

The Townships

'Jump-starts' for stopped hearts

New ambulance equipment should save lives



Dr. Wayne Smith... Time means lives.

By Dan Hawaleshka
SHERBROOKE — A shocking new piece of ambulance equipment is expected to sharply increase the chances of survival for victims of cardiac arrest.

It's called a "semi-automatic defibrillator" and regional health officials say it can save hundreds of lives which would otherwise be lost.

Officials of the Sherbrooke ambulance service *Sécurité de l'Estrie* said Friday 27 of the \$10,000 U.S.-made defibrillators have been on board local ambulances since July 16.

Ambulance technician Yves Dumont told reporters at a ceremony that as well as saving

lives the defibrillators will also make technicians "feel more useful."

Technicians have volunteered unpaid spare time during the last few months to take a 12-to-15 hour training course.

JUMP START

Emergency medicine specialist Dr. Wayne Smith said about 98 per cent of cardiac arrests which happen away from hospitals are fatal. With the defibrillators, which "jump-start" the stopped heart with an electric shock, the number of survivors could climb as high as one in four.

"We'll certainly save 25 per cent" of lives if all goes well, said Dr. Smith, who is a member of the Estrie regional health board.

But the defibrillators are not a cure-all, he cautioned, and to reach the 25 per cent success rate, several things have to happen. The key to success is time and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, or CPR.

To demonstrate, officials staged an elaborate mock cardiac arrest, beginning with a dummy used to practise CPR.

CALL FOR HELP

The following scenario was put forward: a man collapses during a dance and someone who checks his pulse finds none.

An ambulance technician disguised as a bystander orders another bystander to call an ambulance. One arrives a

few minutes later, siren wailing. Throughout the wait, our bystander gives the victim CPR.

With a doctor's help over a two-way radio, the ambulance technicians apply the defibrillator's pads and shock the patient.

To save the victim even one time in four all these elements must exist and the ambulance must arrive within four to six

minutes.

Delays can be fatal.

"Our best chances of survival are squarely related to the time it takes to get to a patient," Smith said.

"If you're going to get it there 12 to 15 minutes down the road," he said, the chances for survival drop like a rock, to near zero.

Smith said that in the Sherbrooke region (Estrie) about

1500 people per year suffer cardiac arrests.

The municipalities covered by *Sécurité de l'Estrie* are Sherbrooke, Lennoxville, Bromptonville, Ascot, Rock Forest, Deauville, Fleurimont and St-Elie d'Orford.

The other eight ambulance companies in the Estrie zone should have their defibrillators by Sept. 30. Magog is slated to get theirs this week, Asbestos in two weeks.



The 'victim' was saved, despite the look on his face.



Ambulance technicians Pierre Carrier and Johanne Chrétien demonstrate the defibrillator.

High praise for youth centres

Drug fighter speaks from experience

By Dan Hawaleshka
LENNOXVILLE — Drugs ruined Barry Salis' life.

On Friday, he tried to keep the same thing from happening to a group of Lennoxville teenagers.

Cocaine led to Salis's downfall. He used the drug for four years, "the last two of which were very heavy," Salis said in an interview during an open-house at the Lennoxville youth

centre. His drug addiction ended his family life and business.

Now Salis, 36, is rebuilding after more than two years of rehabilitation. He started a

Montreal-based drug counselling service and was invited to talk to teenagers in Lennoxville.

Salis speaks frankly, saying it's wrong to think drug addicts are all "losers, assholes or jerks." He said addiction can happen to anyone and teenagers today are under a lot of pressure, constantly bombarded with advertising which promotes alcohol consumption.

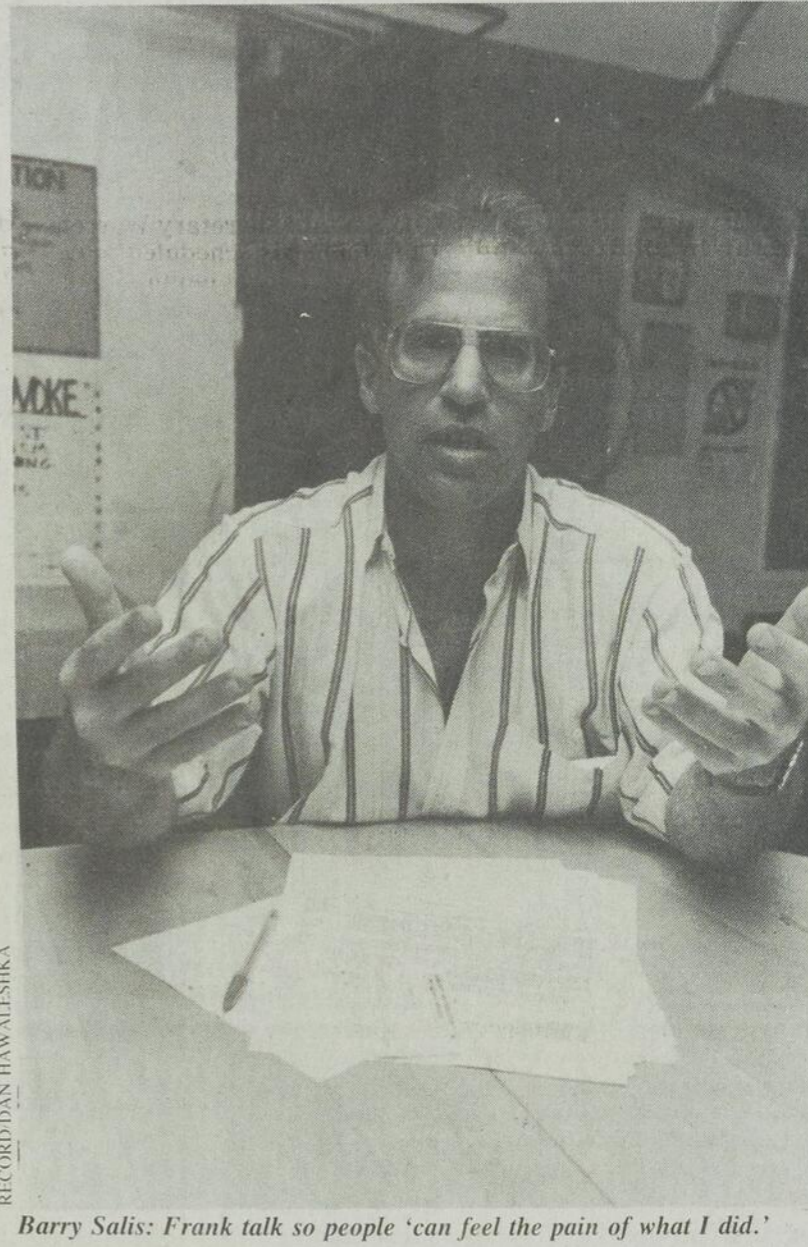
His strategy with teens is to speak with emotion and conviction, "so they can feel the pain of what I did."

He praised youth centres as places where teens can come for help, or just spend some time with friends without resorting to roaming the streets — all of which helps cut down drug abuse.

"In other words they're not sitting around all summer with nothing to do," Salis added.

"This youth centre is a step in the right direction," he added later.

Another point he emphasizes is the need to promote a positive self-image among teens, because when you feel good about yourself, you're less likely to harm yourself with drugs, he said.



Barry Salis: Frank talk so people 'can feel the pain of what I did.'

Beaches rated good to excellent

SHERBROOKE — Eastern Townships beaches continue to do well, receiving water-quality ratings of either good or excellent.

The regional office of Environment Quebec announced rating results Friday based on water samples taken July 19-21.

Water at the following

beaches was tested for coliform bacteria and received an 'A' for excellent: Merry's Point, east and west, Magog; Magog municipal beach; Deauville municipal; Camp d'action biblique, Cleveland Township; and Baie des Sables in Lake Megantic.

The remaining beaches tested received a 'B' for "good" water quality: Blanchard

beach, Sherbrooke; Watopéka in Windsor; Lake Drolet municipal; and OTJ Megantic in Lake Megantic.

The regional office of Environment Quebec announced the results Friday based on water samples taken July 19-21. For updates on water quality at beaches near you, call toll free 1-800-561-1616.

Essential services to rule on Sutton

KNOWLTON (CK) — The Quebec essential services board is expected to decide early this week if Sutton Township must continue paying one its striking workers.

The board held a public hearing in Cowansville Friday where union representatives demanded an inquiry after they said the township reneged on a deal to pay a worker.

The agreement between the township and striking workers called for a worker to be on call 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week. The township

paid the worker based on only an eight-hour day. Then the township stopped paying.

"They didn't want to continue paying the salary," board spokesman Denis Lalonde said Friday.

The board heard both sides of the argument and is expected to make a decision, shortly Lalonde added.

Sutton Township general manager Clement Vautour would not comment on the inquiry until a judgement is made.

Cyclists on tour to peddle 'greenway' network



American and Canadian cyclists joined forces for a 1000-kilometre journey promoting greenways.

LENNOXVILLE (DH) — A group of 10 American and Canadian cyclists rolled into Lennoxville Friday as part of a 1000-kilometre tour promoting so-called "greenways".

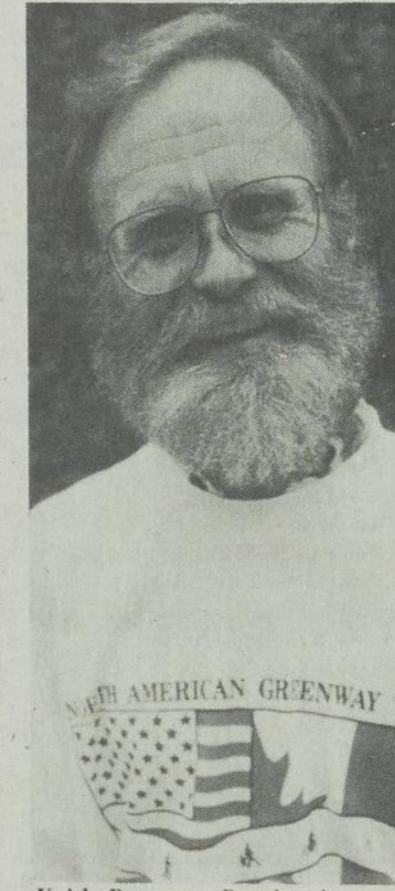
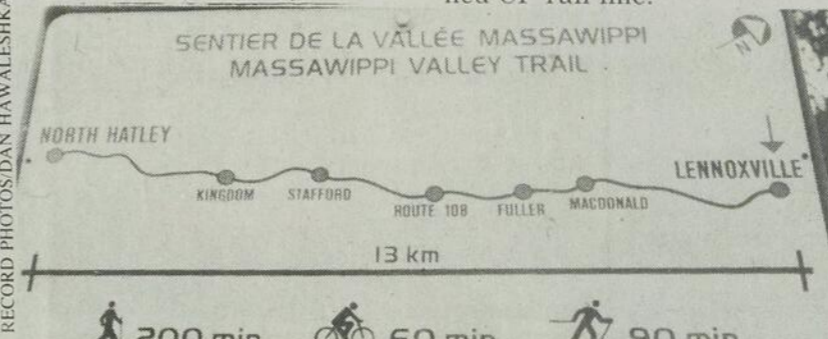
Greenways, also called linear parks, have been springing up in the Eastern Townships over the last few years. They are often built on abandoned railways and are used by cyclists, pedestrians and cross-country skiers.

The group's trip is known as the North American Greenway Tour, and began in Hartford, Connecticut, on July 12. It's

scheduled to end in Montreal July 27.

"They're proving you can go from Connecticut to Montreal on off-road trails," local greenway advocate Keith Baxter said during a reception at Uplands Museum in Lennoxville.

The group crossed the border into Canada in the Three Villages area early Friday. After a reception in Beebe and another in Ayer's Cliff, the group made its way to North Hatley and then Lennoxville via the Massawippi Valley Trail, a 13-km trail on abandoned CP rail line.



Keith Baxter... Proving it can be done.