

Garr from page A1

McKay, 17, were widely praised for helping save the victim, who sustained a closed-head injury. Garr, as of late Friday afternoon, was hospitalized in critical condition at University of Michigan Medical Centers in Ann Arbor. She was breathing with the assistance of a ventilator and was being closely watched for the development of an aneurysm.

"Both of these girls are heroines, definitely," Boychuk said. "They deserve something, because they didn't hang back for one second."

When the lifeguards began their efforts, Garr was in full cardiac arrest — not breathing and without a pulse — from the impact of the tree limb, which Farmington public safety deputy director Mike Wiggins estimated was about five inches in diameter. The limb fell about 40 feet, striking Garr as well as a nearby fence, along the west side of the pool.

The three children whom Garr was baby-sitting were in the kiddie pool when the limb struck her. They were not injured and were safely returned home following the accident.

Public safety Officers Duane Cowger and Christine Schutz dispatched to the swim club. Cowger said he joined in on the CPR, using rescue breathing equipment (bag valve mask) until paramedics arrived. Garr was subsequently stabilized enough to be rushed to Botsford Hospital in Farmington Hills, from where she was airlifted to U-M Medical Centers.

Cowger said the work of Hryczuk and McKay was significant, because it started the emergency response quicker.

"Without their intervention," said Cowger, "it would have been another 1 1/2 to 2 minutes before CPR could have been started. . . The brain starts dying after 4 to 6 minutes from lack of oxygen. They cut that time down to nothing."

Farmington Glen director Mark Papineau, late Thursday, said "The kids did great." He added that all lifeguards at the club receive basic CPR training as well as instructions that their role is "not to save a life, but to keep it going until someone further up the chain can step in to provide treatment."

"Lifeguarding is one of those summer jobs that can be great," Papineau continued. "You can meet a lot of people. But when something major happens you have to rely on 17, 18 and 19-year-old kids to do some pretty

REC NEWS

Each week the Recreation Division of the Farmington Hills Department of Special Services presents a synopsis of upcoming activities. For further information regarding programs, contact the recreation office at 473-9570.

RECREATION EQUIPMENT RENTALS

An assortment of recreation equipment is ready for your picnic, party or special event. Equipment is available from May to September. A separate \$20 deposit is required. Equipment available for rental are picnic packs, volleyball sets, tug-of-war rope, parachute, baseball set and dunk tank. Reservations must be made in advance by calling 473-9570.

OPEN GYM OFFERINGS

The William Costick Activities Center gym is open, with locker rooms and showers available. Please bring correct change and socks for lockers. Days and hours are:

Thursday - Adult Basketball — 7-9 p.m.

Sunday - Adult Basketball — 11 a.m.; Adult Volleyball — 11 a.m.-1 p.m.; and Teen Basketball — 1-3 p.m.

The fee for two-hour session rentals is \$2 for 17 and under, and \$3 for 18 and over. Fee is \$2 more for non-residents.

OPEN SKATE

The Farmington Hills Ice Arena invites participants to join open skating. Fee is \$3 for Farmington Hills residents and \$5 for non-residents. Skate rental is \$2 per person. For specific days and hours call 478-8800.

FAMILY DAY IN THE PARK

Our annual Family Day in the Park will be held from noon to 5 p.m. August 3 at Heritage Park. Many free activities will be available including a craft area, a moonwalk, a giant slide, animals on display, stage acts and hayrides.

amazing things."

Boychuk, also trained in CPR, assisted officers who asked her to find any identification about the victim and to contact her parents. She found a note tucked inside Melissa's blue jeans, with a list written on her father's official stationery from the Farmington Hills Fire Department.

Bob Tompos, a paramedic with Community EMS, said knowing the age of a head-trauma patient is important information for determining the proper medication amount and correct-size breathing tube.

"Please tell everybody not to go out without an ID," Boychuk said. "It's precious time. . . They needed to know how old she was in order to help her."

Garr was without identification because she walked over to the swim club, with the children. Boychuk, a regular at the club, noted that the children visit the pool during the summer — but that Garr was not the person who usually watched them.

The fact that Garr normally didn't watch the kids at the pool added to the freakish nature of the episode. "It's like fate," Boychuk said. "Why her? Why that minute?"

There were no previous indication that the tree was a safety hazard.

"The branch was healthy," Wiggins said. "The only thing I can think of is that it was weakened by past storms and the slightest breeze caused it to fall."

According to Papineau, the accident was "so bizarre. It was a fully-vegetated branch. Somebody came up yesterday (Wednesday) and asked if we'd be checking other things. What can you do except go up in the trees and jump up and down on the branches?"

By TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Within two minutes of Wednesday's freakish accident that critically injured Melissa Garr, Farmington Glen Aquatic Center lifeguards Laura Hryczuk and Melissa McKay were putting their training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation to use.

Garr, 16, struck in the head by an 18-foot-long tree limb while standing outside a swimming pool, was in full cardiac arrest — no pulse, not breathing — when the lifeguards began CPR. But, because they immediately went to work, the Farmington High School student's blood was sufficiently oxygenated to keep her alive until paramedics and police arrived. She remains hospitalized in University of Michigan Medical Centers in critical condition.

The importance of their quick actions

could not be underscored enough by paramedic Bob Tompos of Community EMS, an ambulance company that is affiliated with Botsford Hospital.

"The significant thing about getting oxygen into a person that's unresponsive is, as long as there's oxygen moving in the blood stream the tissues won't start to die," Tompos said Friday. "That's why the majority (99 percent) of cardiac arrest patients outside the hospital don't survive."

Tompos said the combination of mouth-to-mouth and chest compressions brings oxygen in and moves it around to reach different parts of the body. The body can go about four minutes without oxygen before death begins to occur, he added.

Farmington public safety Officer Duane Cowger estimated that Garr began receiving oxygen about 1 1/2 to 2 minutes after she

stopped breathing.

"It's a great help what they (Hryczuk, McKay) did," Tompos said. "What is very frustrating is to get there in six minutes and nothing is being done."

More people having the knowledge of CPR, first-aid and other emergency skills increase the percentage of survival. That's why Tompos stressed that taking courses in those areas should be high on everybody's to-do list.

"Chances are you're going to have to use it on someone you care about," Tompos said.

Community EMS offers customized classes for people interested in learning about CPR, first-aid or becoming an emergency medical technician, said Tompos.

For more information, call (810)356-3900, extension 258.

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