Acadian Ambulance Is Excellent Local Service

It is human nature to take some of the better things in life for granted. That is the reason that annually we take this opportunity to point out one of the outstanding services in Lafayette and Acadiana.

Acadian Ambulance has been around nine years and it has been nine years of excellent professional ambulance service for the area. When we think back before Acadian Ambulance and wonder what these Acadiana communities did for emergency medical service before then. We can safely assume that there were lives lost because immediate, urgent medical attention was not given. That danger no longer exists because of the speedly, highly trained paramedics who man 35 ambulances around the clock.

The Advertiser has published many times the dramatic, but real-life stories of how Acadian Ambulance personnel save human lives, and not in robot-like, mechanical fashion but with a devotion all too often missing in these days of a self-centered society.

One of the most impressive aspects of Acadian Ambulance is the constant pursuit to improve its already excellent service. In the last year the following things have been accomplished:

The company's satellite program was expanded to provide voice and telemetry coverage over a wider area, greatly benefitting patients being transported long distances.

A substantial internal reorganization program took place when the company expanded the number of service districts from four to seven. This permitted closer local control and was accomplished with no increase in manpower.

A number of alternatives were researched and considered for improving fuel efficiency. These ranged from basic driving concepts to experimentation with a light weight modular aluminum ambulance.

In addition, Acadian Ambulance personnel stood at the ready at more than 275 football games, 388 community events and taught more than 10,600 people "What to do until the Ambulance Arrives!" last year. Their training are active in emergency preparedness drills. Their large fleet, their extensive communications facilities and the highly trained personnel are shared with various communities during natural or man-made disasters.

Acadiana got along without AASI before 1971, but we'd be lost without it now, as far as an indispensable life-saving facility is concerned. Thing is, such enterprises are big and costly to maintain. With a staff of 188 people, 35 ambulances, a nationally acclaimed electronic communications system the firm's annual budget is $4.6 million.

The secret to Acadian Ambulance's success is its membership. In 1978 the membership was 86,556. In 1979 it grew to 95,000 and last year it was 101,186. This year AASI is striving for a goal of 103,000 at a $36 annual membership fee.

Despite the inroads that inflation has made in every facet of the economy, $36 is still a bargain rate. Non-members who need ambulance or emergency care must be charged $125 for one call alone. But it's the membership that provides two-thirds of the income for AASI. If membership falls, so does the ambulance service that Acadiana can hardly do without now.

Membership applications are being received at area banks and through the mail. The drive extends through September 5 and, as we have done from the very beginning, we give our unqualified endorsement to Acadian Ambulance Service, Inc. in their vital quest for maintaining the best in emergency medical service for Lafayette and Acadiana.