

# Dramatic rescue effort fails here

H-R September 17, 1979

A dramatic attempt to save the life of a heart-attack victim failed here Friday despite the efforts of a medical team from aboard University Hospitals' Air Care helicopter, local medical and paramedical personnel, and law-enforcement officers.

<sup>Sept. 17</sup> Garrett J. Eilander, 51, of Lake Ponderosa died at about 10 a.m. on a field adjacent to Grinnell High School, where the helicopter had landed to transport him to the Iowa City hospital. The last-ditch effort to save the Montezuma businessman took place on the ground between an ambulance and the helicopter.

Eilander was stricken after being stopped for speeding south of Grinnell shortly after 8 a.m. State Trooper Robert Kinseith of Grinnell said he

issued a citation to Eilander after observing Eilander's car on Iowa Highway 146 two miles south of the city.

After receiving the citation, Eilander complained of feeling ill. He informed Kinseith that he had taken some nitroglycerine, a medication used by persons suffering from certain heart ailments.

"He said he was a heart patient," Kinseith said. "I asked him who his doctor was, and he told me it was Dr. Paulson."

James Paulson, a Grinnell physician, was making rounds at Grinnell General. Kinseith determined the trooper then convinced Eilander that he should be driven to the hospital for treatment. Eilander's condition deteriorated, and the decision was made to summon the Iowa City helicopter to

transport the victim to University Hospitals.

Troopers and deputy sheriffs awaited the helicopter at the high school field, signaling the pilot where to land. The Grinnell-Poweshiek County Ambulance Service, which had been called to transport Eilander from the hospital to the field, arrived shortly ahead of the aircraft and was awaiting the transfer of the patient from the ambulance to the helicopter. Physicians and ambulance attendants administered cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and medication to Eilander during the ambulance run from the hospital to the field.

Eilander was then taken by stretcher and placed aboard the helicopter. His heart failed to respond, however, and medical personnel were forced to remove him from the helicopter. He was placed on the ground, and a defibrillator was used in an attempt to shock the heart back into action.

An anesthesiologist, Dr. Barry Olson of Grinnell General, used an airway and manual respirator to force oxygen into Eilander's lungs.

## Dead at Scene

Bystanders watched as the effort continued for several minutes. But Eilander was pronounced dead at the scene.

Friday's rescue attempt was the second time the Air Care helicopter had landed in Grinnell. Some weeks ago, the aircraft was used to transfer a woman heart patient to University Hospitals.

It took the helicopter bet-

ween 20 and 25 minutes to reach Grinnell from Iowa City.

A similar service is headquartered at Iowa Methodist Medical Center in Des Moines. Eilander owned Merchants Storage and Transfer, Inc., and Garrett Motor Express, Inc., both of Newton. He also owned laundromats in Newton and Oskaloosa, and he was an agent for North American Van Lines of Ft. Wayne, Ind.

He is survived by his wife, Sonja; three sons, John David, Mark Allen and Matthew Joseph, all of the family home; four daughters, Mrs. Kenneth (Lesa) Smith of Rte. 2, Montezuma, Mrs. Marvin (Lori) Gass of Newton, Mrs. Randy (Tammy) Hall of Rte. 2, New Sharon, and Anna Lee Eilander of the family home; three grandchildren; three brothers and three sisters. He was preceded in death by his parents and one sister.

Funeral services were scheduled for 10:30 a.m. today at the Wallace Funeral Home in Newton, with burial at Mt. Zion Cemetery.