

PSH NEWS

Students learn CPR in Red Cross class

*Elin Marcel
Capital Times Staff*

You're at your annual family reunion and Uncle Walter is having a heart attack. What do you do?

Students learned this and other emergency medical procedures Feb. 14 and 21 in "Community CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation)." Assunta Lavelle, a certified American Red Cross instructor taught students infant, child and adult CPR, mouth-to-mouth breathing, and the Heimlich maneuver.

Lavelle said students can benefit from CPR knowledge.

"You just never know when an emergency will arise," Lavelle said.

"One time I had an electrical engineering student tell me he thought it would be good to put this on his resume, since he was going to be working with electricity," Lavelle said.

Students also say CPR training will be beneficial.

"It's something good you'll need to have," said Melissa Major, a senior computer science major from York. Major plans to become a certified

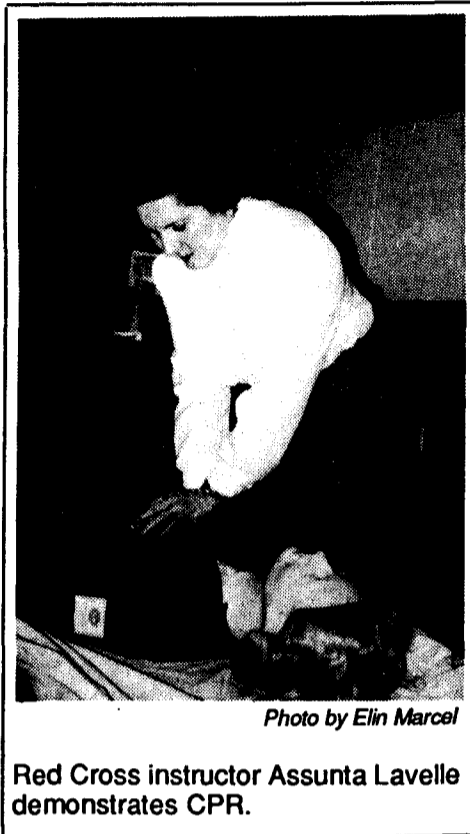


Photo by Elin Marcel
Red Cross instructor Assunta Lavelle demonstrates CPR.

aerobics instructor and said CPR certification is a prerequisite.

"If something happens in [aerobics] class, it's definitely going to help me," Major added.

Daniel Carr of Bloomsburg, a junior mechanical engineering technology major, had a more personal reason for taking the class.

"When I'm not in school, I spend a lot of time canoeing and backpacking," Carr said. "If something should happen, I'd be able to help." Frequently during these trips, the group is isolated and professional help is several hours away, Carr said.

"Let's say I hope I'll never need to use it," Carr added.

The student response to the class was very good, Lavelle said. The class limit is six, and the first session filled immediately, with a waiting list of about 20 for possible additional sessions. Lavelle said she hopes to hold another session this semester.

"People are more interested in CPR now. At the beginning of the AIDS scare a couple of years ago, people were not as interested," Lavelle said.

After completion of the class, students are certified by the Red Cross for one year, and must take the course annually for recertification. The Red

Cross maintains certification records, and issues certification cards to students completing the course.

Certification means a person is authorized by the Red Cross to perform emergency lifesaving techniques on victims. To become certified, students must attend two four-hour sessions, view an instructional film, know and perform the skills on a mannequin, and pass a written exam.

Major said she plans to be recertified next year. But Carr said recertification was not a personal priority.

"I don't feel the actual certification is as beneficial as the knowledge," Carr said. "Certification isn't essential...it's primarily for liability with strangers," he added.

Lavelle, however, emphasized the importance of recertification, saying the Red Cross discourages skill use after certification expiration.

Students found the certification process easy.

"You read the book and pay attention," Carr said.

Major said the hardest part about the class was sitting through the two-hour instructional film.

"It gets long," Major said.

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