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New device made Hendershot's dream of organ donation possible

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HAGERSTOWN - Many are aware that N. Linn Hendershot left a rich legacy for anyone coping with a disability, but few know it was truly a living legacy.

Seven organs were harvested from the community activist and former Hagerstown City Council member after his May 1 death. The organ donations were made possible with the help of a new piece of lifesaving equipment - the EZ-IO - demonstrated to Hendershot on April 29, the day he fell ill.

"Later that very day, we used it for the first time, on Linn," Community Rescue Service Assistant Chief Dave Hays said.

The device uses a drill to insert a needle into a person's bone just above the ankle, establishing a means to deliver fluids and/or medication in an emergency, Hays said.

While it wasn't able to preserve Hendershot's life, use of the device enabled the CRS crew to get him to the hospital fast enough that his organs remained viable and could be harvested, according to Terry Trovinger, CRS chief financial officer.

"It was Linn's wish," Trovinger said of organ donation.

The "EZ IO", an intraosseus device, allowed paramedic J.P. Miller, of the Community Rescue Service in Hagerstown, left, to administer fluid and medications to help sustain the life of N. Linn Hendershot until he reached the hospital. Hendershot was instrumental in getting the device for the Community Rescue Service. Also on the rescue call were EMT-B Steve Pifer, center, and Capt. Jeremy Mackrell. (Credit: By Kelly Hahn Johnson / Staff Photographer)



N. Linn Hendershot (Credit: /)

Cynthia Perini, Hendershot's niece, said the organ donations and her uncle's strong desire to help others came as no surprise to the family.

"It was a sincere illustration of what Linn was all about," Perini said. "He truly walked the walk."

Trovinger and Hays visited Hendershot at his Western Maryland Hospital Center office on the morning of April 29.

They were there to ask Hendershot to lend his support for additional funding for the new West End CRS station before the Hagerstown City Council, a body on which Hendershot once served.

"The city usually gives us \$75,000 a year," Trovinger said. CRS hoped to get at least \$100,000 with Hendershot's help.

That morning, Hays and Trovinger also mentioned to Hendershot that CRS needed contributions to purchase additional EZ-IOs at a cost of about \$720 each for the drill and two adult and two pediatric needles. Ten would be needed to put one in each CRS vehicle, Hays said.

"Linn wanted one of these on every ambulance," Trovinger said.

CRS personnel who worked on Hendershot and took him to Washington County Hospital the evening of April 29 were paramedic J.P. Miller, EMT Steve Pifer and Capt. Jeremy Mackrell.

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