

Cities Unveil New Web Pages

Written by Joe Collins

Tuesday, 17 October 2000 18:00

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The City of Davenport, with a great deal of fanfare, showed off its new Web page. It took 10 months at a cost of \$30,000 and has 1,200 pages of information on everything you ever wanted to know about Davenport, including schedules, events, government, news, contacts, and much more. You can see it for yourself at (<http://www.cityofdavenport iowa.com>). And while not as fancy, the City of Rock Island has also put up a new Web site at (<http://www.rigov.org>) that contains everything you'd like to know about the City of Rock Island, including online employment applications, contacts, events, news, and more.

An advisory group for the Iowa Department of Public Health has said that access to automated external defibrillators (AEDs) – small, portable devices that use an electrical shock to restore a regular heartbeat – should be more widely available across the state. AEDs use voice commands to instruct the rescuer how to hook the machine up to a heart-attack victim and then checks for a pulse and shocks if necessary. A few dozen machines have been purchased throughout Iowa, with most of them placed in police cars and the rest at shopping malls and in workplaces. The advisory group stopped short of saying the state should buy the machines, which cost up to \$5,000 each. The state has also erased training requirements for agencies wanting to buy AEDs, reducing it from a three-hour training

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three times a year to one three-hour session.

 Iowa is one of 32 states that might lose millions in federal highway funds if it doesn't make a .08 percent blood-alcohol level the standard for drunk driving. Congress is currently considering a bill to strip funds from states without the stringent standard. The legislation could be in President Clinton's hands by the time you read this. State's rights advocates and representatives of the liquor industry call it blackmail. Supporters say the bill could save as many as 500 lives each year. Iowa could lose \$19.1 million a year in federal highway funds if it doesn't bow to the pressure. By the way, Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ), who sponsored the bill requiring states to raise the legal drinking age from 18 to 21 or risk the loss of federal highway funds, sponsored this bill as well.

 The infamous "truck-eating bridge" at Harrison and 5th Street might soon go on a diet if a new system being installed by the Iowa Department of Transportation works as planned. Oversized vehicles will break light-beam signals placed between 11th and 12th streets and 6th and 7th streets, and trigger flashing warning signs telling the drivers that their trucks are too big to fit under the bridge. The system, which cost \$103,000, should be installed by the end of October. The system is only a temporary solution to the problem, which will only be solved if the railway bridge is raised. On average, one truck a month slams into the low-hanging railway bridge.

 A recent study whose results were published in the October issue of Pediatrics shows that heavy cigarette use by adolescents is not necessarily the result of depression. However, adolescents who smoke are at an almost four-fold risk of developing high-level depressive symptoms. Other social factors predicted progression to heavy smoking, including previous experimentation with tobacco products, poor school performance, peer tobacco use, more frequent use of alcohol, and parental reports of bad temper. The effect of smoking on the development of depression might be attributable to the impact of nicotine or other smoking byproducts on the central nervous system. Other researchers have linked smoking with teen suicide and adult depression, but they disagree whether tobacco use is a cause or merely the result of a depressed state.

 A new intensive-care center should be opening by the end of the month at Trinity's West Campus. The new center, which will replace the unit on the seventh floor, includes a 17-bed trauma center; an 11-bed cardiac-treatment center; a nine-bed, private-room surgical intensive-care unit; a 24-hour pharmacy; and a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scanner. The new unit also places all cardiac services on one floor and will be tied in with a cardiac-catheterization lab that opened in August, and two open-heart surgical suites that opened in March.

 VoteHemp, a not-for-profit advocacy group devoted to deregulation of industrial-hemp agriculture, has published a voter guide publicizing the positions of all candidates for Congress and the presidency, including Democrats, Republicans, Libertarians, and Greens. Visit (<http://www.votehemp.com>) to see how your candidates stack up. You can also get information on voter registration and how to get involved in the VoteHemp campaign. VoteHemp is currently distributing its literature on college campuses and to natural-food stores. For further information, contact Lloyd Hart of VoteHemp at (508)693-5992.

 The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is delaying completion of its study of a proposed lock expansion along the upper Mississippi River. The delay comes after new data showed barge-traffic demand for the past few years was lower than predicted. This new data lends support to a whistleblower who claimed the corps skewed an economic study in favor of the \$1 billion-plus lock expansion. The corps had hoped the study would be completed by the end of the year, but has pushed it back to March 2002.

 The River Cities' Reader has established a direct way to contact me via e-mail at (cityshorts@rcreader.com). All comments, ideas, suggestions, and, yes,

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criticisms are welcome. If you don't use the Web, you can get in touch with me via the River Cities' Reader's phone or fax numbers, or by sending a note to the paper's street address.