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Athletic club saves man's life

For the second time in a little over a year a quick-thinking worker at a Superior Athletic Club saved a heart attack victim's life using an emergency defibrillator.

A man in his 50s collapsed early Friday on a racquetball court at the fitness center on Cardley Avenue in Medford.

Michelle Gordon was working the front desk when a man approached her seeking help. She gave the man a trauma bag containing the automated external defibrillator (AED) and called 9-1-1, said club manager Dee Gillen.

The man soon returned, saying the victim had stopped breathing. Gordon then sprung into action, Gillen said.

"She was helped by two club members," Gillen said. "Michelle applied the pads and they were able to deliver the shock that saved him."

The man's identity was not available at press time. Fortunately for him, the two members who helped him happened to be a firefighter and a nurse.

In November 2005, a similar incident occurred at the Superior Athletic Club on Barnett Road. A woman collapsed during a racquetball game and was saved by a club employee who knew how to use an AED.

"The AEDs cost only around \$2,000, but are so worth it," Gillen said.

Superior Athletic Club has AEDs in place in all three of its locations. Employees are trained how to use them during a heart saver course they attend.

Gordon and the two club members will receive American Heart Association awards.

Gillen said Oregon has no law mandating that fitness clubs are equipped with AEDs. She hopes the Legislature does something about that soon.

"More and more states are requiring them," Gillen said. "I'd like to see Oregon move that way."

