Preparedness drill has amateurs...

Hammin’ it up at Rodeo Park

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON — They slide into their cramped trailers filled with computers, radio equipment, a soda scattered about here and there, and maybe a snack, and they sit trying to hook-up with other people doing the same thing around the world.

They’re not hackers, although some could envision hackers doing the same thing. These are ham radio operators binging on their radio set-ups to try and connect with people around the world from Fort Madison’s Rodeo Park New Lion Shelter house.

About four trailers and a large generator are parked in the gravel just off Airport Road and antenna wires are strung across the northern part of the park about 25 feet in the air.

The operators were on hand for a 24-hour emergency preparedness drill beginning Saturday at 1 p.m. and running through Sunday at 1 p.m. sponsored by American Radio Relay League. Locally the event was supported by the Lee County Emergency Management Agency.

Steve Cirinna, Lee County Emergency Management Agency coordinator, said he works with the group annually to put on the preparedness drill so in the event regular communications go down, the area has workable communication systems.

“If we ever need emergency communications this is where I’ll come. If anything fails, we’ve got these guys,” Cirinna said.

He said the National Weather Service out of the Quad Cities actually has a ham radio station and most of those folks there are ham radio operators. The state emergency operations center in Des Moines also has a complete ham radio communication center.

“If we ever need emergency communications this where I’ll come. If anything fails, we’ve got these guys.”

-Steve Cirinna, LCEMA Coordinator

“We just went through this with a table top exercise on a New Madrid Fault situation,” Cirinna said. “Obviously you’d have damaged infrastructure and power lines, and when all that stuff goes out and we need someone up and running and get communications going, it’s gonna be these guys.”

John Hobart, a ham operator from Warsaw, Ill., who’s part of the Fort Madison Amateur Radio Club, said the radios allow local to worldwide communication.

Hobart said he’s been licensed since 1977 and has been going to this annual event since 1983. He said he’s never been called into action with his system, which he said is valued at more than $10,000. He said it’s a hobby like any other.

“Sometimes I’m on hours a day and other times I go a month without ever getting on.”

Technology has taken the primitive radio system to new heights, Cirinna said.

SPORTS:

FMHS boys split in Davenport. Girls swept in marathon double-header.

See pages 4-5
Rotary to wrap up 100K campaign next week

Fort Madison Rotary Club gearing up to celebrate its 100 years of service in 2020; they decided to initiate the $100,000 in 100 days.

“Food, fun, and entertainment has been a fun way for Rotarians to include the community in keeping Central Park, the bandstand, and the fountain in good repair,” Garza said.

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SUBMITTED ARTICLE

WASHINGTON D.C. – Institute for Organization Management, the professional development program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, is pleased to announce that Shelley Oltmans, Executive Director, of the Keokuk Area Chamber of Commerce, has recently completed her third year at Institute for Organization Management, a four-year non-profit leadership training program at Midwest in Madison.

Oltmans was awarded a National Institute Scholarship. Given to professionals across the country, the National Institute Scholarships recognize each recipient for their involvement in industry professional organizations, community service, and professional backgrounds.

“Institute graduates are recognized across the country as leaders in their industries and organizations,” said Raymond P. Towe, IOM, CAE, the U.S. Chamber Foundation’s Vice President of Institute for Organization Management. “These individuals have the knowledge, skills, and dedication necessary to achieve professional and organizational success in the dynamic association and chamber industries.”

Since its commencement in 1921, the Institute program has been educating tens of thousands of association, chamber, and other nonprofit leaders on how to build stronger organizations, better serve their members and become strong business advocates.

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Pen City Current - Sunday, June 23, 2019
For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report
06/19/19 – 1:55 a.m. – Fort Madison Police cited Toni Rae Innan, 25, of Fort Madison in the 600 block of 8th Street for driving under suspension. She was released upon citation.
06/19/19 – 6:12 a.m. – Fort Madison Police cited Franklin James McCollum, 23, of Fort Madison, in the 1400 block of Avenue I, for criminal trespass. He was released upon citation.
06/19/19 – 7:53 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1900 block of Avenue J. 06/19/19 – 9:01 a.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Rebecca Sue Billing, 33, of Fort Madison, in the 1400 block of 34th Street, on a warrant and charges of possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of a controlled substance. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
06/19/19 – 10:04 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a shoplifter in the 1800 block of Avenue H.
06/19/19 – 3:27 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Donald Wayne Hendrix, 62, of Fort Madison in the 1800 block of Avenue H, on two counts of theft and a charge of public intoxication. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
06/20/19 – 6:01 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1400 block of Avenue I. 06/20/19 – 6:08 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1500 block of Avenue E.
06/20/19 – 6:58 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1400 block of Avenue I.
06/20/19 – 7:00 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a hit and run in the 2500 block of Hwy. 61.

Lee County Sheriff’s Report
06/18/19 – 2:04 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Brandon Allan Erb, 34, of New London, at the sheriff’s office on two warrants for violation of probation. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
06/19/19 – 6:53 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff’s deputies responded to a one-vehicle accident on Hwy. 61 near milemarker 25. A vehicle driven by Jacob Kenneth Tarrence, 24, of Keokuk lost control in heavy rain and slid off the roadway into the embankment. No injuries or citations were reported at the scene.

Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Colby Matthew Manning, 26, of Keokuk in the 2200 block of Bank Street, on a warrant for violation of probation and charges of possession of methamphetamine less than five grams, interference with official acts, controlled substance violation, and driving while barred. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and released on bond.
06/20/19 – 3:12 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested David Duane Burdette, 54, of Donnellson, in the 3100 block of Avenue L in Fort Madison on charges of driving while barred, operating without registration/plates, and no insurance.

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Fishing picks up as water clears

DES MOINES – The following is the weekly fishing report from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources for southeast Iowa.

Big Hollow Lake
Water clarity continues to improve, but is still cloudy. Largemouth Bass – Fair: Anglers are picking up a few bass in 5 to 6 feet of water around the flooded timber. Bluegill – Good: Anglers had been picking up pretty good numbers of bluegills before last week’s heavy rains; a few nice dry days of weather should bring that fishing back. Black Crappie – Fair: Look for crappies out in the trees and brush piles in 6 to 7 feet of water.

Iowa River (Columbus Junction to Mississippi River)
The Iowa has dropped another 6 inches; it’s about 3 feet below bank full level now. Channel Catfish – Good: Now that it’s easier to safely get out on the river, the water remains more than deep enough to get a boat back to the fish.

Lake Belva Deer
The water is still a little cloudy. Water temperature is in the mid-70’s. Largemouth Bass – Fair: Look for bass around the mounds in the deeper water at the upper end and back in the flooded timber in the lower half of the lake. Bluegill – Fair: Work your way into the openings in the weed beds to find some nice bluegills.

Lake Darling
The lake level came back up after the weekend’s heavy rains. Water clarity stayed about 3 feet. Water temperature is right around 74 degrees. Largemouth Bass – Fair: Find bass in the post-spawn period; work them out of the heavy cover in 6-8 feet of water around the rock piles. Bluegill – Good: Find bluegills on the beds, as well as in around 4-6 feet of water around brush and rock piles. Channel Catfish – Fair: Catfish are spawning; find them along the shorelines in the rip-rap.

Lost Grove Lake
Water clarity is still a little cloudy; it would help if the rains were a little less frequent. Largemouth Bass – Fair: Anglers continue to catch bass; work them out along the edges of the weed beds and around the trees and brush piles in 4-6 feet of water. Black Crappie – Fair: Anglers are starting to pick up a few more crappies around edges of the flooded timber in 8 to 10 feet of water. Bluegill – Good: Bluegills continue to spawn. Look for them in the openings in the weed beds and in small clearings in shallow water in the brush. Channel Catfish – Fair: Catfish are wrapping up spawning activities.

Hounds split at Davenport

BY ETHAN LILLARD
PCZ SPORTS

DAVENPORT- For the first time this season, Fort Madison baseball dropped three games in a row after falling in game one of a doubleheader 8-3 to Davenport North. The Bloodhounds then rallied and picked up game No. 2 by the final of 4-2.

Coming off a doubleheader that saw the Hounds get swept by Washington by a combined 21-0, Fort Madison needed to rebound in a big way. They did, but not in one game.

The Bloodhounds actually snatched the momentum first in the top of the second inning after Jace Burgher got on base with a walk and later came around to score on a Kane Williams single. The momentum was short-lived, as Davenport North then put together a four-run home-half of the inning to take the lead.

Davenport added two more runs in the bottom of the fourth thanks to a walk, two singles, a sacrifice fly and a double. The final run came the next inning after a walk, home-half of the inning to take the lead.

The final run came the next inning after a walk, home-half of the inning to take the lead.

Jordyn Gerdes was hit with the loss for an inning of relief, giving up just one earned runs. Gerdes struck out two and

in game one, going five innings on 94

in game one, going five innings on 94

in game one, going five innings on 94
FM girls can’t rebound from 12-inning loss

BY ETHAN LILLARD
PCC SPORTS

FORT MADISON- For those that aren’t aware, high school baseball and softball games are always scheduled for seven innings. After game one of a doubleheader Thursday night at Fort Madison High School, Washington and the Bloodhounds had 12 innings under their belt and still had an entire second game to play.

GAME ONE
Fort Madison led for a majority of the first contest with starting pitcher Cassie Powers dealing from the circle to begin the game.

Powers held Washington to just one hit through the first two innings, allowing her team to take the lead in the home-half of the second. The bottom of the order delivered for the Hounds, as the seven through nine batters each reached base safely in Kylee Cashman, Jasmine Bass and Vanessa Golowach.

Logan Johnson came back to the plate with the top of the order and the bases loaded with one out. Johnson hit a pop fly and reached base safely on a Washington fielding error, as Cashman came in to score and give the Hounds the 1-0 lead.

The one run was just enough to keep Fort Madison ahead as Powers held the Demons to four hits until the top of the seventh inning.

Powers started off the top of the seventh with a strikeout before a single and a walk led to another single that plated Washington’s first run of the game. With a runner at third, a groundout the following at bat gave the Demons the 2-1 lead, before another run came around to score on a wild pitch to give Washington a 3-1 lead heading into the final half inning of the game.

Again, it was the bottom of the lineup coming up clutch for Fort Madison. Golowach singled, Johnson doubled and Ivy Geerdes hit a sacrifice groundout to plate Golowach and cut the lead to one run.

Olivia Williams followed with a hard hit ball to second and reached on an error, as Johnson came in to score and tie the game at three, forcing extra innings after Washington got out of the jam in the bottom of the seventh.

Again the Hounds started off the top of the inning with an out, but back-to-back singles from Washington in the top of the eighth led to a bases clearing double that gave Washington the 5-3 lead. Powers would retire the side and the Hounds were on the hook for runs again.

Cashman walked in the bottom of the eighth, before Bass singled and moved Cashman to third. Golowach then hit a sacrifice groundout to trim the deficit to 5-4. Geerdes again came through with two outs, hitting a single to score Bass and extend the game to the ninth inning.

Both teams went scoreless for the remainder of the game, before Washington plated three runs in the top of the 12th inning, putting the pressure on Fort Madison.

Geerdes hit a one out single and Olivia Williams walked, bringing the tying run to the plate for Fort Madison with one out. Unfortunately for the Bloodhounds, Washington shut the door on the comeback, going on to win by the final of 8-5.

“(Powers) did good,” Rehm said. “After awhile she had 11 hits so I figured she was getting timed up so I put Katie (Dennis) in to try to close it out.”

Geerdes led the way for the Hounds with two RBIs on a 3-for-6 day at the plate. Cashman scored two runs and was 1-for-4 with two walks. Dennis was hit with the loss in her three innings of relief, allowing four hits and two earned runs. Powers tossed 146 pitches before another run came through a bunt-attempt by Washington in the first game of the double header.

Fort Madison’s Cassie Powers throws to Ivy Geerdes covering first on a bunt-attempt by Washington in the first game of the double header.

The Hounds lost 8-5 in 12 innings in the first game and lost 12-2 in the nightcap.

GAME TWO
The Hounds again drew momentum in game two as they put Washington in front 2-1 lead. A double followed by a walk put Washington in front 3-1, before a sacrifice groundout and a single bumped the lead to 5-1. Dennis was hit by a pitch in the bottom of the seventh inning.

Before a wild pitch and an error helped the Demons take a 2-1 lead. A double followed by a walk put Washington in front 3-1, before a sacrifice groundout and a single bumped the lead to 5-1. Dennis was hit by a pitch in the bottom of the seventh inning.

For the Hounds’ second run of the game, it would prove to be the final run in game two for Fort Madison.

Washington followed its five-run inning with a six-run inning in the top of the third, gaining an 11-2 lead and crushing any hopes of the Bloodhounds splitting the double header.

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Ham radio operators are vital in natural disasters

RADIOS - Continued from Page 1

into the digital world. “We can take a router and redo the programming and make it work within our ham frequency and we can use that over the air. It’s more private over our own intranet, and we can interface that over an Internet setup,” Hobart said.

“We just get started with it but we can relay to another local and so on. We could set up a video in an emergency situation to show what’s going on.”

Dave Haworth of Fort Madison got licensed in 1960 just out of junior high on a temporary basis and then in 1991 got back into the hobby.

“The general purpose of this weekend is to practice for emergency preparedness,” Haworth said. “We always hear about Hurricane Katrina and the ham radio operators were the only voice to the outside world.”

Haworth said the ham radio operators were called into action during the 1993 floods to help take some of the burden off local emergency response teams to help relay some of the more basic information. He said that responsibility is why they do annual drills.

“We practice being prepared for total power outages and sometimes total mayhem scenarios,” he said.

“In the flood of 1993, ham radio operators up and down the river shadowed emergency services personnel. All the emergency services communication would be done through their radios, but when they got overwhelmed with other traffic, like Health and Welfare, they handed that off to us and we took care of that for them so they could concentrate on what they needed to do.”

He said some ham radio operators will also work hand-in-hand with Red Cross officials during disaster relief efforts for welfare traffic.

“The group uses off-the-grid power provided from the generator on-site and tries to see how many connections they can make throughout the country.”

“We set up here and we’re allowed to get on the air for 24 hours to see how many people and how far can we reach in 24 hours without plugging into the wall,” Haworth said.

“It’s partly a contest and partly for fun. We get points. Last year this club was one of the top point scorers in the Midwest for our class, which is 2A. That designation means two radios on auxiliary power.”

Inside one of the trailers Michael Robins of West Point was teaching his nine-year-old son Tristan, how to make connections using call signs, letters, and a small black tuning dial.

“The contacts were then logged into a database that is tracked by the American Radio Relay League for points.”

Tristan made several attempts and then finally made a contact. They don’t carry on much of a conversation, but exchange call signs and class for the current contest.

“The goal is to get as many contacts as you can. That one came in loud and I made him jump on it and that’s all it was. He gave us his information, which I already had by listening to him. We gave him ours and we confirmed it and logged it,” the older Robins said.

He said usually the group has a GOTA radio, which stands for Get On The Air, set up so anybody who came by could try it, but with the impending weather they didn’t set that up this year.

Tristan doesn’t have a license, but since his father, who’s been licensed since 2005 was with him, the two were able to monitor the radio as a team.

The other two trailers included a CW trailer, which is continuous wave signals, such as Morse Code, where the audio wave is a beep on or off. Jim Livengood of Burlington and Larry Newby of Denmark were manning the station in the other small trailer, with Livengood wiggling a shiny morse code activator in response to a flurry of beeps coming in over a speaker.

Those two were also capturing connections and logging them into the system. The term “ham” has a checkered and storied past. Some say the name is actually an acronym, supposedly from the last names of the Harvard Radio Club members who started the first amateur radio stations. Albert Hyman, Bob Almy and Poogie Murray. Wikipedia says the term “ham” comes from the amateur nature of the operators.