

**Eagle Rock Volunteer Rescue Squad  
P.O. Box 234  
Eagle Rock, VA 24085**

**Contact: Carol Lewis, email: [cslewis@ervrs.org](mailto:cslewis@ervrs.org)  
phone (540) 567-2000 cell (540) 589-9633**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Lifesaving Device Donated to Oriskany Church**

A generous donation by a local Oriskany area resident could help save someone's life in this isolated rural community.

The Eagle Rock Rescue Squad has sponsored a series of monthly "Health Day" programs at the King Memorial Church pavilion in Oriskany. Recent programs led by Jack Lewis, who is an Oriskany EMT and a CPR instructor with the Eagle Rock squad, have focused on teaching the principles of cardiopulmonary respiration (CPR) and how to use an automatic external defibrillator (AED), which can restore normal heart rhythm during a cardiac emergency. During the program on AEDs, Lewis mentioned to the attendees that Zoll, one of the major AED manufacturers, sells their devices at a greatly reduced price to churches. He told the group that Eagle Rock Rescue Squad planned to begin an educational and fundraising effort to place AEDs in as many area churches as possible, since it is crucial that the device be used almost immediately after a cardiac emergency occurs, as every minute counts.

Shortly after the program, a local resident, who wishes to remain anonymous, came forward with the entire amount needed (\$1000) to purchase an AED for Oriskany, to be located in the church, which is central to the community.

Georgia Knighton, captain of Eagle Rock Rescue, this week presented the new device to David Cox, pastor of King Memorial Church. "We are very grateful to the person who saw this need in their community and filled it, with their generous donation," Cox said. "It just makes sense to have AEDs in places where people gather, such as churches, especially in a remote, rural area like Oriskany or Eagle Rock."

Knighton emphasized that in this area of the county, where it can take some time for EMS help to arrive, it is crucial to have local people trained in how to administer CPR and how to use an AED, and to have AEDs available at as many sites as possible. "If you don't deliver a shock to a cardiac arrest victim within just a few minutes," she said, "the chances of survival are slim."

At the Oriskany Health Day attendees learned that cardiac arrest is the leading cause of death in the U.S., and the leading cause of cardiac arrest is ventricular fibrillation—the sudden irregularity of the heart's electrical impulses. An AED shocks the heart with an electrical current in order to restore a normal rhythm. The devices are designed for use by ordinary citizens without medical training. They are about the size of a laptop computer, and they analyze the heart's rhythm for abnormalities and deliver an electric shock only if needed. The shock, called defibrillation, can help the heart re-establish an effective rhythm on its own.

“These units are very user-friendly,” said Jack Lewis. “They talk to you and give you step-by-step instructions on how to place the pads and what to do at each moment. They even talk you through giving CPR. You don't have to be a doctor or a paramedic to use it, but it does help if you have some training and are familiar with it. And you don't have to be afraid that the device will deliver a shock accidentally. Even if you press the “Shock” button, a shock will only be delivered if and when it is needed.”

Lewis, who is the training officer at Eagle Rock Rescue Squad, is spearheading a community outreach program for the squad to educate as many people as possible in both CPR and AED use. “We hope to place more AEDs in the Eagle Rock area churches and businesses, to improve our chances of saving a life when a cardiac emergency occurs.”

If your church or other organization is interested in sponsoring a CPR class along with AED demonstration and training, contact Jack Lewis at [jwlewis@ervrs.org](mailto:jwlewis@ervrs.org) or 567-2000. The service is free to the public.

[For a high-resolution photo, go to the Eagle Rock Rescue Squad website at [www.ervrs.org](http://www.ervrs.org) and click on the Press button on the left. Instructions for downloading the photo are provided. Photo caption below.]

**[caption] Georgia Knighton, captain of the Eagle Rock Volunteer Rescue Squad, presents a new Zoll AED to David Cox, pastor of King Memorial Church in Oriskany. The AED was purchased through a special program administered by Zoll to provide defibrillators to churches at a discounted price. Money for the purchase was donated to the Oriskany community by a local area resident who wishes to remain anonymous.**