

# SUCCESS STORY

Sharon Regional  
Medical Center

A STEWARD FAMILY HOSPITAL

## A SHARON REGIONAL PATIENT SUCCESS STORY

Steward

Cardiovascular Services

sharonregionalmedical.org/chestpain

### The Health Challenge

- Sudden cardiac arrest.

### The Treatment

- Stabilized by EMS crew.
- Cardiac catheterization, followed by a stent and ZOLL life vest.
- Cardiac rehab

### The Result

- Back to enjoying family and favorite hobbies.

*“We are all so fortunate to have Sharon Regional in our community.”*

Judi S. – patient

### The Health Challenge

According to the American Heart Association, in 2016 there was a 24.8% chance that someone experiencing cardiac arrest within the hospital would survive, and only a 12% chance of surviving if experienced outside of the hospital.

It was the morning of Good Friday of 2016 when 65-year-old Judi Schlegel went into full cardiac arrest. “The morning of my heart attack, I was planning to meet several family members at Perkins restaurant for breakfast,” stated Judi. “I had no idea that my life was about to drastically change.”

What began as a typical morning with plans to go to meet her cousins for breakfast at the local Perkins restaurant quickly took a turn for the worse when Judi suddenly became unresponsive while sitting at her table at the restaurant. Fortunately for Judi, Chikako Gerasimek, RN, BSN, MSN a nursing instructor at Sharon Regional Health System was at the restaurant with her aunt, Marge Moates, also a nurse when she realized that something was wrong. “I looked over and noticed that the woman was unresponsive,” stated Chikako. At first I thought the woman was choking, but soon realized there was something heart related going on and began to act. Marge and I knew immediately what we had to do.” stated Chikako. Both women teamed up and began to administer CPR while someone in the restaurant called 911. McGonigle’s Ambulance arrived at Perkins within minutes and medics took over Judi’s care at that critical point.

A relative who had been with Judi at the



### Background

**Name** – Judi Schlegel | **Age** – 65

**Occupation** – Homemaker

**Hobbies** – Playing with grandkids, working in the garden, cooking, being with family

restaurant quickly placed a call to Judi’s daughter, Jodi Shrawder, to alert her of the situation and asked what hospital her mother should be taken to.

### The Treatment

“I immediately knew she had to come to Sharon Regional,” stated Jodi who is employed by Sharon Regional as the director of pharmacy. “My cousin was describing to me what was happening, that my mom was receiving CPR, the medics were there and that they were getting ready to shock her. I realized that this was not just a blockage; that her heart had either stopped or was beating so erratically that she was in serious danger.” Jodi describes her initial reaction as being a daughter, not an employee. She didn’t want her mother getting transported to a hospital for care just because of where she worked, but because she knew that Sharon

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Regional Medical Center is the region's only designated Chest Pain Center. She stated, "The decision to take her to Sharon Regional was easy for me. I've been an employee at Sharon Regional for 17 years. I've seen our program grow. I've seen the teams assemble at all hours, trained to save lives. But, this time the patient was my Mom and I knew if we could get her here, we had the best shot at saving her."

Because of the advance notification from EMS, a code STEMI was called prior to Judi's arrival. When the ambulance arrived in the Emergency Department at Sharon Regional, McGonigle's EMS team had Judi stabilized and the hospital team was awaiting her arrival. Sharon Regional's Cardiac Care team instantly took action and readied her for a cardiac catheterization. Dr. James Ryan, cardiologist, oversaw Judi's care from the time she was seen in the emergency room to the cath lab where she received the catheterization. The team decided to stent her and put her in a ZOLL life vest, a wearable defibrillator, that was to be worn 24/7 for 90 days except for quick showers. After 90 days, her heart function had not improved enough, so the decision was made to place a permanent defibrillator in Judi's heart to shock her, if needed.

## The Result

It has been just over a year now since the cardiac arrest occurred and Judi is again able to spend time with her family doing the things she enjoys, as if nothing had happened. When asked Judi what she remembers of the event, she replies with, "Not really anything. I remember drinking my coffee that morning and looking at my spring jacket thinking, 'I'm going to wear that'." She doesn't remember much more than that including driving to the local Perkins restaurant to meet her family or ordering her food. She briefly remembers being treated at the hospital in bits and pieces, but has

little memory of the life-threatening events that she experienced. When talking about her favorite hobbies, she says, "I enjoy baking, cooking, cooking, gardening and being able to play with my grandchildren." She did state, however, that she doesn't feel as strong as she used to be, but that was to be expected. She completed cardiac rehab, once a week, and she's had great success, "It wasn't the most fun experience, but I saw a difference in gaining my strength back." Looking back on the whole situation, both Judi and her daughter describe it as being at "the right time and right place." "My mom had her guardian angels looking out for her that day," stated Judi. If it hadn't been for Chikako's quick reaction and the skill and speed of the Sharon Regional staff, she wouldn't be here today sharing her story. The cause of Judi's sudden cardiac arrest is still in question, but her family couldn't be more thankful for the way everything turned out and the care she received by everyone – from the ambulance response team, the emergency room staff, cardiologists, cardiac cath team and the entire hospital clinical and non-clinical employees. "Everyone treated me with such great care. I am so grateful to Chikako, Marge and McGonigle medics for what they did in the restaurant and also for the care I received at Sharon Regional. The community is so lucky to have Sharon Regional in our area," concluded Judi.

## About Sharon Regional Medical Center

Sharon Regional Medical Center is your community healthcare provider; a 220 acute care bed hospital with 19 satellite centers throughout the region. As a Joint Commission accredited hospital, Sharon Regional Medical Center proudly offers specialized services including the Heart and Vascular Institute, emergency heart attack/stroke treatment, cancer care, orthopedics/sports medicine, minimally invasive surgery, bariatric surgery, emergency care, a women's center, and a breast care center.

For more information visit [www.sharonregionalmedical.org](http://www.sharonregionalmedical.org).

## About Steward Health Care

Steward Health Care is a fully integrated national health care services organization committed to providing the highest quality of care in the communities where our patients live. Steward owns and operates 18 community hospitals across four states, serves over 800 communities, and has more than 23,000 employees. The Steward network includes more than 25 urgent care centers, 42 preferred skilled nursing facilities, substantial behavioral health offerings, and more than 3,700 beds under management.

Additional information is available at [www.steward.org](http://www.steward.org).



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