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Keeping fans safe a family affair

Most footy fans will already have planned what they're doing for next week's AFL Grand Final. As do three generations of the Crennan family, who will be reporting for duty at the MCG and preparing to deliver life-saving first-aid as volunteers for St John Ambulance.

John Crennan, a 68-year-old grandfather from Yarraville in Melbourne's west, will be volunteering at his 30th AFL/VFL Grand Final.

Joining him will be his 34-year-old daughter Jo-Anne and 14-year-old granddaughter Rachel, who serves as a cadet with St John.

Crennan is St John's MCG venue manager, responsible for rostering the 100 volunteers who will be on patrol next Saturday.

The Crennans will report for duty at 7am and won't hang up their hats until 12 hours later, by which point they each will have walked 10-15km.

Crennan has been a volunteer with St John for 52 years and is driven by the satisfaction of knowing he has helped people.

"The first-aid services St John provides significantly increases a person's chance of recovery," he explained.

"We'll have a team of highly trained volunteers stationed all around the stadium on Grand Final day, so regardless of whether someone needs a band-aid, paracetamol or more urgent life-saving attention, we'll only ever be a minute away."

During the 1959 Grand Final between Melbourne and Essendon, a baby was born in the MCG stands with St John cadet Terry King the first person on site to lend a hand.

St John has been operating at the MCG for about 95 years. It runs several first-aid rooms and equips and staffs 12 tailor-made buggies that can respond to incidents on the concourses and areas immediately surrounding the ground.

Crennan added: "What a lot of people don't realise is that St John is a community-funded organisation that relies fully on the support of the Victorian community to continue operating."

St John is always on the lookout for first-aid volunteers to provide support at the MCG, Etihad Stadium and a range of other major events and community activities around the state.

Anyone interested in volunteering for St John should visit stjohnvic.com.au.

THE bounce

Northern Territory Thunder and Ainslie to play in inaugural North East Australian Football

ST JOHN AMBULANCE

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IN THE FAMILY:The Crennan family's involvement with St John Ambulance stretches three generations—from left, Rachel, John and Jo-Anne.

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