

VOL. LIV NO. 31

**Saving Lives**  
**Mobile Units to Treat**  
**Heart-Attack Victims**  
**Gain Widespread Use**

**Police, Firemen, Volunteers**  
**Provide Most of Services;**  
**Seattle Death Toll Drops**

**'Horizontal Taxis' Assailed**

By DAVID P. GARINO

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

COLUMBUS, Ohio—If you're going to suffer a heart attack, you'd probably be "fortunate" if it happened here. The odds of your surviving would be much better than in most parts of the U.S.

Consider, for instance, Edmund D. Doyle, a partner in the law firm of Porter, Stanley, Platt & Arthur here. Mr. Doyle was discussing a corporate-reorganization plan with two partners in an 11th-floor office when he felt a pain in his left arm and a tightening in his chest. A partner became alarmed and called the Columbus Fire Department's emergency squad. Within five minutes a three-man paramedic team arrived, took one look at Mr. Doyle and started intravenous treatment and administered oxygen. He was a textbook case of a heart-attack victim—sweat on the forehead, a gray, ashen appearance and difficulty with breathing.

The emergency squad placed Mr. Doyle on a stretcher and removed him to an ambulance. Two miles along the way, however, Mr. Doyle's heart stopped. Quickly, a paramedic applied a defibrillator to Mr. Doyle's chest, which shocks the heart to restore its normal rhythm. A drug, lidocaine, was administered to prevent erratic heartbeat, and thereafter recovery was routine. Five years ago Mr. Doyle would have been dead.

**Saving Time—and Lives**

Such on-the-spot emergency care for heart-attack victims saved 202 lives in Seattle over a three-year period, doctors there estimate. And Dr. Richard S. Crampton, director of coronary-care systems at the University of Virginia Medical Center, reports that in Charlottesville, the rate for people dying of heart attacks before they could be brought to a hospital was reduced 26% in 1972, largely because of the special ambulance crews' ability to restart stopped hearts.

Despite their potential for reducing heart-attack deaths, mobile emergency-care systems are relatively new. Columbus, which set up its unit in 1969, was one of the pioneers. Now over 150 communities, including Jacksonville, Miami, Seattle, Los Angeles, Chicago and New York, have similar systems, compared with a mere handful four years ago. Cincinnati plans to initiate a rescue system in January, and a massive regional program is being planned for the Kansas City, Mo., metropolitan area. It will eventually encompass a two-state, eight-county, 110-community area.

Advocates of these systems point to some startling figures: Heart attacks, the nation's No. 1 killer, claim over 450,000 lives a year, with over half the victims never reaching the hospital alive and more than two-thirds dying within two hours of the attack. The key to saving many lives is to get qualified emergency care quickly to the heart-attack victim, stabilize his condition and then get him to a hospi-

### Ambulances: "Horizontal Taxis"?

Unfortunately, the national average response time to emergencies is 44 minutes. In some cases, doctors say, the ambulances are nothing more than "horizontal taxis," unequipped to provide medical care. Columbus, operating with four special ambulance units, has trimmed its response time to around five minutes.

In congested areas such as New York City, life-saving equipment has been installed in many office buildings, including the New York Stock Exchange. And New York's St. Vincent's Hospital, one of the first in the nation to offer early care to heart-attack victims, restricts itself to a four-square-mile area in the southern part of Manhattan.

These emergency services are provided mainly by fire-department personnel, but police departments, volunteers and private ambulance firms are also used. The paramedics, usually trained by hospitals or medical schools, can provide other emergency care besides aiding heart-attack victims, of course.

Many once-skeptical doctors are beginning to recognize the value of paramedics. Al Scloes, a battalion fire chief in Columbus, says, "We've come a long way. I remember when doctors accused us of practicing medicine without a license when we delivered babies, but then they realized the babies were going to come anyway."

### National Coordination

Until recently, efforts to set up early-care systems had little national coordination, but in late 1971 six drug companies formed the Acute Coronary Treatment (ACT) Foundation to promote such systems. John Haas, executive director of the foundation, says his office receives about 15 inquiries weekly on early coronary care, compared with practically none a year ago.

In one instance, a television appearance by ACT Foundation officials prompted a private citizen to press for formation of a mobile coronary-care program in Chicago suburbs. Mrs. Jan Schwettman of Inverness, Ill., who had seen several friends die of heart attacks in their 40s, badgered local politicians and fire departments until a program was established. Recently the fire chief of a Chicago-area village was resuscitated by his own men.

The Kansas City program got its start after a physician's close call with death. In the fall of 1971, Dr. Charles Workman, an orthopedic surgeon, awakened with symptoms of a heart attack. "Then the nightmare that happens in every city began," he recalls. Neither he nor his wife Myra, a registered nurse, knew how to contact emergency services; after a call to the police, an ambulance was finally dispatched, and Dr. Workman reached a hospital an hour later.

### Apathy and Budget Woes

"I made a promise that if I didn't die, I'd do something to remedy the situation," he says. It

*Please Turn to Page 33, Column 6*

### Continued From First Page

was Dr. Workman who pushed the plan for a regional system in Kansas City.

In general, the biggest problem in setting up early coronary-care programs is physician apathy, according to Dr. Richard Lewis, director of cardiology at Ohio State University's medical school in Columbus. "At least they aren't hostile anymore," he says. But Dr. Lewis and others note that more and more young doctors are specializing in emergency care.

Another obstacle is money, although advocates of early coronary care argue that costs are relatively small. In Columbus, all emergency-care costs total \$1 million, or about \$1.80 a person, and Dr. Lewis estimates that even if an emergency program were started practically from scratch, costs should fall to between \$2 and \$3 a person. Most programs are financed through city budgets and some communities have used revenue-sharing monies. Additionally, U.S. Department of Transportation money has been available for equipment, including ambulances.

Legal liability also poses a problem. In Illinois, for instance, the state medical-practices law was amended, with Mrs. Schwettman's prodding, to cover paramedics. A number of other states have made similar moves.

## Paramedic Team Looms For Town

Creation of an emergency medical team known as paramedics in the Town of Tonawanda under guidance from Kenmore Mercy Hospital doctors might be possible in six months, Town Supervisor James V. Ryan announced Wednesday afternoon.

"It's not a tomorrow thing, it's down the road a few months but it's possible," Ryan said. **Discuss Plan**

Town officials have been discussing the plan with Dr. Joseph Takats, president of a team of doctors which operates Kenmore Mercy's emergency room. These talks have included a possibility of dispatching the paramedic unit from the centrally located Police HQ on Sheridan Dr., Ryan said.

The paramedic team's purpose is to have personnel trained by doctors to perform proper medical treatment at the scene but under the guidance of a doctor from the emergency room of a hospital by way of a mobile radio system, he added.

Ryan said these could be specially trained policemen; hospital orderlies or possibly Vietnam veterans trained as paramedics.

# Paramedic unit is goal in town

4-8-74  
A Jan. 1 goal has been established for a paramedic unit to be on the road in the Town of Tonawanda.

Town Supervisor James V. Ryan came up with the idea several months ago for having trained medical personnel dispatched in an especially-equipped vehicle to handle emergency calls.

The idea is that the paramedics would be in contact with doctors at Kenmore Mercy Hospital and could treat victims en route to the hospital.

A committee of town and hospital personnel has been formed to establish the program. It includes Lawrence A. Hoffman Jr., town police chief; Norman J. Stocker, (representing Supervisor Ryan), town labor relations director; Richard Muscatello, Kenmore Mercy administrative assistant; Dr. Joseph Takats, president of the corporation which runs the hospital emergency room, and Mrs. Linda Frutig, RN, emergency room supervisor.

"There are numerous problems still to be worked out but we would like to see the personnel begin training by June 1 and the program in operation by Jan. 1," Mr. Stocker reported.

He said the plan is "receiving the utmost cooperation from the hospital" and has met with "an amazingly enthusiastic response from the community" since first being announced.

Numerous aspects remain undecided Mr. Stocker said. It hasn't been determined if the unit will be a hospital or a town function, how many personnel will be required or what the program will cost.

Federal funds are available but it isn't known yet how much the local program might be eligible for, he reported.

It has been established that the paramedics will not respond to every emergency, Mr. Stocker said, only those serious enough to warrant it.

Under the current setup police are usually the first to respond to an emergency call. The officers perform first aid and if the situation is serious an ambulance is summoned.

The committee sees the paramedic unit as also being summoned by police already at the scene. The difference between it and an ambulance is that

the paramedics can already be treating a patient while he is on his way to the hospital.

Police and ambulance attendants are trained in first aid but the paramedics are envisioned as having more extensive and sophisticated training.

Another big plus is the communications between the vehicle and the hospital. Besides voice communications, such things as the victim's heart beat and breathing could be monitored directly from the hospital, while the patient is on his way in.

Mr. Stocker said the town is an ideal location for such a system because it has a hospital and also because it has a large population in a comparatively small area. From a central location, an emergency vehicle can get to any place in the town in two minutes.

Mr. Stocker said there are statistics showing that immediate medical treatment can often be a life or death matter.

The American Medical Association has estimated that at least 125,000 of the 700,000 Americans who die from heart attacks every year can be saved if they have proper care in the critical minutes just after the attack.

Of the 120,000 who die from auto accidents annually, it is estimated that 30,000 can be saved if they have immediate care.

## Paramedic team proposed by Ryan

Establishment of teams of paramedics in the Town of Tonawanda "to serve as the eyes and hands of emergency room doctors" has been proposed by Town Supervisor James V. Ryan.

The supervisor said today he envisions teams operating out of the town police headquarters that would be equipped with ambulances, medical gear and communications equipment to respond to emergencies.

He said trained personnel would have the ability to communicate directly with doctors at Kenmore Mercy Hospital to relay symptoms and obtain guidance for treatment.

Supervisor Ryan acknowledged that the setup would be costly. He estimated equipment costs alone at \$25,000, but said federal funds might be available.

"This is not something that is going to happen overnight, but we are working on it," the supervisor said.

Kenmore Record Advertiser  
Wed. 4/17/79

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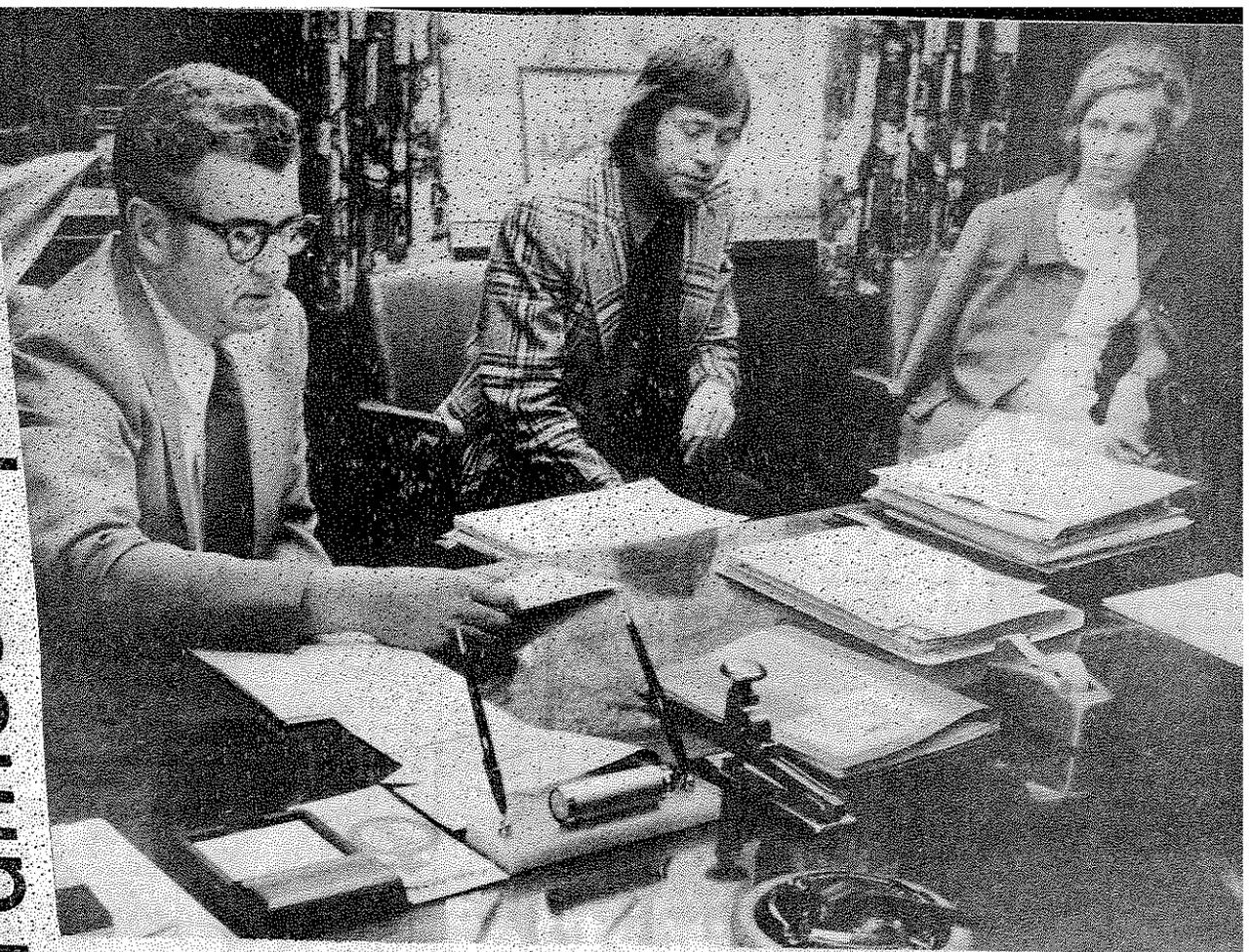
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# Town unveils \$190,000

# paramedic program



Supervisor Ryan, left, Dr. Takats and Mrs. Frutig

... Explain town's paramedic program

By TOM ERNST  
NEWS Staff Writer

A paramedic unit which will be providing sophisticated emergency medical treatment within seven months in the Town of Tonawanda was unveiled today by town and Kenmore Mercy Hospital officials.

A nine-member paramedic team is scheduled to begin an intensive six-month training course Oct. 21, and the vehicle-equipped unit would become operational in April, it was disclosed.

Officials emphasized that the paramedics will be reserved for serious cases requiring immediate skilled medical assistance and that the program shouldn't be considered a form of ambulance service.

The operation is estimated to cost \$190,000 during the first year, including the purchase of a \$23,000 vehicle that will be equipped with thousands of dollars worth of medical gear.

Town of Tonawanda Supervisor James V. Ryan said the town will finance the program, but that the actual cost to taxpayers is expected to be considerably less because of donations of equipment and money from private organizations and civic groups.

The supervisor said an offer to provide the vehicle already has been received from Chevrolet, and that two local firms have offered to donate about \$19,000 worth of gear for the vehicle.

During a press conference in Mr. Ryan's office in the Municipal Building, representatives of the town, its police department, Kenmore Mercy Hospital and Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Associates (the private corporation which runs the hospital's emergency room) gathered to explain the program.

Supervisor Ryan said the program will provide free care to residents and employees in the town. Eventually, he said, if third parties such as Blue Cross and Blue Shield provide coverage for the paramedic service, a fee may be charged.

Two paramedics will be on duty at all times, with the unit housed either at the hospital or town police

within four minutes, officials said.

Dr. Joseph Takats, president of Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Associates, said the paramedic vehicle will be equipped with sophisticated communications gear so that the paramedics can be in contact with doctors in the hospital and be providing treatment while the vehicle is en route to Kenmore Mercy.

Equipment in the vehicle will relay blood pressure, pulse and electro-cardiogram information to doctors in the emergency room.

The paramedics will be trained to administer medication and take other steps necessary during the first critical minutes after a heart attack or serious injury.

Nine paramedics have already been selected, but not notified of their selection. Nine alternates also will undergo the training course and be available if needed, it was pointed out.

The paramedics will be paid \$12,000 annually. Those selected range in age from 51 to 21. Teams of eight men and one woman have been selected for both the actual paramedic and alternate group.

Mrs. Linda Frutig, supervisor of Kenmore Mercy's Emergency Department, said the hospital staff is working closely with the Medical Associates, both in the training program and for the implementation of the system.

Dr. Takats said the associates and the hospital are joining forces to volunteer the training necessary for the paramedics.

Officials said the units will be dispatched from town police headquarters and work closely with police and also the emergency squad of the Kenmore Fire Department.

When the system is operational, police may summon the paramedics if the situation warrants it, or, if it is known beforehand that the situation is serious, the paramedics will respond immediately.

Officials said they foresee the paramedics offering a wide range of services, beyond just responding to emergencies. They would utilize their training to conduct

Wednesday, September 25, 1974

## Paramedic Service Planned in Tonawanda

By TOM KELLY

The Town of Tonawanda will begin a paramedic service to provide immediate attention to heart attack and accident victims, Supervisor James V. Ryan announced today.

Expected to be in full operation by next April, the new system will have highly-trained paramedic teams rushed in a specially-designed emergency vehicle to a heart attack or accident victim and within 4 minutes of the emergency.

The emergency vehicle in effect a mobile emergency room — would be based at town police headquarters on Sheridan Dr., but would be able to reach any point in the town in 4 minutes.

At a press conference today in Kenmore Municipal Bldg., Supervisor Ryan said the paramedic system has been in the planning stage for about a year and that contracts with all agencies involved, principally Kenmore Mercy Hospital and the Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Association, are being prepared.

MR. RYAN estimated the first-year cost of the new system at \$190,000, but emphasized that financing the system will be a "joint tax-effort and contributions."

He said: The Chevrolet... will contribute to the estimated \$23,000 cost of the vehicle; L. J. Raymart Inc., which manufactures mobile coronary care systems, will provide this type of equipment, and the Mennen-Greatbatch Co. of Clarence, which manufactures communications

equipment, will contribute this equipment."

The service will be confined to the town, partly because no federal funding is involved, but also because it is designed to place the paramedics at the side of the victim within 4 minutes.

DR. JOSEPH TAKATS, president of the Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Association, who worked closely with Mr. Ryan in planning the new system, said more than 50 persons have applied for the paramedic training and that those selected will begin their preparation on Oct. 21.

"This is a pioneering effort in this part of the United States and similar programs are offered only in four or five other communities. We will have a minimum of nine paramedics, either on immediate duty or on immediate call and this, of course, will be on an around-the-clock basis," Dr. Takats said.

Capt. Norman Schultz and Lt. Harry L. Faller of the town Police Traffic Department will be in charge of dispatching the emergency medical vehicle.

### Purse Contained \$3

Dorothy Kearney, 45, of 875 E. Ferry St., told Genesee Station police she lost her purse containing \$3 to a man who grabbed her from behind as she was walking to a bus stop at East Ferry St. and Fillmore Ave. about 6 AM today. The victim said the man threatened her with a gun.

## Paramedic unit hiring policy is questioned

The Tonawanda Town Board was questioned last night on hiring practices being used to form a paramedic unit, designed to provide sophisticated emergency medical treatment to town and Kenmore residents.

During the board's meeting in the Municipal Building, Eugene Roberts of 404 Highland Ave. asked how much publicity had been given to the formation of the unit and the acceptance of applications by the town. He also asked if the paramedics would have Civil Service status.

Supervisor James V. Ryan said the program and the jobs were publicized as early as last February, in his "state of the town" message.

He said the jobs will be open to anyone wishing to apply and will be Civil Service positions. Applicants need not be residents of the town, he said but non-residents hired must move into the town within six months.

The town, together with the medical staff of Kenmore Mercy Hospital, is screening applicants for the 10 jobs to be created.

Town Labor Relations Director Norman J. Stocker explained after the meeting that those selected will be paid \$4,000 during a six-month training program at the hospital. Once they complete the program, they will be paid annual salaries of \$12,000.

The training course is scheduled to begin Oct. 21 with the unit slated to be in operation by April.

Town officials estimate the program will have a first-year budget of about \$190,600, including purchase of a vehicle and thousands of dollars worth of medical and communications gear.

The unit will be reserved for serious illnesses and injuries and enable victims to receive sophisticated medical treatment while en route to the hospital.

Town officials say the paramedic unit isn't designed to replace private ambulances or first aid service offered by town police. It will serve serious cases requiring more sophisticated treatment than ambulance attendants and police can provide, the officials say.

# Nine paramedic trainees named

By TOM ERNST  
NEWS Staff Writer

Nine paramedic trainees, who begin a six-month training program Oct. 21 in preparation for offering sophisticated emergency medical treatment to Kenmore and Town of Tonawanda residents, were officially appointed by the Town Board last night.

With one exception, all will be paid an annual salary of \$8,000 during the training program, and will receive a pay hike to \$12,000 once they begin the job.

The exception is William D. Long of 1992 Sheridan Drive in the town. He will serve as coordinator of the training program and receive \$12,000 annually right from the start. Mr. Long has previous experience as a paramedic, having served in a similar program in Kansas City, Town Labor Relations Director Norman J. Stocker explained.

Other appointees are James Carney, 3046 Eggert Road; Daniel Chase, 211 Parkhurst Blvd.; Robert Hodge, 146 Bering Ave.; David Peck, 257 Kenmore Ave.; Kate Rose, 56 Doncaster Road, all Town of Tonawanda, and Wayne Busch, 305 Washington Highway, Snyder; Lance Kohn, 3509 Wallace Drive, Grand Island, and Joseph Oddo, 493 Porter Ave, Buffalo.

The three non-residents of the town will have to move into the town within six months after they complete the training course, Mr. Stocker said.

He said all the trainees have previous medical experience and all are well-qualified for the job.

The program, scheduled to go into operation in April, is slated to cost in the area of \$190,000. The cost will come

out of the town's budget, but donations of equipment and money from area businesses are expected to reduce the actual cost to taxpayers.

The paramedics will offer round-the-clock emergency aid to critically ill or injured residents. A specially-equipped van will enable them to begin treatment while the victim is en route to Kenmore Mercy Hospital.

The program is being conducted through a cooperative agreement between the town and the hospital. Kenmore Mercy emergency room doctors have volunteered their services to help train the paramedics.

In a related matter, the town board's action in setting up the program was praised by a town resident during the town board meeting in the Municipal Building.

Ronald Robertson of 90 Sherwin Drive told the board he has worked on the Buffalo Fire Department's rescue squad for 17 years and has been active in other first aid activities.

He said various attempts have been made in other municipalities to start similar programs over the years. But they never got off the ground, Mr. Robertson said.

The town's program, however, is much more extensive than any of the others that have been proposed, Mr. Robertson said in congratulating the board. He said the program is definitely needed in the town.

No one spoke in opposition to the program.

Supervisor James V. Ryan said Mr. Robertson was voicing comments similar to other comments coming from various segments of the community.

The supervisor also praised a recent Tonawanda NEWS editorial, which voiced support for the program.

*Buff. Evening News*  
10/8/74

## Tonawanda Picks 9 as Paramedics

The Tonawanda Town Board Monday night named the first nine trainees for its new paramedic program scheduled to start April 1. The group will begin studies at the State University of Buffalo Medical School and Kenmore Mercy Hospital Oct. 21.

Selected after interviews with the Town Labor Relations Department were: Wayne Busch, James Carney, Daniel Chase, Robert Hodge, Lance Kohn, William Long, James Oddo, David Peck and Kate Rose.

The nine will become town employes and will operate from Police Headquarters, where they will be on call via the police, who also separate the town's ambulance service.

The group will receive \$75 hours of training, more than eight times what is required for state-certified emergency medical technicians.

They will offer a specialized emergency service for critically injured persons or heart attack cases. There were 550 such cases in the town last year and 285 in Kenmore.

The paramedics, the first such group in New York State, will receive \$4000 pay during their 6-month training period, then will get a raise to \$12,000 a year after they receive certification.

The town is paying for the training of the nine appointees, while another 15 alternates who have volunteered for the program will be paying their own way.

First year costs are projected at about \$190,000, although donations from town merchants are expected to cut expenses.

In other business, the board: —Received an apparent low bid of \$78,400 from M. Mathews & Son of Buffalo to paint water towers in Sheridan and Lincoln Park. There were two other bidders.

—Received six bids for installation of 6-inch lateral water mains along Ellicott Creek Rd. between Heritage Rd. and Calvin Blvd. M. C. Morgan Contractors of Williamsville was the apparent low bidder at \$7848. The highest bid was \$14,630.

—Accepted the sole bid on two hydraulic lift devices for snow plows. The \$11,340 offer came from Walter M. Roberts Enterprises, Town of Tonawanda.

—Board called for bids Oct. 21 for 4000 tons of highway salt and bids Oct. 28 for police uniforms.

## Our viewpoint

# Good place to live

THE TOWN OF TONAWANDA always has been known as a good place in which to live, work and play.

The program that was announced yesterday may well put great new emphasis on the first of those.

Establishment of a paramedic unit certainly will result in the saving of lives. It will be on call — and able to reach any part of the town within four minutes — to treat victims in those critical minutes immediately following injury or such illnesses as heart attacks.

IT IS WELL DOCUMENTED that prompt emergency treatment, as will be provided by these trained paramedics, can help victims survive until they are in the hospital. There more sophisticated equipment and treatment is available, but many lives are lost in the time between the attack or injury and the beginning of hospital care.

The paramedic program is being set up by the town, which will finance it, with

the cooperation of Kenmore Mercy Hospital. Its services will be free to town residents and those employed there.

There will be two paramedics on duty at all times, headquartered either at Kenmore Mercy Hospital or town police headquarters. The team will consist of nine members, who will begin an intensive six-month training course Oct. 21. That training is being volunteered by the hospital and the corporation which operates its emergency department.

THE FIRST-YEAR BUDGET for the service is expected to total about \$190,000, but it may well be that considerably less will be spent because of donations of money and equipment.

Whatever it costs, we're confident it will be a bargain. It's going to save lives, which are priceless.

The Town Board is to be commended for establishing the program, and Kenmore Mercy Hospital deserves applause for the cooperation it is providing.

# Tonawanda Approves 10 Paramedic Positions

The creation of ten positions of paramedic trainee, in preparation for the previously-announced paramedic program to be launched early in 1975, was approved unanimously Monday evening by the Town of Tonawanda Town Board.

The ten trainees, the vanguard of the entire paramedic corps, will undergo specialized instruction at Kenmore Mercy Hospital and at the State University of Buffalo Medical School. For the 6 months of training, beginning Oct. 21, each trainee will receive \$4000 in salary; salary for each trained paramedic will be \$12,000 annually.

Councilman George J. Butler said the job title has been approved by County Personnel Commissioner John V. Clark.

Norman J. Stocker, town labor relations and personnel officer, said about 60 applications have been received from men and women for the trainee positions, including two from young men who served as paramedics in Viet Nam.

The paramedics program is designed to bring sophisticated emergency medical treatment within minutes to accident victims or victims of seizures or heart attacks. The paramedic vehicle, manned by two paramedics, will be equipped with communications gear custom designed by Mennen-Greatbatch Electronics Inc., of Clarence.

At the scene of an accident the paramedics will be in full

communication with doctors at the hospital.

In reply to a question by Eugene G. Roberts, 404 Highland Ave., Supervisor James V. Ryan said the paramedics position will be open to service veterans who are otherwise qualified for the work. Residence in the town will be required of anyone appointed a paramedic, the supervisor said.

Councilman Thomas J. Kelly said the positions will be in Civil Service.

The board accepted five bids on equipment as follows:

Chlorine for the sewage plant from Jones Chemical Co., Caledonia, N. Y., at \$290 a ton; a water strainer for the incinerator plant from the R. P. Adams Co. Inc., 225 E. Parker Dr., for \$3814; a truck spray booth for the highway department from the A. T. Supply Co., Cheektowaga, for \$24,108.

Turf fertilizer from Thiele Coal and Feed Inc., 7435 Shawnee Rd., North Tonawanda, at \$132.35 a ton, and fertilizer from Agway Turf Sales, 560 Delaware Ave., Buffalo, for \$220 a ton.

## Praises program

It was very gratifying to have read in the Tonawanda NEWS, Sept. 25, about the undertaking of a paramedic program in the Village of Kenmore and Town of Tonawanda.

The citizens of those communities are to be counted as the lucky few who will have such a paramedic service available to them. I believe they will be the first for such an undertaking in the State of New York. It will prove to be very beneficial to their emergency health needs.

The leaders of those communities should be praised for undertaking such an important program with the interest and imagination for their fellow men and women in their communities to provide such a medical service.

Having worked with volunteer fire companies in making first aid calls, I know such a paramedic program has long been needed in our community. I hope other communities have the foresight to follow such an important, beneficial program.

Again, hats off to Kenmore and Town of Tonawanda for another first!

Russell Tedesco  
North Tonawanda

## Tonawanda

# 9 Named Paramedic Trainees

The first nine paramedic-trainees who will begin study Oct. 21 to prepare to offer specialized aid for critically ill were named Monday night by the Tonawanda Town Board.

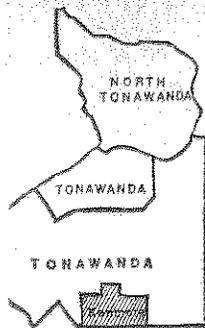
The nine will become town employees and operate from Town Police Headquarters and Kenmore Mercy Hospital beginning in April. They are William Long, Wayne Busch, James Carney, Daniel Chase, Robert Hodge, Lance Kohn, James Oddo, David Peck and Kate Rose. They were selected after interviews by the Town Labor Relations Dept. from among numerous candidates with emergency care experience.

**\$190,000 Cost**

They will receive \$3,000 the first year and \$12,000 after passing a Civil Service test. The first-year cost of the program is pegged at \$190,000 although it may be less since several firms are offering to donate equipment. The program will not be a first-aid program or ambulance service but a specialized emergency program for critically-hurt, including heart patients.

In other matters, the board:

- Received an apparent low bid of \$76,400 from M. Mathews & Son, 121 Norris St., Buffalo, to paint water towers in Sheridan Park and Lincoln Park, well below a \$100,000 estimate.
- Called for bids Oct. 21 for 6,000 tons of salt for Highway Dept. use on streets.
- Adjourned to 8 p.m. Oct. 15 when a public hearing will be held to air proposals on a cable television franchise.



# COURIER

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City, town, village and neighborhood news from  
the Tonawandas and Kenmore

10/10/74



Supervisor J. V. Ryan

Dr. Takats

Benjamin Weppner

John Stuart

Town given paramedic communications and medical equipment worth \$13,000 by two firms

... Weppner from Mennen-Greatback Inc., Stuart from Raymart Inc.

## Paramedic Team Termed Qualified

By JOE WILHELM  
The Town of Tonawanda feels

in the town and knew Long there. Later, Long was a paramedic in Kenmore Office and

competitive class and no test will be held.

Fire Company emergency squad; James Carney, 3046



Supervisor J. V. Ryan

Dr. Takats

Benjamin Weppner

John Stuart

Town given paramedic communications and medical equipment worth \$13,000 by two firms

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## Paramedic Team Termed Qualified

By JOE WILHELM

The Town of Tonawanda feels it has a highly talented team which will open paramedic training Oct. 21 in preparation for starting in April a specialized emergency care for critically ill persons.

Norman Stocker, town labor relations director, who interviewed the nine paramedic trainees before their appointment by the Town Board on Monday, explained that all have had medical training and some have had paramedic service.

### Reunion For One

In fact, it will be a reunion for one trainee, William Long, 1992 Sheridan Dr., Town of Tonawanda, with a friend, Dr. Joseph Takats, president of Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda Medical Associates, which is assisting in the program to be operated in conjunction with Kenmore Mercy Hospital.

Dr. Takats formerly taught at St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute

in the town and knew Long there. Later, Long was a paramedic in Kansas City and the doctor got his medical education there.

As Dr. Takats was helping to organize the town program in recent weeks, he convinced Long to return home to Tonawanda and bring his family back here.

Long convinced another paramedic from Kansas City, Daniel Chase, a bachelor, to join the town program. Chase lives at 211 Parkhurst Blvd. in the town.

### Must Get Certification

Stocker explained that the six-month training program is necessary to qualify the crew for state certification and familiarize them with the way the town, the doctors and the hospital plan to run the service.

He also corrected a belief held by Town Board members and reported in the press that a Civil Service test would be held. Stocker explained that the jobs will be placed in the non-

competitive class and no test will be held.

### \$8,000 Starting Pay

The jobs pay \$8,000 while in training and will advance to \$12,000 after a state medical test of knowledge, he said. The town has estimated the first-year cost at \$190,000 but it may be less since several firms plan to donate equipment.

The service will not replace fire rescue squads or ambulances but will be designed for treatment of heart patients and victims of unusual accidents.

A specially-equipped vehicle with the latest in monitoring equipment will enable the paramedics to be in touch with the hospital to get information on treatment and relay vital life sign data.

### Of er Trainees

Other paramedic trainees and their experience Wayne Busch, 305 Washington Hwy., Amherst, who has served with the Snyder

Fire Company emergency squad; James Carney, 3046 Egger Rd., in the town, a nursing student; Robert Hodge, 146 Bering Ave., in the town, now an inhalation therapist and formerly a paramedic in Atlanta, Ga.; Lance Kohn, 3509 Wallace Dr., Grand Island, first aid captain for the Grand Island Fire Dept.; Joseph Oddo, 493 Porter Ave., Buffalo, a former teacher, now an inhalation therapist; David Peck, 257 Kenmore Ave., Town of Tonawanda, first aid captain with the Kenilworth Fire Company; and Miss Kate Rose, 56 Doncaster Rd., Town of Tonawanda, a nursing student, whose father, Dr. Robert M. Rose, is head of the cardiac department at DeGraff Memorial Hospital, North Tonawanda.

"We feel we have a very talented team which will provide a very vital service to the community," Stocker added.

# Hospital linkup in param

By TOM ERNST  
NEWS Staff Writer

**PATIENTS WHO** accept treatment from the Town of Tonawanda's planned paramedic unit won't have any say over what hospital they are taken to, but the town is within its legal rights to set it up that way, Town Attorney Peter D. Cook said today.

Scheduled to become operational in April, the program calls for nine persons to be trained as paramedics under town jurisdiction. The paramedic unit will provide sophisticated emergency medical treatment to the critically injured and ill.

Through a contractual arrangement with Kenmore Mercy Hospital and Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Associates (a private corporation which runs the hospital's emergency room), the paramedics will undergo a six-month training course at the hospital starting Oct. 21.

In turn, the hospital and the private corporation will receive all the paramedics' "business."

**SEVERAL CALLERS** to the Tonawanda NEWS have questioned the lack of choice patients of the tax-supported paramedic unit will have over hospitals and the fact that all patients will go to the private, non-profit hospital and the profit-making corporation running the emergency room.

Attorney Cook said the state's general municipal law

clearly gives the town the authority to enter into this type of agreement and pointed out that the town conducts much business that benefits private corporations.

He used the example of the commercial appraisers the town has hired to fight suits filed by several local industries seeking reductions in their assessed valuation.

Town Labor Relations Director Norman L. Stocker pointed out that paramedics will be reserved for critical situations, those where the patient's survival might be at stake.

**HE AGREED** that it seems unlikely that someone who has just suffered a severe heart attack is going to gripe because he is being taken to Kenmore Mercy, rather than a hospital perhaps more to his liking.

Mr. Cook and Mr. Stocker both agreed that if someone doesn't want to go to Kenmore Mercy he is free to decline the paramedics' service and call a private ambulance — which again seems unlikely in view of the seriousness of the cases to which the paramedics will respond.

The labor relations director said that because of the communications gear the paramedics' van will carry, it would be technologically unfeasible to have a working arrangement with more than one hospital.

Equipment in the vehicle will relay the patient's blood pressure, pulse and electro-cardiogram information to doctors in the Kenmore Mercy emergency room. Also,

## edic program defended

doctors will be in radio contact with the paramedics and on the basis of the information they receive can instruct the paramedics on what treatment to begin.

**MR. STOCKER** pointed out that the unit will furnish free treatment along with transportation to Kenmore Mercy. Once at the hospital, if a patient decides he wants to go somewhere else, he is free to hire a private ambulance, he continued.

Residents dissatisfied with the setup are free to protest spending tax dollars on it when the town holds a public hearing on its proposed 1975 budget, probably within the next couple of weeks, Mr. Cook said.

Or, he said, they can hire an attorney and initiate a suit against the town charging it with wasting funds.

Mr. Stocker said that as far as any benefit the hospital or emergency room corporation might realize, it should be kept in mind that the extensive training the paramedics are to receive is all being donated by Dr. Joseph Takats, president of the corporation, and other Kenmore Mercy doctors and staff members.

He said that if the town had to pay the cost of educating the paramedics, the price would be such that the program would never get off the ground.

**QUESTIONS HAVE** also been posed regarding the Civil Service status of the paramedics as town employees.

Mr. Stocker explained that all town employees have Civil Service status and the creation of the paramedic positions in the town has been approved by the Erie County Civil Service Commission.

The only question is whether the positions will be competitive or non-competitive.

Mr. Stocker said it is likely that the State Civil Service Department will decide that they are to be non-competitive, as the town wants them to be.

This means, he explained, that the town can hire personnel according to the applicant's background and qualifications, rather than only considering applicants who have passed a Civil Service test and are among the top three in terms of test scores.

If the state determines that the positions are to be competitive, it will first have to prepare a test for the position, since there is none now.

**THEN THE TOWN** would have to follow Civil Service regulations for hiring and it is possible that some of those already hired as paramedics might have to be replaced. A decision is expected before the training program begins.

Town Attorney Cook added that those already hired are bound to work for the town for a minimum of 18 months after completing their training. If they quit before the 18-month period, they must pay the town \$5,000 for the training they have received.

# Training to Begin Oct. 21 on Town Paramedic Service

By JOE WILHELM

Training will get underway Oct. 21 for a Town of Tonawanda paramedic service offering sophisticated emergency care which should be in operation in April, Supervisor James V. Ryan announced Wednesday.

Ryan said the first-year cost would be \$190,000 and that donations from several firms for equipment have already been received.

Nine paramedics, who are town employes, will be notified soon of their selection, and nine alternates will also be picked. Two paramedics, offering specialized skills, will be available around the clock.

#### \$23,000 Vehicle

Contracts will be signed shortly with Kenmore Mercy Hospital and Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Associates Inc., the private group which runs emergency room service at the hospital.

A special \$23,000 vehicle will be bought along with equipment which will relay blood pressure, pulse and electro-cardiogram data from a scene to the hospital.

The vehicle will be housed at the Town Police Hq. on Sheridan Dr. but will often be at the hospital as the paramedics continue training through the year in the emergency room, Ryan said.

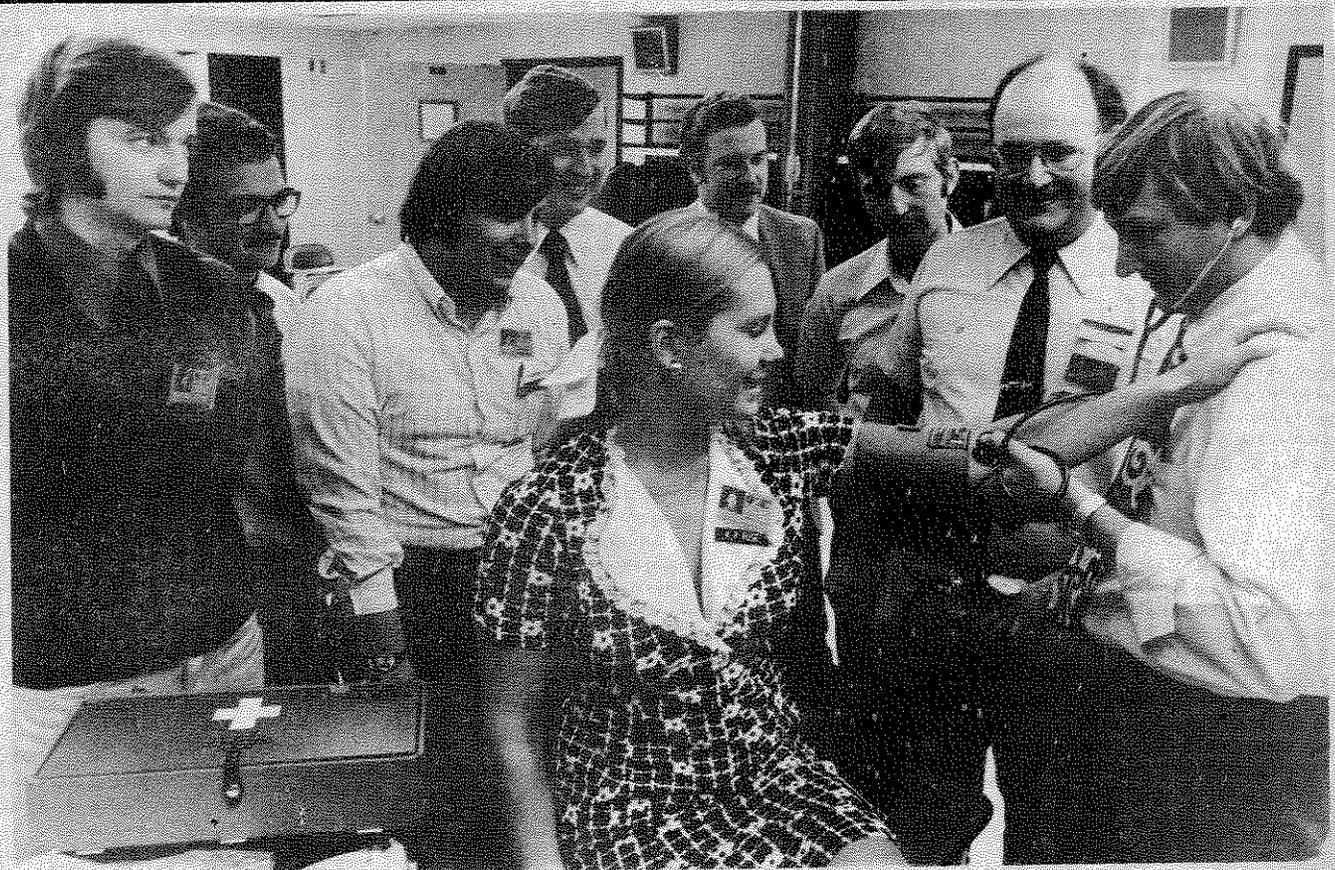
Dr. Joseph Takats, president

of Medical Associates, participated with hospital and town officials at a press conference Wednesday. He said his group and the hospital are joining forces to provide the training necessary.

#### \$12,000 Salary

The paramedics will be paid \$12,000 annually each and will be used primarily on severe emergency cases. Ryan stressed that this service does not replace private ambulance service or first-aid rescue service currently provided in the Village of Kenmore and the town. Town police will dispatch the new unit, capable of moving to any scene in the town in four minutes.

Ryan praised the project as "a pioneer effort in Western New York for a much needed service." Initial plans are to support the project by town taxes but, taking note of preliminary offers for donations of equipment, Ryan said there is some possibility a foundation could be set up and donations are being accepted.



## **Paramedics' training begins**

The Town of Tonawanda's newly established paramedic team began a six-month training program last week. Among the first things the nine-member team learned was how to take a person's blood pressure. Trying out his newly acquired skill on Kate Rose is Robert Hodge. Other paramedics observing are, from left, James

Carney, Joseph Oddo, David Peck, Wayne Busch, William Long, Daniel Chase and Lance Kohn. All of the paramedics were hired provisionally pending a Civil Service exam. They are paid a salary of \$8,000 annually during the period. (More photos, story Page 8)



Len. News 10-11-74

## Paramedic equipment donated

Town of Tonawanda Supervisor James V. Ryan, center, looks over some of the \$13,000 worth of equipment donated to the town's paramedic program today by two local firms. At left is John F. Shuart, president of L.J. Raymart Inc. of 678 Sheridan Drive, in the town, whose

firm donated \$7,000 worth of communications gear. At right is Ben Weppner, vice president-engineering of Mennen-Greatbatch Inc. of Clarence, which is furnishing \$6,000 worth of equipment for monitoring the physical condition of patients. (Related story, Page 10)

*Town News - 10/2 2/74*

# Town emergency rescue

By TOM ERNST  
NEWS Staff Writer

Complaints over the Town of Tonawanda Police Department's policy on summoning ambulances led to gripes over the town's new paramedic unit during the Town Board meeting last night in the Municipal Building.

About 10 men, most of them wearing Ellwood Volunteer Fire Company jackets, said town police won't summon an ambulance to the scene of an emergency until they arrive and determine one is needed.

Town Police Chief Lawrence A. Hoffman Jr. disputed the charge. He said if an emergency call comes to town police an ambulance is dispatched immediately if there is reason to believe one is needed.

Discussion over the ambulances led to questions and expressions of concern over town policy for dispatching the paramedic unit when it goes into service.

The town has hired nine paramedic trainees who began a six-month training course yesterday. After completing training, the unit will supply emergency medical treatment in serious situations.

(In the hallway after the meeting, several of the men posing questions and complaints acknowledged that they are unhappy over the setup of the paramedic unit. Some of them have first aid training as volunteer firemen and said they thought an emergency unit should have been established through the fire departments instead.)

Supervisor James V. Ryan said the

usual policy on the squad will be that if an emergency call comes in to the police department, a patrol car will be dispatched first and if the officer determines the paramedics are needed they will be summoned. He said if it is determined beforehand that the situation is serious, the paramedics may be dispatched immediately.

The supervisor said that with the speed a police car can reach the scene and immediately summon the paramedics, the policy will result in very little delay.

One of the audience members, John Martinez of 79 Tremont Ave., Kenmore, operator of Gold Cross Ambulance Service, was told by Supervisor Ryan that he seems opposed to the paramedic unit.

"Yes," Mr. Martinez replied. "You

## questions are debated

would be too if you were in private business."

Councilman Thomas J. Kelly maintained that the paramedics won't cut into the business of ambulance service because the paramedics will be reserved for critical emergencies. Chief Hoffman added that the paramedics shouldn't be considered an ambulance service but a life-sustaining service.

Councilman Kelly pointed out that if the situation isn't serious enough to warrant the paramedics, the unit will be recalled and an ambulance summoned.

Earlier, the men had griped that the police department's policy on calling an ambulance results in unnecessary delays and maintained that it should be dispatched at the same time a police car is

Chief Hoffman said the department doesn't automatically call for an ambulance with every emergency call because occasional "false alarms" are called in and the town has to pay for the ambulance if one is called but not needed.

Lyle Fell of 126 Harrison Ave. said he called police three years ago when a relative was stricken. He said he had asked for an ambulance but was told none would be called until after the police arrived. The police arrived, saw the woman lying on the floor and only then called for an ambulance, he said.

Chief Hoffman asked him if he had reported the incident. Mr. Fell replied that he hadn't. Chief Hoffman, who was not chief at the time of the incident, said Mr. Fell should have reported it and added, "that is not the

practice in my department now."

Mr. Martinez said there was an unnecessary delay about two weeks ago when a teen-age girl was stricken while watching a football game at Parker Field. She was later pronounced dead on arrival at Kenmore Mercy Hospital.

The police chief contended that the delay was not the police department's fault. He said the delay was caused by confusion at the scene and the fact that no phone was immediately available to summon help.

Chief Hoffman said he understands steps are being taken to have a phone installed where it will be quickly accessible from the area of the football field.

"It wasn't our fault," he repeated.

## Town of Tonawanda

# Board Quizzed on Paramedics

A paramedic program in the Town of Tonawanda continued to receive criticism Monday night as residents called for a public hearing, charging that the program was hidden until it was implemented.

"The program was not hidden," insisted Councilman Harry E. Goss.

He said it had been explained in newspaper articles and by speakers appearing before town groups.

To be in full operation by April 1, the program is designed to bring a doctor's expertise to severe trauma patients, wherever they are via a mobile unit equipped with elec-

tronic equipment linked up with Kenmore Mercy Hospital's emergency room, coronary section and "cardiac intensive care unit.

"We cannot hold a public hearing on the program," said Councilman Thomas J. Kelley, who called discussion of the program within the last few months "a public hearing."

### Public Questions

Citizens asked why the nine paramedic trainees are being taught to use firearms, whether any were hired through the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) and how the program was implemented.

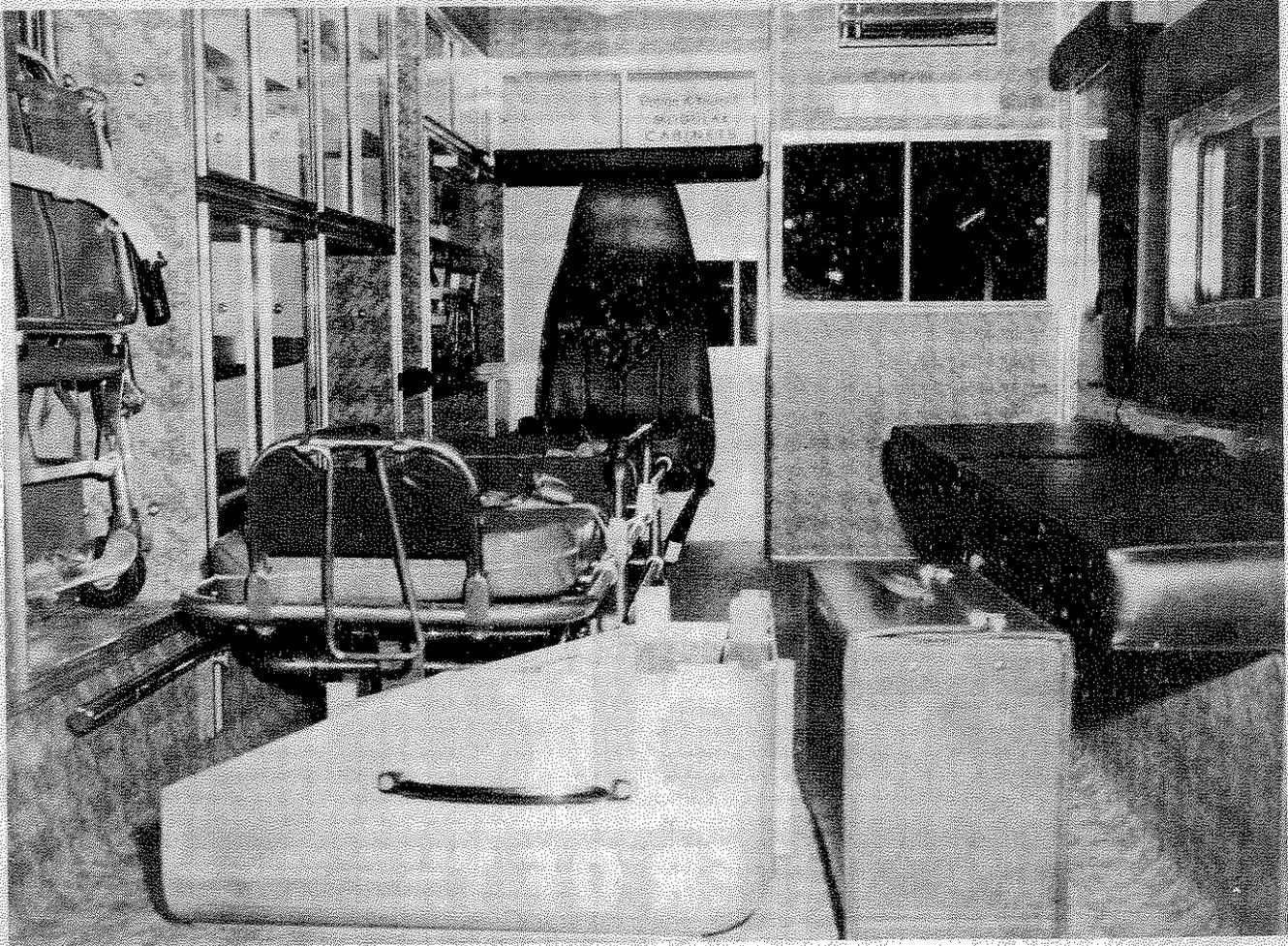
Trustees explained that the trainees, currently in a six-

month instruction program, will not carry weapons but are being taught basic firearm techniques in case they are summoned to a scene where weapons are used.

It was explained that none of the trainees were hired through the CETA program, a federally funded program to help relieve high unemployment. The paramedics are employees of and under contract with the town.

Supervisor James V. Ryan said the program was instituted under the "administrative and legislative" powers of the board.

The board meeting was held in the Municipal Bldg., Delaware Ave. at Delaware Rd., Kenmore.



# Paramedic unit again

By TOM ERNST  
NEWS Staff Writer

The Town of Tonawanda's new paramedic unit was the subject of some sharp questioning again last night as two residents demanded explanations and answers from the Town Board on its set-up and function.

There has been a strong response from town residents on the program, although not all of the response has been negative. Town officials have met a variety of questions ever since the program got off the ground several

weeks ago.

Expected to cost \$190,000 the first year, the program will provide emergency medical treatment by a nine-member team operating with a specially-equipped vehicle.

The nine paramedics, together with nine alternates, began a six-month training program last week. The unit is scheduled to be in operation next April.

At last night's meeting, Palma P. Risler of 281 Argonne Drive asked a number of questions about the unit's funding, staffing and medical pro-

cedures.

Supervisor James V. Ryan said no federal funds are involved in the project, and Town labor relations director Norman J. Stocker said three women had applied for the program, two had been offered jobs and one had accepted.

The paramedics will provide free first aid and transportation to Kenmore Mercy Hospital. Mrs. Risler was told, but once there, patients will incur normal emergency room and doctor's fees.



## How paramedic vehicle will look

Here are interior and exterior views of the type of vehicle the Town of Tonawanda plans to acquire for use by its new paramedic unit, now undergoing training. The vehicle is estimated to cost about \$23,000, not including thousands of dollars worth of medical equipment. Chevrolet is expected to donate the vehicle (only some legal matters remain to be worked out, the company

reports). Two local firms have already donated \$7,000 worth of equipment for the vehicle and the town is soliciting more. The paramedic program is expected to be operational next April. It will provide sophisticated medical assistance in what are considered serious emergencies.

## Topic of inquiries in town

Mr. Stocker told her the service is limited to Kenmore Mercy because the hospital is cooperating with the town and will be the only hospital equipped with the two-way communications gear used by the paramedics.

If a patient doesn't want to go to Kenmore Mercy, he said, the paramedics will treat him until other transportation arrives. Once at the hospital, a patient is free to be transferred to the facility of his choice, he added.

Mrs. Risler asked if the town could

become a co-defendant in a malpractice suit. Supervisor Ryan replied that it could.

George Ciancio of 95 Canterbury Lane asked about the financial aspects of the six-month training course.

The supervisor replied that hospital staff members are donating their time and it is likely that additional training at the State University at Buffalo, originally expected to cost the town about \$5,000, will also be donated.

Later, Mr. Ciancio said he was concerned that the paramedics might

be performing some services for Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Associates — the private corporation which runs the emergency room. The officials assured him the paramedics would not.

Mr. Stocker said the paramedics will only be in the hospital as part of their training, but wouldn't be performing any services for the hospital.

Residents have repeatedly questioned the board on various aspects of the program during the last several town board meetings.

# Paramedic plan faces police ire

*The News 4/11/77*  
By LYNN HEMMINGS  
NEWS Staff Writer

The Town of Tonawanda Police Club, which represents 114 officers, has declared war on the town's controversial new paramedic program.

The club announced today that its membership last week voted unanimously in opposition to the program, and that it will seek a public referendum.

"We are opposed to the plan, but very frankly, if the people of the Town

of Tonawanda wish to have this service, then we think they should have it," a police club statement said.

"For this reason, we will do everything we can to have the matter placed on the ballot in the Town of Tonawanda in November, 1975. We think the people should decide if they can afford this service," the statement added.

The paramedic program is expected to cost \$190,000 during the first year and will provide emergency medical treatment by a nine-member team operating in a specially equipped vehicle.

The unit is scheduled to be in operation in April. Nine newly named paramedics, as well as nine alternates, began an intensive six-month training program about three weeks ago.

The program has been the topic of considerable criticism — and some praise — at recent meetings of the Town of Tonawanda Board.

In discussing their opposition to the plan, police club members said they were acting both as policemen and taxpayers.

They cited the following reasons for their stand:

"— The police have performed the rescue function in the Town of Tonawanda for many years with great success. Our personnel are trained, at a minimum, with advanced first-aid, and a large number of the personnel are trained as emergency medical technicians. The things that a paramedic can do that trained police officers cannot do are so seldom encountered that there can be no justification for the huge additional

expense the program places on the taxpayer.

"— Civil Service selection procedure was by-passed in the hiring of the paramedics. We are against the program for sound financial reasons, but if it is to exist, it should be staffed through the impartial Civil Service selection system.

"— No effort was made by the town to actively advertise the positions to the young Americans who served the nation so well as medical personnel with the military during the Vietnam war. We think it was wrong of the town to fail to seek out these people and encourage them to compete for the positions.

"— The Kenmore Mercy Hospital Emergency Department is the only facility that the paramedics will work through. It is operated by a private corporation. Supposedly they will spend their time while not on calls training in the emergency room. In reality, they will be providing a service to the privately owned emergency room at public expense.

"— We do not think the town is being honest in saying that only nine paramedics will be hired. Eighteen are being trained, and we believe more than nine will be hired eventually.

"— The town has presented no emergency plan for operation of the program in the event the unit's one vehicle is laid up for mechanical or accidental reasons."

Brian P. Shields is president of the police club, which includes all town patrolmen, detectives, desk lieutenants, lieutenants and captains. Excluded are the chief, two assistant chiefs and director of Civil Defense.

## Protest on Paramedics Rejected in Tonawanda

The Town of Tonawanda's Labor Relations director contended today that the opposition of the town's Police Club to the planned paramedics program stems from the club's failure to obtain all its demands in current contract negotiations.

The paramedics program is scheduled to begin in April. The Town of Tonawanda Police Club Monday issued a statement opposing the service, claiming there is no justification for the expense—\$190,000 in 1975—and that the program should be on the ballot in the 1975 elections.

The club also claimed that the selection of paramedics should have been under Civil Service rules and regulations.

Norman J. Stocker, labor relations director who has represented the Town Board in the contract negotiations, said today that the club's statement is "in answer to the town's refusal to grant a 25 per cent wage increase."

"There is misstatement here, and not the full story," Mr. Stocker said. "The club neglects to mention that when we were laying out the paramedics program, we offered to attend a meeting of the club and explain the program in detail and answer all questions.

Our offer was never acknowledged."

It was indicated today that the Town Board, which solidly supports the program, will make a formal reply to the Police Club's statement before the end of the week.

Mr. Stocker denied a Police Club charge that there is no backup vehicle for the paramedic unit if it is out of commission. He said a backup unit would be available and that arrangements for such an emergency are being completed.

In any operation, the paramedics will be in direct communication, through telemetry equipment, with doctors at Kenmore Mercy Hospital. The program will operate under a contract between the town and the Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Association, a doctor's group which operates the Kenmore Mercy Hospital emergency room.

# Police Club lashes back

The Town of Tonawanda Police Club today said it is "appalled" that Norman L. Stocker, town labor relations director, included remarks about current town-police contract negotiations in his response to the club's statement of opposition to the new paramedic program.

Mr. Stocker said yesterday he feels the club has expressed opposition to the paramedic plan because the town has refused them a 25 per cent pay increase.

A statement issued today by the club said:

"We have approached the subject of the paramedics purely from the point of view of the actual issues involved. Mr. Stocker is apparently unable to defend the town's position on these issues, and therefore has resorted to mud-slinging in regard to totally unrelated issues.

"The fact of the matter is, the Police Club is not mad in any respect as far as the contract negotiations are concerned, nor do we have a 'sour grapes' attitude. We have complete faith in the administrative procedures set up by the Taylor Law, which governs our negotiations, and quite frankly, when those procedures have run their course, we think we will have a fair and equitable

contract.

"What Mr. Stocker has done, in an attempt to smoke screen the paramedic issue, is in reality a serious breach of our agreement with him to keep all negotiations confidential until final agreement has been reached. His conduct is entirely unethical, and an obvious hindrance to the spirit of the collective bargaining process. It is a matter that we fully intend to report to the Public Employment Relations Board," the club continued.

In response to other remarks made by Mr. Stocker, the club said:

"Mr. Stocker claims that the town will have availability to a back-up unit within hours of a malfunction. This statement by Mr. Stocker is a complete reversal of his statement only one week ago, when he said that the paramedics would not need a back-up vehicle, because they were being taught to drive defensively to avoid accidents. Now suddenly a back-up vehicle mysteriously materializes. Who is going to pay for it? It seems every time we turn around the cost of the program goes up.

"Mr. Stocker now concedes that more than nine

## at town labor director

paramedics may be hired. Another complete reversal of statement, and once again the cost of the program goes up.

"Mr. Stocker states the cost of the program will be \$150,000. We wish that were all the program will cost. The \$150,000 figure does not include the cost of a new building, which the town intends to build adjacent to the police station to house the paramedics, their vehicle, and equipment. It also fails to include the cost of the alleged back-up vehicle, and additional paramedics in excess of the original number of nine.

"Mr. Stocker states that he has approval from Civil Service to make the position non-competitive. This is not true. The matter is still unresolved at the State Civil Service level. In regard to any approval that may have been granted on a local Civil Service level, one fact must be considered. Mr. Stocker has stated to members of the Police Club that the only function of the County Personnel Office, which administers Civil Service at a local level, is to place an official stamp of approval on the job descriptions that the various towns and villages draw up.

According to Mr. Stocker the towns and villages dictate to local Civil Service.

"It is interesting that Mr. Stocker failed to comment on the issue raised in regard to the paramedics providing service to the private corporation that operates the Kenmore Mercy Hospital emergency room. Apparently, he is unable to justify this private gain at public expense.

"In regard to the town attorney's remark about the issue being put to referendum, we must say that on the surface this sounds encouraging. Now let's see some positive action. If the town wants the issue placed on the ballot, it will be done. Let the town prove its good intent by assuring the public that they will have the right to decide the issue themselves in November, 1975. It will be unfortunate if the citizens of the town are required to force the issue.

"One final point must be pursued. Where is the money coming from to pay the already hired paramedics out of the 1974 budget? No appropriation was stipulated for this expense in 1974. Too many questions such as this remain unanswered."



## Our viewpoint

# Stocker shot from hip

NORMAN STOCKER owes the Town of Tonawanda Police Club an apology.

The young labor relations director for the Town Board was wrong this week when he labeled the Police Club's opposition to the town's new paramedic unit as "sour grapes."

And he compounded his error by revealing the details of current contract negotiations with the police ... something akin to breaking a sacred vow.

The Police Club has good cause to view Mr. Stocker's remarks as "entirely unethical, and an obvious hindrance to the spirit of the collective bargaining process."

WE ALSO FEEL that the legitimate questions raised by the Police Club about the paramedic program deserved to be answered by someone other than Mr. Stocker.

Supervisor James Ryan's response was more thoughtful when he said that he couldn't believe that "greed" motivated the Police Club's statement. He said he didn't want to comment further until the entire Town Board had an opportunity to discuss the Police Club's position.

Mr. Stocker shot from the hip, and as a result may have severely hindered his usefulness in further negotiations with town police. If Mr. Stocker was directed to make his statement from someone in higher authority in town government, it was a tactical blunder.

THE IDEA OF a paramedic unit to serve residents of the town is a good one, as we said in a recent editorial.

Who could fault such a program's premise ... providing fast and expert care in those instances when a person is injured in an accident or stricken suddenly with a heart attack?

However, our initial praise of the program does not mean we blindly accept all its facets, especially when some very pertinent questions, such as those raised by the Police Club, are brought to the forefront.

We are particularly displeased that these honest questions being asked by the Police Club, and we might add by a growing number of residents, should draw the unnecessary attack launched by Mr. Stocker.

SURELY THE TOWN BOARD wants citizen and governmental reaction to the programs it proposes.

The Police Club not only has the right, but also the obligation, to express its views on a proposal which would demand great police cooperation.

Instead of attacking the Police Club for its views, the Town Board should welcome the comments and take them under advisement.

The police suggestion about a local referendum on the issue in 1975 seems especially reasonable.

# Hoffman to give paramedic views

11/20  
R-A

The Town of Tonawanda Police Club, which has voiced strong opposition to the town's paramedic program, plans to hear the views of Police Chief Lawrence A. Hoffman Jr. on the issue at its meeting Dec. 4, and said it hopes "he has something new to tell us."

The club also said it will "bear no grudge" against Norman L. Stocker, town labor relations director, for publicly attempting to link the club's stand with current labor negotiations.

A club spokesman said the chief requested time to speak to the membership.

"We sincerely hope that he has something new to tell us," the club said in a statement issued today. "Police club representatives have questioned Chief Hoffman on many occasions in the past on the paramedic issue, and to the present time we have heard nothing that we could consider a satisfactory answer.

"Quite frankly, we think it is about time that someone with the ultimate responsibility for the paramedic program begins answering the questions we have raised," the club continued.

"It seems to us that the 'buck stops' at the Town Board level, and we wonder how long they intend to insulate themselves from the controversy," the statement added.

"Unfortunately this controversy has resulted in what could have been a serious impediment to the contract negotiations between the town and police club," it continued.

Mr. Stocker, the town labor relations director, last week made remarks attempting to link the club's opposition to the paramedic program with the town's refusal to grant a 25 per cent pay increase to police.

"Mr. Stocker made some remarks that never should have been made," the club said.

Its statement added:

"The police club, however, takes the point of view that it must do

everything possible to clear away any obstacle that stands in the way of successful negotiations.

"Both the citizens of the town and the members of the police club deserve a settlement as quickly as possible and with as little commotion as possible.

"Any further bickering over Mr. Stocker's unfortunate remarks will only serve as a detriment to the negotiations. We have, therefore, contacted Supervisor (James V.) Ryan and Mr. Stocker to inform them that the police club will approach future negotiations as though the remarks had never been made.

"We will bear no grudge. As far as we are concerned, Mr. Stocker's integrity as a negotiator is intact."

# Town Board on firing

By TOM ERNST  
NEWS Staff Writer

The Tonawanda Town Board's spending of \$23,000 to give itself and other elected officials a pay hike and \$150,000 to establish a paramedic unit drew the wrath of residents last night.

The board listened for more than two hours as residents griped about spending increases — and a resulting tax hike — during a public hearing in the Municipal Building on the town's proposed 1975 budget.

If adopted in its present form, the budget would increase town spending by about \$2.4 million — from the current \$17,583,775 to \$19,946,356.

The budget proposal calls for tax hikes of \$5.73 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for taxpayers living outside Kenmore and a hike of \$3.11 for village residents.

It would increase taxes for village residents from the current \$12.97 per \$1,000 to \$16.08. Residents outside the village would pay \$23.44, compared with the current rate of \$17.71.

Salaries of the six councilmen would be hiked from \$6,750 to \$8,500 next year. The supervisor's salary would go from \$19,125 to \$23,000.

The pay hikes were recommended by an ad hoc committee composed of town residents. The committee was appointed by the town board.

One speaker among about 20 who were heard, drew applause as he denounced the board for the pay hike. Eugene Roberts of 402 Highland Ave., pointed out that the councilmen's part-time jobs pay more than is earned by some people working full-time.

B.S. Nadiak of 132 Hoover Ave., Kenmore, said the board is in a leadership position and during inflationary

times giving itself a pay increase is no way to lead.

Donald Maxwell of 132 Chalmers Ave. was the lone speaker to support the pay hike. He pointed out that the board members haven't had a pay increase in three years and told the audience of about 60 that none of them have gone that long without a raise.

Other speakers concentrated on the paramedic unit. Several said the whole program is unnecessary and that the first-aid service provided by town police is sufficient.

Mr. Roberts said he questioned starting the program now, during a time of inflation.

Supervisor James V. Ryan replied that the timing is a matter of judgment.

"When do you start saving lives?" he asked. "We think the time is now."

George Ciancio of 95 Canterbury Lane said the spending package is going to contribute to inflation and asked the board to review the budget again and look for reductions.

Later he said it might be time for the board to spend some of the surpluses it may have accumulated.

Lloyd Olson of 216 Vicksburg Ave. asked if the board has given any consideration to the fact that some people are out of work and may not be able to pay their taxes.

Supervisor Ryan pointed out that the town is involved in a federally funded program to provide jobs. As far as collecting taxes goes, however, the supervisor said that it's up to the county and there is nothing that can be done "at this plateau of government."

Councilman Harry E. Goss contended that there was no

## line at budget hearing

way the town can lower taxes without diminishing service. Mr. Olson said perhaps it's time to cut some services.

Two women speakers contended that there is little point in the public protesting to the board, because it won't pay any attention to the remarks being made anyway.

Supervisor Ryan promised, however, that the board would go back and restudy the budget and try to make further cuts. The town must adopt a budget by Nov. 20, he said.

As the various town board members discussed spending plans in their particular areas of responsibility, Councilman Thomas J. Kelly pointed out that the Engineering Department's proposed budget has increased by \$250,000.

The entire increase, he said, is attributed to expenses the town incurs for construction of its proposed \$73 million secondary sewage treatment plant. The town will eventually get most of the money back, he explained, in the form of federal and state aid.

Later he was asked by Paul Lowrie of 86 Linden Ave. if the whole pure waters program is really necessary.

Councilman Kelly replied that Congress mandated the program, not the town, and there is little choice but to go along. He said the town board members would face criminal penalties if they didn't construct the plant.

During his statement, Supervisor Ryan said a half-million-dollar cut in federal revenue-sharing funds, inflation and wage hikes for town employees all contribute to the increased taxes.

He said the board originally received fund requests from department heads that would have caused the tax rate to increase by \$11.

The proposed tax hike was later chopped to \$7.16 and further review by the town board lowered the figure to the current \$5.73, he continued.

Combining this year's increase with last year's tax cut, averages out to a tax increase of \$1.86 for the two years, Mr. Ryan said.

Councilman Kelly repeated the complaint he has often made in the past that towns are discriminated against by the federal and state governments' revenue-sharing and per-capita aid formulas.

He said the town furnishes the same services as a city and if it received the same revenues, the board would be cutting taxes this year by between \$12 and \$13.

Mr. Kelly said the town has no control over such increases as 7 per cent for Social Security benefits, 9 per cent for state retirement plan costs and 40 per cent for workmen's compensation.

Councilman Gordon H. Tresch said an \$81,000 increase in the Assessor's Office budget is attributable to the fact that three local businesses are suing the town for assessment reductions and the money is necessary to retain the professional services necessary to fight the suits.

He said the suits represent between \$9 million and \$10 million in taxes and so are well worth fighting.

Councilman E. William Miller pointed out that the town's swimming pools and ice skating rinks are all between 15 and 18 years old and the Recreation and Parks Departments are being faced with constantly increasing maintenance costs.

News of:  
**Kenmore  
Town of Tonawanda  
Erie County  
Amherst**

## **Police charges 'sour grapes,' town exec says**

Yesterday's statement by the Town of Tonawanda Police Club opposing the town's new paramedic unit was labeled "sour grapes" today by Norman L. Stocker, town labor relations director.

Mr. Stocker, who has been responsible for setting up the program and also represents the town in its current contract negotiations with the police, said he feels the statement was prompted by the town's refusal to grant the policemen a 25 per cent pay increase.

Among the points raised by the police club was that the officers have been performing the same rescue function over the years and there is no justification for the town spending \$150,000 to initiate the program.

Mr. Stocker said he agrees the police do a good job, but said there is a limit to what they can do because they are not supervised by a doctor and they don't have the sophisticated training and equipment the paramedics will have when the system becomes operational in April.

Town Supervisor James V. Ryan said he didn't want to comment until the entire Town Board has studied the Police Club's statement. He said he expects the board will issue a statement.

The supervisor did say, however, that he has the highest regard for the men of the police club and doesn't believe that "greed" motivated the statement.

If the police club is concerned about saving tax money, he said, perhaps it should concentrate some of its efforts on means of reducing the Police Department's budget.

Buffalo Courier

# Police Club Hits Paramedic Plan

By JOE WILHELM

The Town of Tonawanda Police Club on Monday announced its opposition to a town paramedic program as unnecessary and hit the selection of trainees.

In response, Norman J. Stocker, town labor relations director, who also helped plan the emergency care program to start in April, termed the police criticism a result of the town's refusal to grant a 25 per cent pay raise to police.

Stocker said, "The police are mad. They want a 25 per cent increase in pay, and the request is outrageous. They think they should be getting the \$150,000 cost of the paramedic program."

A press release from the Town Police Club said members at a monthly meeting unanimously opposed the specialized emergency medical care program "both as taxpayers and policemen."

### Expense to Taxpayers

"The things that a paramedic can do that trained police officers cannot do are so seldom encountered that there can be no justification for the huge additional expense the program places on the taxpayer," the statement said.

Stocker pointed out that currently there are two police cars per shift equipped with emergency first aid equipment. The paramedic program would have a staff of nine para-

medics, on a work week yet to be established, with telemetry equipment in communication with the emergency room at Kenmore Mercy Hospital.

He also denied another contention by police that the town has no plans for a backup unit if the one paramedic vehicle is out of commission. He said a back-up unit would be obtained within hours of a malfunction or a spare vehicle would be maintained by the town, with details still being clarified.

### Civil Service Procedures

The police club also charged that Civil Service selection procedures were bypassed in hiring nine trainees; that the town plans to hire a total of 18 overall, instead of the nine already announced and in training, and that the posts were not advertised to recruit veterans with medical training.

Stocker said Civil Service approval to class the paramedics as noncompetitive was obtained and no exam is necessary.

He added that only nine, possibly 10, paramedics will be hired; and that veterans are included among those selected and interviewed by physicians working with the program.

The program will be operated under a contract between the town and Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Associates, a private group of doctors who run the hospital emergency service. The paramedics will be employees of the town under another contract. It provides that the paramedics would have to reimburse the town for training costs if they leave the employ within certain periods of time.

The paramedics are being paid \$8,000 a year while training for six months and will receive \$12,000 a year when the sophisticated emergency care program starts in April. Town officials have estimated the program can save a dozen lives of heart patients a year, and stressed it is not designed as an ambulance service.

The police club pledged it would do all it can to endeavor to put the paramedic program on the ballot next November. Town Atty. Peter D. Cook said there is no specific authority for a referendum but it is possible, pending further research, that the board might be able to call for an advisory referendum.

# Paramedic Plan Assailed By Tonawanda Police

The Town of Tonawanda Police Club today vowed to fight establishment of the town's paramedic program, charging that it wastes tax dollars.

The club, which represents members of the Tonawanda Police Department, voted to oppose the paramedic plan and to try to upset it in a referendum next November.

Brian P. Shields, club president, said the club opposes the paramedic project for a half-dozen major reasons.

Under the paramedic program, which was started by the Town Board, 18 persons are undergoing training at Kenmore Mercy Hospital and the State University of Buffalo Medical School.

NINE OF the 18 trainees are slated to comprise the paramedic corps, after they are certified as emergency medical technicians. The paramedics, town officials said, will work out of Police Headquarters on Sheridan Dr.

Opposition to the program has surfaced at a number of recent Town Board meetings.

The Police Club argued that "the things that a paramedic can do that trained police officers cannot do are so seldom encountered that there can be no justification for the huge

additional expense that the program places on the taxpayer."

Nine of the 18 trainees are on the town payroll and are slated to receive \$4000 pay each during a six-month training period. After certification, each is slated to receive a \$12,000 annual salary.

TOWN OFFICIALS have pegged the first-year cost of the program at \$190,000.

The Police Club said it opposed the project for these other reasons:

- Failure to recruit paramedics through civil service procedures.

- Failure to advertise the jobs for veterans who served in Vietnam.

- "Use of the Kenmore Mercy Hospital Emergency Department (as) the only facility that the paramedics will work through," and it is operated by a private corporation.

- The Club's doubts that "only nine paramedics will be hired." They claim that police officers feel all 18 trainees will be hired for the program.

- The town's failure to present a contingency plan if the one vehicle currently slated for the paramedic operation becomes inoperable.

The paramedic operation is scheduled to begin next April.

# Paramedic critics are

Criticism of the Town of Tonawanda's recently authorized paramedic program brought some sharply worded replies Monday from the president of the private corporation that runs the Kenmore Mercy Hospital emergency room.

Dr. Joseph Takats, president of Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Associates — the firm through which paramedic-handled patients will receive hospital treatment — said a lot of "ignorance has been pervading conversations" regarding the setup.

The worth of the system has been borne out in several other areas of the country, he said during a meeting of the Town of Tonawanda Board in the Municipal Building.

He said a volunteer system couldn't provide as high a level of service as the paid paramedics will, because volunteers don't have "the incidence of exposure" to the type of cases the paramedics will handle.

Dr. Takats also had some strong criticism for the Town of Tonawanda Police Club, which last week announced its opposition to the program. The club also criticized Town Labor Relations Director Norman L. Stocker for what it claimed was his relating the paramedic issue with Police Club-town contract negotiations.

In apparent reference to published statements by the club, Dr. Takats said, "I refute those slanderous articles" which appeared in local newspapers, and which, he added, could be the basis for legal action.

The physician said hospital doctors will train the paramedics, but neither the hospital nor corporation will benefit from services furnished by the paramedics.

Concerning the Police Club's complaint that the paramedics won't have Civil Service status, Dr. Takats said those responsible for the program want to be sure they can get rid of any persons who don't follow orders, something which Civil Service status wouldn't allow.

He noted that much of the training the paramedics are receiving is being donated and said he has contributed over

## Record-A

28 PAGES — 3 SECTIONS

KENMORE, N. Y. 14217 WED

# rapped at board meeting

1,000 hours of his own time so far.

In conclusion, Dr. Takats said the community stands to benefit from the program and called for an end to the "internal squabble."

The hospital's position on the matter was voiced by Dr. John Donohue, medical chief of staff at Kenmore Mercy.

He said the hospital wants to make its services and facilities available to the public, and will do so — whether or not there is a paramedic unit.

During other portions of the discussion, Jo Ann Fik of 27 Westgate Road said she isn't completely opposed to the paramedic program, but is opposed to the way the program was initiated and the fact that the people weren't asked if they wanted it.

She disputed statistics given by the town concerning the number of emergency calls the unit could be expected to handle.

The town, she said, cited 33 calls per day, but that her checks with town police and the Kenmore Volunteer Fire Department revealed that emergency calls average only

about five a day.

Among her other concerns was the fact that there will only be one vehicle for the paramedics.

Supervisor James V. Ryan responded that a backup unit could be available within a "matter of hours" from the firm slated to furnish the town's vehicle.

Councilman Thomas J. Kelly interjected some information on the system's estimated \$150,000 cost for the first year. The figure, he said, represents about 2 per cent of the town's general fund budget and amounts to a cost to residents of about 30 cents per home, per month.

John Krupczyk of 430 Two Mile Creek Road asked if the town is considering holding a referendum over the issue.

Town Attorney Peter D. Cook noted that he previously had indicated that it might be possible to hold a referendum.

That, Mr. Cook said, was his off-the-cuff reaction, and that further research has shown "there is no authority whatsoever for a referendum" on the issue.

# Advertiser

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1974

20 CENTS

C-E - 4/15/74

# A Conversation With:



## Norman J. Stocker

Norman J. Stocker, director of labor relations for the Town of Tonawanda, also is coordinator of a committee which studied the town's new paramedics program. The program, aimed at saving lives, has been the focus of lively controversy during recent Town Board sessions. He shares his views on the whys and wherefores of the program that will be in full operation by April 1.

By GRACE GODDARD

**C-E—What is the prime goal of this program?**

Mr. Stocker — Basically, to provide the public with the best possible and most immediate emergency care.

**C-E—How many prospective paramedics are involved in training, and are they being paid while training?**

Mr. Stocker — There are 18 attending classes at the Town of Tonawanda Police Headquarters. Of these, nine are being paid—they were our first choices. Ten others were offered the course at their own expense with full understanding that they might only be called if any of the nine decided to discontinue or were unable to meet the requirements. In such an event, there'd be these 10 at that same point of training to draw from. One of the volunteers already has dropped out.

**C-E—Of what duration is this training program, what are subjects taught and by whom?**

Mr. Stocker—Six months, amounting to 675 hours of rigorous training that includes biochemistry, anatomy, physiology and pharmacology taught by physicians, University of Buffalo Medical School professors and other trained emergency medical persons.

**C-E—How much will it cost?**

Mr. Stocker—if the entire program was put on the tax rolls, the first year it would cost \$150,000. But we've been receiving contributions that will substantially reduce that cost.

**C-E—What are the contributions?**

Mr. Stocker — A defibrillator is a gift from Mennen-Greatbach Electronics Inc. of Clarence. It's management stated "If we cannot please people in our own backyard, we can't hope to please the world." The firm intends to work with our paramedics and study the operation in action. This will help the firm design future changes. General Motors Town of Tonawanda plant plans to give money for the paramedic vehicle's cab and chassis. Jeffrey Fell offered \$450 for medical supplies and \$800 is from the Buffalo Alumni Group of Alpha Phi fraternity. We also have well substantiated hopes of

other community organizational support. Four in training are salaried by the Manpower Fund.

**C-E—What's the overall concept of the program and what medical problems will occasion its services?**

Mr. Stocker — It amounts to a mobile emergency room that will bring the doctors' eyes, ears, minds and hands to the side of a patient whether at home, at work or on the street in the event of severe trauma cases. Included are excessive bleeding, choking, strokes, heart attacks, electric shock, being struck by lightning, drownings and accidents where shock has already set in.

**C-E—Will the inhalator cars or personnel of the town's fine police department be replaced by this program?**

Mr. Stocker—Absolutely not. If anything, we plan to seek to improve both police training and equipment.

**C-E—How can these doctors be, as you say, brought to the side of the patient?**

Mr. Stocker—Kenmore Mercy Hospital is now staffed 24 hours day and night with full-time physicians—not residents or interns—who specialize in emergency medicine. This mobile unit will, by electronic equipment, be in contact with the Emergency Room and also the Coronary Section of the hospital and its new Cardiac Intensive Care Unit. So what we're really doing is putting a patient in not only the Emergency Room, but if necessary also the Cardiac Unit while he's being attended to at home or wherever tragedy threatens.

**C-E—Why has this program stirred up so much controversy?**

Mr. Stocker—I personally feel that the community doesn't know the whole story. These are costly times and the Town Board has always encouraged residents to attend meetings to express their opinions. But what it really boils down to is this: How much is even one life saved worth? If I appear biased on this, it's for a very personal reason. My own Dad wouldn't be here today if he hadn't been in hospital where a defibrillator was available when he had a heart attack. If at home, he wouldn't have had a chance.

# Concerned citizens form group to challenge paramedic program

A newly-formed Concerned Citizens Group has announced plans to send representatives to Monday Night's Tonawanda Town Board meeting to pose at least 13 questions about the town's new paramedic program.

The program has come under fire at several recent board meetings.

The group, which urged town residents to turn out for the session, has supplied Town Supervisor James V. Ryan with a copy of the questions, it reported.

1) What method was used to determine the need for a paramedic program? Was a study done? If so, why was it not made available to the public in accordance with existing public access laws?

2) Why was a more concrete appraisal of public opinion concerning this program not sought prior to its initiation?

3) How was it possible to begin this program prior to the acceptance of the budget which appropriated the funds for the project? What money was used to pay the trainees and instructors prior to the passing of the budget?

4) Since federal funds are available, why were they not applied for? Would this not have relieved the town taxpayers of a burden? Was it because you would then have to conform to federal specifications concerning recruiting, hiring, training, type of equipment and use of area hospitals?

5) The papers have often quoted the costs of the program as \$150,000. Does this figure include the costs of building housing for this group and their equipment, the cost of malpractice insurance, and the cost of additional vehicles?

6) In light of the possibility of providing additional training and

equipment to programs already functioning within the town, to enable them to perform the same services at less cost, why was this alternative not chosen?

7) Where are the paramedics to be based and to whom are they reporting?

8) What steps were taken to adequately inform all interested and qualified persons in this area that paramedic positions would be available? For example, were Vietnam Veterans notified through the local veterans groups?

9) Are any of the people presently in training under the Federal Manpower Act? If so, doesn't this place the program under federal jurisdiction?

10) Who will mobilize the paramedic

unit? Will the public be able to contact the paramedics directly?

11) Will the Town Maintenance Department be able to service the paramedics equipment? If not, who must service it?

12) Has the medical profession of this community been consulted concerning this program? If so, have they given their tacit approval to this program?

13) Will this program not be a duplicate of the Erie County Program?

A spokesman for the group said it was formed specifically to look into the paramedic program and may not be continued unless other vital issues warrant it.

The secretary is Carol Saliba.

# Paramedic criticism re

By TOM ERNST  
NEWS Staff Writer

Debate over the Town of Tonawanda's new paramedic program continued last night at the town board meeting, with two audience members exchanging some sharp remarks with board members.

The program, slated to cost \$150,000 the first year, will provide nine paramedics to furnish sophisticated emergency medical treatment and transport victims to Kenmore Mercy Hospital.

It has met with criticism from some residents over the past several weeks. The critics claim it is too expensive and also unnecessary because of the first aid provided by town police and ambulance services.

During the board meeting in the Municipal Building, George Ciancio of

95 Canterbury Lane challenged what he said was Councilman Harry E. Goss' use of the word "politics" in connection with conversations the councilman had with residents.

Mr. Goss, in response to a question from another audience member, had said he hadn't been aware of any opposition to the program immediately after it was first announced last spring.

He said he had numerous informal discussions with various residents who were all in favor of the program.

Mr. Ciancio said he was taking issue with the councilman's use of the word "politics," which indicated to him that politics and the paramedic issue are related.

The councilman said Mr. Ciancio was wrong, that the discussions didn't involve politics and that he had said

just the opposite of what Mr. Ciancio claimed.

Councilman Goss said that what he actually said was the discussions were with people not involved in politics.

To clear up the debate, a tape recording being made for compiling the official minutes of the meeting was replayed.

The tape showed Mr. Goss had said the discussions were with "people having nothing to do with politics."

The councilman indicated the tape showed that Mr. Ciancio was wrong but Mr. Ciancio replied that "the implication is still there."

At that point Councilman Goss became visibly angry and said he wanted an apology from Mr. Ciancio. Mr. Ciancio remained silent.

During the debate, Councilman Wilfred Goddard Jr. interjected that it

## newed at board meeting

was Mr. Ciancio who was bringing politics into the issue.

(Mr. Ciancio is an active Democrat and ran unsuccessfully for the town board in November, 1973. The Town Board is all Republican.)

Supervisor James V. Ryan said he is aware of Mr. Ciancio's interest in the program and added that Mr. Ciancio's son had applied for a job as a paramedic.

During another portion of the debate, John Krupczyk of 430 Two Mile Creek Road said residents weren't given sufficient information on the program and the board should sponsor a public hearing.

Supervisor Ryan said there had been plenty of publicity, both through the newspapers and from talks town representatives had given before civic organizations and the fire

departments.

Councilman Thomas J. Kelly, referring to the fact that residents have been voicing complaints about the program for the past several board meetings, said "we have been having a hearing for the past three weeks."

Mr. Krupczyk belittled newspaper coverage of the program and said the newspapers are censored.

During other discussions of the program, Alice Rowland of 23 Westgate Road asked why the paramedics are being trained in the use of firearms if they won't be carrying weapons.

Town Labor Relations Director Norman J. Stocker said the paramedics received a basic firearms course from the police to familiarize them with weapons so they won't be afraid of them.

Police Chief Lawrence A. Hoffman Jr. said it is possible the paramedics might encounter a suicide victim and have to handle the weapon the victim used.

He said that the paramedic trainees were taught to recognize whether or not a weapon is loaded and given other basic information.

The police chief said the weapons familiarization course was the same one offered to wives of town policemen.

William Mayer of 146 Stoneleigh asked if the board has given any thought to dropping the paramedic program.

Supervisor Ryan referred to last week's announcement in which the board affirmed its intention of going ahead with the program, despite some adverse reaction on the part of residents.

*Town News  
12/19/74*

# Paramedic questions unanswered at meeting

By TOM ERNST  
NEWS Staff Writer

Town of Tonawanda residents turned out last night to hear answers to questions raised over the paramedic program, and were told the answers would come in writing later this week.

Councilman Thomas J. Kelly, acting supervisor in the absence of the vacationing Supervisor James V. Ryan, also said the Town Board will conduct a pair of public informational sessions the week of Dec. 16 in the hope of clearing up all the controversy which has arisen over the program in recent weeks.

At least 80 residents attended the town board meeting in the Municipal Building, and several expressed dissatisfaction at being told by Mr. Kelly that the 13 questions posed by a citizens' group last week would be answered in writing.

The questions were published in Friday's NEWS. Councilman Kelly said the answers would be furnished to local newspapers when they are completed.

The acting supervisor noted that the board had received the questions in writing and now wants to take the time to answer them thoroughly and completely in writing.

Several speakers said the board should answer the questions immediately, since they had taken the trouble to come to the meeting during a snowstorm.

Mr. Kelly several times repeated the board's reasons for answering them in writing.



**Mrs. Saliba poses questions**

... During well-attended Town Board session

1546 Enc News - Dec 9, 1974

# Tonawanda Vows Reply On Paramedic Program

BY TOM KELLY

The Tonawanda Town Board Monday evening refused to yield to demands for information on the town's paramedic program but will reply in writing to specific questions and will conduct two public meetings on the project.

Deputy Supervisor Thomas J. Kelly, who presided in the absence of Supervisor James V. Ryan, told a capacity audience in the Kenmore Municipal Bldg. that detailed answers are being prepared to 13 questions submitted by Mrs. George F. Saliba, 88 Carpenter Ave.

In addition, he said, two meetings to disseminate information on the program will be held during the week of Dec. 16. One will be at Kenmore West High School and one at Kenmore East High School, with the dates to be announced.

Mr. Kelly said a film on how paramedics operate will be shown and everyone involved in creating the program will be present to answer "any and all questions."

MR. KELLY told Mrs. Saliba her list of questions was received on Wednesday and the board decided the best procedure would be to "put all the answers in writing."

"If you are not entirely satisfied with answers I urge you to come back for elaboration," Mr. Kelly said. "If you have any additional questions we welcome them also."

A number of persons called upon the board to respond immediately to the questions but the deputy supervisor said the decision to reply in writing would stand. He said both the questions and answers will be released to the public.

Councilman Harry E. Goss

told Mrs. Saliba that verbal responses at the meeting to each of the 13 questions could result in long and confused debate and the board's replies could be lost in the confusion.

THE PROGRAM is scheduled to begin next April and 18 paramedics now are in training. The estimated cost in 1975 is \$160,000 but this figure is expected to be substantially reduced by contributions of equipment by area industry and business.

In other matters, the board will conduct a public hearing 8 P.M. Dec. 16 on the recommendation of the Planning Board to rezone the northwest corner of Colvin Blvd. and W. Grimsby Rd. from first residential to restricted business to permit the construction of a drive-in bank.

After a public hearing, the board ordered that "No Parking" signs be installed on the south side of Highland Ave. from Parker Blvd. to Parkhurst Blvd.

In other action the board:

- Granted permission to Manufacturers Hanover Trust Co. to connect alarm equipment to police headquarters.
- Appointed Schirgbeck, 163 Parkwood Ave.; Philip Nussbaum, 148 Henderson Ave.; and Francis S. Ryan, 377 Moulton Ave., as crossing guards, and Richard Attelle, 111 Keller Ave., Kenmore, as recreation activity leader.
- Engaged A. Lindley as counsel in the proposed sale of Tripi Alley to adjoining property owners.
- Authorized the sale of a surplus addressograph machine to the Brighton Fire District for \$300.
- Authorized an application for state aid for the improvement of Delaware Rd.
- Adopted in memory of Carlton D. Chas. a former town supervisor who died on Thursday.

He said if residents still have questions they are free to raise them at either future board meetings or at the informational sessions to be held at Kenmore East and West High Schools on consecutive nights on dates to be announced.

Mr. Kelly said representatives of the town, Kenmore Mercy Hospital and others involved in the program will be present at the schools to answer questions.

Councilman Kelly also said a 28-minute film of a paramedic operation in Jacksonville, Fla., will be shown at the planned sessions.

The acting supervisor said the board decided to schedule the meetings due to the continuing controversy over the program and because the board has been asked numerous questions at the last several meetings.

The secretary of a newly formed "Concerned Citizens Group," Mrs. Carol Saliba of 88 Carpenter Ave., explained that her group isn't necessarily opposed to the program, but does have questions it wants answered.

Mrs. Saliba said her group feels the program was put into effect without any prior information being given to the public.

Mr. Kelly replied that a story on the program appeared in The NEWS last

April, and that subsequent stories appeared in all area newspapers during the summer and fall.

Mrs. Saliba also said her group wants details on the financial aspects of the program. She noted the program is budgeted at \$150,000 for the first year.

She went on to say that each of the nine paramedics, now in training, will be paid an annual salary of \$12,000. This results in a payroll of \$108,000 and leaves only a little more than \$40,000 for operating expenses, she pointed out. She asked whether this would be sufficient.

Mr. Kelly said a breakdown of the cost estimates will be included in the board's written response.

Several residents complained because the answers weren't available immediately. Mr. Kelly said the board just hasn't had time to formulate complete answers.

He said, however, he would answer, for the second or third time, the question of a garage for the emergency vehicle to be used in the program.

He said the town estimates it will cost about \$8,500 to build an extension to the police department building to shelter the paramedic vehicle and also a town signal truck.

Even if there were no paramedic

unit, the addition would be needed, he said. The \$8,500 isn't part of the paramedic budget but rather comes from funds left over when the police station was built several years ago, he said.

After several other complaints about the lack of immediate answers, William Long of 1992 Sheridan Drive, one of the nine paramedics, said it isn't the board's responsibility to know every aspect of the program. He said the board delegates responsibility to the various department heads.

(The nine paramedics are being paid the equivalent of \$8,000 a year while they are currently undergoing a six-month training program. Mr. Long is being paid \$12,000 and is responsible for coordinating the training program.)

Mrs. Saliba noted that what Mr. Long said may be true, but since the board has been getting "flack" over the program it should have made sure it was fully informed.

John Perryman of 201 Liston Road asked if there was a possibility that the program might be scrapped if the opposition continues.

Mr. Kelly replied that the board is hopeful residents will come to appreciate the program and the service it will render at a cost of about a penny a day to each household.

*An Editorial*

## Controversy Over Paramedics

Despite its lifesaving appeal, the paramedic program planned for the Town of Tonawanda seems to have stirred up a surprising amount of controversy.

Although the Town Board maintains that it has adhered to an aboveboard approach, there are obviously many residents who feel that a full disclosure of the program's details needs to be made. Thus we welcome the board's sound—albeit belated—decision to hold two informational meetings during the week of Dec. 16. That development is unlikely to satisfy those who have demanded a referendum on the issue—state law does not provide for a public vote on such a matter, and in any case every issue cannot be put to referendum—but it should go a long way toward helping town residents understand what the program is all about.

Under the paramedic program, which is not designed to replace ambulance service, specialized emergency medical care would be made available to critically ill or injured persons via a mobile unit manned by trained personnel and containing electronic equipment linked up with Kemore Mercy Hospital's emergency room and cardiac intensive-care unit.

Some town residents have said that

this is not time to initiate new programs. Perhaps so. But if the program saves lives (and town officials have estimated that perhaps a dozen lives a year could be saved), and budgeted expenditure of \$150,000 for 1975 would be money well spent. In terms of its being under close medical supervision, the program would be the first of its kind in Western New York. It suggests being worth a try, and presumably the program could be dropped after, say, a year if it failed to prove itself.

But the public needs to know what its tax dollars are being spent for. The matter has been discussed at a number of board meetings, and the board supplies speakers to groups which are interested in hearing about the program, but there remains a good deal of confusion and misinformation.

The paramedics are now in training, and the program is scheduled to be fully operational by April 1. Between now and then, the board has an obligation to lay all the facts on the table and to seek to assure town residents that what is planned is in their interest. The informational meetings set for this month are a step in the right direction, and we hope that many residents avail themselves of this opportunity to get their questions answered and otherwise to learn about the paramedic program.

*File Dec 6,  
1974*

*Courier  
Express*

# Hoffman again explains

A better understanding of the Town of Tonawanda's new paramedic program will hopefully help overcome the objections raised by the Town Police Club, Police Chief Lawrence A. Hoffman Jr. said today.

Chief Hoffman is scheduled to meet tonight with the club, which serves as both a bargaining unit and social organization for the 115 officers on the force below the ranks of chief and assistant chief.

The club accepted the chief's offer to meet after it raised strong objections to the program several weeks ago.

Chief Hoffman said he foresees the meeting as primarily a question and answer session which will hopefully gain the club's acceptance of the program by answering the objections it has raised.

Some of the points raised by the club were posed to chief Hoffman today and he gave his responses.

The club pointed out that police have traditionally performed rescue functions in the town. It said all officers have a minimum of advanced

first aid training "and a large number of the personnel are trained as emergency medical technicians."

Chief Hoffman said only 19 of the 69 patrolmen on the force are trained as emergency medical technicians.

On the same point, the club said, "the things that a paramedic can do that trained police officers cannot do are so seldom encountered that there can be no justification for the huge additional expense the program places on the taxpayer."

In answer, Chief Hoffman said it would be very difficult to come up with exact statistics on the number of emergency calls that are beyond the capability of a policeman.

However, he said a records check has indicated that for the six-month period beginning Jan. 1, there were 411 emergency calls in the town that the paramedic team could have responded to.

The police chief cited a national study that indicates nearly 70 per cent of the deaths caused by heart attacks occur outside a hospital, and said a

paramedic unit in Seattle was credited with saving 136 lives during a two and one-half year period.

Many cases of extreme shock or excessive bleeding are beyond the capability of an emergency medical technician, he said.

The paramedics, "will be the eyes, ears and hands of a physician at an emergency," he said, and will in effect "take emergency room facilities to the scene of an emergency."

"We don't have any police officers trained to do that, nor do we intend to have any," he said.

The chief said the police will still make the initial response to an emergency call and then determine if the situation warrants the paramedics.

The club also complained that "no effort was made by the town to actively advertise the positions to the young Americans who served the nation so well as medical personnel with the military during the Vietnam war."

The police chief said he doesn't know how many of the 18 paramedics

## medic program function

*Town News 12/04/74*

currently undergoing training actually served as medics in Vietnam. However, he said, nine of the 18 are veterans and six served in Vietnam.

Another point raised by the club was that the privately-operated Kenmore Mercy Hospital emergency room is the only medical facility the paramedics will work through.

The club charged that while not answering calls, the paramedics will "supposedly" spend their time training in the emergency room. "In reality," the club said, "they will be providing a service to the privately owned emergency room at public expense."

Chief Hoffman denied that the paramedics will be providing any service to the emergency room and said they will only be there for training purposes.

Most of the time, he said, they will be stationed at the police station. When they are not answering calls, the paramedics will be expected to participate in training programs for police officers and the public.

The club complained that "we do not think the town is being honest in saying that only nine paramedics will be hired. Eighteen are being trained, and we believe more than nine will be hired eventually."

Chief Hoffman said he foresees no reason why more than nine would be necessary in the foreseeable future, unless a second unit were added. That, he said, would probably only happen if the public requested a second unit.

There is a chance, he added, that a tenth paramedic might be added sometime in the future. That could occur if the paramedics negotiated a contract with the town giving them more than the two weeks vacation they are currently slated to receive, he said.

The final point raised by the club was that "the town has presented no emergency plan for operation of the program in the event the unit's one vehicle is laid up for mechanical or accidental reasons."

Chief Hoffman replied that the town has a tentative arrangement with the

supplier of the vehicle to have a backup unit available in a "matter of hours."

In the meantime, almost all the equipment in the paramedic vehicle could be transferred to another vehicle and the replacement vehicle would transport the paramedics and accident victims.

In a related matter, town labor relations director Norman J. Stocker yesterday said four of the nine paramedics hired have qualified for federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act funds.

The town has said no federal funds are involved in the program's \$150,000 budget for the first year.

The \$8,000 annual salaries the four are receiving while undergoing training are paid by CETA. When they complete training, they will be paid \$12,000 annually.

Since the town is only eligible to be reimbursed up to \$10,000 each, the difference when the paramedics complete their training, he said.

# Questions on Paramedic Program Answered for 'Concerned Citizens'

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Ryan

By ARCH LOWERY

The idea for a controversial Town of Tonawanda paramedic program, bearing a \$150,000 first-year cost, stemmed from the success of such projects in other parts of the country where they are saving lives, town officials said today.

Noting the local plan, scheduled for operation in 1975, had been thoroughly researched and formulated with community input, Deputy Town Supervisor Thomas J. Kelly released answers to questions presented to the Town Board Monday by Mrs. Carol Saliba, 88 Carpenter Ave., Kenmore, secretary for the Concerned Citizens Group.

He also announced two public informational meetings on the program for Dec. 17 in Kenmore East High School and Dec. 18 in Kenmore West High School, both at 8 P.M.

A FILM on a Jacksonville, Fla., program will be shown, he said. Panel discussions will follow.

Panel members will include personnel from the Tonawanda Town Board, the Police Department, Kenmore Mercy Hospital, the Emergency Medical Services Dept. of Erie County and town personnel to be charged with operation of the program.

With the paramedics program scheduled to begin next April, 18 technicians are now in training. Earlier, town officials predicted the initial \$150,000 cost would be substantially reduced by contributions of equipment by area industry and business.

Mr. Kelly said Town Supervisor James V. Ryan first got the paramedic program idea from reported successes in Columbus, O. He said such systems now exist in over 150 communities and "it was felt that a system such as this would greatly benefit this community."

the trainees and instructors prior to the passing of the budget?

"It was initially begun with contingency funds allocated in the 1974 budget for just such things . . . all expenditures in 1974, including trainees' salaries and instructor fees will come from the . . . fund (and) . . . the Federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act."

—Since federal funds are available, why were they not applied for?

"FEDERAL FUNDING . . . has been obtained for four trainees. The possibility of further . . . (aid) . . . was not recommended because of mandates and restrictions imposed."

—The (media) . . . often quoted the costs . . . as \$150,000. Does this figure include costs of building housing . . . and . . . equipment . . . insurance, and . . . vehicles?

"The figure of \$150,000 . . . includes all expenses other than those of a garage or additional vehicles . . . present insurance provides coverage . . . at no additional cost . . . the cost of the garage (\$8500) would come from funds allocated at the time the police building was built."

—In light of the possibility of providing additional training and equipment to program already functioning within the town to enable them to perform the same services at less cost, why was this alternative not chosen?

"IF THE reference . . . is to police and firefighters, the answer is that the doctors and other professionals have refused to accept the services of other than full-time, professionally trained paramedics."

—Where are the paramedics

to be based and to whom are they reporting?

—At police headquarters traffic bureau . . . their permanent assignment."

—What steps were taken to adequately inform all interested . . . persons . . . that paramedic positions would be available? . . . were Vietnam veterans notified through (the VA)?

ON APRIL 8 . . . news media carried reports . . . topic was discussed at town board meetings . . . town actively solicited . . . applications . . ."

—Are any of the people presently in training under the Federal Manpower Act? If so, doesn't this place the program under federal jurisdiction?

—Who will mobilize the paramedic unit? Will the public be able to contact (them) directly?

Through the Police Department communications network . . . direct contact by the public . . . is possible, but will not be standard procedure . . ."

—Will the town maintenance department be able to service the . . . equipment?

"VEHICLE WILL be serviced by town wherever possible . . ."

—Has the medical profession . . . been consulted concerning this program . . . have they given their tacit approval . . . ?

—The medical staff of Kenmore Mercy . . . and Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Associates . . . were constantly consulted . . . and support the program."

—Will this program not be a duplicate of the Erie County program?

"It is not a duplication . . . nor is there any comparable service provided . . ."

# Police Club says it's on

The Town of Tonawanda Police Club today accused the town of taking "retaliatory measures" and placing the club on its "enemies list" for opposing the new paramedic program.

In a statement, the club contended that Police Chief Lawrence A. Hoffman Jr.'s recent order prohibiting police from wearing town-supplied uniforms while working off-duty security jobs was prompted by the club's attitude toward the paramedic program.

Chief Hoffman said today he hasn't seen the statement and "would not want to comment upon it until I've had time to digest it." He added that he didn't want to "try any issues in the newspaper, especially if they are to be submitted to arbitration at a later time."

The police club statement said:

"The members of the Town of Tonawanda Police Club are of the opinion that the Town of Tonawanda is now taking retaliatory measures against the club, because of the club's recent statements in regard to the paramedic controversy.

"Chief of Police Lawrence Hoffman has issued a general order to all department personnel, which forbids the wearing of the police uniform for any part time work. The supposed reason for this action is the rising cost of uniform replacement, but Chief Hoffman has admitted to members of the club that the club's opposition to the paramedic program is partially responsible.

"Even without that admission we are highly suspicious of such a

complete policy reversal so soon after the police club's statements against the paramedic program. Apparently the members of the police club have been placed on the town's 'enemies list,' and are now to be subjected to the town's 'bag of dirty tricks.'

"The parallels between this situation and the tragic Watergate fiasco are quite clear.

"The town's action will of course place an economic hardship on the individual policemen and their families. Unfortunately it will also place a hardship on every citizen of the town.

"Off-duty policemen have in the past filled a need for police service at no cost to the taxpayer. They are employed by hospitals, schools, churches, banks, and other private

## town's 'enemies list'

businesses, and in the course of that employment they prevent crime, ensure public safety, and facilitate the flow of traffic.

"Their effectiveness in these situations depends in a large part in the recognition that is afforded by the regular police uniform. That effectiveness has now been compromised by the town in its decision to disallow the wearing of the uniform for part-time work.

"Unfortunately the need for these services still exists, and the public still has a right to these services. Now, however, when the public asks for these services they will have to be provided by the town. This can only be done by hiring more policemen, and that is a much more expensive proposition than replacing a worn-out uniform now and then.

"We think the town has made a dreadful mistake in approaching the problem in such a petty manner. We can, however, on our part assure the public that we will not be so small-minded as to retaliate in any manner that would endanger or inconvenience the public.

"At this point we must abide by the order, even though we are convinced it was not issued in good faith.

"We do have recourse, however. We intend to file an improper practice charge against the town with the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB), and we intend to file a grievance on the matter, which could also eventually be heard by PERB.

"In the meantime we do not regret our original statements on the paramedic issue one iota. In fact we are now more resolved than ever to

continue our efforts to force the Town Board into providing answers about the paramedic program.

"We will not be intimidated."

Today's statement follows a meeting last night between Chief Hoffman and the police club, in which Chief Hoffman was to answer questions from the members about the paramedic program.

According to Brian P. Shields, president of the police club, "We weren't told anything new of any impact that would warrant a change in our original attitude."

He went on to say that the club would still "push for a referendum" on the paramedic program, and that the members were in the process of researching "the legalistics of bringing the subject to a referendum."

# Town sets meetings, gives paramedic replies

The Tonawanda Town Board today announced that two informational meetings will be conducted to explain the town's new Paramedic program.

At the same time, the board submitted answers to the questions posed last week by a Concerned Citizens Group, which, in turn, has prepared and submitted a new set of questions based on the town's answers to the group's initial set of questions.

The first informational meeting will be conducted in the auditorium of Kenmore East High School at 8 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 17. The second meeting is set for the following night at 8 in the Kenmore West High School auditorium.

Film borrowed from the Jacksonville, Fla. Paramedic program will be shown at both meetings, followed by a panel discussion. Participants will include representatives of the Town Board, the Town Police Department, Kenmore Mercy Hospital, the Emergency Medical Services Department of Erie County and other town personnel who are involved in operation of the program.

The original questions submitted by the citizens' group and the town's answers follow:

**1. What method was used to determine the need for a Paramedic Program? Was a study done?**

(Town) Supervisor (James) Ryan, based upon an article in the Wall Street Journal, under the byline "Saving Lives," in the early months of 1974, began to develop the idea of a Paramedics Unit for the Town of Tonawanda. The article concerned Columbus, Ohio, and mentioned that such systems now exist in over 150 communities, including Jacksonville, Miami, Seattle, Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York. It was felt that a system such as this would greatly benefit this community.

Following preliminary discussion of the concept, the following committee was formed: Linda Frutig, RN, Emergency Room Supervisor, Kenmore Mercy Hospital; Lawrence Hoffman, Chief of Police; Richard Muscatello, Administrative Assistant, Kenmore Mercy Hospital; Norman Stocker, Director of Labor Relations, and Dr. Joseph Takats, Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Associates P.C.

The committee was to research, analyze and document all relevant material in such a system.

On April 8, 1974, the first of a continuing series of articles appeared in the news media announcing the intention of creating a Paramedic Unit in the Town. The article, "Paramedic Unit Is Goal In Town," appeared locally in the Tonawanda NEWS and Record-Advertiser. The article announced the Town "would like to see the personnel begin training by June 1 and the program in operation by January 1."

The committee conducted numerous meetings throughout the spring and summer with officials from Erie County, Kenmore Mercy Hospital, State University of New York at Buffalo, L.J. Raymart, Inc., among others. Additionally, material was garnered from areas where the system is operational: Seattle, Kansas City, and Jacksonville among others. Cost was considered, as well as funding under Federal and State programs. Dr. Kahn, cardiologist at Kenmore Mercy Hospital, made a six-month study of DOA's (dead on arrival) at Kenmore Mercy Hospital, finding "statistically, the venture appears to be justified in terms of lives saved."

Civic groups, volunteer firemen, and other interested parties were visited and had the program explained to them.

After careful consideration, the committee recommended to the town board that this service be made available to the citizens of the Town of

Thereafter, a detailed report, approximately 90 pages in length, was prepared by Norman Stocker and Lawrence Hoffman. This report was then submitted to the town board and was the foundation for the decision of the town board to proceed with this program.

**If so, why was it not made available to the public in accordance with existing public access laws?**

No one has ever requested a copy of the study referred to above. This document was prepared for internal purposes and contains certain privileged information in the form of employment applications.

**2. Why was a more concrete appraisal of public opinion concerning this program not sought prior to its initiation?**

During the 10 months that have passed since its consideration of this program, the committee and the town board have sought public opinion regarding the program. During the initial stages, support was obtained from such groups as the Kiwanis Club, the Lions Club, the Rotary Club, and other civic organizations. Personnel of the industry of this Town, such as Chevrolet and Lucidol, indicated their support for this program.

Initially, support was almost unsolicited. It is only of late that dissent has become apparent.

Programs of this kind are proven and currently working in over 150 communities throughout the United States. As a town noted for its pioneering background, we are always subject to criticism. That criticism, hopefully, is the result of misunderstanding which can be

resolved through more informational seminars in this town.

3. How was it possible to begin this program prior to the acceptance of the budget which appropriated the funds for the project? What money was used to pay the trainees and instructors prior to the passing of the budget?

The project was initially begun with contingency funds allocated in the 1974 budget for just such things as this program. The monies appropriated in the 1975 budget are for the continuation of the program.

All expenditures in 1974, including trainees' salaries and instructor's fees, will come from the contingency fund. Four of the Paramedics' salaries are being subsidized under the Federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). (See Appendix A.)

4. Since Federal funds are available, why were they not applied for? Would this not have relieved the town taxpayers of a burden? Was it because you would then have to conform to Federal specifications concerning recruiting, hiring, training, type of equipment and use of hospitals?

Federal funding under the CETA program has been obtained for four trainees. The possibility of further Federal and State funding was researched and not recommended because of mandates and restrictions imposed. The one key mandate that convinced the committee more than any other that such funding was undesirable, was the one requiring the unit to respond to areas of emergency on a regional rather than a town-village basis. The committee felt that this unit would best serve this town and village as a unit dedicated to only these municipalities.

In the areas of recruiting, hiring and training, the town met and exceeded any county, state, or federal standards to assure that highly capable people would be employed.

There is never a guarantee of federal funds to any reasonable degree

of certainty. It must be remembered that federal funds also come from the taxpayers' pockets. The question remains, "Is a human life, perhaps yours, worth less than a penny a day to the average taxpayer?" The committee answered, "Yes, emphatically."

5. The papers have often quoted the costs of the program as \$150,000. Does this figure include costs of building housing for this group and their equipment, the cost of malpractice insurance, and the cost of additional vehicles?

The figure of \$150,000 is the estimate of funds necessary to meet the expenses of the paramedics for the year 1975. This includes all expenses other than those of a garage or "additional vehicles." The town's present insurance provides coverage for this program at no additional cost to the town.

The cost of the garage facility for this unit, which is estimated at \$8,500, would come from funds allocated at the time the police building was built. The garage would be an addition to the proposed garage for a traffic signal vehicle at the westerly end of the existing police facilities at 1835 Sheridan Drive. The garage would probably have to be built for the signal truck, even if we had no paramedic program.

An additional vehicle or vehicles as you term them, are not necessary. Backup for the paramedic vehicle can temporarily come from an existing town vehicle in an emergency. Additionally, we are assured that, should the need arise, a vehicle comparable to the paramedic vehicle can be delivered as a replacement in a matter of hours.

6. In light of the possibility of providing additional training and equipment to programs already functioning within the town to enable them to perform the same services at less cost, why was this alternative not chosen?

If the reference in this question is to police officers and firefighters, the

answer is that the doctors and other professionals have refused to accept the services of other than full-time, professionally trained paramedics. The paramedics then become the eyes, ears and hands of a doctor at the scene of an emergency. The doctors have stated that when they put their malpractice insurance on the line, they insist upon having highly skilled personnel totally dedicated to the program. The town board, therefore, did not have the option of using the police officers or firemen.

7. Where are the paramedics to be based and to whom are they reporting?

The paramedics are based at police headquarters, 1835 Sheridan Drive. They are a permanent branch of the Police Department and are commanded by Capt. Norman E. Schultz and supervised by Lt. Harry L. Thorp, both of the Traffic Bureau. This is their permanent assignment.

8. What steps were taken to adequately inform all interested and qualified persons in this area that paramedic positions would be available? For example, were Vietnam veterans notified through the local veterans' groups?

Beginning on April 8, 1974, the news media carried reports of the paramedics program and its progress. The topic was discussed at town board meetings. The committee and the town actively solicited and encouraged people to submit applications to Mr. Stocker. Vietnam veterans were encouraged to submit applications. Contact was made with the New York State unemployment office for applicants to be referred to the town.

The result of these articles, press releases, news reports and other efforts was that there were 10 applicants for each of the available jobs. A good group for selection of employes was developed in the course of over six months of receiving these applications. A committee of doctors at Kenmore Mercy Hospital has approved each applicant.

Incidentally, of the original 18 paramedics accepted for training, nine

are veterans; six of the Vietnam conflict.

9. Are any of the people presently in training under the Federal Manpower Act? If so, doesn't this place the program under federal jurisdiction?

Yes, four of the nine paramedic trainees are under the Federal Manpower Act. Because of these federal funds, the titles and employes have been submitted to, and have actually been approved, by the federal government.

10. Who will mobilize the paramedic unit? Will the public be able to contact the paramedics directly?

The paramedics will be mobilized through the Police Department communications network. Direct contact by the public with the paramedics unit is possible, but will not be standard procedure, presuming that the question reflects the ability of the public to direct dial the paramedic unit.

11. Will the Town Maintenance Department be able to service the paramedics equipment? If not, who must service it?

The paramedics vehicle will be serviced by town personnel. Wherever possible, the talents of town personnel are utilized in maintenance and service of equipment. When this is not possible, service contracts are entered into with qualified companies, as has always been the practice of the town.

12. Has the medical profession of this community been consulted concerning this program? If so, have they given their tacit approval to this program?

Members of the medical staff of Kenmore Mercy Hospital and the Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Associates P.C. staff were constantly consulted and thoroughly involved in the formation of this program. They approve of and support the program.

13. Will this program not be a duplicate of the Erie County program?

This program is not a duplication of any Erie County program. There is no Erie County paramedics program nor

is there any comparable service provided by the county.

Dr. James H. Cosgriff Jr. of the Erie County Health Department and his staff, and Roger J. Fenlon of the Erie County Emergency Medical Service and his staff have been aware of and participated in the planning of this program. The program has the approval of these persons.

By comparison, this paramedic unit will perhaps be the pioneer of a total county plan that may be implemented in the future. The committee and the town board have felt, throughout analysis of this program, that a paramedic unit can equitably and economically serve the emergency needs of this town and village, providing needed services that do not now exist.

The committee and the town board have repeatedly asked themselves, "What is the value of a human life, particularly my own?" This will be answered the very first time a paramedic, operating in conjunction with the people of this community, regardless of profession, saves a life—perhaps yours.

#### APPENDIX A PARAMEDICS 1975 BUDGET

Personal Services		\$108,000	
Equipment			
Modular Unit			
Electronics			
Equip.,	\$19,000		
Medical	\$14,000	33,000	
and-or			
Vehicular			
Other Expenses			
Training &			
Education			
Tuition			
Books &	\$3,500		
Supplies	\$1,500	\$5,000	
Uniforms and			
Equip., Maintenance	\$4,000	9,000	
TOTAL 1975			
BUDGET REVISION			\$150,000

# New questions posed on paramedic plans

cal chief of staff at Kenmore Mercy Hospital, not maintained a neutral position with regard to this program? In the Kenmore Record Advertiser of Nov. 20, 1974, it states that Dr. Donohue said that "the hospital wants to make its services and facilities available to the public, and will do so—whether or not there is a paramedic unit."

Again this committee would like to state that its position is not one of condemning the program. We seek the answers to these questions so that we will be able to judge the program in a proper perspective. Further we would like to encourage all interested citizens to attend the two informational meetings being held by the Town Board.

training, and having acquired a Bachelor of Science Degree and a license from New York State. This is a sharp contrast to the \$12,000 the paramedics will receive.

7 — In what manner were the Vietnam veterans "encouraged" to apply? Were presentations made to veterans groups? If so on what dates? On what date was the New York State Unemployment Office contacted? Why were no ads placed in the local papers notifying the public of the opportunity to apply? How did the three non-residents learn of the program?

8 — How many veterans are among the nine selected to begin the program and to receive pay for their training? 12 — Has Dr. John Donohue, medi-

the contingency fund to implement any further programs the board might deem it necessary to initiate?

4 — How large an area would be encompassed in the "region" referred to? To what extent would the Federal Government fund the paramedic program if the "regional requirement" was met?

5 — How was the \$8,500 figure arrived at as an estimate for the garage?

6 — Since the doctors rightly insist on "highly skilled personnel" why was the resource of unemployed registered nurses not drawn from? According to the Nurses Official Registry of Buffalo Inc., nurses currently command a salary of approximately \$10,400 per year. This is after four years of

The Concerned Citizens Group, in receiving the answers from Deputy Town Supervisor Thomas J. Kelly, noted he invited them to pose any further questions needed for clarification on the program.

Following are the new questions, keyed to the original ones in the accompanying story:

1 — In the 150 communities now using the paramedic system, how many are similar to the Town of Tonawanda in area, population and existing hospital facilities?

2 — Are there any commitments in writing from Chevrolet, Lucidol or any other major industry? If so to what extent?

3 — How much money is presently in

# More questions posed on paramedic program

By TOM ERNST  
NEWS Staff Writer

Points not previously covered in a written exchange between the Town of Tonawanda Board and a citizens group formed to question aspects of the town's new paramedic program were raised during last night's Town Board session.

Group representatives Carol Saliba of 88 Carpenter Ave. and Kathy Hayes of 57 Raintree Island raised questions not included last week when the board responded, in writing, to 13 questions the citizens' group had raised.

Referring to the 150 communities the board had said were using paramedic units, Mrs. Saliba noted that the board mentioned a number of large cities, but none comparable to the town in population. She asked for examples of communities similar in size to the town.

Supervisor James V. Ryan responded that he couldn't think of any offhand, but would try to provide the information.

The board's statement said the program has the support of representatives of the industry in town, such as Chevrolet and Lucidol.

Mr. Saliba asked if there are any written commitments from either firm. The supervisor replied, "Not yet."

Concerning the fact that the town didn't apply for federal funds to set up the program (although some of the paramedic salaries are being paid through a federal grant) because services would have to be extended beyond the town, Mrs. Saliba asked how large an area would be covered.

Mr. Ryan replied that he assumed it would be inter-community and said the prime reason for not applying for the federal funds was so the unit would stay in the town.

Mrs. Saliba asked why the town didn't try to hire registered nurses who receive salaries in the \$10,400 range, rather than have to pay the paramedics \$12,000.

The supervisor said none had applied.

Councilman Thomas J. Kelly said he had doubts that there were many nurses in the area in search of work.

Referring to the written town board statement, Mrs. Saliba asked in what manner Vietnam veterans were "encouraged" to apply for paramedic

that while no federal funds are involved for equipment or training, some of the salaries are covered.

Jo Ann Fik of 27 Westgate Road pressed the board for names of specific doctors at Kenmore Mercy Hospital who support the program.

Councilman Kelly said the board was informed by Francis J. Redding, assistant hospital administrator, that the doctors approve of the program and suggested that Mrs. Fik contact him for specific names.

Betty Knowl of 847 Loretta St. identified herself as a nurse, and asked if the paramedics are going to be licensed in any way.

Mr. Stocker replied that they will be certified both by the state and Kenmore Mercy.

Mrs. Knowl said she wanted to be sure there was something in writing in case a lawsuit developed.

When it was mentioned that the paramedics might be called on to administer medications, Mrs. Knowl asked, "You mean they are going to give medication? Don't ever call them for me."

Mrs. Fik then asked if victims might ever go to a hospital other than Kenmore Mercy.

Mr. Stocker said that if a Kenmore Mercy doctor decided, for example, a burn victim should go directly to the Burn Treatment Center at Millard Fillmore Hospital, the patient would be taken directly there and not to Kenmore Mercy.

The town board has scheduled two 8 p.m. public informational meetings on the program. The first is set for Dec. 17 in the Kenmore East High School auditorium. The second will be conducted the following night in the Kenmore West auditorium.

Supervisor Ryan said that while no direct communication was had with any veterans groups, the program was widely publicized and that veterans, both of Vietnam and Korea, were hired.

Miss Hayes asked for an explanation of how the program will work in Kenmore, where the fire department has a rescue squad.

Town Labor Relations Director Norman J. Stocker said both the firemen and village police will be able to summon the paramedics. He added that the paramedics will be able to transport victims to Kenmore Mercy Hospital, something the rescue squad doesn't do.

Several other residents also had some questions during the meeting in the Municipal Building.

George Ciancio of 95 Canterbury Lane contended that at the Nov. 25 board meeting he was told no federal aid was involved in the program. He said he later read in the Tonawanda NEWS that four of the nine paramedics salaries were being paid by the federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA).

Mr. Stocker told Mr. Ciancio that paramedics were not involved when CETA was mentioned at the Nov. 25 meeting, because the hiring at that time was for other jobs.

The labor relations director acknowledged that the matter is somewhat confusing. He explained

## Favors paramedics

I have been reading with more than considerable interest the media accounts regarding the paramedic service being formed by the Tonawanda Town Board.

I read the articles in Readers Digest in mid-1973 about Jacksonville, Fla., and several other cities in California and elsewhere that have set up paramedic service. I have been in the volunteer fire service since 1920, except for about 10 years when I worked and lived in Syracuse, N.Y. I have lived in Kenmore and the Town of Tonawanda since 1935, and in 1941 became a member of the Kenilworth Volunteer Fire Company. During the mid 40s, I was president to chief. I had to retire from active service in 1966 due to ill health.

My working life since 1924 has been in the fire equipment and safety equipment business. I traveled in most of the U.S. east of the Mississippi River repairing fire engines, delivering new equipment and teaching men to operate same.

I have had contact with hundreds of fire departments both paid and volunteer. After 1948 I sold new fire fighting and safety equipment.

During World War II many fire departments and volunteer companies were trained in rescue and first aid. Thousands of firemen and police were trained. Many fire companies purchased special trucks and ambulances. Over a few years much dissatisfaction arose about the type of service given. Many accidents occurred transporting injured to hospitals and complaints of improper treatment. Many lawsuits resulted and many fire departments discontinued the service. Fire Fighting is the primary reason organizing fire departments.

Police departments are primarily formed for Law enforcement.

Several years ago, the Town of Tonawanda Police Department was given the first aid call service. They have done a fine job. I had an occasion to use their service; it was fine.

However, first aid treatment is limited. The paramedics and their equipment should be of great help to our fine Police Department. Being given training much more sophisticated than first aid and they will be in communication with doctors at the hospital emergency room.

No one is obligated to accept this service, as has been mentioned many times. No doubt the ambulance service in the town is fine.

I recently saw the Jacksonville, Fla., film regarding paramedic service in action. Norman Stoeker explained what is being set up in the town. Every one has a right to his own opinion, and I would like to see more people get interested and find out more about what is being offered.

I waited 2 1/4 hours in 1973 for an ambulance from a Buffalo hospital to arrive to take my seriously ill wife to a city hospital.

I highly recommend the service being offered and do not want to take anything away from the men who have tried to do their best in first aid in the past.

Everett J. Stiggins  
Town of Tonawanda

*12/1/73  
Tom Stiggins*

## On paramedic plan

I have been very upset to hear and read the unfavorable comments which have been made concerning the Town of Tonawanda paramedic program.

After listening to the comments of several people, it has become obvious, to me, that many of these remarks are the result of a lack of knowledge regarding the paramedic concept.

It will improve, not eliminate, the emergency services of the Police Department and private ambulance services by making available a mobile intensive care unit which will respond to critical illness and injury situations. The paramedics will be able to perform all the life-saving techniques which, until recently, have been associated with hospital emergency room care. This care will be available to most residents in under four minutes.

This treatment could consist of advanced life support techniques, electrocardiographic monitoring, defibrillation, endotracheal intubation, the administration of various medications, and the other techniques associated with advanced emergency care.

A portable radio equipped to transmit both voice and EKG telemetry will keep the paramedics in constant communication with the doctors in the emergency room at Kenmore Mercy Hospital.

The concept of bringing hospital emergency room care to the scene of an emergency situation has been used successfully in the City of Miami, Fla., since November 1967. Currently Miami has five units in operation. Houston, Texas, currently spends \$1.5 million annually to operate 23 mobile intensive care vehicles.

Systems like these are also operational in Jacksonville, Fla.; Columbus, Ohio; Los Angeles, Calif.; Atlanta, Ga.; Seattle, Wash.; Nassau County, N.Y., and Snyder, N.Y., to name a few.

Victims of heart attacks and heart-related problems benefit immeasurably from this type of program. Statistics compiled by the American Heart Association state that half the victims of heart attacks never reach a hospital alive. That is over 300,000 people annually. It is obvious that improvements must be made in pre-hospital emergency care.

I would like to commend the Tonawanda Town Board for its initiative and concern for the residents of the Town of Tonawanda.

Mrs. Joseph Stromeyer  
North Tonawanda

*Tonawanda 12/1/73*

# Tonawanda to Give Data On Paramedic Program

By TOM KELLY

The Tonawanda Town Board will add to the official record all questions and answers relative to its paramedic program.

Inclusion of the questions and the board's formal responses was requested at a board meeting Monday evening by Mrs. Carol Saliba, 88 Carpenter Ave., Town of Tonawanda, and ordered by the board on the motion of Councilman Thomas Kelly.

Replies to 13 questions submitted by Mrs. Saliba were published in newspapers on Friday but Mrs. Saliba informed the board that further information was requested.

In reply to the further questions, Supervisor James V. Ryan said some of the other communities cited as having paramedic programs are not comparable in size to the Town of Tonawanda but he agreed to study the comparison.

HE SAID that industries such as Chevrolet Division of General Motors Corp., which are contributing to the program, have not given commitments in writing. The supervisor and Councilman Kelly explained that the estimated \$150,000 cost of the program in the first year is "our best estimate" and that the figure includes \$29,000 in federal funds which pay the salary of four paramedics.

Mr. Ryan said that if the board had requested federal funds for the operation of the program it could not be confined to the town and would have been an inter-community undertaking with some federal jurisdiction. He explained that the \$29,000 in federal Manpower funds is used for salaries and does not cover operating costs.

The supervisor said no specific efforts were made to attract veterans with paramedic training in Viet Nam and that no want ads were placed in the press but that applications were publicized and open to everyone. He said Viet Nam veterans were among applicants.

"WE ARE not knocking the program but we feel the public should know how it began," Mrs. Saliba said.

Norman J. Stocker, labor relations consultant, said no problems are anticipated in a

paramedics response to an emergency in the Village of Kenmore.

"The dispatchers, by experience, can judge from a call what type of emergency it is," he said. "In addition, there would be no conflict if a paramedic unit and the Kenmore Rescue Squad both answered a call."

Mr. Stocker said that "paramedic" is the job title which the town requested from the Civil Service and that officially the letters PJD will follow the name, signifying the status "pending jurisdictional classification."

MR. STOCKER said each paramedic will be certified for his work on the completion of his training and will be recertified periodically. Councilman E. William Miller explained that in administering to a patient the paramedics will be in direct communication with doctors in Kenmore Mercy Hospital's emergency ward.

Police Chief Lawrence A. Hoffman Jr. said in answer to a question that consideration is being given to a system in which all conversations between paramedics at an emergency scene and the doctors in the hospital will be tape-recorded for an official record.

AFTER PRELIMINARY discussion, a committee was formed to study the feasibility of a local setup. Members included Linda Frutig, Kenmore Mercy Hospital emergency room supervisor; Police Chief Lawrence Hoffman; Richard Muscatello, administrative assistant at Kenmore Mercy; Norman Stocker, director of labor relations, and Dr. Joseph Takats, Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Associates.

"Statistically, the venture appears to be justified in terms of lives saved," officials said.

The statement also stressed the plans were well publicized and that no citizens had requested to see copies of the plans.

Other questions presented the Board and summary of answers:

— Why was a more concrete appraisal of public opinion concerning this program not sought prior to its initiation?

"DURING THE 10 months ... the Town Board ... sought opinions (from) ... the Kiwanis Club, the Lions Club, the Rotary Club and other civic organizations ... personnel of ... Chevrolet and Lucidol indicated ... support ... It is only ... that dissent has become apparent."

— How was it possible to begin this program prior to the acceptance of the budget which appropriated the funds ... what money was used to pay ...

## Paramedic seminars postponed in town

Two informational seminars to explain the Town of Tonawanda's new paramedic program scheduled for tonight and tomorrow night have been cancelled because of the death of Town Supervisor James V. Ryan's mother last evening.

Town Councilman Thomas J. Kelly, who acted as chairman at last night's Town Board meeting in Mr. Ryan's absence, said the meetings, originally scheduled for 8 tonight in Kenmore East High School and 8 tomorrow night in Kenmore West High School, would be rescheduled after contacting the

schools today to see what dates were available.

Mr. Kelly added that new meetings could not be conducted "probably until after the new year," because the schools are closed during the Christmas vacation period, and would not allow their auditoriums to be used.

The meetings were intended to answer questions about the program that have been raised by citizens, as well as Town Police and Kenmore paid firemen, concerning the operation of the program, hiring practices, and the type of training members of the unit were to receive.

Meeting John Kingston  
12/18/74

# Kenmore firemen add voice to paramedic issue

The Kenmore Professional Fire Fighters Association today added its voice to the chorus of questions and criticism concerning the Town of Tonawanda's new paramedic operation.

The Town of Tonawanda Police Club recently voiced its opposition to the program and said it is continuing its efforts to have the matter put to a referendum.

While not objecting to the program, a concerned citizens group was formed specifically just to question various aspects of the paramedic operation.

In addition, individual residents have raised numerous questions.

The Town of Tonawanda Board has also received some praise for initiating the program, but so far the criticism has far outweighed the praise.

The eight paid members of the Kenmore Fire Department said in a statement today that they support the basic idea of the paramedic program, "but many areas are open to criticism."

The firemen charged "that regardless of what has been stated to date, there was some preferential treatment given with regard to who would eventually be employed as members of the paramedic unit."

The association said that while the town may have sought applications through other means, "the majority of the candidates were hand picked."

"To clarify a point, we must ask if there are any relatives of the Town Board, director of labor relations or chairmen of political parties now employed as paramedic trainees?"

The statement charges "a definite conflict of interest" in the makeup of the committee which screened applicants.

"Why was Dr. (Joseph) Takats of the Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Associates, a group that would stand to benefit financially due to the fact that the paramedic unit will only transport to Kenmore Mercy Hospital, a member of the screening committee?" it asks.

The statement quotes Town Labor Relations Director Norman J. Stocker as saying village fire dispatchers "by experience can judge from a call what type of emergency it is."

The association says, however, "the degree of seriousness cannot be determined via the telephone."

"Perhaps before Mr. Stocker makes any more such statements, especially concerning our group, he should visit our headquarters and find out what really happens."

"We have read in various articles how the paramedic unit will respond to calls in the Village of Kenmore, but again, we find Mr. Stocker making these statements on his own and not consulting with anyone to find out or discuss how the unit will eventually operate."

"The director of labor relations acknowledged that the funding matter is somewhat confusing. We agree. He has stated that federal funds are being used to pay the salaries of four trainees, but the possibility of further

federal or state funding was researched and not recommended because of mandates and restrictions. Are there no restrictions with four or less trainees?"

"A proposed paramedic budget was recently published and showed \$108,000 for personal services. As stated, each of the paramedics would receive \$12,000 per year. However, no provision was shown for employee benefits such as retirement, health insurance, vacation, holidays, or sick leave.

"If these benefits only equaled 25 per cent of each annual salary (and they equal a greater percentage), this would bring the true cost of personal services to a more realistic cause of \$135,000, leaving \$15,000 for equipment, training, uniforms, and supplies.

"The total budget of \$150,000 takes into consideration the assumed support of various industries in the town, none of which has given a written commitment many months after the idea was formulated.

"One of the reasons for not applying for further federal funds was that if these funds were used, the unit would be required to respond to emergencies on a regional rather than on a town-village basis.

"However, at a recent meeting at which the paramedic unit was discussed, it was stated that the unit would leave the town in the event of a major disaster, leaving the town without a paramedic unit that they are supporting via taxes.

"In the event this happens, they seem to be willing to rely on the present system of having the police administer first aid until an ambulance arrives which has and is at the present time quite effective.

"The paramedic unit could cause unnecessary delays if it operates according to present proposed plans. Presently, the town police summon an ambulance that takes the patient to the hospital. In the future, the town police

will summon the paramedic unit and they will transport the patient to Kenmore Mercy unless a doctor determines that the patient be taken elsewhere such as the Burn Treatment Center.

"However, if the patient or his family or his doctor decides that the patient should go to a different hospital, the family must sign a release and then an ambulance will be called thus causing a considerable delay.

"If the taxpayers are paying for the service, they should not be limited to one hospital where in turn, they will be treated by a private group of doctors.

"We hope that the questions we have raised and the questions raised by other groups will be given careful consideration and answered in a clear way. In that way, the public will be served in the best interests of all concerned."

The statement is signed by John E. Kingston, president of the association.

# Turnout urged for 'medic talks

Town of Tonawanda officials say they hope for large turnouts during meetings tonight and tomorrow night on the town's controversial new paramedic program.

The sessions are set for 8 p.m. with tonight's session in Kenmore East High School and tomorrow night's in Kenmore West.

The program has met with a large number of questions and some criticism during recent Town Board meetings.

Board members maintain that the objections have been raised by a vocal minority, while the vast number of residents are in favor of the program.

After last night's board meeting in the Municipal Building, several officials said they hope for a large turnout, rather than drawing just those residents who have been actively involved in questioning and

criticizing the program during previous meetings.

In a statement issued by the board last night, Kathleen M. Hayes, chairman of the Concerned Citizens Group which raised some of the questions, joined with town officials in urging a good turnout.

The agenda for both sessions calls for a 28-minute movie explaining a paramedic program in Jacksonville, Fla., followed by presentations by six speakers and then a question-and-answer session.

Among the scheduled speakers are Dr. David C. Dean, chief of the Cardiopulmonary Laboratory at Veterans Administration Hospital; Roger J. Fenlon, coordinator of the Erie County Bureau of Emergency Health Services, and Dr. Joseph Takats, president of Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Associates Inc., the private firm which runs the Kenmore Mercy Hospital emergency room.

C-E- 1/6/75

# A Conversation With:

## Horace A. Gioia

Horace A. Gioia, president and chairman of the board of the Gioia Macaroni Co. and recently installed chairman of the board of the Federation of Italian-American Societies of Western New York, has definite opinions on the need for and aims of ethnic groups.



By GRACE GODDARD

**C-E—Is there still a need for ethnic organizations in our country?**

**Gioia—**In my opinion, yes. New immigrants having no friends or relatives here, and especially those not conversant in English, need to contact other recent immigrants and also families of those who've been Americans for many years.

**C-E—But isn't it true that today's immigrants are generally better educated than those who came here during the great waves of immigration of the 1880s and early 1900s?**

**Gioia—**I know that people who emigrate from Italy are usually well educated. We've hired women in my own business who, in Italy, were school teachers or dressmakers. They stayed until they sort of got their feet on the ground.

**C-E—Do most Italian immigrants still have a language problem?**

**Gioia—**Language problems exist but, having a sound Italian education, it's easier for them to master English. They also are thrifty, reliable and dependable. So within a short time you see them buying homes and then, through the ethnic groups that befriended them, offering aid to other immigrants.

**C-E—Do you have any specific plans for Italian-American organizations?**

**Gioia—**I have a plan, and I have a dream.

**C-E—That plan?**

**Gioia—**To somehow organize all ethnic groups, including German, Greek, Italian, Irish, Welsh, Polish and also Puerto Rican and other Spanish speaking people, to raise funds for a dream project.

**C-E—And the dream?**

**Gioia—**To have these combined groups work for something that I, as chairman for fund raising for the American Heart Assn., feel is of great importance, a great need. That is to set up mobile coronary care units

like those they have in Rochester, Syracuse and Nassau County. This could be a marvelous reciprocal gesture, a way that would provide a chance for newcomers to show their appreciation for the United States—their new home.

**C-E—Isn't that what's planned in the Town of Tonawanda?**

**Gioia—**Not quite as extensive as that town's setup, although that would be ideal. Rather, somewhat like the cardio-pulmonary resuscitation unit I saw in action a few weeks ago in Amherst when my son, Richard, had chest congestion that resembled a heart attack. Within minutes, a team from the Snyder Volunteer Fire Company was at our home assisting my boy. In areas having mobile units, it's estimated that 35 per cent more people arrive at hospitals alive.

**C-E—But why have the ethnic societies got the ball rolling?**

**Gioia—**I hope to take this avenue because I know that the city and county, in these times especially, don't have the money. I can't say exactly where the money's coming from, but we have to start somewhere to put this vital show on the road. We each have a heart, so we're all in the same boat. From past experience, I know how neighborhood-minded, community-minded—state- and even nation-minded—these ethnic groups are.

**C-E—What happened that makes you so convinced of this need?**

**Gioia—**My friend, the Rev. Donald Kirsch of Canisius College, collapsed and died while sitting next to me at a Canisius Scholarship event in the Hotel Statler Hilton. What a waste of a useful life that was. That's when I became convinced that on-the-spot care is desperately needed in our area. In an affluent country like ours, where we seem to have money for so many other programs, this should be an A-No. 1 priority.

Wednesday, January 8, 1975

## Professional Paramedics Defended at Meeting on Program in Tonawanda

By DAVE ERNST

If neighboring Snyder has volunteer paramedics, why can't the Town of Tonawanda have volunteers as well and save some of the \$150,000 the program is likely to cost this year?

The question drew attention from several speakers at an informational meeting Tuesday night in Kenmore East Senior High School.

Dr. Joseph Takats, one of the prime movers behind the program and one of the Kenmore Mercy Hospital doctors who will be directing the paramedics by radio as they treat a heart attack or accident victim, said he just did not wish to risk a malpractice suit by working with anyone but a full-time professional.

A private hospital like Kenmore Mercy will assume none of the responsibility, he said.

However, the Meyer Memorial Hospital nurses and physicians-in-training who most often work with the Snyder volunteers are backed fully by the government-run institution in the event of a malpractice suit. That is the difference, Dr. Takats said.

**HE SAID** policemen who now respond to many emergency calls cannot match the training or equipment of the paramedics.

Sixteen persons are now in the midst of 6 months of training, and will continue their studies even after they begin work, he said.

In addition to the telemetry system that will enable a physician at the hospital to monitor the victim's pulse and electrocardiogram at the scene, the paramedics will carry a device called a defibrillator.

Heart attack victims especially younger ones, often go

into ventricular fibrillation, where the heart beats at many times its normal rate but pumps no blood, Dr. Takats said.

**MANY DIE**, he said, because a well-trained policeman lacks the necessary equipment, or because even the most efficient ambulance finds it impossible to respond and transport the victim back to a hospital in the 4-6 minutes before the victim sustains irreversible brain or heart damage.

Some town residents have questioned the cost of the program, the need for it and the lack of public input in the planning stages. Several called Tuesday for an advisory referendum on the topic.

But another member of the audience of about 150 called their objections "nitpicking" and said: "I can't believe there are people in this town who believe we don't need this."

**ONE WOMAN**, a nurse, said: "We pay taxes for golf courses. We don't play golf, but I don't begrudge the people who do."

Town Supervisor James V. Ryan, who conducted the meeting, said the 16 paramedic positions will not be under competitive civil service because the town wants to be free to fire anyone who "starts acting like a doctor."

However, the other rights of the paramedics will be protected by the regulations governing non-competitive civil service positions, he said.

# Paramedic session attracts about 200

Tonawanda  
Session  
1/8/75

About 200 residents turned out last night for the first of two presentations and question-and-answer sessions on the Town of Tonawanda's new paramedic program.

Last night's session was conducted in Kenmore East High School. A similar one is scheduled for 8 tonight in Kenmore West.

The program included about a 90-minute presentation by various officials involved with setting up the program and then a question and answer session which lasted until 10:45 p.m.

The Town Board scheduled the two sessions in an attempt to answer all questions on the new program.

The paramedics have been the topic of numerous questions and some criticism at recent Town Board meetings.

Town Supervisor James V. Ryan and Labor Relations Director Norman J. Stocker both said today they were pleased because the meeting drew many "new faces"—as opposed to the Town Board meetings where some residents appeared week after week to question and criticize.

Mr. Ryan said the "new faces" seemed to express mostly positive comments last night. There were negative comments too, he said, but maintained they came mostly from the "old faces."

Supervisor Ryan and Mr. Stocker both quoted the same speaker as summarizing the general atmosphere of the discussion.

"Let's quit the nitpicking and get on with the program, it's ideal," they quoted her as saying.

# Young Woman Knows How To Handle an Emergency

By ERNA P. EATON

A familiar sight to television viewers—paramedics—soon will become a familiar figure in two Western New York communities. The Town of Tonawanda and Kenmore will be one step ahead of the television show, "Emergency," however—one of the real paramedics is an attractive young woman.

Miss Kate P. Rose, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Robert M. Rose of Kenmore, is one of the first nine persons chosen for the new paramedic program, administered by Town of Tonawanda Police Department.

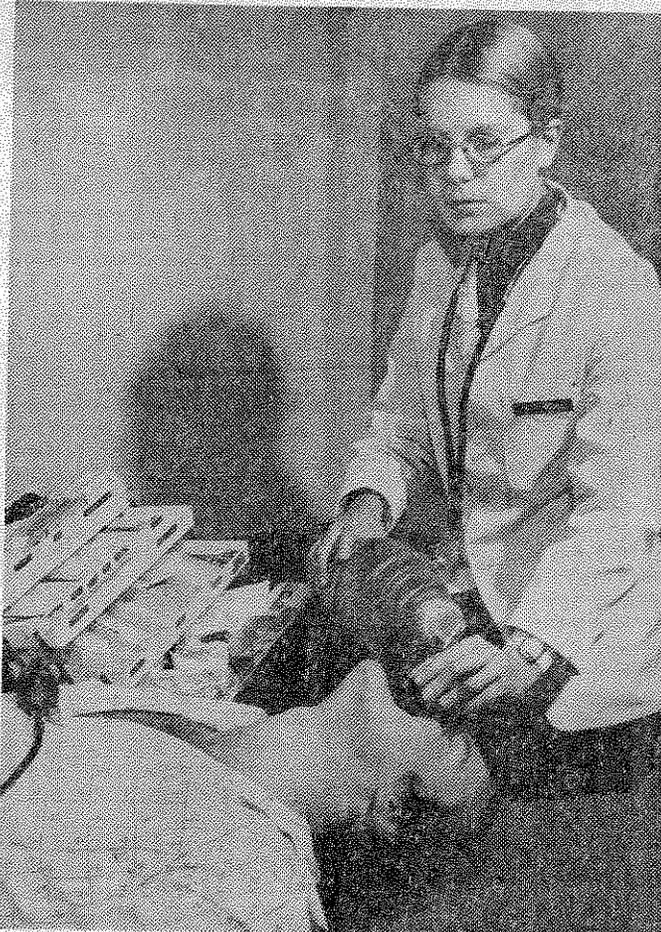
"AFTER A YEAR of being a student nurse," said Miss Rose, who will complete her paramedic training in April, "I found that I had too much empathy with my patients, so when this program came along I thought we—the program and I—would be better suited to one another."

All trainees are required to have some previous medical background, explained Kate, who is a graduate of Park School of Buffalo, Cazenovia College and George Washington University and has 27 credit hours toward a master's degree.

"THE PROGRAM we follow very much resembles the television show," she continued. "In responding to a call, we stabilize the patient before transporting the patient to the hospital, where a physician takes over. We always are in radio contact with a physician in the emergency room of Kenmore Mercy Hospital and everything we do is under his supervision."

The training program, according to Police Chief Lawrence A. Hoffman Jr., takes about seven months to complete and was compiled from many paramedic programs in use throughout the country "and we added some of our own concepts."

"We have placed the paramedics in the Traffic Division of our Police Department because all emergency calls are answered by police in the township, rather than the Fire



CORRECT use of an Ambu bag, a manual breathing device, is demonstrated by Miss Kate P. Rose, the only woman trainee in the Town of Tonawanda Police Department's new paramedic program. Her "patient" is William D. Long, co-ordinator of the program. The first group of trainees will complete training in April.

"All our paramedics will be licensed by the state when they finish their training," he continued, "and we want all of our police officers to receive training in pulmonary resuscitation this year to help sustain life until a paramedic team arrives. Eventually we want all our officers to be certified by the state as medical emergency technicians."

INSTRUCTION for paramedic trainees, Miss Rose explained, consists of a 40-hour work week, during which the group attends a weekly class in Police Headquarters, primarily for training in equipment use, and classes in State University or Buffalo Medical School in

anatomy and physiology. "We spend 20 hours each week in clinical rotation in various departments of Kenmore Mercy and Meyer Memorial hospitals," said Kate Rose, who has concluded the rotation program in Kenmore Mercy Hospital.  
At Meyer Memorial Hospital

she is observing and learning techniques in pathology, recovery room, coronary care unit, intensive care unit and emergency room.

In addition to caring for heart attack and stroke victims, the most common, trainees learn procedures in childbirth, respiratory diseases, diabetes, neurological diseases and injuries and heat and cold injuries.

"WE WILL WORK in teams of two from a mobile intensive care unit, which is not to be confused with an ambulance," said Kate. "If absolutely necessary to save a life, we could transport the patient, but the van is to be free to go from one location to another in response to emergency calls. Patients are to be transported in ambulances."

Although the teams will work in shifts, Kate does not anticipate conflicts in her personal life because of the irregular work schedule. She describes her fiancé, James B. Wenzel, as "extremely supportive—even to attending town meetings to speak in favor of the program."

Miss Rose and Mr. Wenzel, an assistant manager of a bank branch in Town of Tonawanda, plan to be married in St. Mark's Episcopal Church in North Tonawanda on March 22.

Completing preparations for a formal wedding and an intensive study program might seem to be enough to fill anyone's waking hours, but Kate Rose is as energetic as she is studious.

An animal lover (the Rose family lives with four cats of various ages and sizes), Kate regularly exercises her palomino which she rides with an English saddle. She also enjoys swimming and water skiing.

Times News - 4/4/74

# Paramedic unrest seen quelled by 2 meetings

The two informational meetings on the Town of Tonawanda's paramedic program have apparently answered questions posed by interested citizens.

This sentiment was shared today by Town Supervisor James V. Ryan and by members of a "Concerned Citizens Committee," which previously had submitted questions about the program at Town Board meetings.

The second session, attended by about 150 residents, was held last night in Kenmore West Senior High School.

About 200 residents turned out for the first meeting, held Tuesday evening in Kenmore East High School.

Each meeting included a 90-minute presentation by various officials involved with setting up the program, and was followed by a question and answer session.

The Town Board scheduled the two meetings in an attempt to answer questions about the new program, which has been the subject of controversy at recent Town Board meetings.

Mr. Ryan said he felt the meetings had "in the main, dispelled any grey areas brought to light when those who voiced opposition to the program had an opportunity to bring their objections and questions before the public."

Carol Saliba, secretary for the citizens committee, said her group viewed the meetings "with a great sense of satisfaction," and complimented both Mr. Ryan and the panel for what she called the "high caliber of the presentation," on both evenings.

Mr. Ryan said the two sessions

demonstrated a "real effort to reach as many people who were interested in the program as possible," and added that he believed those who attended the meetings saw the paramedic program "as a life-saving service and recognized the need for it."

Mr. Ryan also said he felt the meetings "clearly showed that instituting the paramedic program was not an attempt to interrupt or jeopardize the fine ambulance services in the town."

The program, expected to cost \$150,000 the first year, will provide emergency medical treatment by a nine-member team operating with a specially equipped vehicle.

The nine paramedics, together with nine alternates will complete a six-month training program in April.

Certified as regular paramedics were: Robert C. Hodge, 146 Bering Ave., town; William D. Long, 1992 Sheridan Drive, town; Kate Rose Wenzel, 173 Marjorie Drive, town; James W. Carney, 3046 Eggert Road, town; Joseph R. Oddo, 493 Porter Ave., Buffalo; Lance J. Kohn, 3509 Wallace Drive, Grand Island; Wayne P. Busch, 305 Washington Highway, Snyder; Daniel Chase, 946 Highland Ave., town, and David A. Peck, 257 Kenmore Ave., town.

Certified as alternates were Kevin B. Day, 184 Claremont Ave., town; Kent Hicks, 184 Grayton Ave., town, and Mark J. Kahanic, 230 Rochelle Park, town.

Expected to complete their requirements and be certified as alternates are Ronald P. Robertson, 90 Sherwin Drive, town, and Russell Tedesco, 240 Bryant St., North Tonawanda.

Regular paramedics residing outside the town now have six months in which to move into the town. Any alternates living outside the town will not be required to move, unless they are hired as regular paramedics.

The alternates are not salaried. They will be paid on an hourly basis, if they are called in to work.

# Buyers Selective At Zonta Sale Benefiting Paramedics Program



Courier-Express/I. R. Sorgi

Miss Kord finds bard's books at  
'as she likes it' rates

By GRACE GODDARD

The annual Rummage Sale sponsored by the Kenmore Zonta Club Friday evening and Saturday morning attracted an anticipated capacity crowd to Memorial Hall, 3354 Delaware Ave., Town of Tonawanda. But shoppers were more selective than in former years, and prefaced the usually "grab and purchase" with a question: "How much?"

Try-ons and even shopping list consultations marked this event that benefited the new Paramedics Program of the Town of Tonawanda. By the time the traditional "fill whatever you can stuff into a shopping bag for 50 cents" signal was given late Saturday morning, much of the mounds of merchandise had been moved. The residue was picked up by a Salvation Army truck.

#### Fun Affair

Aside from the bargains, the sale was a fun affair and it's becoming more and more apparent that this informal type of salesmanship is extremely popular.

A four-volume set of Shakespeare's plays was purchased by Miss Donna Kord, 14, for a bit more than a dollar.

"I love Shakespeare and I love these prices," said the comely daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Kord, 46 W. Girard Blvd., Kenmore.

Meanwhile, Donna's mother was successfully rummaging amidst piles of kitchenware that

looked good as new, thanks to the "elbow grease" that previously had been applied to booth items by Mrs. Harvey M. Bomm who's never missed a meeting during her 27 years of Zonta membership.

#### Finds Bible

"Seek and ye shall find" apparently was the Biblical impulse that brought Julian Toote to the sale. An inter-denominational ministerial scholar, he sought and found a Bible and several books on theological subjects at prices that rivaled the widow's mite.

A definitely-not-for-sale feature of Friday night's "early bird" event was Jason Nawrot. This 10-month old charmer was toted in papoose fashion by his understandable proud father, William Nawrot, 430 Westgate Rd., Kenmore. Mrs. Nawrot was searching for a large picture frame that could enhance a collage of photos she planned to be taken of the baby at varying stages of growth.

There were many attractive small items that Mr. Nawrot could have purchased. Instead, baby-laden as he was, he bought a vacuum cleaner complete with attachments.

#### Toy Counter Busy

The toy counter was a frenzy of activity as young fry like Stephen Varkonda, 11, and Peter Martinelli, 8, found bargains in games.

Stephen is the son of Mrs. Clare Varkonda, 80 Seventh St.,

and Peter is the son of Mrs. Marilyn Martinelli, 2079 Bailey Ave. Badminton and tennis rackets were the discovery of Martha Irish, 11, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dale Irish, 316 Wynnwood Ave., Town of Tonawanda.

Bargains galore gratified the customers. But what truly wowed them on Friday was when Harry Baldwin, whose wife is a Kenmore Zonta past president, tried on a curly wig and then—in a reflective mood—admired what he saw in a shiny frying pan while Mrs. William Michie, also a past president, tried to complete the sale.

#### Repairs Made

Mrs. Betty A. Miller and Mrs. Wilfred T. Pearson, co-chairmen of the event, credited the A-1 condition of sale appliances to repairs made by Bill Moyes, 20, and his brother Paul, 14. They've assumed this responsibility for the past several years, although they have no connection with the club other than friendship. Their mother, Mrs. William Moyes 353 Taunton Ave., also in friendly fashion mans a booth.

The pant-suited, sneaker-shod Zontians also apparently had fun—but of a more frenzied sort.

"Their year's work is done, but within a week I can predict that Zontians will already begin collecting things for next year's event. They'll do just fine, although garage sales are beginning to make a dent in our collections," Mrs. Pearson said.

# Paramedic vehicle bid rejected in favor of more costly model

The apparent low bid of \$18,848 for a vehicle for use by the Town of Tonawanda's new paramedics program was rejected by the Town Board last night in favor of one costing \$6,823 more.

The bid of Roadsafe Emergency Vehicles Inc. of Shelbyville, Tenn. was rejected on the grounds it didn't meet specifications.

Town Councilman Gordon H. Tresch said the vehicle didn't meet specifications in numerous areas and the firm admitted it didn't.

As a result, the board voted unanimously to award a \$25,671 contract to Professional Vehicles Sales Inc. of the Bronx.

The board was questioned about the amount it is spending on the paramedics program by Carol Saliba

of 88 Carpenter Ave.

She noted that the paramedics, who are currently undergoing training with the program scheduled to be operational in May, have a first-year budget allocation of \$150,000.

Mrs. Saliba said \$110,000 has already been allocated for salaries and now the town is spending \$25,000 for a vehicle.

"That leaves less than \$15,000 for operating expenses," she noted. "Do you think you can still stick to the \$150,000 budget?"

Supervisor James V. Ryan responded that he is confident the paramedic program will stay within its budget limits.

In other matters during the meeting in the Municipal Building, the board:

—Granted the Towne Art Guild Inc. permission to hold its annual art show at the

Delaware Pool on July 27, with an Aug. 3 rain date.

—Approved the hiring of Robert Wells, 49 Grayton Road, to do public relations work for the town Bicentennial Committee at \$100 per month.

—Approved creating the position of an additional assistant supervising building inspector.

—Awarded a \$39,273 contract to Mid-City Dodge Inc. of Cheektowaga for 15 replacement police cars. The firm was low bidder.

—Awarded contracts of \$9,141.02 to Laux Sporting Goods and \$277.40 to Jim Ludtka Sporting Goods, both for baseball equipment.

—Called for bids at 8 p.m. March 10 for a "low center of gravity" tractor for use by the Parks Department.

—Noted three building permits for construction valued at \$3,500 for the week ending yesterday.

—Adjourned until 8 p.m. Monday.

*Town News - 3/25/75*

*B E News 7/25*  
**Tonawanda Buys  
\$25,000 Vehicle  
For Paramedics**

The Professional Vehicle Sales Inc., The Bronx, has been awarded a contract at its bid price of \$25,871, to supply an emergency vehicle for the Town of Tonawanda's paramedic program.

The town board authorized the purchase Monday evening after rejecting a bid of \$18,841 by Roadsafe Emergency Vehicles Inc., Shelbyville, Tenn., on the grounds that Roadsafe's vehicle failed to meet specifications in several respects.

The paramedic vehicle will consist of a truck chassis and a module designed for emergency care and outfitted with the latest in medical equipment. The paramedic program is scheduled to begin between April 1 and May 1.

Only two bids were received on the vehicle.

Councilman Gordon H. Tresch, who moved approval of the purchase, said delivery is expected in about 75 days.

The board accepted the low bid of Mid-City Dodge Inc., Cheektowaga, to supply 15 cars for the Police Department for \$39,272. The transaction involves the trade-in of 15 used cars.

In other action the board approved a contract with the Salaried Workers Association, a union representing 141 clerical and supervisory employees. The agreement, retroactive to Jan. 1 and effective for 2 years, is the fourth pact negotiated between the town and the union. It provides for a 9 per cent salary increase with a wage re-opener in the second year, and a prescription drug plan.

# Graduation day arrives for town paramedics

By TOM ERNST  
NEWS Staff Writer

(Another photo, Page 1)

A two-year effort requiring thousands of hours of planning and training paid off last night when 12 persons were graduated as full-fledged paramedics in the Town of Tonawanda.

Nine of the graduates officially start their \$12,000 a year jobs Thursday. Three will serve as alternates. Two more are expected to complete the requirements and be certified as alternates shortly.

The paramedics will provide 'round-the-clock emergency medical care in the town. The paramedics are trained to begin treating victims at the scene and continue the treatment while transporting the victim to Kenmore Mercy Hospital in a specially-equipped vehicle.

The town is currently awaiting delivery of the vehicle, expected in about three weeks. After that, it is expected to be another couple of weeks before the unit is fully operational.

In the meantime, the paramedics are continuing their training and are spending time riding in town police cars to learn their way around the town and to familiarize themselves with police operations.

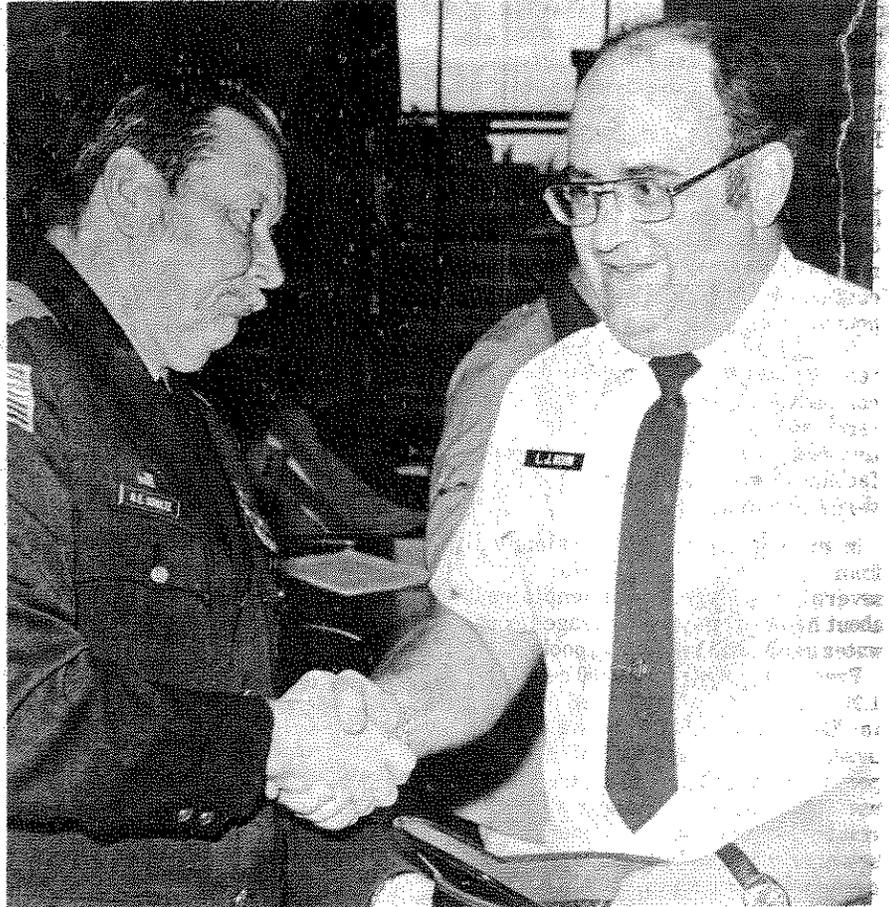
Dr. Joseph Takats of Kenmore Mercy Hospital, who headed the instructional phase of the program, said the town now has "probably the finest such program in the nation."

Dr. Takats certified the graduates last night. Each has completed a minimum of 1,000 hours of training, both in the classroom and at area hospitals.

Supervisor James V. Ryan, who initiated the program some two years ago, praised the efforts of Town Police Chief Lawrence A. Hoffman Jr. and Labor Relations Director Norman J. Stocker.

The paramedics will be under the direction of Police Capt. Norman E. Schultz, head of the department's Traffic Bureau.

Capt. Schultz presented the paramedics with their caps and badges during last night's graduation ceremony in the Municipal Building. Chief Hoffman administered the oath of office.



Capt. Schultz, left, congratulates paramedic Lance Kohn  
... During graduation ceremony (Another photo, Page 1)



Courier-Express/I. R. Sorgi

Joseph R. Oddo Mrs. Kate R. Wenzel Wayne P. Busch Dr. Joseph Takats  
Town of Tonawanda paramedics receive diplomas from training physician

# 14 Paramedics Get Their Diplomas

By DAVID S. WITERSKI

Graduation ceremonies for 14 Town of Tonawanda paramedics were held Monday night during a meeting of the Town Board at the Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda Municipal Bldg.

The paramedics have completed a seven-month training program at Kenmore Mercy Hospital and the University of Buffalo Medical School.

They were presented diplomas, caps and badges by Capt. Norman Schultz of the town's Police Dept., who is commander of the town's Traffic Bureau and chief of paramedics.

### Trained Assistants

Paramedics are trained medical assistants who supplement

the work of medical personnel. The paramedics will use town vehicles equipped to keep them in contact with physicians at Kenmore Mercy while they are aiding patients at the scene.

Presented the diplomas by Capt. Schultz, assisted by Dr. Joseph Takats, who had participated in the paramedics' training, were:

Alternate Paramedics — Ronald P. Robertson Sr., Kevin B. Day, Russel C. Tedesco, Kent Hixson and Mark J. Kahanic;

Paramedics — Mrs. Kate R. Wenzel, David A. Peck, William D. Long, Wayne P. Busch, Lance J. Kohn Sr., Robert C. Hodge, James W. Carney, Daniel N. Chase and Joseph R. Oddo.

Town Supervisor James V. Ryan praised the paramedics and said a "great deal of time, talent and effort has been donated by innumerable people" who have contributed to the town program.

The Town Board voted to hire the 14 paramedics, effective Thursday, at annual salaries of \$12,000 each.

In other action, the board set June 16 for a public hearing on a proposal to increase the maximum annual salary senior citizens can earn and still receive a 50 per cent property tax exemption.

Under the proposal, the income limit would be raised for persons 65 and over from \$5,000 to \$6,000 a year.

## 7 Trained Paramedics To Graduate June 2

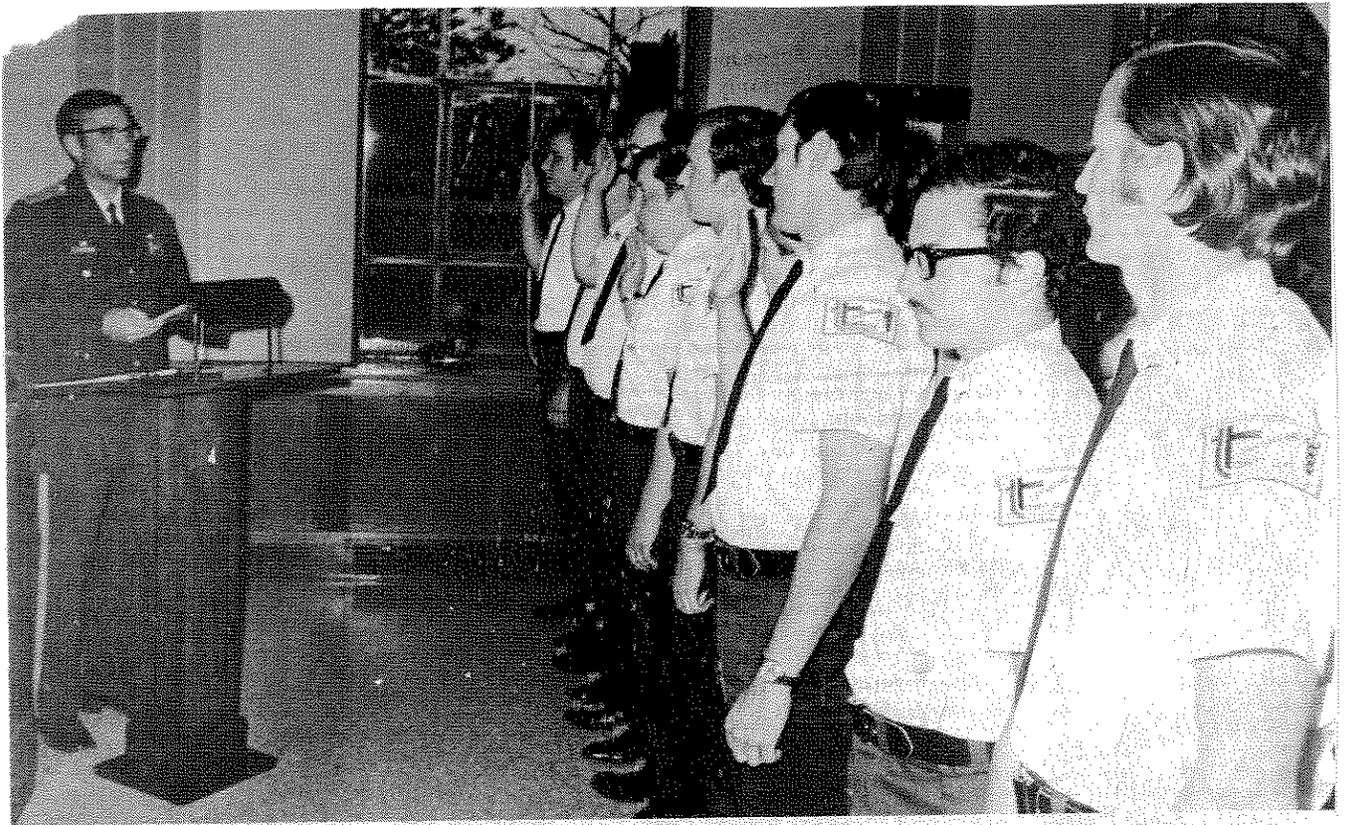
Graduation exercises for the Town of Tonawanda's paramedics will be conducted in conjunction with the Town Board's June 2 meeting, it was announced today.

Sixteen candidates who have trained for 7 months at the State University of Buffalo Medical School and Kenmore Mercy Hospital recently completed a series of eight written examinations. The successful candidates will be formally assigned to their duties after the graduation.



## Town receives paramedic van

The Town of Tonawanda's new \$23,000 emergency medical unit was delivered today, for use by the town's newly-formed paramedics unit. Above is an exterior shot of the vehicle outside police headquarters. At left, Police Chief Lawrence A. Hoffman Jr., left, and Lt. Harry R. Thorp look over the array of sophisticated medical gear inside. The paramedics will be outfitting the vehicle today and tomorrow and it will go on display Wednesday through Saturday at the Boulevard Mall. The vehicle is expected to be fully operational on Aug. 4. The paramedics will be dispatched from police headquarters and available to respond to serious emergencies anywhere in the town. A communications hookup will enable paramedics to be in contact with doctors at Kenmore Mercy Hospital and receive guidance in treating victims, while the van is en route to the hospital. Nine full-time paramedics recently completed a six-month training course. The vehicle will be manned by two paramedics at all times.



## Paramedics take oath during graduation

Town of Tonawanda Police Chief Lawrence A. Hoffman Jr. administers the oath of office to members of the town's new Paramedic Unit, during graduation ceremonies last night in the Municipal Building. Nine regular paramedics and three alternates were certified

and awarded badges, after completing about 1,000 hours of training. It is expected to be several weeks yet for the unit to be fully operational. (Story, additional photo on Page 8)

*TONAWANDA NEWS*  
*6/3/75*

BUFFALO EVENING  
NEWS

6/3/75

## Tonawanda Holds Welcome Rite for 12 Paramedics

By TOM KELLY

"We welcome them, this new breed, to a much-needed area of skill. They represent what for this town is a milestone, another first."

Town of Tonawanda Police Chief Lawrence A. Hoffman Jr., thus introduced 11 men and one woman at Monday evening's Town Board meeting as they officially were designated paramedics in an emergency medical care service program due to be in operation on July 1.

Chief Hoffman, who presided at the ceremonies and who presented the graduation certificates, joined Supervisor James V. Ryan and Dr. Joseph Takats, president of the Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Association, in commending the paramedics on their "long and arduous" months of study and preparation and their readiness "to serve your fellow man."

"THIS PROGRAM was conceived 2 years ago and since then many persons have given of their time and talents to make it a reality," Mr. Ryan said. "The paramedics spent 650 hours of institutional training and 350 hours in hospital and clinical training. I'm proud of them."

Dr. Takats described the creation of the paramedic corps as "a situation unique to this area" and called the paramedics "one of the finest groups of people."

"It took a gutsy bunch of officials — the supervisor and the councilman — to launch this service," he said.

Dr. Takats also announced that the curriculum under which the paramedics were trained may be adopted by an area college and that a formal course may be established with credits for its graduates.

CHIEF HOFFMAN said the town is indebted to Dr. Takats, to Norman J. Stocker, labor relations director, who co-ordinated the program; and to Dr. George Sanderson Jr., chief of anesthesiology of Kenmore Mercy Hospital, and to Dr. David C. Dean, chief of the cardiopulmonary laboratory at Veterans Administration Hospital, for "valuable direction" in the specialized training.

Traffic Capt. Norman E. Schultz, who will supervise the operation of the paramedic vehicle, presented each paramedic with a blue uniform hat.

During their training, the paramedics were paid at the annual rate of \$8000. As of Thursday their annual salaries will be \$12,000.

6/3/75

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# TONAWANDA NEWS

Established 1880

North Tonawanda, N. Y.

Monday, August 11, 1975

15 C

## Angler drowns in



Victim's belongings left on shoreline

Search boat in background

A fisherman drowned at about 9:30 this morning when he waded into the Niagara River under one of the Grand Island Bridges in the Town of Tonawanda to retrieve his minnow bucket.

The victim was identified by police as Richard S. Dobeis, 62, of 1543 Eggert Road, Amherst.

The victim's bait bucket apparently floated away as he was fishing from the shore under the bridge. He removed some of his clothes and waded into the fast-flowing current in an effort to retrieve it, witnesses reported.

When it became apparent that the man was in trouble, three people at the scene tried to aid him by throwing a tire to him, but the effort failed.

The victim went under and did not come up, the witnesses said. Those attempting the rescue were Brian Beutler and his sister, Vicky, of 27 Benefield Place, and Harry Lether, a friend of Vicky. The latter's address was not immediately available.

Mr. Lether and a police officer who arrived at the scene, Patrolman Val Ihle, acquired a small boat from a nearby marina and tried to locate the man.

The victim was found about 15 minutes later by the City of Tonawanda Police Department's underwater squad.

The Town of Tonawanda's new paramedic team treated Miss Beutler for shock and attempted to revive the victim. He was pronounced dead at the scene by an Erie County medical examiner and the body was taken to the county morgue.

# TONAWANDA NEWS

Changing  
(Weather details, Page 8)

Established 1880

North Tonawanda, N. Y.

Monday, August 11, 1975

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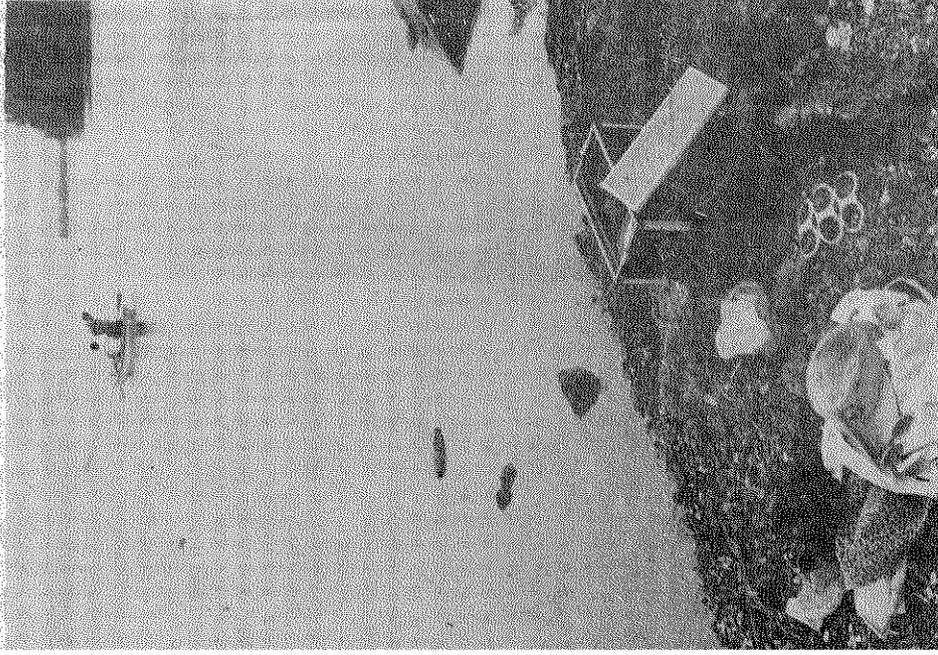
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## Ready to serve the community

At midnight tomorrow, this group of specially-trained paramedics and their specially-equipped truck officially will be ready to spring into action in the event of serious emergencies anywhere in Kenmore or the Town of Tonawanda. The paramedics and their van were formally inspected yesterday by Town Supervisor James V. Ryan, left foreground,

shown addressing the group. With Supervisor Ryan is Police Chief Lawrence A. Hoffman Jr. The unit won't have a special telephone number. Town police (876-5300) and village firemen (875-3000) will determine whether an emergency is serious enough to warrant dispatching the paramedics.

## Medics respond to pair of calls

The Town of Tonawanda's new emergency medical unit rushed to the aid of a heart attack victim last night, but the 56-year-old man died later at Kenmore Mercy Hospital.

Police said the victim was Wellington E. Loeb of 79 McConkey Drive. The paramedics were summoned at about 8:25 p.m.

Earlier, the paramedics treated Charles A. Panepinto, 15, of 35 Mang Ave., after he had been struck by a car while riding his bicycle on Elmwood Avenue near Homewood Avenue. The boy was taken to Kenmore Mercy by the squad, where he received further treatment for minor injuries and was released.

Police said the driver, Mack J. Stewart of Phoenix, Ariz., was not charged.

The paramedics, who officially began answering emergency calls in the town and Kenmore at midnight Sunday, are being "phased" into service. By agreement with doctors at Kenmore Mercy, the squad is not yet using defibrillator equipment on heart patients or injecting drugs.

## Town paramedics phased into jobs

The Town of Tonawanda's new paramedic team, which went into service at midnight last night, apparently is being "phased" into the job despite the extensive training its members have undergone.

According to Norman Stocker, town labor relations director, similar phase-in programs have been used by other

communities with new emergency medical unit squads.

The treatments which the paramedics will not be practicing immediately include use of the defibrillation machine for heart patients and injection of drugs.

Those services will be rendered when the squad arrives at the hospital with its patient.

Mr. Stocker said the arrangement has been worked out cooperatively with six doctors in the emergency room of Kenmore Mercy Hospital so that the paramedics "aren't hit with everything at once." He said the service will be like a normal ambulance service for the first week.

The squad answered its first call today at 3:03 a.m. to assist a woman having difficulty breathing. The squad also assisted at a drowning this morning in the Niagara River near the Grand Island Bridge.

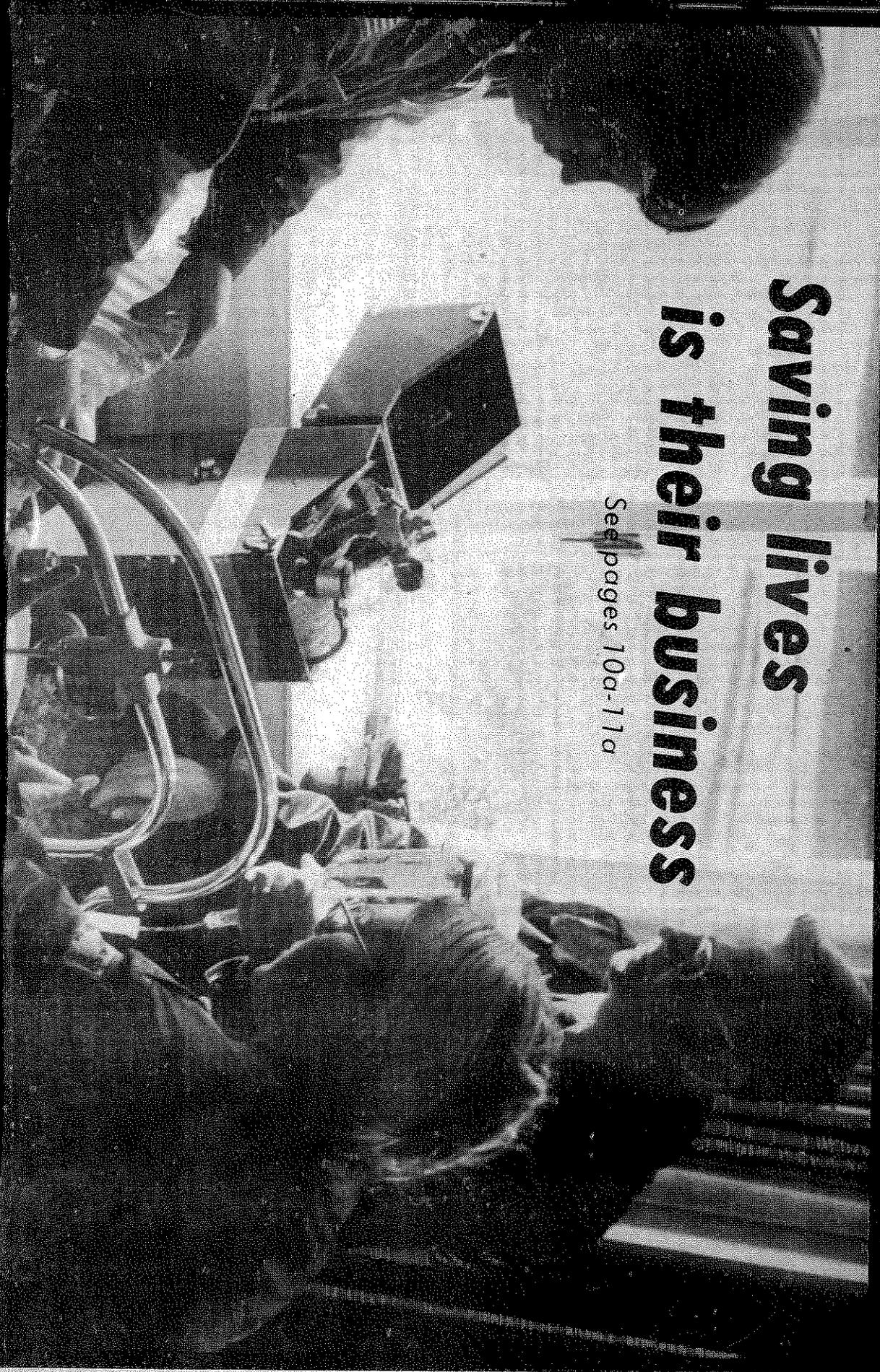
### Town - News 7/22/75 Excellent service

Both Mrs. Greune and I want to express our sincere thanks to the police officers and the paramedics who responded so quickly, efficiently and compassionately to the scene of the bicycle accident in which our son Paul was involved.

It is comforting to know that such services are available in the event of an emergency, and I was particularly pleased with the manner in which the police officer in charge advised Mrs. Greune of the situation.

This performance fully justifies, in our minds, the institution of the paramedic program and once again confirms the excellent services we have available in the town.

Francis W. Greune



# **Saving lives is their business**

See pages 10a-11a

Photos by David L. Bugbee  
NEWS Staff Photographer



**Kate Wenzel fills out a report**

... She's the only woman among 12 paramedics

## *Praise for paramedics*

Letters from town residents who have had first-hand experience with the paramedics speak highly of their performance:

From a nurse whose neighbor suffered a heart attack—"It is a nice feeling to be a resident in the Town of Tonawanda and know there is a medical system such as this available when it is necessary."

From a woman whose husband had a heart attack—"Please pass on our sincere thanks to the paramedics that helped us in this recent emergency. The true professionalism they exhibited is a credit to the Town of Tonawanda paramedic squad and to the Town of Tonawanda Police Department."

From a lawyer after his son's bicycle was hit by a car—"It is comforting to know that such services are available in the event of an emergency.... This performance fully justifies, in our minds, the institution of the paramedic program and once again confirms the excellent services we have available in the town."

# Success of paramedics

Saturday, November 22, 1975

Tonawanda NEWS Frontier

# proves their worth in town



**Patrolman John Murphy reaches for the alert button**

... To notify the paramedics of an emergency

**BY TOM ERNST  
NEWS Staff Writer**

When the Town of Tonawanda's Emergency Medical Unit was just getting off the ground last winter, its worth was the subject of a considerable volume of questions from some segments of the community.

The program has been fully operational for a little more than three months now and you don't hear anyone questioning it anymore.

The paramedics like to think that their actions have answered those questions better than verbal explanations ever could.

The end result of any medical program is measured in terms of lives saved.

"Have you saved anyone's life?" several of the paramedics were asked during a recent interview.

The answers were virtually all the same. The paramedics aren't quick to give a definite "yes." After all, they say, who can know for sure that someone wouldn't have pulled through.

On the other hand, the paramedics feel in their own minds they have saved lives. When you answer a call and the victim's heart isn't beating and you get it going again and that person is alive today—few would argue that you saved a life.

Two paramedics are on duty at all times. When they aren't answering a call, they are either at the town police station or at Kenmore Mercy Hospital (KMH).

The 10 full-time and two part-time paramedics are under the jurisdiction of the police department. The program was set up in conjunction with Kenmore Mercy.

The majority of patients are taken to Kenmore Mercy. The Emergency Medical Unit's van is equipped with communications gear that enables a doctor in the emergency room to monitor the vital signs of a victim in the van.

This enables a doctor to advise the paramedics on what treatment to administer while the victim is en route to the hospital.

Sometimes the paramedics are swamped with calls, as many as four within 35 minutes. So far, reports town Labor Relations Director Norman J. Stocker, the paramedics have been able to handle all the calls and haven't had to assign priorities to them.

Other times, however, the paramedics might put in an eight-hour shift without receiving a single call.

They use the slack periods to practice their skills and further their educations.

Paramedic Robert Hodge explained that most times those on duty will go over to the hospital and observe what is going on in the emergency room. "You get to know the doctors and you gain experience, under the doctor in charge," he said.

Every Wednesday, three paramedics are on duty. One spends the entire shift at the KMH emergency room.

The paramedics' office in the police station is stocked with medical books and practice equipment. A life-like rubber arm, complete with veins, enables them to practice giving intravenous injections.

Joseph Oddo's view of the job was typical of the paramedics questioned.

"I am enjoying it," he said. "You are constantly learning and growing more confident. The time goes fast because no two calls are exactly alike."

Because the paramedics are reserved for serious cases, by nature the job has a lot of grim aspects to it. Some calls, however, can be viewed a little light-heartedly.

Paramedic Hodge recalled one in which they were summoned to a local plant and found that a woman employe had gotten her hair caught in a machine.

Her hair was intertwined so tightly that the only way the paramedics could free her was to take the machine apart.

Some calls, however, are such that there is nothing the paramedics, or anyone else, can do to save a life.

It's when a life hangs in the balance that the paramedics have the opportunity to employ their skills to give life the edge it needs to defeat death.

So far, the paramedics say, they have employed their skills correctly.

"We haven't blown any yet, I hope we never do," Paramedic Hodge said.

# Zoning request for restaurant, paramedic bids occupy board

By TOM ERNST  
NEWS Staff Writer

A zoning change to permit construction of a Sambo's restaurant on Sheridan Drive will be the subject of a public hearing at 8 p.m. May 12, the Town of Tonawanda Board decided last night.

Norman Lewis and Emanuel Katz, owners of the vacant lot on the north side of Sheridan, between Loretta Street and Wilmington Avenue, are seeking to change the lot's zoning designation from C-1, restricted business, to C, general business.

A proposed building on the 395 by 140-foot lot would contain the restaurant on one side and a store on the other.

Sambo's is a chain of restaurants. None is listed as being in the Buffalo area, however.

In another matter at a regular meeting of the town board, Grayco Instruments of Buffalo was awarded a \$11,585 contract for the purchase of telemetry equipment for the town's new paramedic unit.

The firm was the lone bidder. The equipment will transmit such information as a victim's pulse from the paramedic unit to Kenmore Mercy Hospital, where victims will be taken for treatment.

The data will enable doctors at the hospital to instruct the paramedics on treatment while the victim is en route.

George Ciancio of 95 Canterbury Lane questioned the board on the bid, noting that Grayco had already donated some medical equipment to the program.

Councilman Thomas J. Kelly replied that the donated equipment is in no way related to the telemetry gear.

He said the nature of the equipment is not such that the town would have to buy the telemetry equipment from Grayco in order to be able to make use of the donated equipment. The equipment all operates independently, he said.

The councilman added that Grayco was the only bidder and oftentimes the town finds itself with no choice on awarding a contract because only one firm has submitted a bid.

The board also approved an amendment to its agreement with the federal government to receive Community Development Act funds.

The town is scheduled to receive

\$159,818 during the first year of the three-year program. It could receive close to \$1 million during the life of the program.

Councilman Kelly described the amendment as "taking care of some technicalities."

He said it has no effect on the town's plan to use the majority of the funds for establishment of a senior citizens center.

There had been some initial concern that the amendment, which the federal government requires the town to sign, might have mandated a change in the way the town plans to spend the funds.

In other action during the meeting in the Municipal Building, the board:

—Promised that it would take action on a complaint that a Sheridan Drive motorcycle dealer allows his refuse to be blown about the neighborhood.

—Received apparent low bids from

Lobugio Block Co. for the purchase of 4,500 12-inch cement blocks at 55 cents each and 2,500 8-inch blocks at 39 cents apiece. The bid and two other apparently higher ones were referred for study.

—Awarded a contract to Jones Chemical for the purchase of chlorine for the water and sewage treatment plants at \$260 a ton. The firm was lone bidder.

—Called for bids May 12 both for the purchase of chlorine for the town swimming pools and for hydrated lime and pulverized limestone for the Water Department.

—Rejected all bids for the purchase of shade trees. Councilman Harry E. Goss explained that the trees were originally intended for spring planting but it has now been decided to wait until fall to plant.

—Granted permission for a July 19 block party on Orchard Drive.

—Granted permission to the volunteer fire companies in the town to use the area around the Delaware Pool for their Memorial Day observance on May 26.

—Noted 17 building permits for construction valued at \$37,110 for the week ended yesterday.

—Adjourned until 8 p.m. Monday.

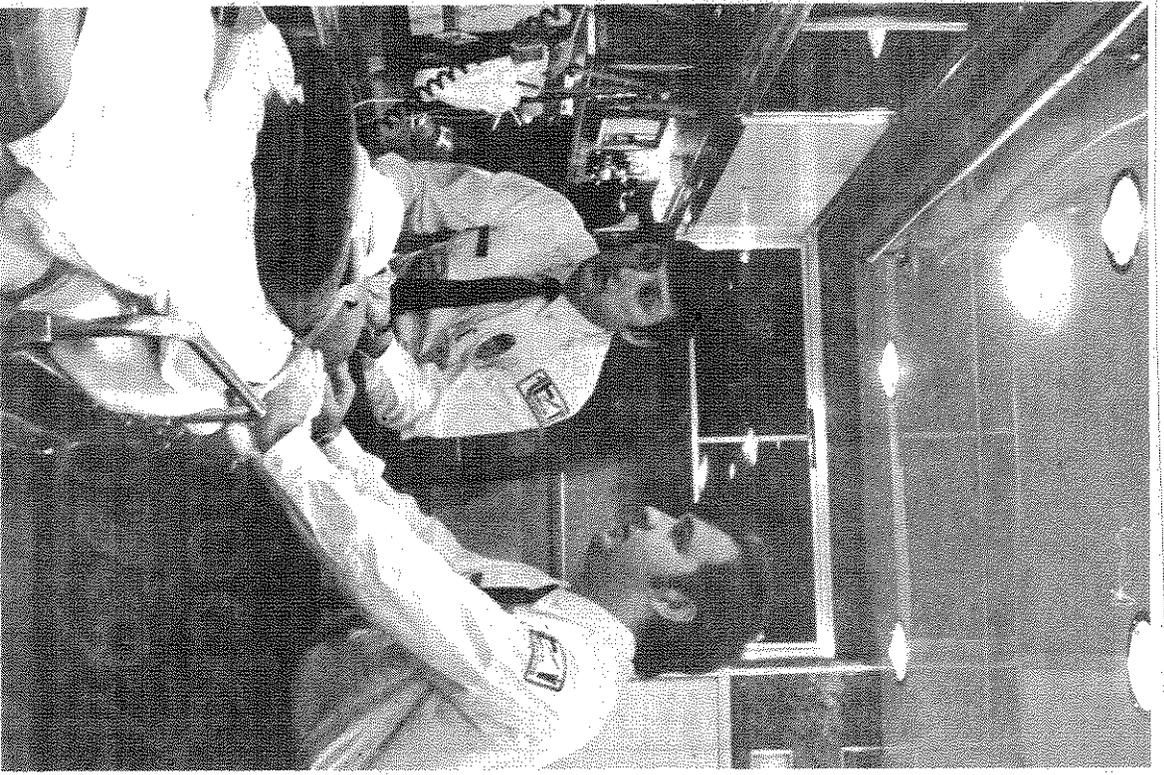
March 27, 1977 - Tonawanda News



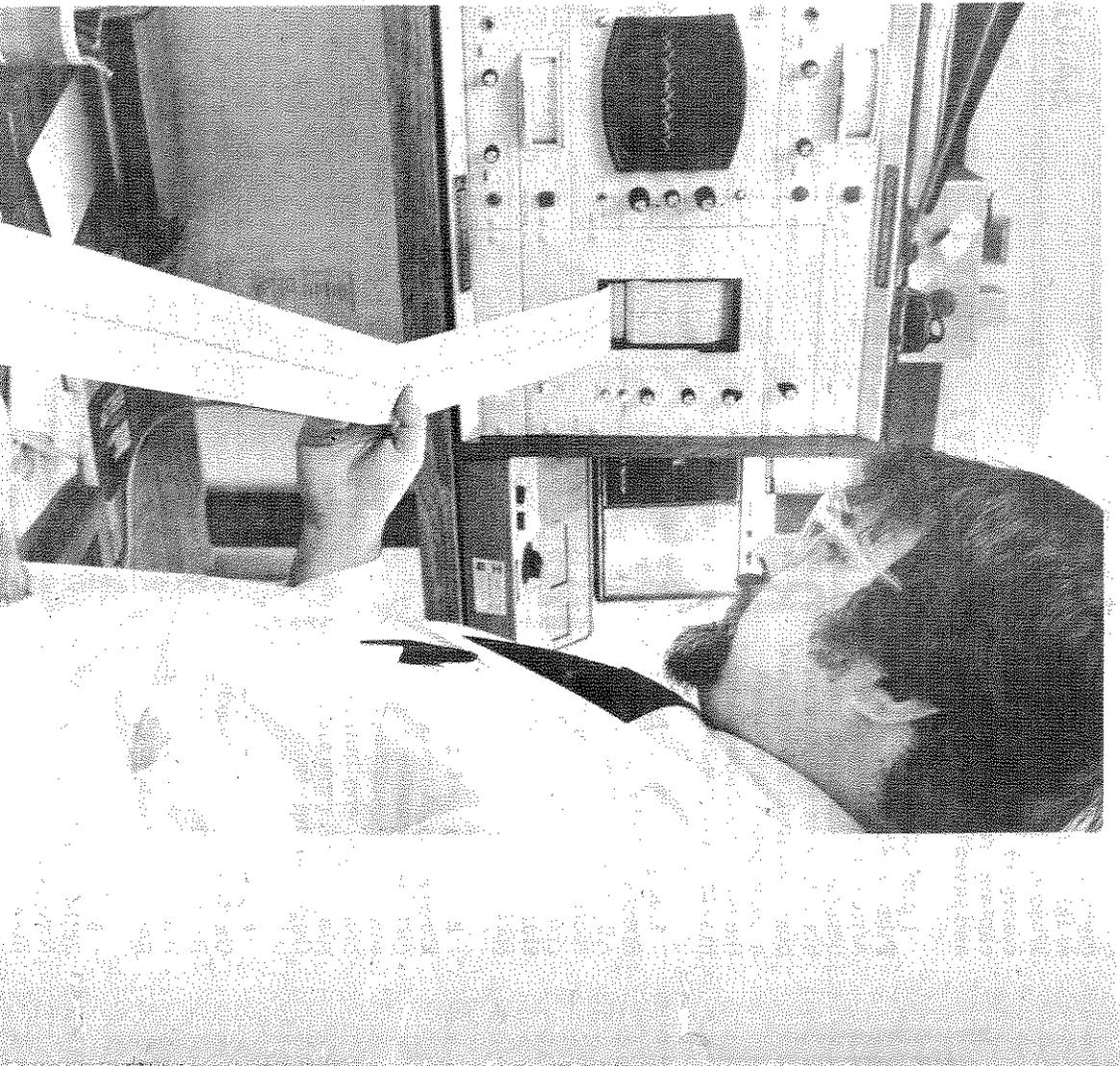
## Paramedic gear donated to town

More than \$750 worth of equipment was donated to the Town of Tonawanda's new paramedic program yesterday by three local organizations. Pictured, from left, are Catherine McGowan, president of the Kenmore Zonta Club, which donated \$500 used to purchase a life-like adult head for training purposes; Charles M.

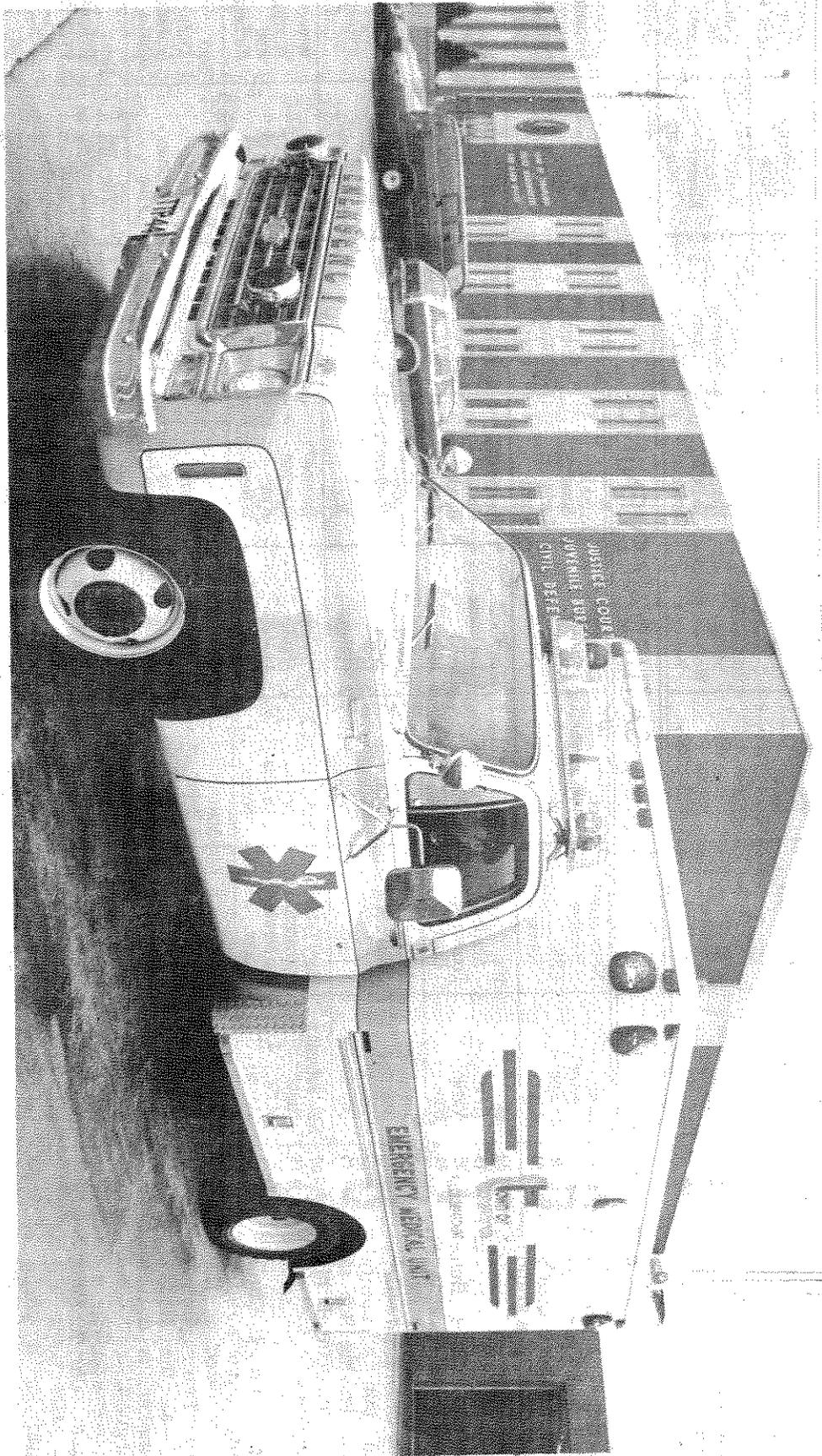
Delaney, employment manager of the J.H. Williams Co., which donated more than \$100 worth of tools for the paramedic vehicle; Kenneth J. Höhl of Watson Sales Co., which donated a fire extinguisher and a life-like infant head for training, and town Supervisor James V. Ryan, who accepted the equipment on behalf of the town.



**Paramedics Hodge, left, and Wayne Busch check gear**  
... At the start of their shift



**Dr. Gary Mendelow checks a victim's heartbeat at Kennore Mercy**  
... Transmitted from Emergency Medical Unit van



**The Emergency Medical Unit van leaves to answer a call**

... From the Town of Tonawanda police station on Sheridan Drive



## Lucidol grant aids emergency unit

The Lucidol Division of Pennwalt Corp. donated \$2,000 to the Town of Tonawanda's Emergency Medical Unit yesterday and these four huddled in the paramedic van to determine the best use for the

money. Pictured, from left, are Lawrence A. Hoffman Jr., town police chief; Richard A. Schwab, president of Lucidol; Joseph Oddo, one of the paramedics, and James V. Ryan, town supervisor.

## \$8,000 contributed to paramedic cause

The Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda Chamber of Commerce has collected almost \$8,000 so far for the town's paramedic program, and it hasn't even started its fund drive yet.

Several large companies have made sizable donations to account for most of the funds, but small, individual contributions come in too, according to Robert Wagner, co-chairman of the fund, along with Joseph Rennie.

Pending start of the formal fund drive, the chamber has established a bank account for the money it has received to date.

Most of the funds will be used to purchase new and replacement equipment, and

The fund recently received a \$20 contribution from four Liston Street families in gratitude for the unsuccessful effort the paramedics made to save a neighbor's life.

A letter accompanying the donation said, in part: "I cannot praise the people (paramedics) and their work too highly. They were extremely efficient and we would like to have the money added to the fund for more equipment.

"We feel that it is reassuring to know help like this is available and that the Town of Tonawanda is very fortunate to have this unit..."

Donations may be sent to the chamber at 3491 Delaware Ave.

## Paramedics kept busy

Members of the Town of Tonawanda emergency medical unit, more commonly known as the paramedics, answered a total of 151 calls between their first day of operation Aug. 11 and Sept. 18, according to recent statistics.

Fifteen of the calls involved automobile accidents resulting in injuries. Another 23 were injury accidents not involving vehicles. Injuries in these categories generally were not considered minor.

The paramedics answered 30 cardiac calls and 48 miscellaneous but serious medical problems, including diabetic shock, stroke and emphysema victims.

The remaining 35 calls involved miscellaneous minor injuries.

12

Tonawanda NEWS

Monday, December 15, 1975



## Snowmobiles offered to aid paramedics

Two Town of Tonawanda brothers plan to "come to the rescue" of the town's paramedic team, if the need arises. The brothers are Skip and Robert House, both of 38 Sunnydale Drive, who've donated the use of their snowmobiles this winter in case the

paramedics' van encounters a severe snowstorm and can't reach its destination. Shown with the snowmobiles are, from left, Skip, Paramedics Robert Hodge and William Long, and Robert.

# TONAWANDA

# NEWS

Cooler

(Weather details, Page 10)

Established 1880

North Tonawanda, N.Y.

Monday, January 26, 1976

15 Cents

# Town restaurant is scene of gas leak, \$800 holdup

By LYNN HEMMINGS  
NEWS Staff Writer

Three persons who were overcome by gas fumes at Kurban's Restaurant in the Town of Tonawanda early yesterday during what may have been an unrelated \$800 holdup were listed in "fair" condition today at Kenmore Mercy Hospital.

Authorities were trying to determine the nature of the gas, which may have been freon, and believe the leak may have occurred independently of the holdup. Freon is used in refrigeration, among other things.

Admitted to Kenmore Mercy were Robert C. Hodge, 27, of 9 Masetfield Drive, Town of Tonawanda, a paramedic; Richard Crandall, 40, of 1416 Kenmore Ave., Kenmore, a Kurban's chef, and Cathy Steen, 25, of 33 W. Girard, a waitress.

Several others also were affected by the fumes. The series of events began shortly after 1:30 a.m. when Claire Hayes, the manager, was about to count the receipts and noticed that Mr. Crandall was nowhere to be found, according to Capt. Robert J. McDonough, chief of detectives.

Mrs. Hayes found the chef unconscious in the cellar and went upstairs to call an ambulance. Immediately after telephoning for aid, Mrs. Hayes and Patrick Blackley, a patron, were confronted by two men wearing ski masks. One of the robbers had a handgun.

Mrs. Hayes, Mr. Blackley and

others in Kurban's were forced to lie down on the floor in the kitchen. No was was injured by the robbers, but meanwhile those in the restaurant apparently were inhaling fumes.

In the brief time that passed between Mrs. Hayes' call for aid for Mr. Crandall and the time help arrived, the holdup men had scooped up the loot and fled.

Capl. McDonough reported that those treated at Kenmore Mercy for acute toxic gas inhalation, and released, included Mrs. Hayes, 55; Russell Tedesco, no age available, of 240 Bryant St., North Tonawanda, a paramedic; Steven Segal, 22, of 70 King St., Tonawanda, a bartender; Diane Daniels, 21, of 756 Woodstock Ave., Town of Tonawanda, a patron; Darryl Dickinson, 34, of 101 Nassau Ave., Kenmore, an ambulance driver, and Lt. Norman Bedient of town police.

Kurban's is located at 3365 Delaware Ave.

Detective Donald Miller is in charge of the investigation.

The Kenmore Volunteer Fire Department was called to help disperse the gas.



Our viewpoint

# Paramedics paying off

THE TOWN paramedics are beginning to pay some life-saving dividends.

The NEWS has received several letters from Town of Tonawanda residents recently praising the paramedic squads for quick action in emergency situations.

Controversy has surrounded the paramedics since their inception last year, but no one can dispute that several lives have been saved as the result of their efforts. We wonder if these benefits can be measured in costs.

IT'S EXPENSIVE to equip a paramedic team and this was the main bone of contention in the town. Just the initial expense alone in the first year of operation was \$150,000.

But there are indications that expense to town taxpayers may be abating while the benefits will remain.

A donation of \$8,000 has been received by the paramedics from the

Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda Chamber of Commerce in a continuing fund drive to help the squad purchase and maintain equipment.

There also have been smaller contributions.

Four Liston Street families recently donated \$20 in gratitude for the effort paramedics made in attempting to save a neighbor's life.

A LETTER accompanying the latter donation said, "We feel it is reassuring to know help like this is available and that the town is very fortunate to have this unit."

So maybe the cost of the paramedic service in the town will be subsidized over the years by community donations. We can't think of many more worthwhile services that deserve contributions.

Donations may be sent to the Chamber of Commerce at 3491 Delaware Ave., Kenmore, 14217.

## *Lauds paramedics*

My husband was recently stricken with a heart attack in our home. I called our family doctor and gave him the symptoms and he suggested I drive my husband to the hospital.

Luckily, I do not drive in winter, and I asked him about medical emergency. He said that was what I should do, as they are equipped with a cardiograph and that they will take over from there.

I called the Town of Tonawanda police and asked for the medical emergency (paramedics). They were here in 10 minutes! They took over from then on until they transported my husband to Kenmore Mercy Hospital.

What a great team they are. In this case — it was Kate Wenzel and Dave Peck, and a policeman (did not get his name). They were very efficient and well trained.

God bless them, they truly are heroes — and they had the courtesy to come back to the hospital the next day to visit my husband to see how he was doing.

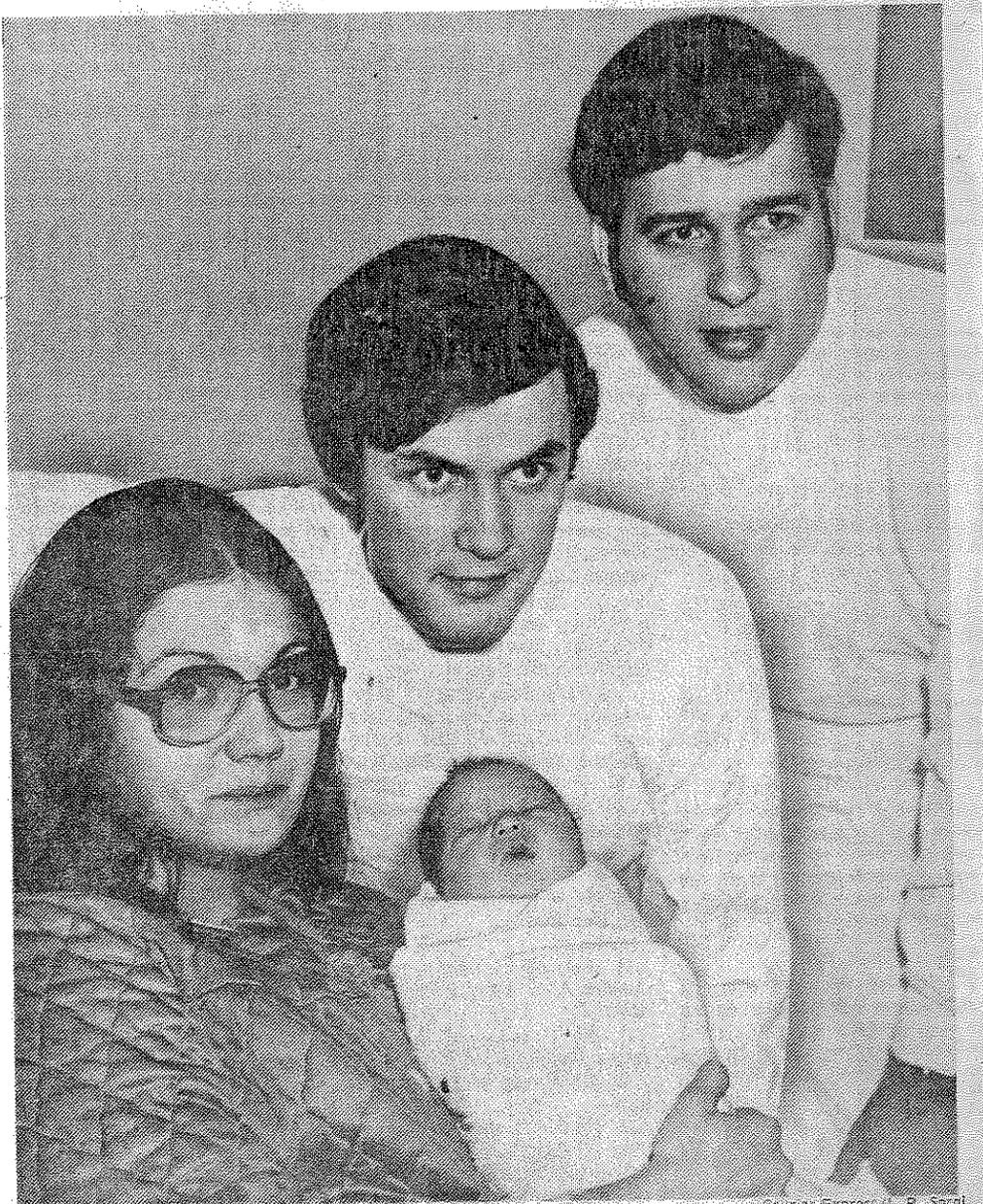
Every day since then I thank God for the paramedics, an excellent doctor, the great physician "up there," and that we are living in a great town.

There will be an article about this in our Town of Tonawanda Senior Citizens news bulletin next month — to inform the members what to do in an emergency.

I thought a letter to your paper might be a good idea — as I feel sure that more people could use this information in case of an emergency.

I am especially grateful to our police department and the well trained people in their medical emergency.

**Mrs. Bruce W. Robertson**  
Kenmore



Courier-Express/I. R. Sordl

Mrs. Bernard A. Howe Jr.      Kevin B. Day      Wayne P. Busch  
Amanda Virginia Howe  
A happy reunion in the hospital after a hectic delivery in paramedic vehicle

# Paramedics Log

## 1st Baby Delivery

By JOE WILHELM

The Town of Tonawanda paramedic team which has won praise for its life saving techniques since starting emergency medical service last August, delivered its first baby early Thursday.

Two team members, Wayne P. Busch and Kevin B. Day, assisted Mrs. Carol Howe, 24, of 870 Highland Ave., with delivery of 7-pound Amanda Virginia in the paramedic vehicle outside the Howe home, about 7 a.m.

Her husband, Bernard A. Howe Jr., rushed home from his custodian job at nearby Kenmore Junior High School just in time to greet the new arrival. The couple has a son, Daniel, 4 years old.

'Just Fantastic'

From her bed at Sisters Hospital, Mrs. Howe said the paramedics were "terrific, just fantastic!"

The two men visited with the parents at the hospital Thursday night and laughed and shared memories of their morning's experience.

The paramedics pointed out the help that town police give team members on the scene of

emergencies. Pftm. Thomas Trapper drove the paramedic vehicle to the hospital while they attended to the mother and child.

The 10-member team received six months of extensive training at Kenmore Mercy Hospital before beginning full-time emergency medical service for the town last August. Since then, they have answered more than 1,000 calls and received numerous letters and calls of praise.

Kenmore Training

The two men had assisted in deliveries while training at Kenmore Mercy Hospital but this is the first emergency delivery in an out of hospital situation, they noted.

Busch, 24, supervising paramedic, was a biology major at Buffalo State College, and served four years with the Snyder Volunteer Fire Co. paramedic team.

Day, 24, was an Army medical corpsman, still serves in the Army Reserves and was also on orderly at Sisters Hospital where his mother, Mrs. Maureen Day, is a nurse.

## Baby girl is first for paramedics

The Town of Tonawanda paramedics started out treating one patient recently, but a few minutes later they had two.

The first was Mrs. Carol Howe of 870 Highland Ave. The second was Mrs. Howe's daughter, who became the first baby ever delivered by the paramedics during their brief history.

Paramedics Kevin Day and Wayne Busch had the honor of delivering the 7-pound baby—in the paramedic van right in front of the Howe home.

Both Mrs. Howe, and her daughter, named Amanda, are doing just fine in Sisters' Hospital in Buffalo, the paramedics reported.

Town Patrolmen Val Ihle and Timothy Trapper were the first to arrive at the Howe home when Mrs. Howe realized that Amanda was on her way, about 7 a.m.

Mrs. Howe was placed in the paramedic van and the baby started arriving almost immediately, so the paramedics decided to deliver the baby right there.

Amanda and her mom were taken to Sisters' Hospital at the request of Mrs. Howe's physician.

The move was first cleared with Kenmore Mercy Hospital, to which paramedic patients are usually taken.

Mrs. Howe's husband, Bernard A. Howe Jr., was called at Kenmore Junior High School, where he works as a custodian, but the stork got to his home before he did. The couple has a son, Daniel, 4.

Paramedics Day and Busch are no strangers to the art of delivering babies. They assisted in deliveries while training at Kenmore Mercy Hospital, but Amanda was the first emergency delivery away from a hospital.

*Courier Express 9/26/76*

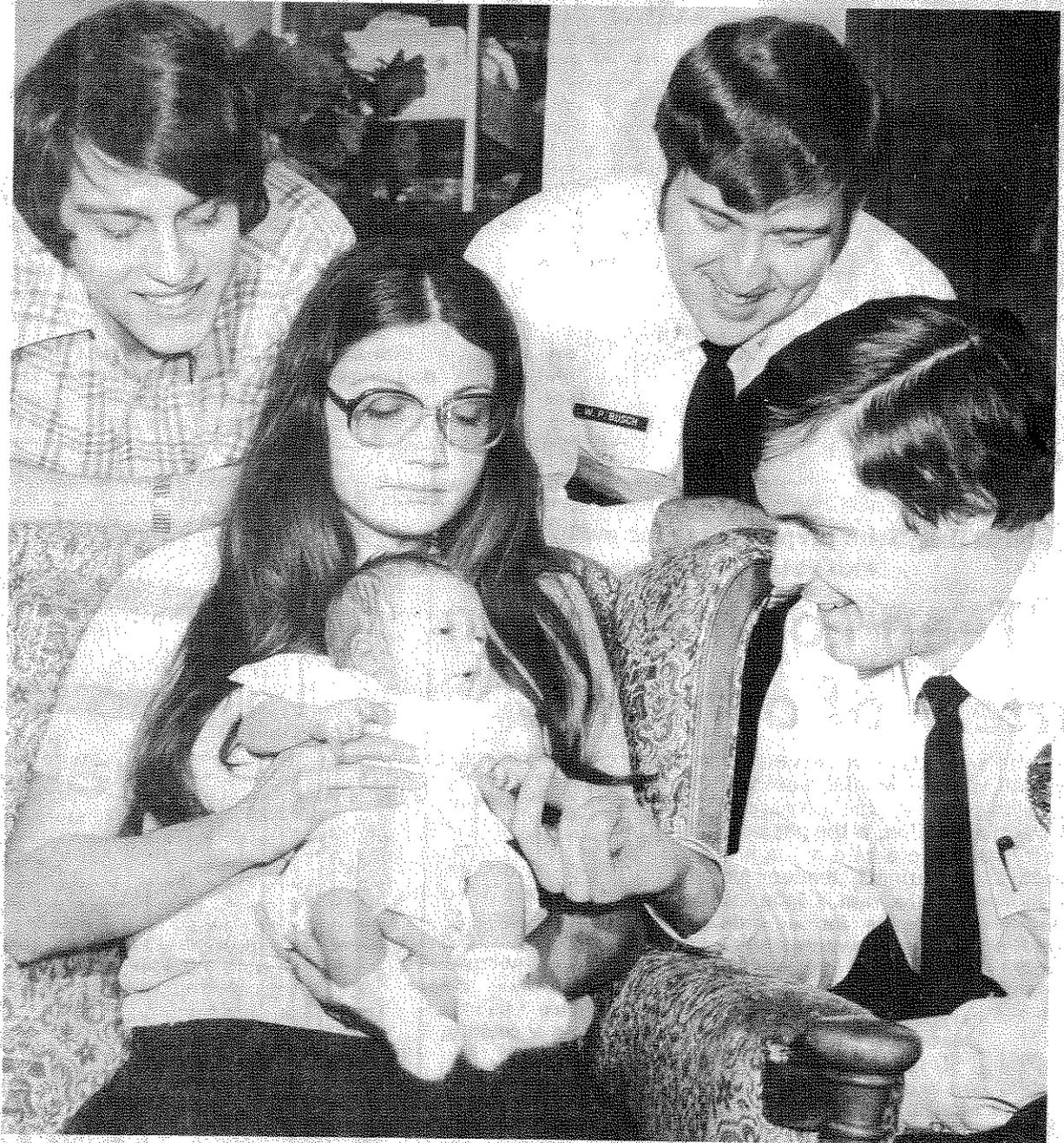
*Record-Advertiser 9/26/76*

# TONAWANDA NEWS

Established 1880

North Tonawanda, N.Y.

Monday, March 1, 1976



## Paramedic baby makes public debut

Although she probably isn't aware she made history for the Town of Tonawanda paramedic unit by being the first baby ever delivered by the paramedics, 12-day-old Amanda Howe almost seems to be saying "thank you" from her mother's lap to paramedics Kevin Day, holding her hand, and Wayne Busch, both of whom handled her delivery. Her father, Bernard Howe, 870 Highland Ave., left, shows his feelings with a typical fatherly

smile. Amanda arrived Feb. 19 in the paramedic van as it was parked in front of the Howe residence. The paramedics arrived at the Howe home at about 7 a.m., after Mrs. Howe had notified town police when she realized Amanda was on her way. Mrs. Howe was placed in the paramedic van and the baby started arriving almost immediately, so the two paramedics decided to deliver her right then and there.



## ***Rescue staged for make-believe crash***

Twenty-five persons, including these two unidentified "victims" being escorted from a helicopter at Kenmore Mercy Hospital by Town of Tonawanda Paramedic Robert Hodge, right, were "injured" Saturday in a simulated plane crash on Grand Island. There actually were no victims, no injuries and no crash—but area firemen, law enforcement

agencies, rescue teams, hospital personnel and other groups didn't know that. The simulated crash was a disaster drill designed to test readiness to respond to a severe emergency situation. A hospital spokesman said the exercise was "highly successful."



## Fatally stricken while driving

Members of the Town of Tonawanda paramedics team are shown administering first aid to George F. Neel, 80, of 83 Spruce St., North Tonawanda, shortly after 8:30 a.m. today after he suffered a fatal heart attack while driving on the Twin Cities Memorial Highway. Police said he was traveling east when his car veered off the road between Colvin Boulevard and Luksin Drive, and smashed through

fencing. He was alone. He was pronounced dead on arrival at Kenmore Mercy Hospital. Arrangements are incomplete. The accident occurred approximately on the Town of Tonawanda-City of Tonawanda line. The town paramedics were called by City of Tonawanda police. Facing the camera is Paramedic Kate Wenzel. Paramedic Joseph Oddo also responded to the call for aid.

7070 (Name)  
3/29/76

*Tommy*



## **Together at hospital**

Mr. and Mrs. John Franasiak of the City of Tonawanda were together when they were injured in a March 11 car accident and they are still together, sharing a room in Kenmore Mercy Hospital's Skilled Nursing Facility. That's nurse Dory Babi checking Mrs. Franasiak's injuries. It's

hospital policy to put married couples in the same room, unless the couple opposes it. The Franasiaks said they wish to thank the Town of Tonawanda paramedics for the care they received immediately after the accident.



Courier-Express/I. R. Sorgi

Bruce Robertson feeds "Cosmo" while thanking Supervisor Ryan

... town paramedic service saved him.

# Victim of Heart Attack Is Avid Booster for Team of Paramedics

By JOE WILHELM

Bruce M. Robertson of the Town of Tonawanda is a heart attack victim who feels he's a "shining example of the lives saved by paramedics."

And he expressed a hope at his 83 Woodward Ave. home on Wednesday that other governments would soon provide the service.

"I wouldn't be here if not for them and I am naturally enthusiastic about this program," Robertson, 67, said. "But heart attacks are not limited to persons my age. They can happen to high school students, college students, working people. The paramedic service should be expanded statewide," Robertson said.

Robertson asked town officials to arrange for newspaper publicity for him to tell his story and to thank the pair who provided him with the emergency medical service at home last Jan. 24.

But the two paramedics, Mrs. Kate Wenzel and David Peck, had to answer an emergency call at press conference time on Wednesday. Town Supervisor James V. Ryan, who guided the beginning of the town emergency medical service program last August after six months of training, accepted Robertson's thanks. The two paramedics returned later to chat with him.

### Only Full-time Team

The 10-member town team is the only Buffalo-area full-time emergency medical service and the only one financed by a government in this area. Some volunteer fire departments offer some similar emergency services.

Robertson on Wednesday recalled that he experienced chest pains while shoveling snow last Jan. 24. His wife called a physician and suggested to the doctor that she contact the then fairly new town

team. The doctor agreed and the pair was there "within 10 minutes, although it may have been faster," Robertson said.

He suffered cardiac arrest once in the paramedic van outside his home and again in the Kenmore Mercy Hospital emergency room. "My doctor later said, 'You were over the brink and they brought you back,'" Robertson said.

### Revived Twice

The paramedics twice used a defibrillator, an electrical device which shocks the heart, to revive him. The town van is connected to the Kenmore hospital by radio and other electronic equipment, where doctors advise and assist much in the manner of the "Emergency" television show about paramedics.

Robertson, a retired technical writer for Bell Aerosystems Div., Textron Inc., added, "It's impossible to measure the value of this program."

Town News 3/25/76



## Town paramedics get 'thank you'

Bruce M. Robertson, left, feels he owes his life to the Town of Tonawanda paramedics and yesterday he had the opportunity to thank them in person. Pictured with him, from left, are Paramedics David Peck and Kate Wenzel and Dr. Joseph Takats of the Kenmore Mercy Hospital staff, who supervised the paramedics' training. Paramedics

Peck and Wenzel responded to the call when Mr. Robertson suffered a heart attack in January and treated him at the scene and rushed him to the hospital. Mr. Robertson asked them to drop by his home at 63 Woodward Ave. so he could extend his personal thanks.

### Police, paramedics

This is a short note expressing our appreciation for the prompt and efficient service of both the police and the paramedic unit. Especially gratifying was the quick response as well as the competent manner in which they ministered to my wife. The people in this area are indeed fortunate to have such a team available.

Members of the coronary-care unit at Kenmore Mercy Hospital also are included in our sincere appreciation for their work and excellent care my wife has received.

Warren C. De Long  
Town of Tonawanda

Tona-N  
3/21/74

BCR- 3/25/76

## Man Thanks Medics for Saving Life

Bruce M. Robertson, 67, is so grateful for being alive that he called a press conference Wednesday to sing the praises of the Town of Tonawanda paramedic team which "brought me back to life after my heart twice stopped beating."

"I'm here, I feel fine and I'm enjoying life. I would not be here at all if it had not been for the paramedics," Mr. Robertson said.

Mr. Robertson became ill at his home, 63 Woodworth Ave., on Jan. 5 and two paramedics,

David Peck and Mrs. Kate Wenzel responded after a call to police headquarters.

"Mr. Robertson's heart stopped beating before we had him moved into the emergency vehicle," Paramedic Wenzel said. "His heart began beating again before we arrived at Kenmore Mercy Hospital but at the hospital the heart again stopped.

"Dr. (Joseph) Takats, with whom we had been in communication after arriving at the Robertson home, took over

and the heart beat was resumed."

Mr. Robertson, a retired Bell Aerosystems technical writer, was confined to the hospital's intensive care unit for several days and after a period of recuperation returned to his home on Feb. 24.

During the press conference in his home, he extended his thanks to Town Supervisor James V. Ryan, Norman J. Stocker, paramedic program co-ordinator, Dr. Takats, the program's medical co-ordinator and the two paramedics.

Tonawanda News  
4/21/76

# Your Town Meeting

## 'Slogans' rapped

The NEWS and the Town of Tonawanda Town Board have shown what they think of police, fire and municipal workers of the area. Your editorial, "Town fights mandates," has given you both away.

The anti-union, municipal destruction slogan, cropped up just like big brother, New York City.

"Unless something is done to reckon with public employes, reduce taxes immediately, we are going broke" all because of the police, firefighter and municipal workers.

It is the political season again and what a time to generate public opposition to municipal workers. The same old story is out again.

"I will not let the Town of Tonawanda go down the road of destruction as did New York City. I promise to deal tough with public employe unions. I am against collective bargaining, look what happened to New York City."

These are all managerial and political slogans.

They pick the police and fire services for this one because they didn't pay attention to the Taylor Law makeup and now they need a goat.

They don't want to admit that this is what the people wanted and it bothers them. So we will throw it back at them as a means to try to change the law.

Who are they trying to save, themselves for re-election or the economy?

Municipal workers have only asked to be paid a living wage and for decent working conditions, like the factory or construction worker neighbors.

We, too, are victims of inflation and Richard Nixon. We pay the same taxes, raise families at the same economic standards as everyone else. Gasoline, food and clothing are all the same price for all, but conditions are not.

Maybe the Town Board should take a hard fast look at themselves before jumping on big brother's coat tails. They got a raise and big brother didn't. They have had labor peace, big brother has not.

Thank you for the consideration you have given me as

an individual to express my freedom of speech.

**George Myers**  
Town of Tonawanda



## Aids elderly driver

Town of Tonawanda Paramedic Joseph Oddo reaches into a car to aid its driver, 81-year-old Albert Doyle, after the car veered out of control and struck a pole on Delaware Avenue near Princeton Boulevard in the town shortly after 1:30 p.m. yesterday. Mr. Doyle, who resides at 30 Twyla Place in the town, was listed in "fair" condition today at Kenmore Mercy Hospital with multiple cuts and bruises. He was alone in the auto at the time of the mishap.

## Paramedic quiz

Why this sudden push to get good publicity for the paramedics? Have some of the inevitable problems emerged? Has the State certified them as "Paramedics"? Have the paramedics been given Civil Service status? Where is the back-up van that would be here within a matter of hours? Are the paramedics really serving the public in a police dog van?

In your publication, I have seldom noticed pictures or names of patrolmen or firemen (Kenmore) who have delivered babies or aided heart attack victims as well as having performed all their other duties. For example, a picture in a recent edition shows a police officer working alongside the paramedics and demonstrates a known fact — that the police are perfectly capable of administering help of this kind. Yet, you fail to mention the officer's name. Both paramedics' names, however, were listed.

The paramedics must certainly perform a few specialized duties for which they have been trained at taxpayer expense and for which they receive an excellent salary.

Why the avalanche of publicity? Is this an effort to prove their worth? Why is it necessary?

Are you now discovering that the police and firemen have been doing this service for years and that suddenly it costs the taxpayers an additional \$250,000 in order to obtain it from another source?

*Be News - 4/10/76*  
**Jo Ann Fik  
Kenmore**

## Likes paramedics

We would like the people of the Town of Tonawanda to know what a wonderful service we have, the paramedic program.

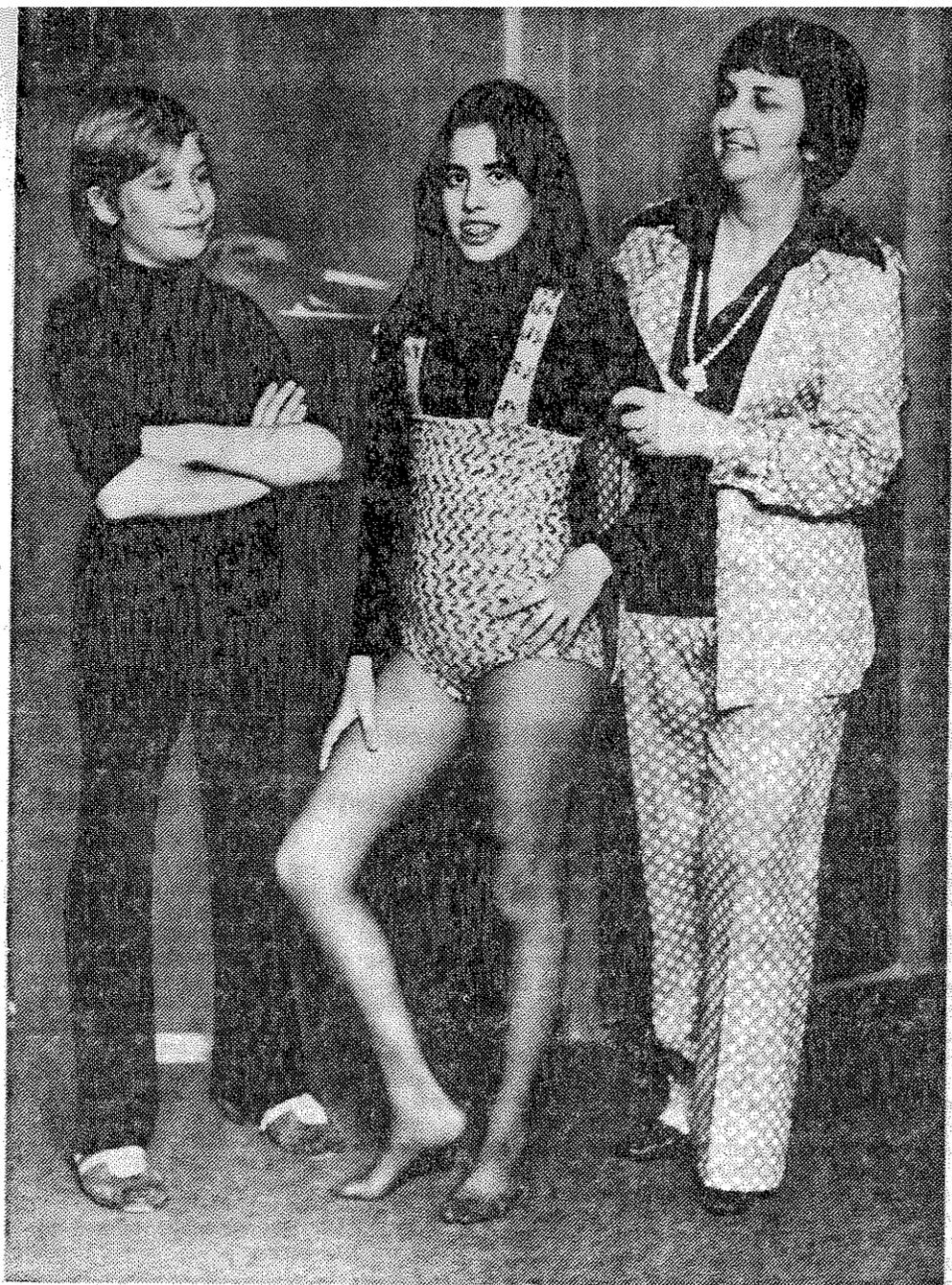
We had to call upon this service for my husband recently at 1 a.m. They were here in no time and worked very quickly and so efficiently. We had the team of Robert Hodge Jr. and Lance Kahn.

It certainly is a comfort to know this service is available to all of us, so please people, never let the paramedic program fall by the wayside for lack of funds.

**Mrs. Kenneth Gaisser and  
children**

**Town of Tonawanda**

*Town News 4/19/76*  
\*\*\*\*\*



C-E  
6/9/76

Robert F. Hamsik

Michelle Muscarella

Courier-Express/I. R. Sorgi  
Mrs. Parlato

Director coaches students at rehearsal for benefit musical

## Musical to Benefit Paramedics

A LONG TIME love of the theater, dance and entertainment in general has led Mrs. Lillian Parlato into developing a musical Theater Workshop.

For many years, Mrs. Parlato, who resides at 209 Sweetbriar Rd., Town of Tonawanda, has taught dancing, music and voice in the dance school method.

"I also tried to put on musical productions rather than the traditional dance school recital," said the teacher, stressing that she has staged many productions. Among her efforts are a scholarship fund drive production for Sweet Home School and one for the Sertoma Club, an international service club.

MRS. PARLATO'S WORKSHOP is currently producing a new production called "Attention Class." This original musical, open to the public, will be held at 8 p.m. Friday, June 18, at Kenmore East High School, 350 Fries Rd., Town of Tonawanda. Proceeds will benefit the Town of Tonawanda Paramedics, trained to administer emergency medical care. Tickets are \$2.50 for adults and \$1.50 for students.

The script for "Attention Class" was conceived through rap sessions and script writing sessions in which the individual performers developed their own parts and characters, according to Mrs. Parlato.

"It was my function to edit and coordinate the individual parts and characters," said the director.

"ATTENTION CLASS" ranges in setting from the one room classroom through today's modern educational complex.

Mrs. Parlato's background includes experience as a professional performer. She appeared as a singer and dancer at the Chez Ami and Town Casino, former Buffalo night clubs.

Tickets for the musical may be ordered through Paramedics, 876-5300; Twin City Racquet Club, 694-3877; Parlato Real Estate, 875-5421, or Lillian Parlato at 834-2294 or 834-2258.

# AWANDA NEWS

Changing

(Weather details, Page 8)

Tonawanda, N.Y.

Monday, August 11, 1975

15 Cents

## drowns in Niagara

A fisherman drowned at about 9:30 this morning when he waded into the Niagara River under one of the Grand Island Bridges in the Town of Tonawanda to retrieve his minnow bucket.

The victim was identified by police as Richard S. Dobeis, 62, of 1543 Eggert Road, Amherst.

The victim's bait bucket apparently floated away as he was fishing from the shore under the bridge. He removed some of his clothes and waded into the fast-flowing current in an effort to retrieve it, witnesses reported.

When it became apparent that the man was in trouble, three people at the scene tried to aid him by throwing a tire to him, but the effort failed.

The victim went under and did not come up, the witnesses said. Those attempting the rescue were Brian Beutler and his sister, Vicky, of 27 Benefield Place, and Harry Lether, a friend of Vicky. The latter's address was not immediately available.

Mr. Lether and a police officer who arrived at the scene, Patrolman Val Ihle, acquired a small boat from a nearby marina and tried to locate the man.

The victim was found about 15 minutes later by the City of Tonawanda Police Department's underwater squad.

The Town of Tonawanda's new paramedic team treated Miss Beutler for shock and attempted to revive the victim. He was pronounced dead at the scene by an Erie County medical examiner and the body was taken to the county morgue.



Fisherman is rushed off for treatment

But resuscitation efforts prove in vain

in background

June 17, 1976  
Tova News



**Ron Perla, Mary Parlato, Gloria Beiter, John Pericak**

... Performance to benefit the paramedics

# Musical Theatre Workshop sets production benefiting paramedics

The Musical Theatre Workshop will present "Attention Class" at 8 p.m. Friday in Kenmore East High School, Town of Tonawanda, to benefit the Town of Tonawanda Emergency Medical Unit, the "paramedics."

Lillian Parlato is director of the program which is an original show conceived through discussion and script writing sessions with the students of the workshop.

Although the students receive formal instruction individually, the emphasis is placed on performing before an audience. Their services are offered to charitable or public organizations interested in using their programs to raise money.

"Attention Class" is a musical whose setting ranges from a one-room

Harvey, Carolyn Martha, Kathy O'Malley, Michele Muscarella, Melanie Muscarella, Ronald Norman, Beverly Occhino, Jim Parlato, Lillian Parlato, Elizabeth Quenneville, Andrea Rubin and Susan Weber.

The first day at school is portrayed featuring Lillian Bezinque as the teacher.

Taking part in the dance class will be these advanced dance students directed by Helene Venetta: Kathy Kingsley, Jo Ann Caci, Susan Peperone, Karen Didio, Sandra Krull, Diane Doell, Amy DeForest, Theresa Schunk, Angela Nardeccia and Candy Cook.

The art class will feature Art Masso as vocal art instructor.

Mountain as the principal, Miss Handle.

Highlight of an audition scene for a school variety show will be a dance routine by Isabelle Slifer, a social studies teacher at Maryvale High School, Cheektowaga. Miss Slifer also is a dance instructor and she will present a number with the following dance students: Paula Guizzotti, Sue Kazlowski, Carol Roemer, Elaine Indridson, Terry Miller, Cindy Sass, Kathy Cleary and Dale Mohrher. Also in the scene will be Donna Bradfield, baton twirling, and Chick Campagna.

In a lunch room scene, Shirley Campagna will portray Miss Behave as the lunch room "lady."

Participating in a series of adult classes will be Ron Perla, Gloria

Masso, Mary Parlato and Beckey Perla.

Music will be provided by: Nancy Canmizzano, piano; Ed D'Agostino, drums; Frank Parlato Jr., bass; Phil, Bill and Bill Jr. Occhino, saxophone.

Tickets will be available at the door, or from Parlato Real Estate, Twin City Racquet Club, the paramedics or Lillian Parlato.

Town News - 4/17/76

# Town Paramedics Work with Hospital



*Paramedics treat serious emergencies*

After an eight-month training program, the Town of Tonawanda paramedics, the first such municipal team in New York State, began service in August 1975.

The paramedics man a specially equipped van on a 24-hour basis and are dispatched from the Town Police Headquarters to respond to serious

emergencies anywhere in the Town and Kenmore.

Communications and medical gear enable the paramedics to treat victims while enroute to Kenmore Mercy Hospital. The special equipment also allows doctors in the hospital's Emergency Department to monitor the patient's condition and advise the paramedics on treatment.



## Young miss has good reason to be grateful

Deborah O'Lear has good reason to be grateful to Town of Tonawanda Paramedics Robert Hodge, right, and Lance Kohn (center) — she owes them her life. The 13-year-old girl was eating a bagel several weeks ago when she suddenly fainted in the living room of her home at 611 Evergreen Drive, in the town. The bagel became lodged in her throat and she stopped breathing. Her father found her lying on the floor and summoned the paramedics. They got her breathing again and rushed her to Children's Hospital in Buffalo. She was released a couple of days later and is doing fine now. The

paramedics estimate that Deborah hadn't been breathing for about five minutes. If she had gone much longer, she would have died. Six minutes is about the longest a person can go without breathing before suffering brain damage. The paramedics were assisted by town police Lt. Henry Zuger and Patrolman Jack Klaus, left. Patrolman Klaus drove the emergency medical vehicle to the hospital so the two paramedics could keep working on Deborah. Here, Deborah enjoys looking over the paramedics' log.



## Paramedic fund drive launched

Letters are going out this week to Kenmore and Town of Tonawanda residents soliciting funds to purchase a backup vehicle for the Emergency Medical Unit (paramedics). Sponsors of the fund drive estimate that they will need \$30,000 to purchase the vehicle, plus some equipment. Pictured

looking over a copy of the letter residents will receive are, from left, Robert E. Wagner, Joseph L. Rennie and Joseph F. Koch. The Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda Chamber of Commerce is cooperating in the effort. Checks, payable to the Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda Paramedic Fund, can be mailed to the chamber office at 3491 Delaware Ave., Kenmore, 14217.

Town - News 11/15/76

# Town paramedics handle 1,703 cases

The Town of Tonawanda Emergency Medical Unit, more commonly known as the paramedics, treated 1,703 patients in its first year of operation, 301 of them from vehicular accidents. The report period was from Aug. 11, 1975, to Aug. 11, 1976. Statistics were released recently by Town Supervisor James V. Ryan. The paramedics treated 271 persons for cardiac problems and 77 stroke victims. A total of

84 persons were treated for overdoses, including drugs and alcohol. Other calls included nine for poison, 145 for respiratory distress, 360 for miscellaneous medical, nine for burns, 131 for falls, 67 for convulsive disorders, 133 for miscellaneous trauma, 54 for psychiatric problems, 10 obstetrical, one childbirth, 11 invalids needing assistance and 40 unattended deaths.

# Malloy Claims 'Privilege' in Flu Shots

The battle against swine flu has sparked a fight of another kind in Kenmore and the Town of Tonawanda. Kenmore Mayor Robert A. Malloy charged Sunday that a series of special flu-shot clinics arranged by the town for town employes "smacks of 'special privileges' and is an improper expenditure of public funds." At the same time, Malloy sharply rebuked Village Trustee Daniel Martin for posting notices in village offices that the town clinics would be open to village workers also. Martin, Malloy complained exceeded his supervisory authority over village employes and

suggested that the workers could use village time to get the shots. Martin insisted on Sunday that he meant for the workers to get inoculated during breaks and lunchtimes. The flu clinics are scheduled for next week at the Tonawanda Municipal Bldg., town Highway Dept., and two other locations, and are for municipal employes only. Town Personnel Director Norman Stocker said Sunday they would be operated by the two town paramedics on duty and would be closed if the paramedics had any other service calls. "I don't see why town employes shouldn't have to wait

on long lines to get their shots just like everybody else," Malloy said Sunday. But Stocker would say only that the town effort was started "to cut our absenteeism rate later in the season (when flu usually hits)." Erie County is operating most swine-flu clinics in this area. Malloy protested, in a sharply-worded letter to Martin, with whom he has tangled before, that the trustee had no authority to make the clinic postings for village workers — particularly if he meant for them to take village time for their shots. "It is timely to remind you that you are not the mayor of the Village of Kenmore," he

wrote, charging that the posting "usurped my authority and responsibility as mayor." **Trustee's Explanation** Malloy ordered department heads not to release workers during village time for the clinics, but later said that they could get their shots on free time. Martin denied on Sunday that he was offering employes time off for the shots, and said the clinic hours would cut across the lunchtimes and other breaks for many workers. "I dread the thought of a flu outbreak," he said. "The mayor is just upset that I was doing his job for him."

## Paramedics tops

On August 14 at 10:53 p.m. I called the paramedics. They arrived to treat my wife within 3 minutes of the call.

While attending to my wife they received another call, which they promptly requested be given to another squad.

At 11:15 the paramedics took my wife to Kenmore Mercy Hospital where she was pronounced D.O.A.

The people in the Town of Tonawanda should be proud of the fact that help arrives that quickly when called.

Crew 22 was polite and pleasant.

Thank you for your courtesy and "know how."

Charles H. Smith  
Town of Tonawanda

FF-1  
8-14-76  
9/15/76

# Shots a sticky issue

By LYNN HEMMINGS  
NEWS Staff Writer

The Kenmore Village Board's best known political jousters are needling each other over a new issue these days.

They're trading shots about shots. Swine flu shots, that is.

It all began when Republican Trustee Daniel D. Martin posted notices in village offices noting that Kenmore employes may get swine flu shots from special clinics being conducted by the Town of Tonawanda for municipal employes.

The notices announced when the shots would be given, namely from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday in the Council Chambers at the Municipal Building and from 1 to 4 p.m. Friday at the Town Highway Department at 500 Woodward Ave.

The notices also stated that release forms are available from department heads.

Mayor Robert A. Malloy, a Democrat, apparently wasn't too keen on the idea of Trustee Martin's posting the notices. He directed village employes to ignore them.

In a note to Trustee Martin, the mayor said, "I have rescinded your improper authorization to department supervisors to release village employes during regular working hours for the purpose of securing swine flu shots.

"Since this is not the first instance in which you have exceeded your authority, perhaps it is timely to remind you that you are not the mayor of the Village of Kenmore and you are not to issue any supervisory directives to any department supervisors or employes."

Mayor Malloy also suggested that if Trustee Martin has any future thoughts on how the village work force should be directed, "it is advisable that you discuss them with me,

rather than usurp my authority and responsibility as mayor."

The mayor also said the clinics smack of "special privilege" and represent an improper expenditure of public funds of both town and village governments.

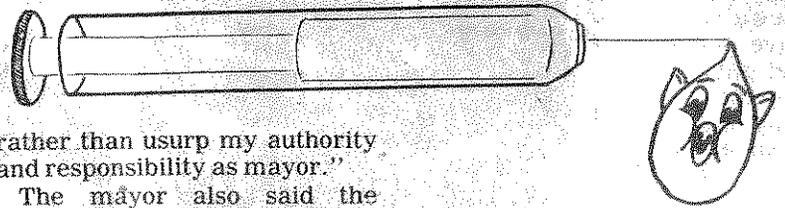
"It is my position that any village employe who wants a swine flu shot should be required to secure it on his or her own time and be required to wait in line just like any other citizen must do," the mayor concluded in his note to Trustee Martin.

Mayor Malloy and Trustee Martin are old hands at locking horns, so Trustee Martin responded in kind to the mayor's action.

"First of all, your habit of sitting in your chair in your office and wheeling your poison pen while thinking off the top of your head instead of within it is becoming very irritating," Trustee Martin said in a letter to the mayor.

"The village would benefit a great deal more if you would direct your time and energies to constructive matters rather than this petty nonsense.

"If you had taken time to read my notice to the employes, in-



forming them of the availability of the flu shots, you would have discovered that the release forms are medical release forms and not work release forms.

Furthermore, I did not authorize the employes to take time off from their jobs to receive these shots. I merely informed them of the times that the shots would be available.

"Also, I suggested to Mr. Pratkano (Michael Pratkano Sr., public works superintendent) that he inform his men that if they desired a shot, that they would have ample time to receive one at the end of their regular scheduled work day."

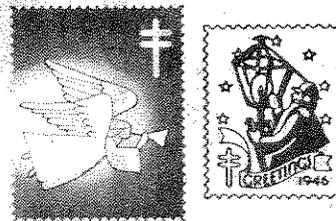
Trustee Martin also noted that some employes in the police and fire departments were working at the time flu shots were made available to the general community and that he believes they should have this additional opportunity to receive their shots.

"I dread to think of the consequences to the residents of our village if we had an outbreak of flu among our village employes," Trustee Martin continued.

"If you had paid more attention to your responsibilities earlier, it would not have been necessary for me to do your job for you."

Trustee Martin concluded by saying the shots still will be available to any employes desiring them. He said the intent was for employes to get their shots during their lunch periods, coffee breaks or after work in the case of public works employes.

**11 SHOPPING DAYS LEFT**



**GIVE TO CHRISTMAS SEALS AN AMERICAN TRADITION**

T-W 12/13/74

# TONAWANDA NEWS

North Tonawanda, N.Y.

Saturday, February 26, 1977

15 Cents

## Saving lives is their business

See pages 12a-13a



# Praise replaces protest as pa

By JO ANN SPECIAL

Saving lives is the job of the Town of Tonawanda's paramedics.

Town of Tonawanda residents receive the services of the only full-time salaried paramedics in the state, outside of New York City.

These paramedics have also received more training than any other unit in New York, according to paramedic James W. Carney.

**THE UNIT IS** composed of 10 regular paramedics and one alternate, and has been functioning since October 1974. Since that time, the group has earned the grateful acceptance and appreciation of those they service.

The initial friction voiced by many citizens who originally opposed the forming of a paramedic unit in Tonawanda, has mostly been forgotten.

The unit receives approximately 2,600 calls a year.

During their short history, the paramedics have had 12 heart resuscitation patients, and seven of those patients are still alive today.

The paramedics have serviced 271 cardiac patients, 84 overdoses, nine poison victims, nine burn patients, and 30 automobile accident victims.

**THEY HAVE ALSO** delivered one baby, saved the life of a 13-year-old girl who was choking to death, rescued an 11-year-old boy who was pinned underneath an automobile, and retrieved two men trapped in a tank under construction at a new sewer treatment plant.

The job is not glamorous.

Paramedic Robert C. Hodge says, "When we come to work, we must be up 100 per cent mentally and physically. If we're not, we can hurt ourselves and others.

"At times, I come home from work covered

with blood and vomit. The job can be glorious, but it is not always a very flattering one."

The great success of the program is due largely to the fact that the paramedics do not move people to the hospital immediately.

Unlike a private ambulance service that only carries a patient to a hospital, the paramedics administer medical assistance immediately.

"We have saved many people who would have died if they had called a private ambulance. Split second service is often necessary in emergencies, especially with heart attack patients," Mr. Hodge said.

**CITIZENS ALSO ARE** lucky because paramedics often arrive on the scene before family doctors can be reached or found.

"You wouldn't believe the confidences people have in us because we're there when the family doctors aren't. That's good and that's bad," Mr. Carney said.

Once on the scene of an accident, paramedics are efficient and professional. Unlike the county paramedic program, which is organized through the state Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) and offers only 292 hours of study, the town paramedics have 1,000 hours of training.

They also receive two weekly lectures that review the good and bad points of the previous week's emergencies. The lecture also reviews emergency techniques rarely used, but essential to know, such as delivering babies.

"The EMT courses are basic and very short. Our program is much more sophisticated. I think it's bull for these (county) people to call themselves paramedics," said Dr. Joseph Takats of Kenmore Mercy Hospital.

Dr. Takats is medical director of the Emergency Medical Unit, and organizer of the paramedic program here.

"When you see these guys at work, it's really impressive. They can run circles around some general practitioners," he said.



Paramedics Kohn, second from left, and Oddo, third from left

... Assist ambulance attendants with patient, Morris Youngman

**THE PARAMEDICS** service between 200 and 210 people per month.

A typical call took paramedics Hodge and Carney to an emergency on Kenview Drive in the town.

Arriving in less than five minutes from the time the call was received, the team attempted to revive a lady whose heart had stopped beating.

While working on the patient, the paramedics received instructions and advice from a doctor at Kenmore Mercy through a special communications device.

A hospital machine called a telemetry transmitted the patient's heart patterns (EKG's) to the hospital's heart machine.

This gave the doctor the necessary information and the paramedics administered services on his advice.

In an attempt to revive the patient, the paramedics started two IV's and administered six different types of drugs. She also received a cardiac massage.

The patient's heart beat was revived three times, although she did eventually die.

The paramedics explained that the 60-year-old patient's heart was not strong enough to be revived.

"**WHAT OFTEN SEEMS** like a few minutes could be any amount of time to an emergency victim. That's why it is essential to phone us immediately after an emergency occurs. We have a better chance of saving someone," said Mr. Carney.

While the paramedics were working frantically to revive the patient, police cooperated and assisted the paramedics by carrying the stretcher into the house and driving the patient's husband to KMH.

**THIS PARTICULAR** case does not have a happy ending, but it can be said the paramedics exhausted all possibilities to revive the patient in an attempt to save her life.

After restocking the drugs from a back-up source, the paramedics returned to the town police station, which is their base of operation. Mr. Hodge then filed a medical report, which he called "the most tedious part of the job."

**LAWRENCE HOFFMAN**, police chief, believes the paramedics "get to see a side of life that most people don't experience."

Paramedic Hodge agrees: "We see people at their worst — both the patients and their families, and sometimes it is hard on me. I have a 3-year-old son, and I can't help relating to him when I see young children in danger.

"To get this job and keep it, a person must have compassion for others, or else become a robot," he said.

Another paramedic, Wayne Busch, said that "after all the time I've spent as a paramedic, I have never gotten used to the unhappy death cases.

"For my own peace of mind, I try to detach any personal feelings I have from the job. But when I get home from work, I find myself thinking about what has happened during the day."

However, the job is often very rich in rewarding experiences. As a reminder of this, the paramedics constantly receive donations and thank you notes from residents they have served.

The Rev. Walter T. Newman, 43 Southwood Drive, had his life saved by the paramedics in May 1976.

**HIS WIFE** wrote to the paramedics: "I phoned your number and within seconds, it seemed your men were here. I can credit them completely with saving my husband's life. He was running a 107-degree fever when they arrived."

Bruce W. Robertson, 63 Woodlawn Drive, is one of the seven heart resuscitation patients who are still alive today, due to the paramedics. A letter of thanks expressed his family's appreciation.

"What a great team Kate Wenzel and Dave

# Paramedics continue to perform

Peck (paramedics) are. They are truly heroes who saved my husband's life."

David A. Denler's family also received the aid of the paramedics. His 11-year-old son, Andy, was accidentally struck and pinned under a car.

Mr. Denler wrote: "All the men were efficient, kind, and compassionate at a time when we badly needed help. Thanks in a large part to these dedicated men, Andy is coming home today."

**ANOTHER NOTE** reads: "This letter is to commend the efficiency of our police and paramedic departments, who probably saved our 13-year-old daughter's life. She fainted while eating, and food apparently slipped into her windpipe, making breathing impossible.

"The prompt and efficient arrival of the police and paramedics cleared our daughter's throat and restored her breathing."

However, some citizens are still skeptical of the paramedics' services.

"We still have people who don't like us, and a few policemen who feel we are taking away 12 positions that could be filled with more police officers," Mr. Carney said.

Dr. Takats was mad and indignant when parts of the community reacted negatively towards the paramedic program in 1974.

"The population couldn't believe that what was happening was for the good of the community, and not a political maneuver," he said.

"The paramedics reflect their own skills and ability. Their enthusiasm showed itself after the paramedics finally got out on the road," Dr. Takats added.

The seven-month training program of the 10 full-time paramedics, and one alternate, included four months of study at the University of Buffalo Medical School, where they attended courses in anatomy, bio-chemistry, and pharmacology.

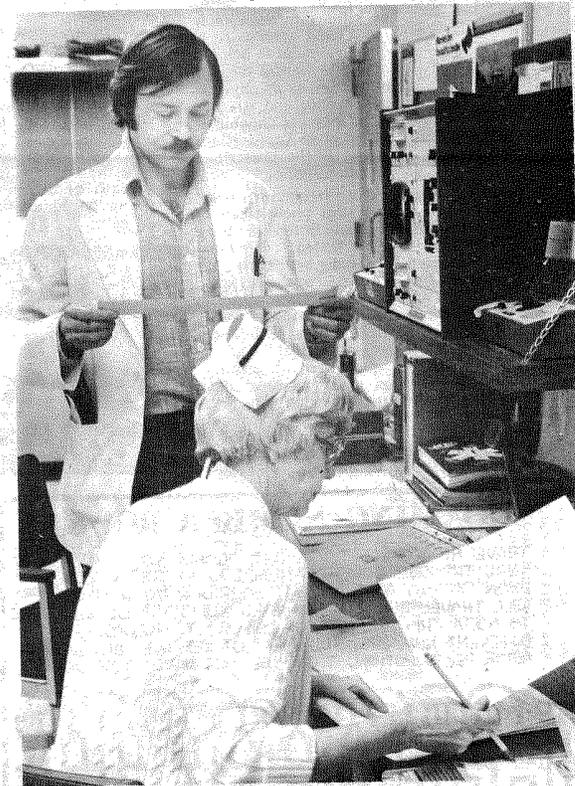
Paramedics received an \$8,000 salary while training.

Once they have completed their training, their annual salaries are \$12,955.

Only 13 of the 21 people who started in the program were graduated. The 10 paramedics and alternate now on the job are Wayne P. Busch, James W. Carney, Robert C. Hodge, Lance J. Kohn, William D. Long, Joseph Oddo, David A. Peck, Kate R. Wenzel, Kevin B. Day, Kent L. Hixon and Ivan Konanoff. The paramedics are supervised by Capt. Robert Tracey.

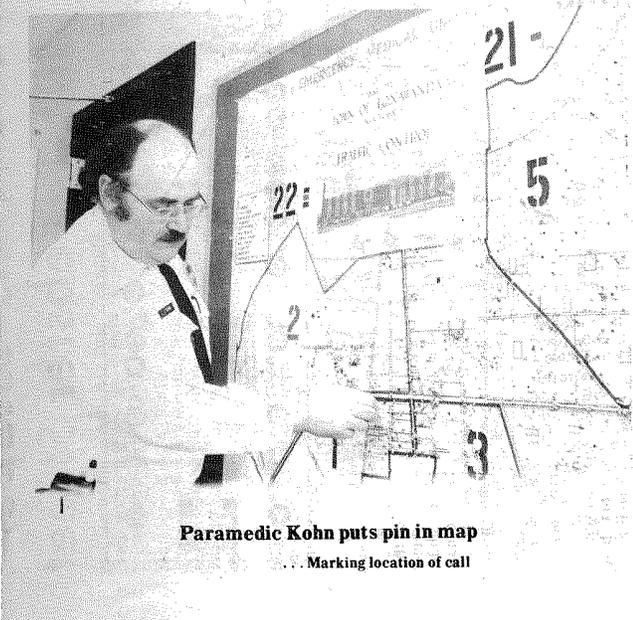


**Paramedics Oddo, left, and Busch go over reports**  
... Outside emergency room at Kenmore Mercy Hospital



**Dr. Takats examines 'read-out' information**  
... Assisted by nurse Mrs. Naomi Hiebsch

*'Within seconds... your men were here'*



**Paramedic Kohn puts pin in map**  
... Marking location of call

**Photos by David L. Bugbee**  
**NEWS Staff Photographer**

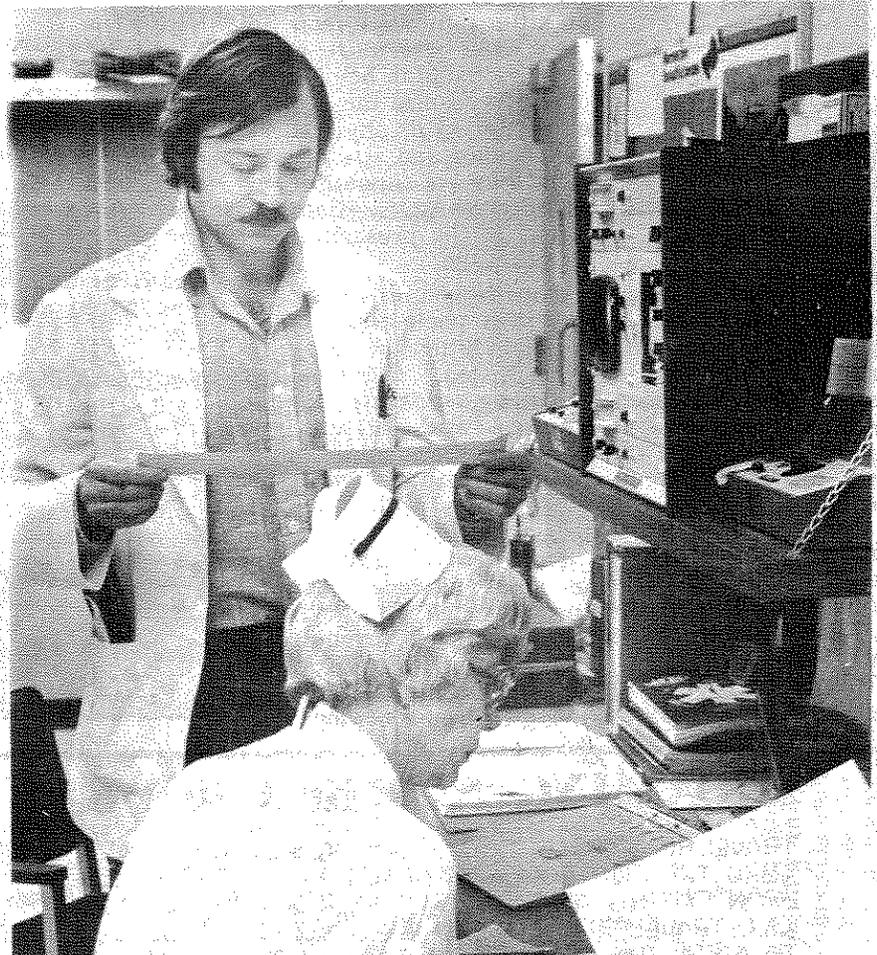
# Continue to perform



Paramedics Oddo, left, and Busch go over reports

... Outside emergency room at Kenmore Mercy Hospital

*'Within seconds ... your men were here'*



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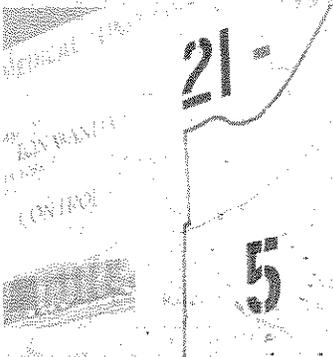
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# Emergency Medical Care

By DEBORAH WILLIAMS

Courier-Express Staff Reporter

If you have to be a victim of a heart attack or other medical emergency you are better off being at Rich Stadium or in the Town of Tonawanda, health experts agree.

Both are supplied with well-trained paramedics equipped with the latest in emergency medical equipment and backed up by physicians and other health care personnel.

However, the vast majority of county residents do not have access to the latest in emer-

gency health care techniques, equipment or the best-trained personnel.

Health officials point out that lives are being lost needlessly in Erie County because of problems involving malpractice insurance for paramedics and the absence of a coordinated emergency health care system.

"The level of public understanding is very low in this area," explained Roger J. Fenlon, coordinator of the Bureau of Emergency Health Services, Erie County Health Dept.

"Most people believe that they have access to paramedics when they only have ambulance attendants who are trained as emergency medical technicians but do not have the training or the medical backup to actually begin emergency treatment," he explained. "Paramedics have advanced training and equipment to begin medical treatment and even administer drugs under a physician's supervision."

He pointed out that many other states and communities have far more advanced emer-



Courier-Express/Ed Zagorski

Mrs. James B. Wenzel

Wayne P. Busch

Town of Tonawanda paramedics demonstrate life support system in an ambulance

# Spread Thin Over Erie County

gency health care systems and are saving lives.

In Pennsylvania, a "Good Samaritan" law protects paramedics and other emergency health personnel from lawsuits except in cases of gross negligence. Other states have similar laws.

In Erie County, emergency health services are provided by a bewildering variety of municipal, volunteer, commercial ambulance services and fire companies.

The Town of Tonawanda boasts the only fulltime paramedic program. The 19-member team is financed by the town. Because of its government affiliation it has been able to avoid problems with malpractice insurance since the paramedics are covered under the town liability coverage.

The Advanced Coronary Technology (Act) group, a nonprofit research organization, has surveyed various paramedic programs across the country and has not discovered a single case of a lawsuit against a paramedic. But ambulance companies and municipalities are reluctant to operate without insurance in this suit-conscious society.

LaSalle Ambulance, in conjunction with Mercy Hospital, operated a paramedic program similar to the Town of Tonawanda's from May 1976, to

March 1977. It was ended because of problems getting malpractice coverage for the paramedics at realistic rates.

Fenton termed the LaSalle program "very successful." A typical example is the case of a 47-year-old woman who had a heart attack at the West Seneca Mall and was clinically dead.

LaSalle paramedics used a defibrillator to shock the heart and it began beating again. A graph of her heart functioning was transmitted to waiting emergency room physicians at Mercy Hospital while she was still at the mall and when she was en route in the ambulance.

Thus, physicians were in constant contact with the patient before she even arrived at the hospital and were able to order the administration of needed drugs.

Studies in Seattle, Wash., have shown that death can be reduced 11 per cent with the emergency medical technician training which most Erie County ambulance attendants now have. However, the death rate can be reduced another 22 per cent with the advanced paramedic program such as that in operation in the Town of Tonawanda.

Fenton and others in the Health Dept. and the County Legislature are now taking steps to ensure the availability of improved emergency health

services to all county residents.

A state law which took effect Sept. 5 enables paramedics to secure malpractice insurance under the state Medical Malpractice Insurance Agency which provides coverage at lower rates than available elsewhere.

Douglas Baker, president of LaSalle Ambulance, expects to secure insurance for his employees through this agency and resume the paramedic service in the Mercy Hospital area "very shortly."

On Sept. 8 the County Legislature approved a resolution authorizing the county director of insurance to investigate other new state law which allows municipalities to include paramedics in their liability coverage regardless of whether the paramedics are municipal employees.

Meanwhile, Fenton and his staff have been drawing up a plan for an upgraded emergency medical program. The program would involve training of paramedics and the purchase of radio telemetry equipment for the emergency room at Meyer Memorial Hospital.

Some volunteer fire companies, such as North Collins, have already purchased all the equipment needed for the paramedic program and are awaiting the resolution of the insurance problem and the

hook-ups at Meyer Hospital.

Dr. John T. Gentry, Erie County health commissioner, said emergency health services are a "high-priority area."

He said studies have shown highway fatalities can be reduced by as much as 50 per cent and deaths from heart at-

tacks by 22 per cent.

Erie County's emergency care system has improved in the last several years with the training program for emergency medical technicians.

"Our program is good now but it can be so much better," Fenton said.

## SCHULTZ PRAISED

Recently, the Town of Tonawanda Police Department lost a great man. On June 26, Capt. Norman E. Schultz passed away, leaving a legacy of fond memories with everyone he touched.

Capt. Schultz was the original commander of the Paramedic Unit. It was under his guidance and direction that the paramedics functioned in their fledgling years.

Capt. Schultz provided countless hours of his own time, working with the Paramedic Unit, molding it and shaping it into a unit whose effectiveness is felt by the entire community.

Capt. Schultz availed himself unselfishly to each paramedic to ensure that any questions that arose were handled in an efficient and proper manner.

He will be sadly missed by all who knew him.  
**Paramedics,  
 Town of Tonawanda**



—photos by NON COLLERAN



Kevin Day and Kate Rose stand by in Tonawanda Police Headquarters, awaiting that next call for help. And it always comes. Above, Kate displays the kit containing medications that can be administered at the scene on a doctor's orders.

# The Paramedics:

By ROSE CIOTTA

"PATROL 44 . . . Patrol 44 . . . apparent heart attack . . ." The emergency message pierces the still air, and that plea for help instantly sends adrenalin pumping through the two Town of Tonawanda paramedics on duty.

They know they have to be ready for anything. And they are.

A siren screaming out the urgency of their mission. Within four minutes, they are at the scene . . . and a private home, a public building or a highway median becomes an arena for the dramatic struggle to save a life.

In this case, the patient is obviously in great pain. There's sweat on his forehead, and he has difficulty breathing.

Decisions are split-second now. While others look on helplessly, these trained professionals act quickly to inject an intravenous solution and send an electrocardiogram via a special communications unit to a doctor standing by in the emergency room at Kenmore Mercy Hospital.

The special telemetry unit sends a reading within 30 seconds, and the doctor orders medication by radio to ease the pain. The paramedics' emergency van carries 32 drugs. Under the doctor's orders, specific drugs can be administered to treat immediately such emergencies as an irregular heart beat or dropping blood pressure.

The aim is to defuse the emergency so the patient can be transported safely to the hospital.

The key is getting help fast enough to make a difference.

IT ALL SOUNDS like television's version of "Emergency," doesn't it? Well, except for the fact that the television series makes every call a potential tragedy, its portrayal of the paramedic and his job is right on target.

An emergency. It could be a car accident, a shooting, an industrial accident, a fire or even childbirth. As Dr. Joseph Takats, medical coordinator of the Town of Tonawanda unit puts it, "We see people in their greatest distress, their greatest moment of need."

Yet, the level of emergency care available in Western New York — and even statewide — ranges all over the lot, from bare-bones ambulance transport to fully-trained units staffed by emergency medical technicians, the paramedics.

Thus a victim's chances of surviving a medical emergency can depend simply on where he lives.

Next month, the Town of Tonawanda paramedic team will mark its fourth anniversary as the only municipally financed paramedic program in New York State.

Programs operated by the Snyder Volunteer Fire Company on a smaller scale and by LaSalle Ambulance/Mercy Hospital on a private basis are two other sparks of advanced emergency service in an otherwise fragmented area picture.

While New York is 10 years behind some western states in emergency care, there are some programs, less sophisticated than the Town of Tonawanda's, operating in several counties, including Monroe, Broome, Albany and Onondaga. A New York City Hospital runs a paramedic unit with funding from a federal grant.

In most communities, however, the rescue squads operated by volunteer firefighters are the first to respond to a medical emergency.

In fact, notes Eleanora Piekiet, coordinator of advanced emergency medical training for the state, volunteers are the backbone of the state's emergency-response system, accounting for 71 percent of the emergency ambulance service.

Volunteers receive training on their own time according to their company's standards. For most units, it's a primary service and one they don't want to lose.

While health officials point to more advanced on-the-scene medical services delivered by well-trained professionals as the direction of the future, there is no evidence that other communities are hurrying to join the status of the Town of Tonawanda's unit.

"It's simply a matter of economics," says Mrs. Piekiet. "When you need someone, you'll pay what you have to. But when you don't need them, you're not interested in seeing taxes go up."

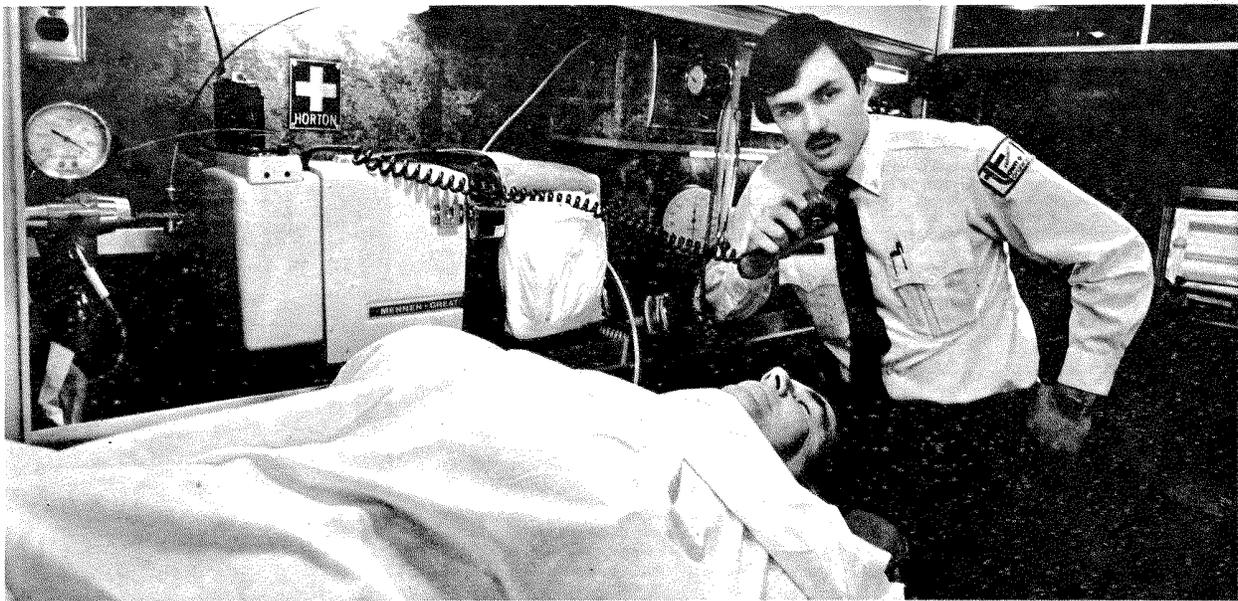
The organizing of its trailblazing unit faced many hurdles in the Town of Tonawanda, not the least of which was financing, when it was first proposed by Supervisor James V. Ryan in 1974.

WHEN THE UNIT'S white and green van rolled out on Aug. 11, 1975 to begin answering emergency calls, it did so amid community skepticism, medical opposition and Police Department uproar.

The squad of nine men and one woman, chosen from among 80 initial candidates, was well prepared, however. Team members had received 1,200 hours of training under the guidance of Dr. Takats. He devised the training which included both basic course work at the University of Buffalo Medical School and on-the-job training at four area hospitals. The program surpassed both federal and state criteria.

The highest state classification — an emergency medical technician-paramedic — requires 300 hours of training.

The real proof of their abilities has come on the firing line, however, and over the last four



With a cardiac patient resting in the van, Kevin Day describes the situation by radio to a doctor on duty at Kenmore Mercy Hospital.

# Swift...and Sure

years, the paramedics have won the respect of a grateful community.

"We had a lot of hurdles to overcome," admits Tonawanda Police Chief Lawrence A. Hoffman Jr. He supported the program from the beginning, but had to answer criticism from department officers who previously had handled medical-emergency calls.

When the program first started, it had a budget of \$150,000. This year's allocation is \$180,175, of which \$157,100 goes for salaries.

"Is a human life worth \$200,000?" asks the chief. "We said yes, that there is no estimate on the value of a human life. We've saved many human lives with the use of this unit."

For example, of the 54 cardiac-arrest calls answered by the unit in 1978, 23 victims were resuscitated and "at least half are still walking around," says Kevin B. Day, one of the squad members. In 1977, of the 78 cardiac patients treated, 28 were resuscitated.

He recalls one man who was resuscitated three times. "It added three years to his life ... He just died recently."

In the paramedic office on the main floor of Tonawanda Police Headquarters on Sheridan Drive, letters like the following often make their way to the bulletin board:

"To all members of the paramedics. Thank you all for saving my life on the morning of Nov. 7, 1978, at about 2 a.m. ..."

Or, "We've lived in town for 36 years and I've always called it the Garden Spot of America, but now I have a very real, personal reason for calling it that."

**T**ONIGHT KEVIN DAY and Kate Rose are the two-member team on duty. They typify the

high caliber of the squad members. Bright, energetic and committed, they represent the new breed of medical aides. They know they aren't doctors and they don't pretend to be.

Yet, they're good at what they do, and that's getting the adrenalin to flow during an emergency when seconds can mean the difference between life and death.

Although it is a 24-hour service, there are more calls at night. And some nights, the car accidents, heart attacks and police emergencies keep the paramedics at peak performance.

About 60 percent of the time, however, the calls are less severe and hospital transport is handled by a commercial ambulance, leaving the paramedics free for other calls.

The police radio accompanying Kevin and Kate blares for Patrol 44 ... "girl having a seizure."

The address is in Kenmore, so in accordance with a system termed "ideal" by state officials, Kenmore volunteer firemen are the first to answer the call.

If its first aid, they handle it themselves. If they want the paramedics to take a look, they issue a call which signals for the unit to proceed, but without flashing lights and siren.

In this case, the patient is retarded, epileptic and often has seizures. Nonetheless, the volunteers want the paramedics to take a look.

The badly shaking body of a 28-year-old woman is draped from a single bed as Kate and Kevin enter the room, their medicine kits in hand.

There is little they can do, however, until the seizure subsides.

"Susan, Susan, how are you feeling," Kate calls out as she taps the woman's cheek to try to wake her. Kevin proceeds with taking her vital

signs as Kate keeps her attention focused on the patient. She wants to make sure Susan doesn't hurt herself.

They briefly discuss the woman's condition, the fact that the seizure is concentrated on the left side, and agree there is no need to start an intravenous injection.

As worried parents look on, the seizure ends and the patient is prepared for her trip by ambulance to Kenmore Mercy Hospital for observation.

One call in a steady stream of pleas for help.

**I**T'S ONLY THAT steady volume of calls, however, that keeps paramedics at peak performance, officials note. In their first full year, 1976, the unit responded to 1,703 calls. That total climbed to 1,905 for 1977 and 1,937 for 1978.

A significant number were cardiac emergencies: 411 or 21.7 percent in 1977, and 438 or 18.1 percent in 1978.

General medical disorders accounted for 340 calls in 1977 and 382 in 1978. This was followed by trauma emergencies such as burns, falls, athletic injuries: 337 in 1977 and 346 in 1978.

Car accidents accounted for 277 calls in 1977 and 330 in 1978.

And at last count, the unit has delivered 12 babies.

"For a municipality so close to the hospitals, it's amazing the number of women who can't make it there in time," says Kevin. He helped to deliver the unit's first baby, Amanda Howe, on Feb. 19, 1976.

"I was so elated I couldn't sleep for two days," he says.

Wayne Busch, who also responded to the call, adds: "It was a big relief for everyone, including us. From then on, we were on a big upper."

*Continued on Page 6*

# The Paramedics

continued from Page 5

Unfortunately, not all the calls end on a happy note. And calls involving infants seem to be the worst, says Kate. In one three-week stretch, members of the unit experienced the death of three babies, aged six months and younger.

Kevin Day recalls the case in which an infant accidentally suffocated, and there was nothing the paramedics could do to revive him. "The baby was a week younger than my own son," Kevin says. "It didn't hit me until a few hours later. After that . . . well, there were times I'm sure I wanted to go into the corner and cry."

"There are calls on which you do all you possibly can . . . On some, you get there and there are signs. On others, there is nothing you can do."

"After some of the calls, I would mope around for days. My wife would say I did everything I could. Sometimes I wonder. You always think, if I had done this before that . . . Sometimes you're your own worst critic."

A real frustration, explains Kate, is when you reach a patient only to learn that you've been called too late, that another hour could have made a difference.

A daily diet of pressure and distress can weigh heavily on paramedics. The experts warn of burn-out, and most figure 15 years is a maximum for the job.

**A**S THE ONLY WOMAN on the squad, Kate Rose has been in the spotlight. She's been watched to see how women perform in a job which depends on teamwork and trust in another person's professional ability.

**"There were times I'm sure I wanted to go into the corner and cry."**

At first, says the 30-year-old former nursing student, some men objected to her becoming a paramedic. "Some thought women shouldn't have this job because of the physical work."

Since then, she says, her performance on the job has brought her acceptance.

Sometimes she get stares from the public because she wears the blue pants and the white shirt of the paramedics' uniform.

"But," she says, "I love the public. And I'm very proud of what I am and of the unit."

"This is a big step forward in medical care. We're taking medical care to the person in need. It's a revolutionary concept."

Kate still remembers her first save three years ago. "I feel so proud that the person is alive today," she says. "It's a feeling you can't get from anything else . . . It's an unbelievable, heart-warming feeling. You almost want to cry. It makes everything worthwhile."

Norman J. Stocker, town personnel director and one of the grass-roots organizers of the unit, gets weekly calls from all over the country inquiring about the town's program.

He foresees a problem for his own paramedics in the future unless other similar programs are developed. "The biggest problem is where do they go for advancement. They don't have anywhere to go."

In addition to Kevin, Kate and Wayne, the paramedic team includes Kent L. Hixon, Lance J. Kohn Sr., William D. Long, David A. Peck, Ivan Kochanoff, Joseph R. Oddo and James W. Carney.

Most of them talk about wanting to stay in medicine — by becoming a supervisor of a unit or a physician's assistant — once they leave the daily grind of answering emergency calls.

**O**NE OF THIS AREA'S prime proponents of paramedic service is Dr. Takats, who single-handedly pledged the medical support necessary to get the Town of Tonawanda's unit off the ground.

Everyone associated with the unit admits that getting medical backing is the key to the future of such programs since it is the physicians who must issue the medical orders and who must assume the medical responsibility and liability for the paramedics.

"Physicians have the biggest string on the whole thing," observes Michael J. Walters, director of the county's emergency medical services.

Mr. Walters points to trained units in Lancaster and North Collins which can't go on the road because they lack doctors who are willing to put their malpractice insurance and their reputations on the line.

"When I first began giving advanced emergency medical training, I was told I was nuts," says Dr. Takats, who has been at Kenmore Mercy since 1970 when he completed studies as a doctor in osteopathic medicine. Now, he says, the area of emergency medicine is a specialty.

Dr. Takats attended the College of Osteopathic Medicine in Kansas City and received medical training which would not allow him to be called a medical doctor.

That fact, coupled with Dr. Takats' maverick style, led to some initial resistance from Kenmore Mercy doctors.

"Our biggest problem was Takats," notes Mr. Stocker. "He didn't fit the image of the white-shirt doctor. He was an Hawaiian-shirt, dungaree doctor. But we can't thank that man enough for the hours he's put in developing the program. There isn't anybody else who would find enough hours to do this."

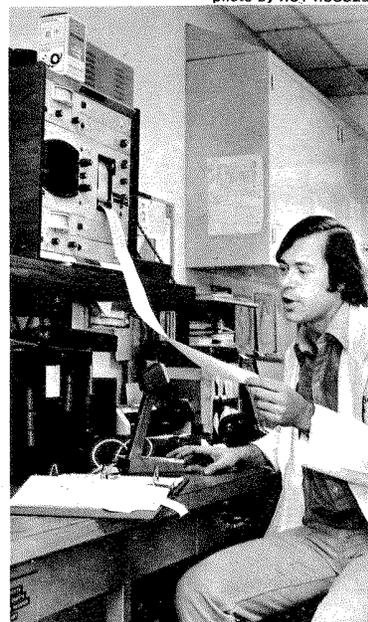
Since the state lacks a training program for emergency medical personnel and, officials agree, has failed to take any leadership in developing future programs, officials fear it may be a long time before the quality of service available in some pocket areas touches the majority of the population.

"I don't think we'll see paramedic services become as common as ambulance services, but we will see pockets of paramedic care as areas see its worth," says David Krieman, the state Health Department's senior emergency medical-care representative for the Buffalo area.

Mr. Krieman does believe that four or five emergency-care units may get started in the Buffalo area within the next year.

A volunteer group in Grand Island is in training and is expected to go into operation soon with a commercial ambulance service also working with Kenmore Mercy Hospital.

There is a proposal pending for Tonawanda and North Tonawanda to fund jointly a paramedic unit using trained Fire Department personnel. Mr. Krieman describes that effort "as an opportunity to rise above the traditional viewpoints" since the cities are located in two different counties.



Dr. Joseph Takats: "We see people in their greatest moment of need."

There's also been some movement in the rest of the region, notes Mr. Krieman, such as in Jamestown and Batavia. The ideal, however, he says, would be a countywide system operating out of the county Medical Center, but that plan is stymied and would require a major public outcry for the service and a commitment from the medical community. "Without broad-based physician sponsorship, you don't have anything," Mr. Krieman says.

One of the major problems, officials claim, is the state's failure to provide any direction in terms of training or even streamlining the requirements for training.

For example, the person who completes a federally-approved course of 500 to 800 hours is classified just the same as a person who takes the state-approved course of 250-300. Each is called an emergency medical technician-paramedic.

According to Thomas Luka, assistant director for county advanced life support, the course curricula are basically the same, although the federal course goes into several more advanced, rarely-used procedures.

A person with the basic 81-hour course is also called an emergency medical technician, however, leading to public confusion as to how well qualified the person is who responds to an emergency.

**T**HE PROBLEMS FOR AN areawide program are many. For those in the field, however, the bottom line is that cities like Dallas, Seattle, Miami and Los Angeles are further ahead.

As Mrs. Piekiet from the State Health Department puts it, "When we say we have a right to this care, are we willing to say we're also willing to pay for it?"

**ROSE CIOTTA** is a News staff reporter who covered the Tonawandas for the last two years. She currently reports on news from the Erie County Legislature.

BEN 6/3/75

# Tonawanda Holds Welcome Rite for 12 Paramedics

By TOM KELLY

"We welcome them, this new breed, to a much-needed area of skill. They represent what for this town is a milestone, another first."

Town of Tonawanda Police Chief Lawrence A. Hoffman Jr., thus introduced 11 men and one woman at Monday evening's Town Board meeting as they officially were designated paramedics in an emergency medical care service program due to be in operation on July 1.

Chief Hoffman, who presided at the ceremonies and who presented the graduation certificates, joined Supervisor James V. Ryan and Dr. Joseph Takats, president of the Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Association, in commending the paramedics on their "long and arduous" months of study and preparation and their readiness "to serve your fellow man."

"THIS PROGRAM was conceived 2 years ago and since then many persons have given of their time and talents to make it a reality," Mr. Ryan said. "The paramedics spent 650 hours of institutional training and 350 hours in hospital and clinical training. I'm proud of them."

Dr. Takats described the creation of the paramedic corps as "a situation unique to this area" and called the paramedics "one of the finest groups of people."

"It took a gutsy bunch of officials — the supervisor and the councilman — to launch this service," he said.

Dr. Takats also announced that the curriculum under which the paramedics were trained may be adopted by an area college and that a formal course may be established with credits for its graduates.

CHIEF HOFFMAN said the town is indebted to Dr. Takats, to Norman J. Stöcker, labor relations director, who co-ordinated the program; and to Dr. George Sanderson Jr., chief of anesthesiology of Kenmore Mercy Hospital, and to Dr. David C. Dean, chief of the cardiopulmonary laboratory at Veterans Administration Hospital, for "valuable direction" in the specialized training.

Traffic Capt. Norman E. Schultz, who will supervise the operation of the paramedic vehicle, presented each paramedic with a blue uniform hat.

During their training, the paramedics were paid at the annual rate of \$8000. As of Thursday their annual salaries will be \$12,000.

Tonawanda City

# Town unveils \$190,000 paramedic program

Journal News 09/25/74



Supervisor Ryan, left, Dr. Takats and Mrs. Frutig  
... Explain town's paramedic program

By TOM ERNST  
NEWS Staff Writer

A paramedic unit which will be providing sophisticated emergency medical treatment within seven months in the Town of Tonawanda was unveiled today by town and Kenmore Mercy Hospital officials.

A nine-member paramedic team is scheduled to begin an intensive six-month training course Oct. 21, and the vehicle-equipped unit would become operational in April, it was disclosed.

Officials emphasized that the paramedics will be reserved for serious cases requiring immediate skilled medical assistance and that the program shouldn't be considered a form of ambulance service.

The operation is estimated to cost \$190,000 during the first year, including the purchase of a \$23,000 vehicle that will be equipped with thousands of dollars worth of medical gear.

Town of Tonawanda Supervisor James V. Ryan said the town will finance the program, but that the actual cost to taxpayers is expected to be considerably less because of donations of equipment and money from private organizations and civic groups.

The supervisor said an offer to provide the vehicle already has been received from Chevrolet, and that two local firms have offered to donate about \$19,000 worth of gear for the vehicle.

During a press conference in Mr. Ryan's office in the Municipal Building, representatives of the town, its police department, Kenmore Mercy Hospital and Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Associates (the private corporation which runs the hospital's emergency room) gathered to explain the program.

Supervisor Ryan said the program will provide free care to residents and employees in the town. Eventually, he said, if third parties such as Blue Cross and Blue Shield provide coverage for the paramedic service, a fee may be charged.

Two paramedics will be on duty at all times, with the unit housed either at the hospital or town police headquarters. It will be able to reach any point in the town

within four minutes, officials said.

Dr. Joseph Takats, president of Kenmore-Tonawanda Medical Associates, said the paramedic vehicle will be equipped with sophisticated communications gear so that the paramedics can be in contact with doctors in the hospital and be providing treatment while the vehicle is en route to Kenmore Mercy.

Equipment in the vehicle will relay blood pressure, pulse and electro-cardiogram information to doctors in the emergency room.

The paramedics will be trained to administer medication and take other steps necessary during the first critical minutes after a heart attack or serious injury.

Nine paramedics have already been selected, but not notified of their selection. Nine alternates also will undergo the training course and be available if needed, it was pointed out.

The paramedics will be paid \$12,000 annually. Those selected range in age from 31 to 21. Teams of eight men and one woman have been selected for both the actual paramedic and alternate group.

Mrs. Lunda Frutig, supervisor of Kenmore Mercy's Emergency Department, said the hospital staff is working closely with the Medical Associates, both in the training program and for the implementation of the system.

Dr. Takats said the associates and the hospital are joining forces to volunteer the training necessary for the paramedics.

Officials said the units will be dispatched from town police headquarters and work closely with police and also the emergency squad of the Kenmore Fire Department.

When the system is operational, police may summon the paramedics if the situation warrants it, or, if it is known beforehand that the situation is serious, the paramedics will respond immediately.

Officials said they foresee the paramedics offering a wide range of services, beyond just responding to emergencies. They would utilize their training to conduct first-aid courses for area residents, especially police and volunteer firemen.