

Herald Sun

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Death spurs defibrillator donation

- by: **Conor Ryan**
- From: **Leader**
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NO football club is immune to the tragic accidents that can result from the intensity of Australian rules football.



(L-R) Phil Randall from Heathmont Lions Club, Heathmont Football Club President Rob Parker, Peter Ewing from Heathmont Lions Club and Heathmont Cricket Club President Jamie Rudge with the new defibrillator. Picture:

Josie Hayden

Source: Leader

But, thanks to a little community intervention, Heathmont Football Club will be better prepared than most to deal

with health emergencies and potentially save lives.

The Jets have received a heart defibrillator, donated by Heathmont Lions Club.

The donation comes just two months after Heathmont's Division 4 rivals Silvan suffered the death of 22-year-old Vincent Bonanno during a pre-season practice match.

Lions club treasurer Peter Ewing said the tragedy had spurred his club to act.

"I heard the tragic news of the young lad who died earlier this year and wanted to do something. I'm a long-standing Heathmont man; one of my sons even played football down there years ago.

"I thought I'd ring the football club to find out if they happened to have one, which seems to be an integral part of making sure things were as safe as they could be."

The Lions club, after talks with the football club, decided to donate the full amount for the vital piece of equipment: about \$2500.

Heathmont Football Club president Rob Parker said the offer had come out of the blue because the two clubs did not have much of a previous relationship.

"They rang us and asked if the club had one. We said no, and they said they wanted to put a proposal to us to fund one for us," he said.

"We had some discussions with them, as to how it would be used, where it would be located and to see whether the other clubs in the area could use it as well.

"We had talked previously about getting one for the club, even prior to this year, but I guess with the cost of \$2500-3000, like most clubs, it's pretty hard to find those sorts of funds."

The portable defibrillator will be located in Heathmont's H.E. Parker Reserve pavilion all year long, except for the Jets' away games, allowing the cricket club access to it.

The small Heathmont Lions Club has donated some \$25,000 this year alone to organisations such as Eastern Health, the Salvation Army and to flood relief.

Mr Ewing said he hoped the two Heathmont institutions would continue to work together.

"I'm sure this will help develop a relationship between the clubs, which is good. They're assisting youth and we do a lot of that too."

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