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Just the Facts

Thursday, June 22, 2017
 Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication!

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 Hoopeston Happenings
 with Jim Russell and Beth Bray Knecht
 on Aunt Martha's Youth Mental Health program
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Ofc. Jeff Thomas of the Champaign Police Department, navigates Remote F6B, a robot used in situations involving explosives, as University of Illinois Police Sgt. Aaron Landers stands inside the joint bomb squad's new vehicle, a former ambulance donated by the City of Hoopeston.

Ambulance given to bomb squad returns for demonstration

A used Hoopeston ambulance has been repurposed and is again being used to keep people safe. In February, the council approved donating the ambulance to the University of Illinois and Champaign bomb squad. Tuesday evening, squad personnel returned with

the transformed vehicle and put it through its paces for city officials and media. Before getting the ambulance, the bomb squad had a large truck and large trailer to take equipment to scenes See BOMB on other side

Here's what's showing at the **LITTLE LORRAINE**

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Bomb continued from other side

where they were needed, said Sgt. Aaron Landers of University of Illinois Police and bomb squad commander. Responding to SWAT callouts or other incidents, with the larger vehicles, “it was just too hard for us to get into the problem area,” Landers said.

Team members would have to park away from the scene, unload their equipment and move it to where it was needed, he said. The addition of the new vehicle makes things “far faster and more efficient,” he said.

The new bomb squad vehicle is big enough to hold most-used items, like the 85 lb. bomb disposal suit, which Landers and other team members wear, and a

more modern piece of equipment - a 2004 F6B bomb disposal robot.

A squad member can operate the robot from a safe distance, determine what the situation is and how to handle it, then operate the robot to perform the needed tasks. Landers, who started with the UI Police in 1999, likes the robot because “we don’t have to wear the suit as often.”

The bomb squad is made up of three members each of the University of Illinois Police and Champaign Police Department. Participation in the unit is voluntary.

While primarily serving Illinois State Police District 10 - which covers Vermilion, Champaign, Coles, Douglas, Edgar, Macon, Moultrie, Piatt and Shelby counties - bomb squad members are federally deputized to serve as extra technicians at major explosions, like the Oklahoma

From the Blotter

Two people were arrested after police were called at 11:45 p.m. Tuesday to the 600 block of East Wyman for a domestic dispute.

Kenneth Jones, 38, and Jennifer Jones, 30, were each charged with domestic battery and were taken to the Public Safety Building in Danville to await arraignment.

Weather

Mostly sunny , then chance of thunderstorms today. High 90. Tonight, mostly cloudy, chance of storms. Low 70. Tomorrow, storms likely. High 81, low 59.

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City bombing.

Some members, like Landers, have previous bomb-handling experience. Landers, an Air Force veteran, served in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait during Operation Desert Storm, where he built bombs, did demolition work and missile testing.

Larry Sapp, Arrow Ambulance director, was instrumental in connecting the bomb squad, who needed a vehicle, with the city, which had one to donate.

Alderman Carl Ankenbrand brought the idea of donating the ambulance to the council in January, saying no city department had a use for the vehicle.

Obituaries

EDWARDS - Sharon L. Edwards, 63, of Hoopston,, died at 4 a.m. Tuesday, June 20, 2017, at home. Arrangements are pending at Blurton Funeral Home, Hoopston.

Classifieds

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