



**Weather**  
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**Sports**  
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**Business**  
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# LEADER-TELEGRAM

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## Shocked into action

A coach's collapse was met swiftly by trained professionals at the match

**By Alyssa Waters**  
Leader-Telegram staff  
When John and Julie Folstad went to watch their son Matt compete in a WIAA sectional tennis match last week in Marshfield, they went as parents, not professionals.  
But the Folstads, who are registered nurses, sprang into action when they saw a man lying on the ground near the tennis courts just after 2 p.m.



**John Folstad**



**Julie Folstad**

Thursday.  
Eau Claire Regis tennis player Matt Folstad, 16, was competing in a match when his parents noticed people congregating around Adam Bassak, Baldwin-Woodville's assistant tennis coach.  
John Folstad, 51, director of physician recruitment and relations at Sacred Heart Hospital, thought he might be able to assist.

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## Save/'I'm lucky to be telling the story'

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When he approached, Bassak was facedown and someone was trying to feel for a pulse.

"I could see from his face that it was very blue in color," John Folstad said of Bassak.

At that time, John Folstad and Duane Myklejord, a coach from Marshfield Columbus High School who is an anesthesiologist, used the log-roll technique to turn Bassak onto his back.

John Folstad and Myklejord determined Bassak had no pulse. Myklejord began rescue breathing, and John Folstad began chest compressions.

That's when Julie Folstad, 51, joined her husband.

"When I saw that they had turned him over, and I saw the anesthesiologist start the breathing, that's when I went to help," she said. "Sometimes it helps to have a second person available to do compressions if the other person gets tired."

An athletic trainer from Marshfield Clinic, Ashley Lagerquist, who was at the tennis meet to assist players with injuries, already had called 911 and unpacked her automatic external defibrillator.

John Folstad and Myklejord continued CPR while the defibrillator was attached. Everyone stopped while Julie Folstad administered the shock to the heart, and then CPR was continued.

"Immediately we couldn't feel a pulse," John Folstad said. "We started CPR again and he started to wake up. He started to breathe on his own."

Bassak, 30, of Woodville, remembers little.

"The only thing I remember is right before it happened," Bassak said on Tuesday.

Minutes before he collapsed, Bassak ran a tennis ball from an official to the courts. He guessed the distance was a couple of hundred yards.

"I remember feeling short of breath and light-headed," he said. "Once I

came to, they asked what day it was, if I knew where I was — the typical questions. I remember I gave them the exact address of the high school. I remember them looking at me like, 'OK.' I don't even think they knew the address to the school.

"I was completely coherent."

Bassak, who has a hereditary heart defect, had been in cardiac arrest. Neither he, nor any of his family members who have the same heart defect, has experienced cardiac arrest before, he said.

He considers himself lucky.

"I honestly don't know if it has completely hit me yet," he said.

Bassak's doctor told him chances are low that someone with a cardiac arrest treated outside of a medical facility would have no lasting effects. Bassak's chances were greater because an AED was available.

After he was revived, Bassak was taken by ambulance to St. Joseph's Hospital in Marshfield

where he was equipped with an internal defibrillator. The machine, which is no larger than a small cell phone, monitors Bassak's heart rhythm and paces or shocks the heart as necessary. He was released from the hospital Saturday.

Bassak, who is originally from Chippewa Falls, was back to work as Baldwin-Woodville's band teacher on Tuesday. He said he didn't have time after being revived to thank the people who came to his rescue. The Folstads didn't even know his name.

"I thank the people that were there and helped," Bassak said. "I'm very lucky that all of those people were there. I'm lucky to be telling the story."

The Folstads said it was just part of their training.

"Your training just kind of kicks in," Julie Folstad said. "It's just something based on being in the medical field — you just respond."

John Folstad agreed.

"It's always a good feeling to know that you helped someone," he said.