

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Heart Attack Victim says Fellow Hockey Players “Saved My Life”

When Paul Walters went to play hockey with friends at Nanaimo Ice Centre late on December 21st, he had no idea he was on the verge of suffering a severe heart attack.

“I started to feel ill with a severe pain in my chest,” Walters recounts, “After sitting on the bench for some time, I decided to go into the dressing room to shower and change, and the pain continued to get worse.”

Mr. Walters asked for Dave Sheepwash, an off-duty paramedic who happened to be playing as well that night, and was still on the ice. Sheepwash asked for someone to call 911 just as Mr. Walters lost consciousness and stopped breathing.

Dave Sheepwash, and two other Old Timers hockey players, Jeff Braun and Pat O’Dwyer took turns administering CPR and used one of the facility’s Automated External Defibrillators, or AEDs until the BCAS Ambulance crew arrived and transported Mr Walters to Nanaimo Regional District Hospital.

Over the next few days, Mr. Walters received surgery to repair a badly blocked artery, and was released on December 26th to home care.

“I would like to acknowledge these three men for saving my life,” Walters says, “I find these three men of outstanding character, and I will never forget them.”

Mayor John Ruttan agrees. “This is a terrible thing that Mr. Walters went through, and I’m just glad he’s recovering” he said. “Mr. Sheepwash, Mr. Braun, and Mr. O’Dwyer indeed deserve our recognition for their actions in saving Mr. Walters’ life that night.”

Mayor Ruttan, and Councillor Larry McNabb, Chair of the Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee are also thankful that the AEDs were installed and available for public use.

Councillor McNabb said, "I have to say those three guys are heroes for stepping up and helping a friend like that, and if one of those AEDs was a factor, then I think they're one of the best purchases we ever made."

“We wish Mr. Walters all the best and hope for a speedy and full recovery for him,” Mayor Ruttan said. “We will be looking towards making a formal presentation to the men who acted so quickly and efficiently to care for their friend that night.”

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