



Coach, student, and neighbor come together to save man

September 17th, 2008 @ 10:01pm

By Sam Penrod

A man who suffered a heart attack yesterday morning in Delta is recuperating tonight in the hospital. There's a good chance he would not have survived had he not been across the street from the high school.

Delta High school's health teacher, who is also the head football coach, calls it a team effort. He says a passerby, a neighbor, one of his running backs and the EMT's are all a part of this story, and it's giving him a textbook example of why students should learn CPR.

Mr. Smith, who lives across the street from the high school, was working in his yard when he suffered a heart attack. Russell Henrie, the Delta High School football coach, said, "Just got done teaching health when a lady came into my classroom and said, 'There's a man that just had a heart attack across the street. Come quick, help.'"

Henrie saw one of his players, Michael Hatch, in the hall and told him to get the defibrillator. "Coach Henrie told me to run in and grab the defibrillator out of the office, and I ran and grabbed it," Hatch said.

Hatch ran the life-saving device across the street, just like he was on his way to scoring a touchdown. By then a neighbor had already started CPR, and Henrie started operating the defibrillator. The machine instructed them on how to use it. "I was glad to hear that. You just turn it on, and it tells you what to do," Henrie said.

The machine found no pulse and advised a shock. After two shocks and more CPR, the ambulance arrived. Mr. Smith was rushed to the hospital and regained consciousness before being airlifted to Provo.

Henrie hopes this story will teach everyone the importance of CPR, knowing about defibrillators and having the courage to use one. "The teamwork, everything falling into place for this man at the right time, it was neat to see," he said.

It's an experience that will change his perspective when he teaches CPR in the future. "I've taught it a million times, but never had to do it, and I finally got to see it in action, and it works. I'll be able to get a lot of mileage out of this story. I'll use this for the rest of my career," he said.

In fact, Coach Henrie took all of his students in the health classes today on a tour of the school, showing them where all three defibrillators are located, in the office, weight room and gym, just in case one is ever needed again.

E-mail: spenrod@ksl.com