



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Council Session

Item C3

**Recognition of Katie Wichman and Suzanne Swantek with the
Grand Island Fire Department's Citizen's Citation Award**

Staff Contact: Troy Hughes

Council Agenda Memo

From: Russ Blackburn, EMS Division Chief

Meeting: January 25, 2011

Subject: Citizen's Citation

Item #'s: C-3

Presenter(s): Fire Chief Troy Hughes
Russ Blackburn, EMS Division Chief

Background

Sudden Cardiac Arrest is a leading cause of death in the United States, claiming nearly 300,000 lives each year. During a sudden cardiac arrest, heart function ceases – abruptly and without warning. When this occurs, the heart is no longer able to pump blood to the rest of the body, and in some 95 percent of victims, death occurs.

While Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is a significant public health crisis, it is often misunderstood. SCA is not a heart attack. A heart attack occurs when a blood vessel becomes blocked and interrupts blood flow to the heart, causing heart muscle to die. Sudden cardiac arrest occurs when the heart's electrical system malfunctions and the heart stops beating. Most of these deaths occur with little or no warning, from a syndrome called sudden cardiac arrest. The most common cause of sudden cardiac arrest is a disturbance in the heart rhythm called ventricular fibrillation.

Once a cardiac arrest occurs, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and defibrillation is required within the first several minutes to restore electrical activity to the heart and revive the heart's pumping function. Availability of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) is critical for rapid response to cardiac arrest.

Discussion

On July 4, 2010 Katie Wichman, a nurse at Saint Francis Medical Center, was with her family preparing for a 4th of July block party when her boyfriend's grandfather came in the house and collapsed with sudden cardiac arrest. Ms. Wichman began CPR on the victim (Duane Phillips). Family members called 911 and started making arrangements for the barricades of the block party to be moved to make way for the ambulance. Suzanne

Swantek, a nurse with the Grand Island Clinic, heard the call to clear a way for an ambulance and went to help. Ms. Wichman and Ms. Swantek did CPR until the paramedics arrived.

Immediate bystander CPR can double the chances that a sudden cardiac arrest victim will survive to be released from the hospital.

The Grand Island Fire Department would like to present Katie Wichman and Suzanne Swantek with the Citizen's Citation Award for their display of heroism shown on July 4, 2010 in which they saved the life of Duane Phillips.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Katie Wichman and Suzanne Swantek be presented with the Grand Island Fire Department's Citizen's Citation for their life saving efforts on July 4th, 2010.