

If Ray signs utility reform bill

# ICC planning to expand staff

By John McCarroll  
Gazette Des Moines Bureau

DES MOINES — If Gov. Robert Ray signs into law a utility reform bill passed this year by the Iowa Legislature, the Iowa Commerce Commission plans to expand its professional rate-reviewing staff by nearly a third, a move the ICC has wanted to make for many years.

ICC Chairman Andrew Varley said last week that he plans to take advantage of a provision in the utility bill that would allow the ICC to hire as many new employees as it considers necessary to handle rate cases under a tighter review schedule mandated in the bill.

AT PRESENT, the ICC has 23 lawyers, accountants and economists who handle the intensive analysis of requested utility rate hikes. Robert Holletz, the ICC's executive secretary, said with Ray's signature on the bill, the ICC would seek another 11 persons for the professional positions plus three persons to handle support jobs.

Varley and his predecessor,



Andrew Varley

Maurice Van Nostrand, had sought additional professional staffers at the ICC to keep up with the increasing number of complex rate cases facing the agency, but Varley said with the new rate review schedule included in the legislation, hiring additional staff will be mandatory.

Under existing law, when utilities request ICC approval for a rate increase they usually begin within 120 days collecting it from consumers, under bond. If the ICC rules against the increase — or as is more

usually the case, decides to permit only a portion of it — the money collected from consumers in excess of that amount is refunded to them.

The bill Ray is expected to sign into law would allow the ICC to grant an interim increase, and require it to act on the request within 10 months of its filing. If it did not act within that time, the portion of the increased rates the ICC allowed on an interim basis would become permanent and the remainder of the increase could be collected by the utility under bond, subject to refund to customers.

Varley said in an interview that he didn't know whether Ray would leave in the bill the open-ended provision for the ICC to hire more staff members, but he said if Ray vetoes that section, the ICC will be forced to seek permission to hire more help.

Under state law, Iowa's regulated utilities are assessed a fee for the cost of rate reviews conducted by the ICC, and that includes the cost of the professional employees. Hol-

etz estimated that the 11 employees Varley wants to hire would cost the utilities \$282,000 a year.

THE ICC, unlike most other utility-regulating agencies in other states, doesn't operate under any deadline for acting on rate increase requests. Both consumer groups and utilities have complained that the average 22 months it has taken for a final decision from the ICC on rate cases is too much time.

The bill approved by the Legislature, at least according to its defenders, would prevent the extended rate reviews by allowing the ICC to implement temporary rate increases and then take as long as necessary to review the full rate filing.

After 10 months, if the ICC hasn't acted on the full rate, the temporary rates become permanent. It's that provision that many legislators and consumer groups say makes the legislation anti-consumer, pro-utility

• Turn to page 24A: ICC

## Linn shelter taking in 5,000 animals a year

The dogs clambered on top of each other, staying as far away from Pat Hubbard as possible. Their dark eyes peered at her from the far corner of the van as she plucked out the dogs one by one and placed them in a pen at the Linn County Humane Society's animal shelter.

Hubbard, executive director of the Humane Society, pulled 23 dogs from the rear of the van in less than 10 minutes. Each dog was thin to the bone, shaking with fright, and smelling like manure.

"This is a cruelty-to-animals case," she explained to this reporter, as we watched a shelter employee give some of the dogs a bath. "These dogs were being mistreated. This is one of the main purposes of the Humane Society, to help animals when they are in distress. It's the animals that always suffer."

THE HUMANE Society takes in about 5,000 unwanted animals



Dave Rasdal  
Gazette county reporter

a year. These 23 dogs — taken from one house in Manchester — definitely needed help. Not only did they look sickly, they were: They had skin and infectious diseases, and a veterinarian had determined that most of them had parasitic worms.

One of the dogs was dead on arrival, and eventually 21 of the dogs were euthanized (put to sleep) because their chances of a pleasant survival were not good and they could not be put up for adoption, Hubbard said.

According to James Ash, a Manchester police officer, the

• Turn to page 20A: Shelter

The Gazette

## Metro-Iowa

Cedar Rapids/Sunday, June 7, 1981

## Linn ambulance services growing

By Kurt Rogahn  
Gazette staff writer

Whether you live right between Mercy and St. Luke's Hospitals in the middle of Cedar Rapids or on a farm north of Walker, there's an ambulance service that serves you.

Six ambulance services cover zones in Linn County: Center Point, Central City, Palo, Mount Vernon/Lisbon, Anamosa and Area Ambulance (Cedar Rapids). Additionally, one service goes nearly everywhere — the Linn Sheriff's Department has a rescue van which provides backup advanced care to the ambulance services which cover rural Linn County areas.

Each ambulance service has mutual-aid pacts with neighboring counterparts in the event more ambulances are needed in a particular zone at a particular time. And seldom do arguments come up over who should respond to a particular call, because the county has been divided into geographical zones which each service covers.

IT'S SAFE to say that most ambulance attendants in Linn County are trained in advanced first aid and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation. But the ambulance companies vary as to the level of training above the "basics."

"They do a great job within the rural setting they serve in," said Tim Trosky, director of Area Ambulance in Cedar Rapids. "A lot of the time,

they don't get the credit they deserve, considering that they are volunteering their time and are unpaid."

In big cities or small, however, the philosophy behind ambulance service has shifted over the last 10 years. Years ago, ambulance attendants worked quickly to "load and go" — put the patients in the van and get them to a hospital.

Today, ambulance attendants stabilize a patient in the field, then transport. They do this quickly, but it can look slow to an anxious observer, according to several ambulance company sources.

Following are capsule descriptions of the rural ambulance companies and the service provided by the Linn Sheriff's Department.

### Linn Sheriff's Rescue

"Rescue 57" is usually manned by Sgt. Ted Beuter.

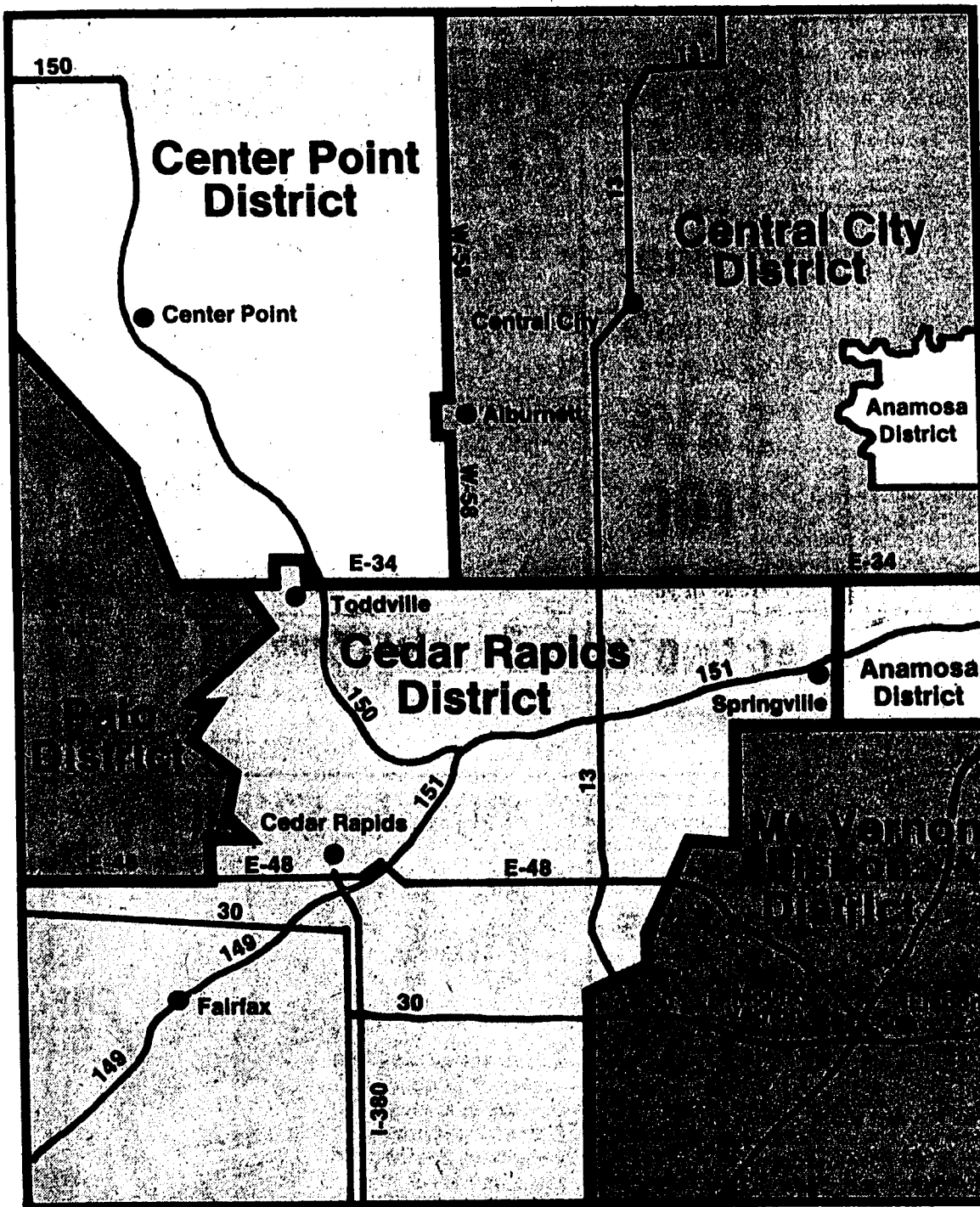
"The sheriff's rescue service assists local rescue services," Beuter said. "We do not transport... but we do bring equipment, and we can be another member of the team trying to help the patient."

Sheriff's Rescue, based in a garage in Hiawatha, responds to areas north and west of Cedar Rapids. Beuter is an EMT-II who is working toward a paramedic's classification.

Beuter defined the levels of training for ambulance personnel:

"An EMTA is your basic ambu-

• Turn to page 18A: Rescue services



## Area Ambulance: Shortage of units should be rare

By Kurt Rogahn

Even if he had two or three more ambulances than he has now, Area Ambulance Director Tim Trosky says there could be times when the service comes up short.

Are there enough ambulances? "I think so. The city hasn't really grown in 10 years, though the number of calls has gone up and studies show Iowa with among the highest populations of people over the age of 65."

With 42 staff members, six ambulances and six dispatchers, Trosky feels that shortages should be rare.

From 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily, three ambulances are staffed, with two to an ambulance. From 11 p.m. to 7 a.m., two are staffed. One crew stays up all night; on the other crew, one member stays up while the other sleeps. The remaining units are on standby, and Trosky can staff those in an emergency by calling in the necessary number of crew members.

"You can go without any calls at all in an eight-hour shift, or you could have 20 calls on an eight-hour shift and have the 20 calls spread out, and you'd have enough ambulances," Trosky said.

"Then again, we had a situation several months ago which you did a story on in which we had five calls in a half-hour," he recalled. "We had enough ambulances."

Though any decision is still a way off, Trosky does feel the ambulance service may have to put another crew on at night — making three ambulances available overnight rather than two.

"Our ambulance service is an EMT-II approved service," he explained. "On each two-

• Turn to page 18A: Area Ambulance



Tim Trosky

## Biking novice finds cause to become 'Uneasy Rider'

IOWA CITY — Last Sunday I was chased by a herd of cows, attacked by "killer dogs," and the water from my thermos leaked all over the cookies.

And then there was the forgotten mayonnaise to deal with.

What was I doing? No, I wasn't camping on farmland, irritating cows as a wild pack of dogs descended upon me.

I was out biking, seeing the sights of a small portion of Johnson County.

I am not a bike enthusiast. I am not even sure I qualify as an amateur bicyclist. I do not even own a bike.

But instead of whipping by the countryside in a car, I thought it would be nice to get on a bike and actually "experience" the back roads, perhaps get a friend to go along and have a picnic lunch at Coralville Lake.

After hearing my threats of blackmail and worse, my friend Peg said she would be delighted to go with me.

Packing a lunch in a backpack, we set off on our bikes, mine a borrowed 10-speed with a seat that refused to conform to the average rear, and Peg's a 15-year-old 3-speed, with a seat that tilted frontwards or backwards at its own discretion.

We headed up North Dubuque Street in Iowa City (old U.S. Highway 218) and found ourselves on an actual bike path.

The Coralville Lake bikeway is beautiful, when you are not trying to deal with cars. I thought the worst was over when we managed to get across the bridge overlooking Interstate 80, but 20 feet beyond we came to one of the very few hills that went down.

The hill must have a 45-degree slope on it and it comes right into a steel bridge, which has plenty of room for one car coming both



J. McCauley Flansburg  
Gazette Johnson County Bureau

directions. In this context, however, "plenty" means the cars were not in danger of shearing off the door handles if they drove an incredibly straight line.

Any extra room for a bicycle or two is questionable.

I don't really remember much of the bridge, except that I was travelling at least 80 mph (perhaps a slight exaggeration) when I went over the bridge with my eyes closed. Peg, being the far more safety-minded of the duo, was about a quarter of a mile behind, going at a slow speed.

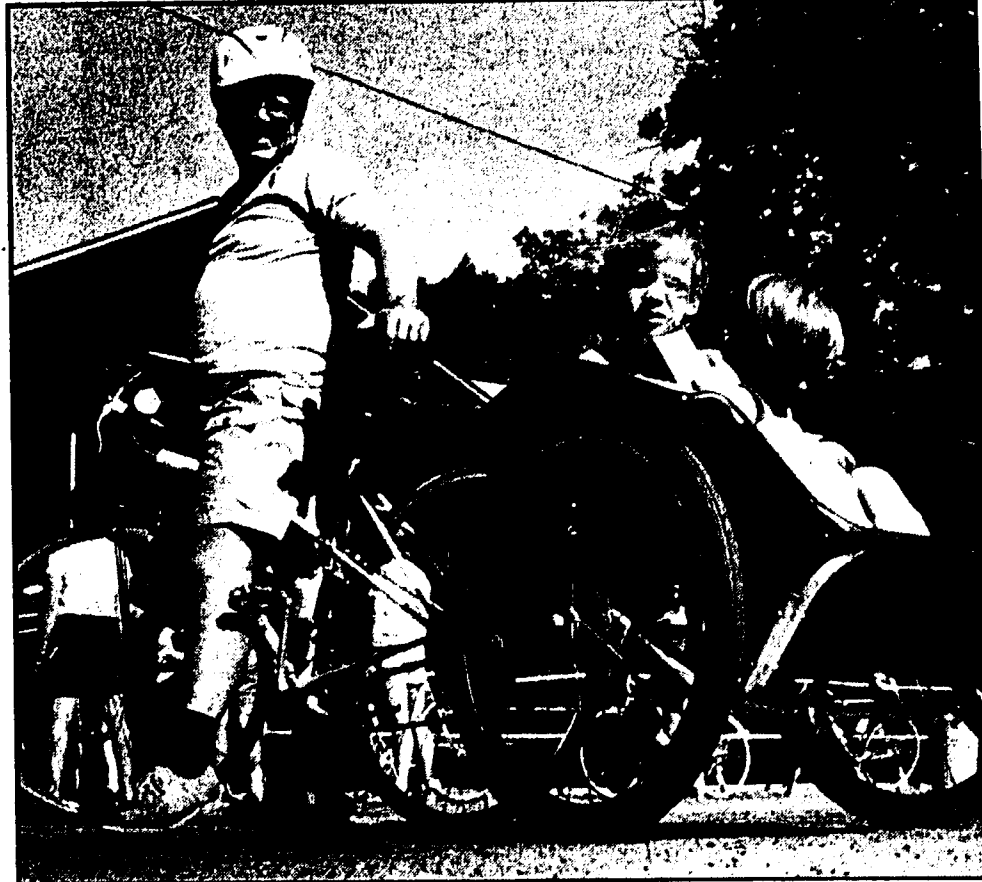
After the bridge, the bikeway moved off the road, where it was actually paved like a wide sidewalk. Just for bicycles. My kind of biking.

In a surprisingly short time, we wound up at Coralville Lake, and sat down in an unshaded area for lunch. We had a nice, quiet lunch, except for Peg's complaint about the lack of mayonnaise on her sandwich. When we were ready to leave, I decided we hadn't seen enough of the countryside yet, so I determined we were going to visit some friends who were rumored to be sunning somewhere at Lake Macbride.

Peg could hardly wait.

As we were leaving Coralville Lake, I asked a park attendant which way Macbride was, as well as the safest route for bikers. He pointed us in a

• Turn to page 24A: Bicycling

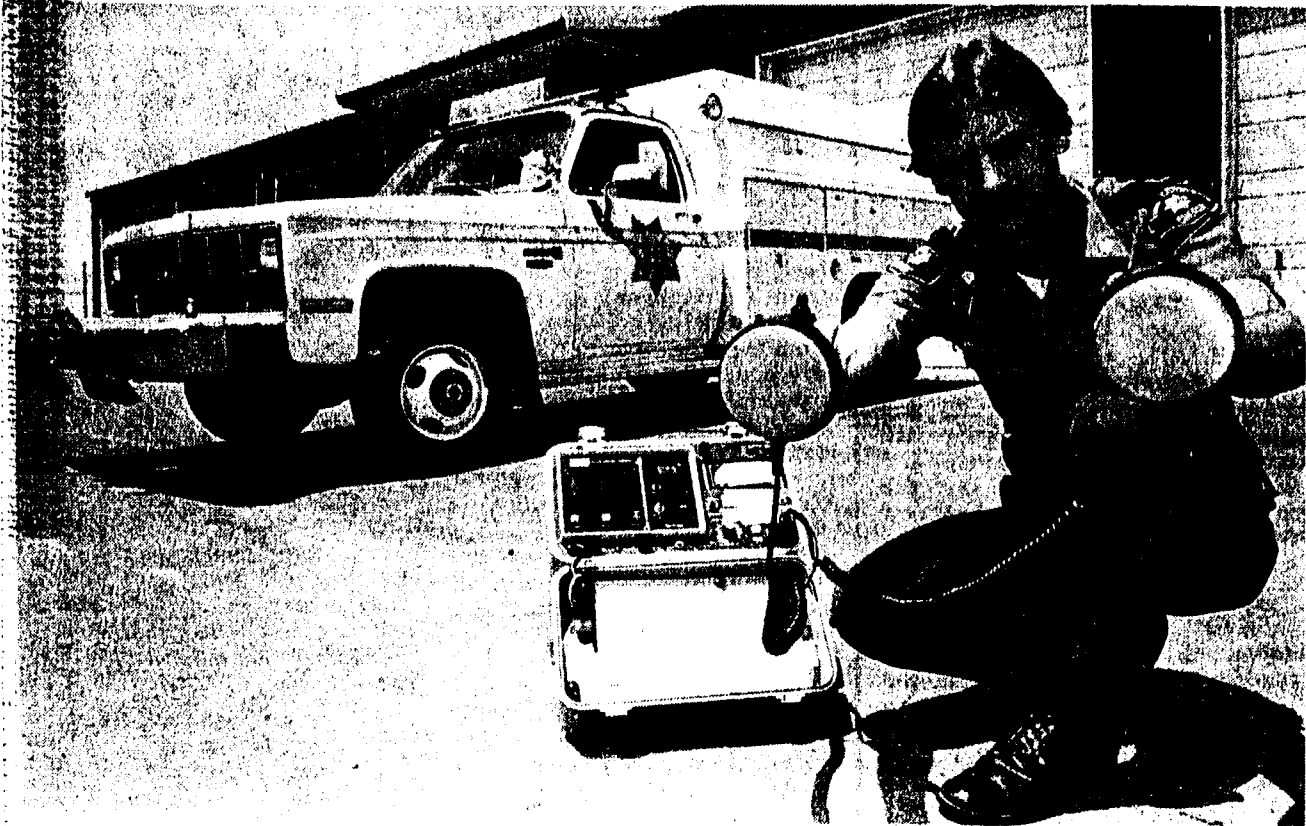


Gazette photos by John McIvor

## Off for a rendezvous

Bicycling enthusiast Ann Wilcox of Cedar Rapids (left) waits to leave Bever Park Saturday with other members of the Hawkeye Bicycle Association. Above, Neil Vauthrin of Cedar Rapids checks on his children, 5-year-old Jill and 2-year-old Jeremy, before starting a ride north to Alburnett to meet bicyclists coming south from Waterloo. Both groups are strong supporters of the "Rails to Trails" project which will convert former railroad rights-of-way to recreational trails linking Waterloo and Cedar Rapids.





Ted Beuter, one of the EMT-II's who mans the Linn County Sheriff's Rescue van, demonstrates a portable defibrillator that is used in some heart attack cases. The van — put in service just 30 days ago — was financed by donations to the Guy Heckle Search Fund, which helped pay for efforts to find the 11-year-old Boy Scout who disappeared from a February, 1973, campout in the Toddville area and has never been found. The Heckle case marked the sheriff's department's entry into search/rescue operations.

## From page 17A: Rescue services

lance attendant. The initials stand for Emergency Medical Technician-Ambulance. They have 120 hours of training, and they can do the advanced first aid and CPR, plus they can do splints, stop bleeding, and certain kinds of opening airways," Beuter said.

"An EMT-I is the next level. They can do IVs, treat shock, and do other kinds of opening airways," Beuter said.

"When you get into EMT-IIs, you can work with the cardiac defibrillator, administer drugs, and work with more IVs," Beuter said. They can also deliver babies.

Paramedics do all of the above, "plus they get into advanced cardiac care, treatment of trauma and advanced neo-natal care," Beuter said.

Besides Beuter, the Sheriff's Department has three other EMT-IIs and one EMT-I who is working for his EMT-II.

"I'm on 24-hour call, five days a week," Beuter said. "We average about 2½ calls a day."

Steve Zamastil of Palo Ambulance described how Rescue 57 fits in with Palo Ambulance, which is typical of the other rural ambulance services: "It's a three-tiered response system. If something happens out here, we're going to go first. We'll get there first. At the same time, the Sheriff's Rescue is going to go. In a life-threatening situation, he's got some of the drugs and some of the know-how we don't have." If something is more serious — "really life-threatening," Zamastil said, Area Ambulance from Cedar Rapids responds with its paramedics. "Or, we'll take off for the hospital (Palo Ambulance will transport) with Ted in the back."

When Sheriff's Rescue responds to rural areas covered by Palo, Center Point, and Central City, Sheriff's Department personnel are in charge and responsible for the patient until they reach the hospital, Beuter said.

In the areas where Area Ambulance provides initial backup to local services, such as in Mount Vernon-

Lisbon and in the Cedar Rapids-Marion-Hiawatha area, the Sheriff's Rescue team assists Area Ambulance teams, which are in charge, Beuter said.

### Central City

Central City Ambulance has one ambulance and seven attendants now, and it desperately needs volunteers, according to Lois Clarke, president of its board of directors.

An arm of Central City's city government, the ambulance service covers the northeast part of the county and is funded through its patient charges. Its dispatching is done by the Linn Sheriff's Department.

Each of its attendants is trained in first aid and CPR, and the company will pay for EMTA training if the volunteer passes the tests "and stays with it for a while," Clarke said.

Three of the seven attendants have EMTA training, Clarke said. Another volunteer, who doesn't have an EMTA rating, is a nurse, Clarke said. One of the seven attendants is about to go on maternity leave, Clarke said. "She likes the work, and she says she'll be back. But we need volunteers."

### Center Point

Operated as part of the volunteer Fire Department, Center Point's ambulance service covers the northwest part of Linn County with two units — one a modern "modular" unit and the other an older van.

Member Mike Peacock said donations and patient fees fund the service. All 29 Fire Department members participate in the service: 14 have EMTA training, two are EMT-I's, 12 have had advanced first aid training and the last member is a newcomer to the department who will take advanced first aid training soon, Peacock said.

"One of our members is a first aid instructor who's trained to teach CPR by the American Heart Association as well as the Red Cross," he added.

The department does its own fire and ambulance dispatching. "When

you dial our emergency number, the phone rings in 24 homes," Peacock said.

### Anamosa

Certain parts of eastern Linn County are covered by Anamosa's ambulance service. Ten volunteers staff two ambulances in this separately run city entity, according to Don Goodman, the ambulance service's manager.

Dispatched through the Sheriff's Departments in both Linn and Jones counties, two-thirds of the volunteers have had EMTA training and most are qualified in CPR, Goodman said. The service averages 30 calls a month.

### Mount Vernon/Lisbon

All 20 volunteers manning the two ambulances at Mount Vernon/Lisbon Ambulance have had EMTA training, according to Linda Halsey. Some of those EMTAS have also taken ERT (Emergency Rescue Training), but none are EMT-I's or IIs, Halsey said.

Funding comes from the cities of Mount Vernon and Lisbon, from patient billings, and from grants provided by the Southeast Iowa Emergency Medical Conference.

Dispatching is done through Area Ambulance's C-med dispatch.

### Palo

Sponsored by the 30-member volunteer Fire Department, Palo's ambulance service has one ambulance purchased last year, according to Fire Chief Steve Zamastil. Two or three attendants respond on each run, at least one of them being an EMTA or EMT-I, Zamastil said.

The service has two EMT-I's, seven EMTAS, and 4 ERT's (Emergency Rescue Technicians, one level below EMT-I), Zamastil said.

The service had 120 calls last year and 143 calls the year before. Palo Ambulance covers western Linn County and two Benton County townships, Fremont and Canton, which include the cities of Atkins and Shellsburg.

## Rapids Welcomes TONY SQUEO to the Chevy Team



It's a pleasure to have Tony selling with our team. Tony, his wife Kathleen, and three children; Lisa 15, David 14, & Eric 11, reside at 3625 Lawrence St. N.E.

Drawing upon 12 years of experience in the automobile business, Tony invites all his friends & customers to visit him at Rapids Chevrolet. If you're thinking of a new or used car or truck, come in and see Tony soon, or call him at 366-2753.

**Rapids Chevrolet**  
601 First Avenue Southeast 366-2753

## From page 17A: Area Ambulance

person team on an ambulance run, one is an EMT-II and the other is an EMT-I or trainee."

Just as he's sure Area Ambulance Service is adequately staffed, Trosky is an enthusiastic backer of central basing — that is, basing the ambulances at Mercy Hospital in central Cedar Rapids. (Some cities base ambulances at outlying fire stations rather than in a central location).

"There are several advantages to being based in the hospital," Trosky said. Response time is more even. Ambulance attendants work in Mercy Hospital when they're not on a run, providing them with more experience, and the hospital pays them for the time they work, which amounts to about 40 percent of their yearly salaries.

Trosky expanded on those points:

• **Response time.** The average response time within the limits of Cedar Rapids-Marion is 6 or 7 minutes, he said.

If, for example, three ambulances in Cedar Rapids were based in an east-side fire station, a west-side fire station and a central location and if three calls came from the same side of town within a short time, one of the three ambulances responding would end up with a long response time, Trosky said.

Because someone can suffer brain death within four minutes, the Cedar Rapids Fire Department also responds to medical emergencies when Area Ambulance feels its own response time won't be quick enough to save someone.

"The Fire Department responds out of nine locations," said Philip Bode, chief training officer for the Fire Department. "We average a response time of about three minutes from the time of the end of our radio dispatch to the arrival of our people at the scene."

Out of 2,336 alarms last year at the Fire Department, 687 (or 29.4 percent) were medical emergencies, Bode said. The 142 staff members each cover an average of four medical emergencies a year. They are trained in CPR and advanced first aid.

There was talk several years ago of training firefighters to the EMT level, Bode said. "But because of the quick response time by Area Ambulance and because of the logistics of the retraining needed to recertify EMTs each year, we chose not to get into EMT training," Bode said. Firefighters don't have the patient load necessary for recertification, he said.

"With EMT ratings, if you don't use it, you lose it," he continued, and recertification calls for time spent working in the hospital.

When firefighters respond, they stabilize the victim until ambulance crews arrive. The Fire Department does not transporting. But Fire Department engine companies responding on medical emergencies carry oxygen and resuscitators and other first aid equipment.

"I think we have the best system we can get for the money right here in Cedar Rapids," Bode said.

"For this particular setup, this system is excellent," Trosky agreed. "In New York City, this system isn't going to work, because there are inherent problems in

New York City that we don't face here."

Before this system was set up, the "save rate" in Cedar Rapids was less than one percent. "By 'save rate,' we're referring to someone with cardiac arrest — someone who's lifeless and pulseless when you get there — and getting them to the hospital alive," Trosky said. "Now, the save rate is anywhere from 15 to 18 percent."

That compares with a 22 percent save rate in Milwaukee, which has Fire Department paramedics stationed throughout the city, according to a recent Milwaukee Sentinel news story.

Trosky holds that the save rate would improve if more members of the general public knew CPR.

• **Experience.** "If you had ambulances based in outlying fire stations, you'd take away from the ongoing experience that they get in the hospital when not on call," Trosky said. "You can't beat the experience they get in the hospital."

• **Cost.** "Mercy Hospital pays about 40 percent of the attendants' salaries," Trosky said. "That 40 percent is based on the time they work in the hospital. If they spend 100 percent of their time out in the ambulance, well, then their time is charged to the ambulance service. January is our busiest time of the year, so the percentage of time charged to the ambulance service during that month is higher."

A third question has been the need for Area Ambulance to have its own dispatchers.

Trosky believes the need is clearly present. "We average about 5,000 calls per year," he said, emphasizing the strain that would be placed on someone else's dispatch center if they absorbed that many calls.

"Besides, all of our ambulance dispatchers are EMTs," he added. "And they're located in the hospital, so if a doctor is needed, one can be located right here and the doctor can talk on the radio right to the ambulance crew."

Furthermore, the dispatch center is connected to the statewide ambulance frequency, Trosky said, and the dispatch center contains the telemetry system needed for transmittal of medical information directly from medical instruments over the radio.

But Linn Sheriff Don Sawyer and other Sheriff's Department sources question whether the added radio equipment and phone lines and dispatchers' time is necessary. Linn County could do ambulance dispatching for the ambulance service and save the system money, Sawyer believes.

"It just makes sense that all communications should go through one system," Sawyer said. "That would be one of the advantages of a joint city-county law enforcement center as well. With one system, you can have one set of dispatchers and save on the number of dispatchers," Sawyer said. Communications between the various agencies also would improve, he said.

"But I don't want to sound as if I'm power-hungry, trying to take over someone else's territory," Sawyer said. "It's just that right now, we're doing the dispatching for Central City Ambulance and several police departments. The capacity for us to take on other dispatching services is already there."

The Gazette covers sports from baseball to bowling; boxers to golf; racing to rodeo

# MEN'S SHOE REMOVAL SALE! LAST WEEK!

OVER 400 PAIR LEFT!  
CHECK THE SIZE CHART BELOW . . . IF YOUR SIZE IS HERE, NOW'S THE TIME TO SAVE.

		LENGTH												
WIDTH	NARROW (B & C) MEDIUM (D) WIDE (E-EEE)	6½	7	7½	8	8½	9	9½	10	10½	11	11½	12	13
							9	24	19	20	18	12	13	26
		7	8	11	17	22	13	15	5	18	19	5	21	7
				3	11	17	12	7	16	19	16			3



RE-GROUPED AND RE-PRICED

**\$19-\$29-\$39**

NONE HIGHER! HURRY FOR BEST SELECTION  
**FAMOUS NAME BRANDS**  
ARMSTRONG MEN'S SHOES — STREET FLOOR

*Armstrong's*  
Quality is Economy

## How Air Ambulance fits into rescue efforts

When does Air Ambulance enter Linn County's ambulance picture?

"Lifeguard One," as it's been dubbed by the sponsoring St. Luke's Health Care Foundation, has flown 55 times since Feb. 2. In May, it flew 21 times, according to Bruce Thorsen, director of the St. Luke's Health Care Foundation.

Lifeguard is a cooperative venture between several non-profit organizations. Pilots are hired by the St. Luke's Health Care Foundation. The medical personnel are attendants from Area Ambulance.

"Air Ambulance responds when requested by the local ambulance company or by the local sheriff, police, or Highway Patrol," said Sgt. Ted Beuter of the Linn Sheriff's Department.

Under no circumstance is the air ambulance sent out without someone at the scene requesting it, Beuter said, and that's done for several reasons.

"The main point is, we want to make sure the helicopter is used in only an emergency situation and only when absolutely needed," Beuter said. "It would be a tragic irony if the helicopter were tied up on an unnecessary or marginally necessary run while someone else died someplace else where the helicopter was needed more."

"The other point is we don't want to put the helicopter itself in jeopardy by landing it in a situation

where no one would be in control of the area on the ground," Beuter said.

Helicopters need wide landing areas. Ground personnel can keep passersby and witnesses away from the blades. They can also keep cars away if the only landing spot available is the highway, Beuter said.

"We do not encourage the general public to call us directly," Thorsen added.

**THE FUND-RAISING** drive for operational expenses on the helicopter is about 44 percent complete, Thorsen said. It costs \$75,000 yearly to operate the helicopter — for fuel and the pilots' salaries and uniforms — and so far, \$32,000 has been raised. The \$75,000 was to fund the helicopter through the end of January 1982.

Fees charged to patients cover medical expenses, not the operation of the air ambulance, Thorsen said.

At this November's annual meeting of the Health Care Foundation, the need for an air ambulance will be re-evaluated, Thorsen said.

"People in rural areas have been very supportive of this service," Thorsen said. "They see this as a valuable tool."

"Many of our donations so far have come from agricultural-related industries and small donations from rural areas."