from Young.

"She's home, recovering, and doing well," he said, adding she wanted to thank those who helped her. "We offered to go to her house and meet her. She said no, she wanted to get out of the house."

Young met the rescuers who helped save her on Wednesday night at the Cicero Fire Station at routes 11 and 31.

"How to you thank someone for saving your life?" said Young, of 6314 Matilda Gage. "I'll never forget it. I just wanted to thank these people personally."

Cicero's quick response time is one reason Young is alive, Pangaro said.

The emergency call came in at 8:30 p.m., Pangaro said. Within a minute, a rescue crew was dispatched. The crew arrived at 8:34 p.m. and began administering CPR. Within two minutes they delivered a shock from an automated external defibrillator.

Paramedics from the North Area Volunteer Ambulance Corps arrived and began advanced life support. Together, the rescuers continued CPR and delivered two more shocks.

Rescuers eventually detected a pulse and Young began to breath. She was transported to a local hospital. It was seven days before Young regained consciousness.

"I was on a sedation that paralyzes you, and they assumed I had brain damage," Young said.

On the seventh day after the heart attack, doctors too her off the sedation and Young opened her eyes.

"I couldn't talk because the breathing tube was still in my mouth," she said.

Her family already was making plans to send her to a nursing home.

But the next day, when the breathing tube was removed ...

"I could talk, and think, and respond, and carry on a conversation," Young said.

Young's cardiologist told her the recovery from her kind of attack was one in 1,000.

She began cardiotherapy Monday to help strengthen her heart. She'll soon start physical therapy but already can walk and get around.

"I seem to be fine," Young said. "I never even needed a wheelchair."

Most of her rescuers were on hand Wednesday night to meet with Young. She gave the group a gift certificate to Twin Trees restaurant.

"It's the first time I've been involved in a complete save," Pangaro said. "It's emotional. . . . To hear her say she's not supposed to be alive and we saved her life, it's an unbelievable feeling. It makes all the years I've put into this and all the practice well worth it."

### **The life savers**

Rescuers involved in helping Ann Maria Young after she had a heart attack Nov. 13 were:

#### **Cicero fire department**

Deputy Chief Dave Pangaro; Assistant Chief Ron Barling; Capt. Jeff Hill; emergency medical technicians George Barrett and Ralph Howe; medic Jeffrey Paquette; Lts. David Nicholas and Eric Nicholas; and firefighters David Grimsley, Jim Perrin and Robert Arnold.

#### **NAVAC**

Paramedics Dale Smith, Jim Baxeneale and John Lyng; and emergency medical technician Jim Cullen

Tom Leo can be reached at [tleo@syracuse.com](mailto:tleo@syracuse.com) or 470-6013.

Categories: [North Suburbs](#)

## **Comments**

Footer