

# ZOLL®

CASE STUDY

## Larry Evans Wrestled for His Life and Won

Right before Christmas, 68-year-old Larry “Smiley” Evans had just entered the lobby of the West Wilkes High School in North Carolina to watch his grandson, Quinton, in a wrestling match. The lobby was empty except for a few people selling tickets. Before going into the gym, he attempted to enter the men’s room, but the door was locked. The locked door was the first blessing, according to his daughter, Paige Tart. “He would have gone in, locked the door behind him, and the rest would be history,” she said.

Paige saw her father turn from the door with a look of surprise, fear, and pain. He staggered, tried to brace himself against the wall, and collapsed, hitting his head against the window pane. He landed face down on the floor. Paige and her mother, Paulette, screamed for help, not knowing what to think because two years earlier Larry had been diagnosed with congestive heart failure and heart disease, and underwent triple bypass surgery.

Larry was rolled over onto his back. A cut near his left eye was bleeding. Within seconds, his face and tongue started to swell and he began to turn blue. He had no pulse.

“At that very moment reality set in, and I saw my daddy lying there completely lifeless,” Paige said. Her family was desperately trying to call 911 but could not get cell phone service. Two people finally connected to 911 and an ambulance was dispatched.

At the same time, Mitch Stegall, the high school’s assistant wrestling coach and first responder for athletes, ran to the lobby. So did Kelly Reynolds, a parent and nurse, who had been sitting in the bleachers. Kelly immediately started chest compressions while Mitch yelled for someone to get the automated external defibrillator (AED) and started administering breaths. Another coach sprinted down the hallway to get the ZOLL® AED Plus®.

As soon as the AED Plus arrived, Mitch and Kelly attached the electrode pads to Larry and followed the AED’s instructions step by step. The first step was letting the AED Plus analyze Larry’s condition. “When the AED said to shock him, we did,” said Mitch. “In a matter of seconds, we saw his life coming back into him. When I first looked at him, he was gone. From the time Kelly and I started working on him, we had him back in less than four minutes after we shocked him. It was another two minutes before the first responders got there. If we hadn’t had the AED, he would not have made it.”



“I was so glad the AED was there,” says Kelly. “He needed the shock. The heart can’t keep beating at the irregular rhythm he was in. It was almost immediately

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*Survivor Larry "Smiley" Evans*

after the shock that he came around. I don't honestly know what would have happened if we hadn't shocked him."

Larry was awake and responding by the time the paramedics arrived. They transported him to Frye Regional Medical Center, where he spent the week before Christmas fighting pneumonia. He went home for the holidays and then returned to undergo surgery for an implantable cardioverter-defibrillator (ICD). A few weeks after Larry received the ICD, he was able to return to work.

"I know the Lord performs miracles," Larry said. "I'm living proof. I honestly believe if I had been home, I wouldn't be here today. I'm lucky the school had the AED and trained people to know what to do."

Although Mitch is trained for this sort of emergency, he says, "It would have been easy for me to have gotten flustered and missed something. The AED talked to me step by step, confirming what I was doing were the right steps. It gave me confidence when I knew I was pressing at the right depth when doing compressions. It's like having a coach over your shoulder telling you you're doing it right or having someone say you need to 'Push Harder.'"

"My dad is very blessed and is a walking miracle!" said Paige. "We had lots to celebrate and had the best Christmas ever! It is clearly obvious that God still has big plans for him."

### The Importance of AEDs

"Larry's collapse was a wake-up call to our schools," says Westley Wood, director of student services for the district. Our schools are very active, and people are in and out all the time. It is by luck we haven't had to use the AED more than one time."

After Larry's collapse, Wilkes County went to work to equip all 22 schools in the district with at least one AED Plus unit. The North Carolina High School Athletic Association purchased one AED Plus for each high school, and private donors funded all other AEDs throughout the school district, including additional units at the high school. The district also initiated a program for school nurses to develop school-wide policies and train teams on the AED and in CPR.

"Without the AED, my dad never would have made it," said Paige. "I know that many schools are fighting the fight to get AEDs. For me, it's a no-brainer."

The ZOLL AED Plus, the first and only Full-Rescue AED that provides Real CPR Help® for depth and rate of chest compressions, audibly coaches rescuers with prompts that say "Push Harder" or "Good Compressions" during CPR.



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