



#GeisingerGrateful

Catherine Pennycoff honors GSACH Emergency Department

Catherine Pennycoff's 43-year-old fiancé, Ron Moon, had a family history of heart disease. Still, when he felt chest pains and achiness in his left arm one night in October 2016, he didn't think it was a reason to worry. But after he woke up at 2 a.m. sweating, turning gray and in worsening pain, Catherine and Ron both realized it was serious. They went to Geisinger Shamokin Area Community Hospital* (GSACH) as fast as they could.



It almost wasn't fast enough. Ron's heart stopped as soon as he got to the exam room in the Emergency Department.

"He looked like he was having a seizure," said Catherine. "His eyes rolled back and the machines started beeping and everyone rushed over." Catherine was taken out to the waiting room for what felt like the longest three minutes of her life. "Techs came out and sat with me. A nurse came and held my hand," she said. "I was terrified, but I wasn't left alone."

Meanwhile, the physicians and staff were doing everything possible to save Ron. It was on their second attempt with a defibrillator, a device which sends an electric shock to the heart, that Ron came back to life. He was taken by Life Flight® to Geisinger Medical Center (GMC) in Danville. It was there that Shikhar Agarwal, MD, one of the cardiologists caring for Ron, told them Ron had suffered the most severe heart attack possible. The actions taken in the emergency room saved Ron's life. Ron spent three days in the Intensive Care Unit. During that time, he and Catherine experienced the personalized, skilled care of cardiologists, residents and nurses. Catherine remembers that Henry Fesniak, MD, and the residents were fantastic.

"Dr. Fesniak took time to talk to both Ron and me, and he explained things in a way that made sense without using complicated lingo," she said. Thankfully, Ron suffered no lasting effects from his heart attack. He was able to return to his life even healthier than before.

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A few weeks later, Catherine went back to the GSACH Emergency Department to personally thank the night-shift staff who'd taken care of Ron. The Life Flight nurse who had taken care of Ron as he traveled from GSACH to GMC happened to be there — and he remembered them.

"It meant so much to me that he remembered who I was and cared to ask about Ron," said Catherine.

Catherine wants to make sure all the staff who helped Ron — and who helped her — are recognized.

"If it hadn't been for the staff at both hospitals' emergency departments and their level of knowledge, I don't think Ron would still be with me. I do not have one complaint. And I am thankful from the bottom of my heart."

**GSACH is a campus of Geisinger Medical Center.*