

4 Children Drown

Mother Watches As Sons, Daughter Go Under

By Scott Nuecker
of the Times

The four children of a Davenport couple drowned Tuesday night while wading near the south shore of Credit Island.

The children of Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Triplett, 511 E. 7th, were the victims of what officials termed the worst drowning in recent memory.

The bodies of three of the Triplett children — Arzelle, 10, Keenan, 8 and Wayne, 7 — were recovered Tuesday night.

Shortly after 10 p.m., scores of volunteers and police broke off dragging operations for the child who set off the

tragic chain of events.

Her parents called her Toshia for birth certificate — and now her death certificate — will read Kira.

None of the children could swim, family members said. The family had gone to Credit Island to wade in the water and escape the sultry inner-city heat.

It was the two-year-old Triplett daughter who was splashing in the muddy waters near the makeshift boat dock when the wake from a tug boat knocked the child down and sucked her into the river.

Her aunt, Clara Triplett, of Davenport, was the first to see young Toshia floating out into the current. "I looked up and she was bobbing down the river," she cried.

"I yelled for help and her mother and the kids came running. But Ruth (the child's mother) couldn't reach her," Clara Triplett sobbed.

The mother ran from the shore in an attempt to rescue her daughter — but her efforts were to no avail.

Then Toshia's brother, Arzelle, and cousin, Martin Triplett, 11, followed their mothers into the relatively shallow water and raved to rescue the baby.

The youths had to swim out into neck deep water before they reached Toshia, who miraculously was still above water, they said.

But the two younger Triplett children who followed Arzelle and Martin into the water apparently tripped the older boys, causing them to lose their tenuous grasp on the two-year-old girl.

"We had a hold of her until my cousin knocked us down," Martin sobbed.

Officials said the fever drops off



Jerome and Ruth Triplett, back to camera, stand behind the ambulance containing the bodies of three of their

four children, who drowned near Credit Island Park. (Times photo by Larry Fisher)

precipitously just past the landing.

All of the youngsters except Martin went under when they were tripped up.

Only Martin — who said he knows how to swim — returned to the surface.

A friend of the family said the boys went under almost immediately.

"I couldn't do nothing," Clara Triplett cried as she wiped the streaming tears on her mud-raked arm.

Ruth and Clara Triplett were standing in the water when the boys raced past them to rescue the infant.

Ruth apparently had slipped in the mud as she tried to reach her drowning daughter. A friend of the

family — Hestelle Clark, of 705 E. 6th St., Davenport — said "Ruth can't swim. She was slipping so bad that she almost drowned herself."

Bonny Hayes also of 705 E. 6th St. said she ran to the road and flagged down a motorist for help.

But as fate would have it, the man's leg was in a cast.

"I think he would have had time

to save them if he could have gone into the water," she said.

The man did notify authorities, but it was too late.

As recovery efforts began, the mother of the four dead children had to be led to the ambulance.

Officials of the sheriff's depart-

ment — DROWNING
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Swimming Not Regulated

By James Kane
of the Times

Local government agencies Tuesday night declined to accept responsibility for regulating or prohibiting swimming around Credit Island Park, where four children drowned earlier in the day.

There are no regulations preventing swimming in the Mississippi River, which surrounds the park, and there are no signs posted warning that swimming is dangerous.

Officials of the Davenport Park and Recreation Commission, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Iowa Conservation Commission all agree that such regulations would be difficult, but they claim their agencies are not responsible for those rules.

Richard Gaden, chairman of the city's park board, said the question of swimming off Credit Island never has been an issue and has not been studied by the board.

Gaden said he had not been aware that persons

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O'Neill Wants Jaworski To Run Investigation

WASHINGTON (UPI) — House Speaker Thomas O'Neill asked former Watergate prosecutor Leon Jaworski Tuesday to serve as special counsel for the embattled House Ethics Committee's investigation of South Korean influence-buying in Congress.

The job is his if he wants it, a source told UPI. "He's No. 1 on the Speaker's list."

Sources said O'Neill telephoned Jaworski in Houston, where he now is in private law practice. The former prosecutor was not immediately available for comment and the source said the matter was left open for

the moment, with both men planning to talk again today.

O'Neill told reporters earlier that he talked to one of about a half-dozen men of "national stature" who are under consideration to replace Philip Lacovara, who quit as special counsel Friday after a fight with the panel's chairman.

O'Neill declined to identify any of the individuals, but he and Rep. John Flynn, D-Ga., chairman of the committee, promised whoever gets the job would have "total independence" to conduct a fast-paced inquiry free of interference.

Jaworski was named special Watergate prosecutor on Nov. 1,

1973, succeeding Archibald Cox, who was fired 10 days earlier by President Richard M. Nixon in the "Saturday Night Massacre."

Cox, like Jaworski, reportedly is among those mentioned as possible choices to lead the Ethics Committee's inquiry. Other names are understood to include former Sen. Sam Erwin, D-N.C., who headed the Senate Watergate Committee, Sam Dash, that panel's chief counsel, and John Doar, chief counsel for the House Judiciary Committee in the Nixon impeachment proceedings.

But the sources said Jaworski is

—INQUIRY
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Leon Jaworski

Adlai Heads Senate Inquiry

(C) Washington Star

WASHINGTON — The Senate Intelligence Committee has begun its own inquiry to determine whether any current or former members of the Senate may have been involved in alleged attempts by South Korean agents to buy influence on Capitol Hill.

With public attention focusing on House and Justice Department probes, Sens. Adlai E. Stevenson, D-Ill., and Harrison Schmitt, R-N.M., the

chairman and ranking minority member, respectively, quietly have been seeking information that might implicate senators in any improper lobbying activities by the Koreans.

The source said some senators on the panel were disturbed to learn officially late last week that the names of four members of the Senate Intelligence Committee may have been on a typewritten list of names once found in the possession of Tongson Park, who allegedly funneled the bribe cash to Capitol Hill

Smith Gets Reprimand

By Deborah Donovan
of the Times

A letter of reprimand in his file is the only punishment Director Jerry Smith deserves, the Davenport Civil Rights Commission said Tuesday.

Although the decision seemed anti-climatic after the possibility of dismissal had been raised, the controversy is apparently not finished. Principals on both sides of the issue — Smith and representatives of the mayor's office, who asked the commission to investigate the matter — said they would study the decision before commenting.

And the chairman of the commission, Ethelene Owens, was the only member of the seven-member panel who dissented, saying Smith should not be criticized. Mrs. Owens is the only black on the commission. Two leaders of the black community spoke in support of Smith this week, and seven black men told the commission at its regular meeting Tues-



Jerry Smith

day they think he is doing a good job. Only one of them said Smith had helped him with a complaint.

The commission members decided Smith acted improperly in both incidents they investigated at the request of William McCarthy, executive assistant to Mayor Robert Buus.

— He implied the commission participated in a complaint against

—SMITH
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Park Beer Curfew Urged In Davenport

By Paul Davies
of the Times

The Davenport City Council will be asked to approve an ordinance allowing beer drinking in certain areas of city parks during limited hours.

The ordinance is the result of a proposal that drew favorable comments Tuesday from two park commissioners and some aldermen. Officials said the ordinance to implement the plan will be prepared for the city council to adopt in two weeks.

Park commissioners indicated they probably will ask for an 8 p.m. curfew on beer drinking in parks, and allow the drinking only in some picnic areas.

They also said they plan to close all city parks at 10:30 p.m., an hour earlier than the present practice.

Last week, the park commissioners proposed allowing beer drinking

only for persons getting permits from the park board office — and issuing the permits to only a few organized groups.

But aldermen said they did not want such a restrictive policy.

Only Ald. Robert Smith, D-3rd Ward, met with the park commissioners and Police Chief Kenneth Conlon.

Conlon suggested the curfew on drinking, saying most of the problems occur at night.

Officials have moved to restrict beer drinking mainly because of complaints about large groups of young persons who drink in some parks at night, causing noise and litter problems and complaints about harassment of others in the parks.

Conlon said a curfew still would allow drinking at family picnics, preventing the main objections that

—BEER
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'Double Dipping' Allowed

The U.S. Senate rejects efforts to end double dipping — drawing pension and pay — by retired officers and enlisted men. Page 3.

National League Wins

The National League continued to dominate the All-Star baseball game, whipping the American League 7-5. Sports.

Carter Seeks Gas Tax

President Carter has agreed to seek a 5-cent gasoline tax to help fund government transportation projects. Page 31.

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