Acadianambulance Service begins membership drive

Acadiana bureau

LAFAYETTE — Acadian Ambulance Service's 13th annual membership drive begins Aug. 1 with a goal of acquiring about 3,000 new subscribers.

Richard Zuschlag, secretary-treasurer of the 15-parish emergency medical company, said the goal of 120,000 members is expected to be reached, with most of the increase from Tangipahoa Parish.

But Acadian Ambulance last year didn't reach its potential number of Tangipahoa Parish members, which should be achieved this year, he said, with recent endorsements by the Tangipahoa Parish Police Jury and area municipalities.

Member enrollment is accepted only during the month-long campaign which ends Sept. 2, and those failing to join will not be eligible until the 1984 membership period.

Service is provided to non-members but a charge is assessed for each call; while a membership provides year-long coverage for all emergency transportation for a person or a family.

Members are covered for emergency situations in any of the 15 parishes served. A $10 fee for transportation to a facility other than a hospital is assessed to members.

The membership fee for an individual or family is $45, $3 more than last year's rate. The increase is necessary to recover $250,000 in federal and state grants which were used for training but have been eliminated, Zuschlag said.

The company has made cost-cutting moves by laying off some middle-management personnel, but there have been no ambulance staff reductions, Zuschlag said.

In addition, the company will no longer publish its annual report, which is being replaced by a brochure.

Zuschlag added that the company provides an assurance that, in the event of a hurricane, 40 ambulances would be available to assist 890,000 people in south Louisiana.

Applications will be taken at banks in the following parishes: Acadia, Lafayette, Vermilion, St. Landry, St. Martin, Iberia, St. Mary, Pointe Coupee, Evangeline, Terrebonne, Assumption, Tangipahoa, Jefferson Davis and the Lafourche Parish's Thibodaux Hospital District.

St. James Parish is also served by Acadian Ambulance; but a contract with the Parish Council provides service to all residents there without individual subscriptions.