



HEROES FOR LIFE™
PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

A LIFE-SAVING CHURCH SOCIAL

It was a pleasant September morning in Meppel, the Netherlands, as church services came to a close. Henk Rous, 71, prepared to serve coffee to the other parishioners at the social gathering that followed the sermon. Volunteering at the church social was a weekly ritual that he and his wife Meta had enjoyed since his retirement.

However, this Sunday would turn out to be anything but routine. Shortly after starting the coffee service, Henk suddenly collapsed. As Meta realized what was happening with growing fear, a fellow churchgoer and retired pediatrician quickly took action, enlisting other parishioners to help. Henk, who was unresponsive and had no pulse, was suffering sudden cardiac arrest (SCA).

A well-placed AED

Fortunately, there was a ZOLL AED Plus® automated external defibrillator (AED) in the church. As one parishioner ran to retrieve it, others started performing CPR. Once the AED arrived, they attached the pads to his chest and the AED recommended a defibrillating shock to help restore a normal heart rhythm. After the shock was delivered, four different volunteers took turns performing CPR until EMS arrived about 10 minutes later and took over his care. Henk was then transferred to the local hospital.

When Henk woke up later that day, he had no idea that he had suffered SCA. "I wondered where I was," he says. "All I remember was serving coffee. I didn't know what I was doing in the hospital." Upon learning the details of his ordeal, Henk says, "I was lucky."

While in the hospital, Henk received an implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD) which will help detect and stop an abnormal heart rhythm if it happens again. Fortunately, Henk did not suffer any neurological symptoms or damage from the SCA and was able to return home ten days later.

A renewed focus

To anyone who could potentially help save a life, Henk recommends: "Take a CPR course, know where to find an AED, and learn how to use it." Because Henk's fellow parishioners understood the importance of this advice, he is alive today to tell his story and encourage others to be prepared to save a life.



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– Henk Rous

Sudden cardiac arrest victim



He continues to work on improving his physical condition under the guidance of his cardiologist. Having suffered heart failure four years prior to his SCA, Henk understands the importance of heart-healthy lifestyle practices. "With physical therapy, I hope to get in shape soon," he says. Asked what advice he would give to other SCA victims, Henk says, "Take it easy – learn to live with it, but don't stop living. Try to enjoy life."



Henk Rous

Henk and his wife know how fortunate he was that morning, "I was lucky with good CPR and the availability of a ZOLL AED." Meta adds, "I had the fear of 'This was it; it's over,' but now I have joy with the good outcome." Henk

Henk was fortunate to receive both lifesaving CPR and the defibrillating shock from the ZOLL AED within just a few minutes – in time to restore cardiac functionality and save his life.

feels blessed that he will be able to continue doing the volunteer work he loves and to spend time with his family, including his five grand children.

Henk was fortunate to receive both lifesaving CPR and the defibrillating shock from the ZOLL AED within just a few minutes – in time to restore cardiac functionality and save his life. He and his family are truly grateful that the church had an AED and for the help he received.