18 November 2015

DonateLife Thank You Day and James Ackerman Memorial Race Day

The James Ackerman Memorial Race Day on Sunday 22 November at the Sunshine Coast Turf Club will coincide with the inaugural DonateLife Thank You Day.

DonateLife Thank You Day is a day for all Australians to acknowledge organ and tissue donors. James Ackerman died in June after a football accident and his family honoured his wish to become an organ and tissue donor.

For James’s family, Sunday will be a day of mixed emotions.

“We are so proud of James not only with his achievements in life but also the gift of life he gave others through organ and tissue donation,” James’s aunt, Kaylene Hart said.

The memorial race day will raise money for the James Ackerman Trust Fund which will help support his wife and two small children.

Kaylene said it was fate that the two occasions coincided.

“James saved the lives of many through donation and he also loved a punt so the fact that the two events have come together is very appropriate,” she said.

On DonateLife Thank You Day, Australians are encouraged to say thank you to the donors and their families that agreed to organ and tissue donation.

Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service donation specialist nurse Shona McDonald said the local community could show thanks by registering their donation decision on the Australian Organ Donor Register and ensuring their loved ones know and accept this decision.

Organ and tissue donation is the ultimate gift – just one organ and tissue donor can transform the lives of ten or more people.

“James’s story has touched many people not only in the local community but throughout Australia,” Ms McDonald said.

“DonateLife Thank You Day is a chance for us to honour not only James but the gift of life given by all organ and tissue donors and their families,” she said.

James’s family is keen to see that his legacy lives on and has invited DonateLife to have an information stall at the race day.
“We encourage everyone who attends the James Ackerman Memorial Race Day to go and have a chat with the DonateLife staff and sign on to the Australian Organ Donor Register,” Kaylene said.

For more information:
- Organ and tissue donation - www.donatelife.gov.au
- James Ackerman Memorial Race Day - www.sctc.com.au

ENDS

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