

## FANWOOD POLICE SAVE AREA RESIDENT WITH NEWLY-ACQUIRED DEFIBRILLATOR

by Suzette Stalker (published with permission from the [Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood](#))

Just a little more than two weeks after the Fanwood Police Department received several defibrillator units for its patrol cars, one of the devices was used to save the life of a man who went into cardiac arrest May 27, 2001, while visiting a restaurant in the borough.

A defibrillator uses electronic impulses to restore a person's heartbeat to its normal rhythm following cardiac arrest. Besides the ones now available to the police department, the unit is also part of the Fanwood Volunteer Rescue Squad's inventory of equipment. Pictured is a representative of Merck donating a defibrillator to police chief Robert Carboy, left, and squad member Steve Siegal.

Lawrence Susman, 72, of Westfield was sitting in the main dining room of the Sun Tavern, located at South Avenue and Terrill Road, with his wife, Barbara, and their friends when he collapsed, according to Mrs. Susman. They had gone to a movie before coming to the eatery and had just placed their order when Mr. Susman was stricken at 6:30pm, his wife told the Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood. She noted that while her husband has had heart trouble, there were no warning signs earlier in the day that a crisis was soon to occur.

Patrolmen Michael Schilling and Russell Yeager of the Fanwood Police Department were on the scene within minutes, quickly followed by members of the rescue squad, Mrs. Susman said. The patrolmen utilized the defibrillator they had in their patrol car to revive Mr. Susman, who had stopped breathing and did not have a pulse when the officers arrived, according to Fanwood Police Chief Robert Carboy (pictured right, with Merck public safety director



Richard Harris and Rescue Squad member Steve Siegal). He said the defibrillator restored Mr. Susman's heartbeat "almost instantaneously."

Mr. Susman was subsequently transported by the rescue squad to Muhlenberg Regional Medical Center in Plainfield, where his wife said he was continuing to improve. She added that her husband was expected to be transferred to Morristown Memorial Hospital in Morristown earlier this week for follow-up care.

Mrs. Susman extended her appreciation to Officers Schilling and Yeager, as well as to the rescue squad personnel, for their combined efforts in saving her husband's life.

"They were all outstanding," she said, observing that her husband "would not be alive" without them and without the defibrillator being on hand during the first critical minutes after her husband went into cardiac arrest.

"They should really be proud," Mrs. Susman said.