

Agency Name: American National Red Cross – Southern Tier Chapter

Program Name: Health & Safety Services

Program Success Story:

“She’s gone!” exclaimed Phillip Zulick to his brother Mark as their 92-year-old mother, Mary, slowly collapsed at the foot of the steps of their home in Binghamton on St. Patrick’s Day morning, 2009.

Mark Zulick was getting ready to do some yard work for a neighbor, while Phillip was helping their mother to the car on the way to a doctor’s appointment. When Mary Zulick reached the last step she appeared to stop breathing, her eyes rolled back in her head and her legs gave way. That is when Phillip cried for help and asked Mark to call 9-1-1. Even as Mark relayed the emergency information to the dispatcher; his Red Cross CPR (cardio-pulmonary resuscitation) training was coming back to him. He rushed back outside.

As their mother lay in the driveway, Mark started administering CPR chest compressions after moving her tongue over to one side. Mark would blow air into her lungs followed by more compressions. Finally, she resumed breathing albeit very weakly, but she was alive!

When the EMTs arrived, they gave her oxygen and headed straight to Wilson Memorial Hospital with Mark in the ambulance and the brother following behind. At the hospital the doctors took charge and within an hour Mary Zulick was conscious and could remember what she had for breakfast and what medications she had taken that morning.

Mark Zulick swears that it was some sort of divine providence at work. Five years earlier, Mark attended a Red Cross CPR course provided by his employer. Earlier in his career Mark had worked for a company that made driver trainers and amusement ride simulators. “At that time I came to the realization that the work I was doing might someday save a life and I adopted this as a personal inspiration. I remembered this again when I was taking the Red Cross CPR class. Little did I know then how real and close to me that would become,” said Mark.

Mr. Zulick is actively working with the Red Cross by sharing his story and spreading the word. “Really, this is a question we could all ask ourselves: ‘Am I ready; do I know what to do in case of an emergency?’ It could change your life and save someone else’s,” he said.

Red Cross Southern Tier Chapter’s health and safety services director, Stephanie Long, added, “Every year we teach CPR and AED to thousands of Southern Tier residents from teens to seniors as part of our mission to empower people to act when emergencies happen. We couldn’t reach the number of people we do without our partnerships with businesses and employers who provide Red Cross training to their personnel.”

Mrs. Zulick is recovering at home slowly in the care of her sons and a team of doctors. She is already walking on a treadmill and doing the daily crossword. “We cannot express how grateful we are to all those involved in helping to save our mother’s life; the 911 staff, the ambulance crew, the volunteer fire department, the Broome County Sheriff’s Department, the emergency room staff – Dr. Leslie Bank - Dr. Kashou – the I.C.U. staff – and the South Tower staff at Wilson Hospital for these are truly gifted people and they are our heroes”, said Mark.

Both Mark and his mother Mary Zulick joined us at our volunteer recognition dinner in June 2009.