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County emergency management agency covers many areas

A Vermilion County agency stands ready to help in times of emergency.

Bob Huff, director of the Vermilion County Emergency Management Agency, was the speaker at Monday's Hoopeston Neighborhood Watch meeting.

Huff, retired from the Danville Police Department, is relatively new to the post, having served only a few months, but in that time, he's gotten a handle on the job.

"We're not first responders, we're resources," Huff told the crowd. In the case of a local emergency, such as a tornado, EMA would have to be requested by local emergency officials. Once the request is made, however, the county agency can bring manpower, vehicles and other assistance.

EMA helps fire and police departments in communities in Vermilion County. They assisted during the Rossville fire, bringing in their mobile command unit, and also in Allerton, bringing in a tanker when there



HUFF

were problems with the municipal water supply. The agency also assists the county's dive team during searches for drowning victims, taking depleted air tanks to be refilled and using their lighting system in searches.

Another area EMA covers is that of providing weather spotters during severe storms. Approximately 30 volunteers help during storms, opening an emergency center at EMA headquarters and coordinating spotter activity. "We can't stop a tornado but if we can give you a warning, you can take shelter and hopefully we can save lives," he said.

Huff had high praise for Earl Drollinger,

Warning issued at Watch meet

"Travelers," once called gypsies, are in the area and are trying to scam local residents.

At Monday's Neighborhood Watch meeting, Police Chief Mark Drollinger said a group of travelers was in Hoopeston recently selling lightening rods. "That's one I hadn't seen in about five years," he said.

Drollinger said the people sell the rods for an "exorbitant" amount of money and did so to a local elderly woman. "They followed her to the bank to make sure they got their money," he said.

From personal experience, Drollinger also warned about email scams labeled as from LaSalle Bank. The email requests an account number or Social Security number but is not affiliated with the actual LaSalle Bank.

Another warning was issued about an email virus sent under the guise of Osama bin Laden being



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Sincerely,
Rich Stipp

Hoopeston Council hears from skateboard enthusiasts

“If you build it, they will come,” say two skateboarding enthusiasts.

Jon Satterfield and John Scott, who have worked with Alderman Carl Ankenbrand on a proposed city skate park, gave a presentation at Tuesday’s Hoopeston City Council meeting.

This year, the United States is expected to have an estimated 15 million skateboarders, Scott said. The average age is six to 18 but “there are a lot of older skaters in their 30s,” he said.

The two urged the council to strongly consider creating a skate park for many reasons, including an increase in tourism, boost to local suppliers, help in keeping skateboarders off the street and to help the skill level and attitude of local athletes.

Scott said skateboard parks are constructed of many materials, including wood, concrete and steel. Wood is the least expensive to install but is Hoopeston’s EMA director.

See EMA on other side

EMA continued from other side

“You’re really fortunate to have him,” Huff said. “Earl’s very dedicated to you guys up here.”

EMA also has a hazardous materials (hazmat) team and a confined space team, for events such as grain bin accidents. EMA’s rapid response team is used to search for missing people.

Another activity the office handles is monitoring the VX plant in Newport, Ind. Huff has toured the plant and seen how the nerve gas is destroyed. Annually, a drill is held to test how agencies would respond if an accident at the plant occurred. This year, Huff experienced his first drill - covering Westville, Georgetown and Ridge Farm - and got an excellent rating.

Part of his job includes public speaking and Huff hopes to schedule plenty of speaking engagements this fall to talk about winter preparedness and again in the spring to talk about tornadoes.

Currently EMA’s offices are in the Public Safety Building but in the next few months, the agency will move to South Georgetown Road. Grants paid for the building, which also includes outbuildings for vehicles and equipment. The move will make EMA more

also has the highest maintenance needs. Concrete, the men said, is more desirable.

The most common shape for a skate park is that of a bowl, similar to a swimming pool. In fact, skateboarders often use empty pools. “Skateboarding started out in pools and now it’s going back to pools,” Scott said.

The men presented information on companies that create parks and communities in which they are located. In this area, major skate parks are in Chicago, St. Louis, Mo., and Louisville, Ky.

Illinois has other skate parks but most are inadequate, the men said, adding that most skateboard accidents are caused by irregular skating surfaces.

Ankenbrand said the parks committee met last week to talk about creating a skate park at Cheese (North Side) Park, where skateboarding is currently allowed. He would like to see rest rooms, pavilions and perhaps a walking path installed at the park to accommodate skateboarders. The work, he said, could be done in stages as money becomes available.

Local skateboarders are trying to help in that effort. In the last two months, skateboarders have collected more than 300 pounds of aluminum

Police News

Tammy J. Reyes, 43, of 222 E. Thompson Ave., was arrested Tuesday. She was charged with deceptive practices after she allegedly wrote checks on a closed account to Hoopeston businesses.

Reyes was released on a cash bond.

A pair of black-rimmed sunglasses was found outside city hall after Tuesday’s city council meeting. The owner may identify and claim them at the police station.

Weather

Chance of thunderstorms today and tonight. High 91, low 65. Tomorrow, partly cloudy. High 83, low 61.

For current weather conditions, call Hoopeston Weather Service (217) 283-6221.

Classifieds

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Rossville: 1-2 bdrs. Riverview Apartments. Completely refurbished, on-site washers & dryers. 1 bdr. \$310/mo., \$310 deposit; 2 bdr., \$360/mo., \$360 deposit. Call (217) 840-3672.

2 1-bdr. apts. Available Aug. 1; 2 1-bdr. apts. Available Sept. 1, starting at \$440/mo. Includes utilities. Cash deposit. (217) 497-9000

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HELP WANTED

Hoopeston Area High School is seeking applications for a Middle/High School Choral accompanist for the 2005-06 school year. Please send letter of interest to: Hank Hombeck, Principal, Hoopeston Area High School, 615 E. Orange, Hoopeston, IL 60942.

Hoopeston Migrant Head Start is now accepting applications for Teachers and Bus Drivers. Please call (815) 984-3706 w/ questions or fax resumes to (815) 984-4500.

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RUMMAGE SALES

Biggest ever garage sale. 419 W. Washington, Hoopeston. Sat., Aug. 6, 7-noon. Oak table, farmhouse table, trunks, quilts, lots name brand clothes, strollers, bassinette, high chair, car seats, home deco, Boyd’s Bears. Misner

Moving sale. 415 S. Second Ave., Hoopeston. Fri. & Sat., 8-? Collectibles, linens, books, dolls, games, 49 years’ accumulation of other stuff.

809 E. Penn St., Hoopeston. Friday, Aug. 5 & Saturday, Aug. 6th, 8-11 a.m. Misc. household items, some clothing, patio table & chairs, golf clubs and more.

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