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## Bystanders save life at ShopRite in Pearl River

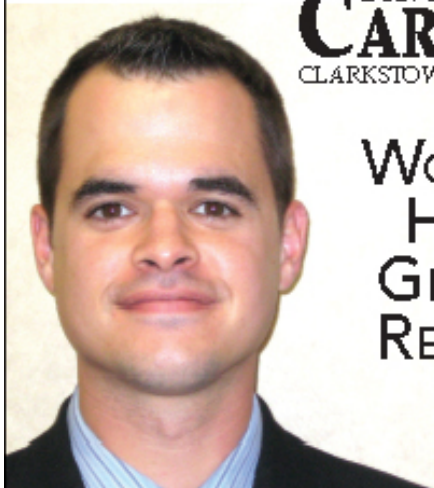
By HANNAN ADELY  
THE JOURNAL NEWS

(Original publication: October 19, 2007)

PEARL RIVER - Teamwork, quick thinking and a handy defibrillator helped to save a woman who went into cardiac arrest last weekend at ShopRite.

The unidentified woman collapsed while shopping in the dairy section Sunday with her daughter. ShopRite staff made an announcement that they were seeking medical or emergency workers to assist in aisle 23, and a nurse who was shopping nearby ran to help.

The nurse, Kathie Kelley of Pearl River, was shopping with her son, who is an employee



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at the supermarket on Middletown Road. Kelley, who works in the adult trauma unit at St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center in Paterson, N.J., said the woman was unresponsive and turning blue when she arrived at the scene.

"She had absolutely no pulse when I got there," she said.

Kelley began to administer cardio-pulmonary resuscitation. An employee had brought over the defibrillator, which ShopRite keeps in the store in case of an emergency.

By that time, Dr. Rani Beharry, had arrived on the scene and offered to administer the defibrillator. Beharry is an internist who specializes in geriatrics and works at hospitals in Philadelphia and Chester, Pa., as well as several nursing homes. She has had training in advanced cardiac life support.

Beharry, who lives in Delaware and was visiting her boyfriend in Pearl River, also noticed that the woman's lips were blue and that she was not moving any of her limbs.

"She didn't have a pulse and wasn't breathing spontaneously," Beharry said. "She was essentially dead on arrival."

After Kelley started chest compressions, there was still no pulse, so Beharry shocked her with the defibrillator. Kelley continued CPR, and Beharry shocked her a second time.

At that point, the woman's pulse returned and the emergency medical workers from the

Pearl River Alumni Ambulance Corps took over. They put the woman on a stretcher, gave her oxygen, and took her by ambulance to Nyack Hospital where she was recovering yesterday.

Kelley said she hoped the incident would demonstrate the need for businesses and restaurants to have defibrillators. "It was there within a minute or so and utilized, and this woman is going to live to see her family because this thing was there," Kelley said.

ShopRite spokeswoman Karen Meleta said all of the 200 ShopRite stores in five states are equipped with defibrillators.

"It clearly has value to the community when you think about how heavily traveled our stores are," Meleta said.

ShopRite of Pearl River got a defibrillator a year and half ago, said general store manager Dominick Rienzo, and between eight and 12 employees are trained to use it.

The store got the equipment shortly after a similar incident took place around two years ago. A shopper in the store went into cardiac arrest, and despite receiving first aid and CPR, did not survive.

Rienzo said that in both incidents, the store was fortunate to have the aid of emergency personnel who were shopping in the store.

This is the second incident of this nature and the response in the store was just great,

he said.

Frank Deschino, captain for Rockland Paramedic Services, said early defibrillation saved the woman's life. By the time the ambulance crew left the hospital, she was alert and talking to family members.

Scott Kenny, an emergency medical technician who responded with the Pearl River Alumni Ambulance Corps, praised the people who answered a call for help.

"If it were not for the fast actions of the initial bystanders and the store AED (Automatic External Defibrillator) this customer would not be alive," Kenny said in a letter to The Journal News. "I along with my partner would like to take the time to thank you for your heroic actions and dedication to the community."

Reach Hannan Adely at [hadely@lohud.com](mailto:hadely@lohud.com) or 845-578-2439.

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