

Is the Iowa "Brain Drain" Over?

Written by Joe Collins

Tuesday, 03 October 2000 18:00

Iowa's "brain drain" might be a thing of the past, according to recent statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau. Estimates show Iowa now ranks 37th among the states and the District of Columbia in the percentage of population with a bachelor's degree, up from 42nd 10 years ago. People with a bachelor's degree accounted for 21.7 percent of the state's population in 1999, up from 17.6 percent in 1991. Iowa continues to rank high in the percentage of population over 25 with a high-school diploma, ranking seventh, up from 17th in 1991.

A new NASA instructional resource center has opened its doors to Iowa educators as well as those in nearby Nebraska and South Dakota. The center will provide access to NASA expertise and educational materials in science, math, and technology. Located at the Western Hills Education Agency in Sioux City, Iowa, it is the first such center to be located in a regional educational-service agency and not a university. NASA's Marshall Field Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama, picked the agency through a competitive application process resulting in a two-year renewable agreement between the agency and NASA. You can see what new resources are available by looking at (<http://www.aea12.k12.ia.us/rerc/welcome.html>). More NASA-related resources can be easily accessed through the Marshall Field Space Flight Center's Web site at (<http://www1.msfc.nasa.gov/>).

The Planned Parenthood Clinic in Bettendorf began offering abortion services last week. On September 27, the clinic performed seven abortions. Clinic officials said they plan to have a doctor perform the procedure two days a month. The clinic also offers services such as annual exams, pregnancy testing, birth control, and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, as well as adoption services.

It's the end of the Congressional legislative session and proponents of Internet filtering are trying to stuff their legislation through Congress. The "Children's Internet Protection Act," sponsored by Senator John McCain (R-AZ) and Representative Ernest Istook (R-OK) would require all public schools and libraries receiving federal funding for Internet access to install Internet blocking software on their computer terminals. More information on Internet filtering, including ways to properly express your opinion to the right people on this current legislation, can be found at the Web site of the Internet Free Expression Alliance at (<http://www.ifea.net>).

The race for mayor in East Moline is starting to become interesting with a second Democrat announcing his candidacy. Lieutenant Bobby Ellis, a 25-year veteran of the East Moline Police Department, will face 3rd Ward Alderman Joe Moreno in the February primary. Ellis pledges he will fill the plant being vacated by Case New Holland and allow the issue of a merger with Moline to die. Current Mayor Bill Ward has announced he does not plan to seek re-election.

U.S. Senator Charles Grassley (R-IA) has introduced a bill authorizing federal trial and appeals courts to allow trials and oral arguments to be captured on film and recorded on audio tape for broadcast. The judges who sit on the Judicial Conference, which establishes federal court policy, oppose the bill despite a 1995 study they conducted that concluded cameras would have little, if any, effect on courtroom decorum. One of the judges' biggest concerns is a repeat of the media circus surrounding the O.J. Simpson trial. However, cameras have been allowed in Iowa courtrooms for 20 years under strict rules set by the Iowa Supreme Court, including leaving the final decision to the trial judge.

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A \$530,000 grant from the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust in Muscatine will help create a new laboratory in Ames to make computers stronger and faster. Awarded to researchers David Jiles and John Snyder, the money will be used to create a lab for magnetoelectronics, a combination of magnetics and microelectronics, a new technology to create more data-storage on computers. The Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust awards grants of more than \$14 million a year to support scientific research, scholarships, and education. You can find out more by visiting the Trust's Web site at (<http://www.carvertrust.org/>).

The system to notify Iowans that a high-risk sex offender has moved into their neighborhood is bogged down with hundreds of unprocessed cases. The delays have allowed many convicted child molesters to move into apartment complexes without warning to nearby residents, as required by law. As many as 2,400 cases among the 37,000 on the registry of sex offenders haven't been accessed or reported. The state's Department of Public Safety has been completely overwhelmed: Of the 60 cases the staff receives each month for processing, only 40 actually are.

Quad City Bank and Trust is supporting classroom teaching through its \$5,000 Expanding Horizons Program. This is the second year for the program, which funds projects exposing students to the arts, communication fields, and elective-course material. Expanding Horizons grants are available to all public and private not-for-profit schools in Rock Island, Moline, East Moline, Davenport, Bettendorf, and Pleasant Valley for teachers of grades 6 through 12. Applications are available through each school's principal or by contacting Paula Weaver, community banking officer, at (319)388-5433, extension 249. All applications must be postmarked by October 31, 2000.