Fayetteville officer saves woman from overdose By Paul Woolverton Posted Feb 7, 2019 at 5:07 PM Updated Feb 7, 2019 at 5:27 PM

Police and emergency medical personnel treat a woman with an apparent opioid overdose shortly after 11 a.m. Thursday in the parking lot of the Hardee's restaurant on Skibo Road at Raeford Road. [Contributed photo by William Murehead Sr.] ▲

A Fayetteville police sergeant saved the life of a woman who was suffering from a drug overdose Thursday morning, according to the Police Department and an eyewitness account.

The incident happened about 11 a.m. in the parking lot of the Hardee’s restaurant on Skibo Road at Raeford Road. That’s when a car pulled in and a woman in the back seat fell out when the driver opened the door for her, said William Murehead Sr. Murehead said he was in the restaurant when he saw the car pull in and he ran outside to try to help the woman.

“She wasn’t breathing. Her face was blue,” Murehead said.

Sgt. Shawn Strepay, a police spokesman, said a 911 call for help was made at 10:58 a.m., and Sgt. Christopher Cody arrived in less than three minutes.

The woman appears to have overdosed on an opioid, Strepay said. One of the people with the woman had given her a dose of the naloxone anti-overdose medication, Strepay said, but it was not enough. Naloxone is a drug that blocks an opioid’s effects and prevents the victim from dying.

Strepay said some people who abuse opioid drugs buy naloxone to have it ready in case they need it. Fayetteville police officers carry it to help overdose victims.

Cody gave the woman more naloxone, Strepay said, but it still wasn’t enough. Cody also gave the woman cardiopulmonary resuscitation, Murehead said, until her breathing returned.

Emergency medical personnel arrived and gave the woman more naloxone, Strepay said. She recovered, declined further medical treatment and left, Strepay said.

Murehead said he hopes that Cody gets recognition for his effort.

Opioid overdoses have become so common in Fayetteville that the Police Department began equipping its officers with Narcan brand naloxone in 2015. A recent report says “the department has had 173 individuals that were administered a Narcan injection and the resulting injection saved their life.” Some Fayetteville firefighters began carrying naloxone in 2018.

Staff writer Paul Woolverton can be reached at pwoolverton@fayobserver.com or 910-486-3512.