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Saint Clair Police Department receives donation of 5 lifesaving devices from Carlisle-based foundation

By Frank Andruscavage Staff Writer

SAINT CLAIR — The Saint Clair Police Department has accepted five new automated external defibrillator units from the Carlisle-based Nicholas Ryan Over Foundation.

Saint Clair Police Chief William Dempsey said the units are Zoll Cardiac Science Powerheart G5 models valued at \$2,000 each, or \$10,000 for all five.

Dempsey said one unit will be placed inside the police station and in each department patrol vehicle.

The fifth unit will be dedicated to the borough's pool.

"This donation will allow us to now place a dedicated AED at the Saint Clair Community Pool to be used in the event of a cardiac emergency," the chief said. "Since we have the opportunity, we thought we would put a good tool in a good place." Dempsey said he came across the foundation on the internet, made contact and began the process of obtaining the AEDs. "I reached out to them. They asked what our goals were and took my request under consideration," Dempsey said. "They then decided to provide us with the units."

Dempsey said CPR and AED lessons are part of the normal training mandated for police officers, so no additional instruction will be needed to use the devices.

The units were delivered and presented to the department on Tuesday by George "Skip" Over, co-founder of the Nicholas Ryan Over Foundation along with his wife, Cristal.

The two started the organization in memory of their son, Nicholas, who died April 8, 2001, at the age of 20. While attending Thompson Institute where he was studying to be a computer technician, Nicholas died in his sleep due to a cardiac arrest. The cause of death was an undiagnosed heart condition called arrhythmogenic right ventricular dysphasia. At the time of his death, Nicholas was seemingly healthy.

Over said that the foundation is in its 20th year. He said it would have been its 21st year, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was set back from a year of fundraising.

The foundation donates between five and 10 AED units each year, Over said, one year giving 10 units to the Lower Paxton Twp. Police Department in Dauphin County.

It has also given units to organizations such as youth soccer leagues, Little Leagues and softball associations.

The units' purchase was made possible through fundraisers conducted by the foundation — a dinner and silent auction and a golf tournament.

Having a police department equipped with AED units is a tremendous asset, Over said, since officers are usually on duty 24 hours a day and can get to the scene of a medical emergency faster than EMS units.

"If they have the equipment, they can possibly save lives, especially when every minute counts," he said.

Over added that Saint Clair plans on going one step further than just having the units on hand for emergencies. Dempsey plans on getting at least two members of his department certified to instruct people.

"He is going to offer free classes to anyone in town who wants to learn," Over said.

He said he hopes people take advantage of that training when it becomes available.

"After all, who wouldn't want to save a life," Over said.