

## Heroes revive man's heart

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Jason Pinsonneault, 36, believes his life is a special gift.

Early this summer, Pinsonneault in a bid to get fit, decided to go running at St. Edmund Campion Secondary School, 275 Brisdale Dr. Midway through his run at approximately 11 a.m. he collapsed as a result of a condition called Sudden Cardiac Death (SCD).

Sudden Cardiac Death occurs when a person whose heart has stopped loses consciousness and there's a stoppage of normal breathing. During SCD, there will be no sign of either pulse or blood pressure.

Joe Decamellis, head custodian at the school, who had ventured outside on what he described was a hot day to trim the grass around the school's field, found a lifeless man lying face down. He pulled out his walkie-talkie and asked his colleague Paul Bertrand to call 9-1-1.

Soon after, the two men along with summer school principal Brian Stapleton, took turns in administering Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and heart massages as they waited for emergency crew to respond. Pinsonneault's pallor by then had turned blue and he appeared "clinically dead," his rescuers said.

A grateful Pinsonneault—who recovered from the trauma – along with his wife Jennifer and two children showed-up at the St. Edmund Campion Secondary School's chapel, Thursday, Sept. 1 to participate in a mass, share his story and thank the "angels" who saved his life.

"Words cannot express how I feel," said Pinsonneault an employee of Canadian Tire. "Thank you from the bottom of my heart. Things have changed. My outlook on life now is to live every moment and enjoy it."

Decamellis, who has been a custodian with the Dufferin Peel Catholic School Board (DPCSB) for some 10 years, said he learned CPR when he first joined the school board and never had an opportunity to use it until now.

"When I saw him (Pinsonneault) laying on the ground that day, he was in pretty rough shape," Decamellis recalled. "So, yes, I believe in miracles. God does help us out, that's for sure."

After spending nine days in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) Pinsonneault began his journey to recovery. It was providence that her husband decided to go running during the day and not at night as he usually did, said Jennifer.

As the family chatted and shared their compelling story, there were many in the packed chapel, who were misty-eyed and shaking their head in bewilderment.

"I don't know how my CPR training kicked in, it was an automatic response," said Bertrand. "Something in me kept urging me to continue doing what I was doing as we tried to get his colour and heartbeat back. He was blue. He was cold. This is a miracle that he pulled through and that he's strong."

Starting this year, it's likely Pinsonneault will celebrate two "birthdays".



**The heart will go on.** Jason Pinsonneault, 36, (lower left corner) returns to St. Edmund Campion Secondary School to thank Paul Bertrand (lower right) and Joe DeCamellis (upper left). The two men along with summer school principal Brian Stapleton were responsible for reviving the young father's heart after he collapsed during his morning run. Also seen here are Pinsonneault's wife Jennifer and their two children Isabella, 3, and Nicholas, 1. *Photo by Ken Hay*