

## High school students get training in CPR



**CPR.** Michelle Thompson, 16 (left), and Maria Becerra, 15 -- students at Huron Heights Secondary School -- practice on a resuscitation doll at a CPR demonstration Friday morning. A campaign is underway to get more than 6,500 Waterloo Region students trained in CPR and the use of public defibrillators. *Record staff Source: Record staff*

By Jeff Hicks, Record staff

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KITCHENER — Pat Doherty aims for a century.

“I want to live to be 100,” said the 83-year-old Kitchener man and longtime community volunteer.

Two years after suffering a serious heart attack at a hockey meeting, Doherty looks strong and has a good shot at becoming a centenarian, just like his railway-worker uncle.

On Friday, the retired teacher stood with his daughter Kathy at Huron Heights High School in Kitchener where students were demonstrating their knowledge of cardiopulmonary resuscitation and proper use of defibrillators.

CPR performed by Blenheim fire chief Rick Richardson saved Doherty’s life. Just so happened Richardson was sitting beside Doherty at the meeting. Richardson went right to work on Doherty. It saved his life.

“Time is heart muscle,” said Roger Mayo, manager of the region’s Emergency Medical Services. “You lose 10 per cent per minute.”

To save more lives like Doherty’s, the Advanced Coronary Treatment Foundation is training for Grade 9 students across 20 high schools in Baden, Cambridge, Elmira and Kitchener-Waterloo.

About 6,500 teens will be trained in CPR and defibrillator use.

“I’m here to tell them this works,” Doherty said as he watched the teens work on their chest compressions using special mannequins at the program launch on Friday.

One of the students was 16-year-old David Jennings.

As a lifeguard, Jennings has long been trained in CPR. He also knows how to use a defibrillator. In an emergency, he figures he can do the job although he's yet to be tested in a life-saving situation.

"It's not very complicated," Jennings said. "It's a simple procedure."

Jennings plays hockey for a midget team. His goalie, Andrew Masters, is Doherty's grandson. Jennings recalls how Doherty's heart attack rattled his friend.

Doherty is a living lesson for Jennings. Doherty could easily have died at 81. Now, he plans on sticking around for another 20 years.

His daughter Kathy Doherty-Masters is the healthy-active living consultant for the region's Catholic school board. Training staff and students in the life-saving techniques that allowed her dad to stand beside her Friday is one of her missions.

"My dad's story drives me," she said.

The Catholic board has at least four teachers at each high school who are trained in CPR and defibrillator use. At elementary schools, trained staff numbers more than 500.

Her son Brendan already has his training. Her older boy Andrew, the goalie, will be trained second semester. Both are Resurrection high school students.

Meanwhile, grandpa Pat is busy collecting and sorting information on hockey history.

In the wake of his heart attack, he takes a dozen pills a day and has to watch what he eats — no more junk food or salty chips. But he is determined to make it to 100.

Perhaps before then, the students he watched Friday will put their training to good use.

"Hopefully, they'll save a life one day," he said.