

LeClaire Ambulance Shut Down by State

Written by Joe Collins

Tuesday, 16 January 2001 18:00

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The story of LeClaire Ambulance took a recent twist when the service's supervisor of operations quit after the company was shut down by the State of Iowa for failing to comply with an agreement with the Iowa Department of Public Health's Bureau of Emergency Medical Services.

The state claims LeClaire Ambulance left its district uncovered, ironically, while attending a meeting in Davenport on how to improve response time in Scott County. Because of the meeting, an ambulance's response time to a woman suffering a heart attack was extended, and the woman died. The suspension follows the recent downgrading of LeClaire Ambulance's capabilities from Paramedic Service to Basic Service by its medical director, Dr. Ann Kandis. LeClaire has already appealed the suspension, a process that could take 30 days or more to complete. Medic EMS will be handling EMS calls in LeClaire's territory from its Bettendorf and Eldridge posts. Some of the players involved in this have interesting Web sites, including the Iowa Department of Public Health's Bureau of Emergency Medical Services, which can be found at (<http://www.idph.state.ia.us/pa/ems/default.htm>).

A campaign has been launched to raise \$3.75 million for a major self-improvement and marketing program in Davenport. Called the D1 Initiative, the program to be implemented by DavenportOne, a business organization formed last year by the consolidation of the former Davenport Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Davenport Association, Downtown Davenport Development Corporation, Davenport Central City Partnership, and Rejuvenate Davenport. The D1 Initiative will pay for programs aimed at business attraction and retention, downtown redevelopment, coordination with elected and appointed government officials, effective lobbying in Des Moines, educational programs, community marketing and image campaigns, and the development of future community leaders. The campaign hopes to attract 5,000 new jobs by 2004, as well as up to a 5-percent annual increase in the city's property value and sales-tax base. Fundraising for the project is expected to end by May, with much of the money expected to come from the business community.

Students hoping to receive financial assistance from the state to attend an Iowa private college should begin the application process for an Iowa Tuition Grant (ITG) as soon as possible. Each year, the ITG program has a limited pool of funds to be dispersed as grants to qualified Iowa high-school seniors demonstrating a financial need and planning to attend an Iowa private college. Grants are available for all four years of college, with awards of \$4,000 for

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full-time students and pro-rated awards for part-time students. The earlier students apply, the more likely they are to receive an award. The best place to get started on the process is by pointing your Web browser to the Iowa College Student Aid Commission at (<http://www.iowacollegeaid.org>). Other funding resources can also be found on this Web site.

The Iowa State Troopers Association is offering refunds to its financial supporters because of untrue claims that 100 percent of the money would be spent “helping Iowa troopers protect you, the law-abiding citizen.” All donations made in response to the more than 285,000 fundraising letters were routed to an out-of-state, for-profit company hired by the troopers. None of the money was given to the troopers. To obtain a refund of a donation made to the Iowa State Troopers Association through its direct-mail campaign, call (877)948-7667.

The National Taxpayers Union points out that while President-elect George W. Bush has indicated he might be willing to end the federal government’s three-year antitrust case against Microsoft, 17 state attorneys general, including Iowa’s Tom Miller, have joined the federal lawsuit. Since the case was brought against Microsoft, the company has lost \$250 billion – resulting in a loss to the NASDAQ composite index of more than 2,000 points, the organization claims. The National Association of Attorneys General Web site (<http://www.naag.org>) says that multi-state lawsuits are “now an integral part of the way that state attorneys general fulfill their role.” By the way, Miller claims he has spent 812 hours – almost half a year of 40-hour weeks – in pursuit of Microsoft.

On January 1, Iowa law-enforcement officers began using new crash-reporting forms. Included on the form is an expanded area describing driver distractions, including cell phones and other electronic gear, passengers, fallen objects (such as a cigarette dropped on the floor), and fatigue or sleep. The goal is to provide better, more complete data about motor-vehicle collisions, as there is growing concern about driver distractions – especially cell-phone use. Previous versions of the form had no place to list cell-phone use as a possible cause of a crash. Iowa is now the eighth state to track the role of cell phones and other electronic distractions in crashes.

Vermont State Representative Fred Maslack recently proposed a bill to register people who don’t own guns and require them to pay a \$500 fee to the state. Under the bill, adults who choose not to own a firearm would be required to register their name, address, Social Security number, and driver’s license number with the state. “There is a legitimate government interest in knowing who is prepared to defend the state should they be asked to do so,” Maslack says. Vermont already boasts a high rate of gun ownership along with the least restrictive laws of any state; it’s currently the only state that allows a citizen to carry a concealed firearm without a permit. Vermont’s crime rate is the third lowest in the nation.

The Bettendorf Public Library has received a \$3,000 grant from Humanities Iowa for the Poem/Art Odyssey. This is a long-term multimedia project that will take place from January 2001 through April 2002. It will begin with nationally renowned poet Robert Creeley writing a poem in January that will be illustrated by a local artist in February. In March, a local poet will write about the artwork. The project continues in that way all year long, culminating in a reception, art exhibit, and poetry reading featuring the six poems and six artworks on April 4,

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2002. Incidentally, April is National Poetry Month. The poets involved in the project are John Turner, Kathleen Lawless Cox, Robert Creeley, Shelly Moore Guy, Rebecca Wee, and Tracy Alan White. Artists involved in the program are Glenn Boyles, Ralph Iaccarino, Ryan Luke, Rachel Mullens, Sandra Turner, and Bruce Walters. The Library is matching the \$3,000 grant with cash and in-kind contributions.