

## A Variety of Flood Aid Available

Written by Joe Collins  
Tuesday, 08 May 2001 18:00

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- U.S. Bank and Firststar Bank will offer discounted loans to individuals in cities and surrounding communities of Moorhead, Minnesota; Fargo and Wahpeton, North Dakota; and Davenport, Iowa. The discounted loans, which will be available April 30 through May 18, are designed for customers who have flood-related expenses or who need to repair their homes because of the rising waters. There are two loans: an unsecured installment loan for short-term needs and a home-equity loan. Both carry reduced rates, and the first payment may be waived for up to 90 days. For more information, visit the banks' Web sites at (<http://www.usbank.com>) and (<http://www.firststar.com>).
- Ameritech customers displaced by the flooding can have their telephone calls from their homes or businesses forwarded to another number for free, or have access to free voice-mail services for one month. When customers return to their homes or businesses, Ameritech will provide free repair services to the primary phone lines that have been damaged by the flooding and will waive the standard charges to reconnect phone service. Residential customers in Illinois can arrange for the free service by calling (800)233-4444, while business customers can call (800)660-3000.
- Twelve-year-old Nick Borcharding from Davenport has been chosen as one of five national winners of VOYA's Teen Poetry Contest 2000. VOYA, or Voice of Youth Advocate, is a bi-monthly journal for librarians, educators, and other professionals who work with young adults. The Bettendorf Public Library sponsored a local poetry contest in December 2000 in which Borcharding's poem, "The Power of the Mind," was chosen and submitted to VOYA's national contest. Borcharding received a cash prize for winning the poetry contest and was published in the April 2001 issue of VOYA.
- Have some ideas as to how the State of Iowa could deliver more services via the Internet or other technology in this era of budget difficulties? Point your Web browser to (<http://www.info.state.ia.us/infopoll/surveys/s3.htm>) and fill out the short survey. The survey asks participants to describe their ideas on digital government applications and the potential benefits. Responses are anonymous, with the option of providing an e-mail address. A summary of responses will be posted on the Web site as they become available. Deadline for

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submitting surveys is May 12.

- If you drive on 17th Street in Rock Island after dark, note the new historically inspired streetlights. The lights were installed as a part of the 17th Street resurfacing project. Cost of the lights was \$124,000, with a total project cost of \$992,000.
- The Libertarian Party was kind enough to note that representatives from 190 governments are currently meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, to negotiate the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) – a multinational treaty designed to battle the “devastating” effects of tobacco. The conference, sponsored by the U.N.’s World Health Organization (WHO), is expected to result in a treaty that will call for dramatic increases in the cost of cigarettes to discourage smoking; severe restrictions on cigarette advertising; and perhaps multi-billion-dollar lawsuits against cigarette companies “responsible” for tobacco-related health problems. The WHO says it wants the FCTC ratified by U.N. member nations and in effect by 2003.
- The 6th Annual Mississippi Valley Young Writers Conference will be held Wednesday, June 6, at Augustana College’s Erickson Hall in Rock Island. This evening of writing, sharing, and learning is for youth ages 12 through 17. Registration begins at 6 p.m., and the last session ends at 9 p.m. A \$15 registration fee includes all learning and writing sessions, an orientation packet, a conference T-shirt, and snacks. All facilities are handicapped-accessible. For a registration form or more information, call Matthew or Pamela Clemens at (563)323-6014 or (800)642-9340, or e-mail [ChuckTwain@aol.com](mailto:ChuckTwain@aol.com). Deadline for registration is June 1.
- Over the next four to six weeks, 1,000 Scott and Rock Island county residents will be part of a telephone survey to help determine if Quad Cities-area residents approve of a new bridge between Bettendorf and East Moline, and if they approve of using sales taxes to pay for it. Conducted by the Public Opinion Laboratory of Northern Illinois University and overseen by the Bi-State Regional Commission, the survey is part of an effort seeking to improve Mississippi River crossing needs. Each questionnaire will take eight to 10 minutes. The survey was paid for by Moline, East Moline, Rock Island, Davenport, Bettendorf, and Scott and Rock Island counties, all of which contributed \$4,000 to fund the survey.
- In a 5-4 ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court recently ruled that people stopped for minor offenses punishable only by a fine, such as not using seatbelts or jaywalking, can be subject to arrest, including handcuffs, booking, and jail. At issue in the case, *Atwater v. Lago Vista*, was whether someone who is charged with a misdemeanor that is punishable only by a fine, not jail time, could be arrested and jailed prior to conviction at the sole discretion of a police officer. The case involved a Texas “soccer mom” who is white; but in its friend-of-the-court briefs, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) warned that giving the police such discretionary authority too often represents an open invitation to racial profiling of African American, Latino, and other minority motorists.