



PRESS RELEASE

CITY OF MUSCATINE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FIRE DEPARTMENT RECEIVES SWIFT WATER RESCUE BOAT

Kent Corporation Charitable Foundation assists in purchase

MUSCATINE, Iowa – Time is crucial in water rescues and battling ice to launch a rescue operation loses precious minutes. That lesson was learned earlier this year and led to the acquisition of a swift water rescue boat by the Muscatine Fire Department.

“We won’t have to wait while the ice is broken at the launch site,” Mike Hartman, assistant Fire Chief, said. “We may not be able to bring the victim into this boat but we can get to and stabilize the victim while the rescue operation proceeds.”

Kent Corporation Senior Vice President Rich Dwyer was joined by Jeff Bohling, trustee of the Kent Corporation Charitable Foundation, and GPC Safety Division Director Kevin Garrison, in presenting a check to the Muscatine Fire Department for the purchase of the boat.

“We are honored to be able to help,” Dwyer said. “This boat fills a need to enhance the rescue capabilities of our first responders. With the increased traffic from further development of the riverfront, the ability to respond quickly to rescue situations is needed. This is just one more tool that the rescue personnel can use to achieve that goal.”

Hartman said the Zodiac will be housed at the riverfront.

For more information, contact: Kevin Jenison, Communication Manager,
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"We thought about getting a trailer to haul the boat but you still have the problem of getting the boat to the riverfront and off the trailer," Hartman said. "The boat can be carried to the riverfront by four rescue personnel and that increases our response time."

Hartman noted that the boat is designed for swift water rescues and can be used on the Mississippi River and on Mad Creek when it floods.

Garrison also sees a benefit during barge loading operations.

"One of the things that we are most concerned about, and our personnel are concerned about, is the safety of the barge workers," Garrison said. "Having the rapid response capability that this boat offers provides some security for those working on the barges."

The boat was purchased through Dive Rescue International, an organization that provides training and equipment throughout the world. The organization also providing several dry suits and life jackets with the boat purchase.

Training with the new boat will begin within a month after the craft is completely outfitted and moved to the riverfront. Plans for a training session with GPC are also being considered.

Two to three rescue operations are completed during the summer months on the Mississippi River while there have been two winter rescue operations in the last five years.

"We have had some individuals up on the bridge threatening to jump," Battalion Chief Darrell Janssen said. "This boat gives us another opportunity to quickly respond and be under the bridge in case they do jump."

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Time is critical in any rescue operation and the rescue boat increases the ability to respond quickly and decisively as assets gather for the complete operation.

“It would be nice to have every tool imaginable at your fingertips for water rescues but that is just not possible,” Hartman said. “This boat is a big step toward improving our capabilities.”

The boat will be stored inflated and ready to use. Rescue personnel just hope that it is not needed for anything but training.



Assistant Chief Michael Hartman accepts a check from the Kent Corporation Charitable Trust for the purchase of a Zodiac swift water rescue boat from GPC Safety Division Director Kevin Garrison, Kent Corporation Charitable Foundation trustee Jeff Bohling, and Kent Corporation Senior VP Rich Dwyer.

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