

Community calendar

Wednesday, June 28

Prepare for disaster

The Hampton Roads Chapter of the American Red Cross is encouraging residents to attend free Together We Prepare classes to learn how to prepare themselves and their families for disasters. The next class will be held on Wednesday, June 28 from 5-7 p.m. at the American Red Cross office 4915 W. Mercury Blvd. For more information or to register call 838-7320.

Humane Society

The Isle of Wight Humane Society will meet Wednesday, June 28, 7 p.m. at the Nike Park Senior Center, 13036 Nike Park Road in Smithfield.

Windsor farmer's market

The Windsor Farmer's Market will have a grand opening Friday and Saturday, June 30 - July 1, 8 a.m. until sold out. Music by the Edwards' family. The market is located on Route 460 near the Windsor Fire Department.

Monday, July 3

Smithfield fireworks

Smithfield and Isle of Wight Parks and Recreation will have its fireworks display on Monday, July 3 at 9:30 p.m. at Clontz Park, located on North Church Street. For more information call 357-2291.

Surry fireworks

Surry County Parks and Recreation is also hosting its fireworks display on Monday, June 3 beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the County Parks and Recreation Center. For more information call 294-3002.

Tuesday, July 4

Windsor Fourth

The Town of Windsor will have its fireworks display on Tuesday, July 4, 9:30 p.m. at the park off Duke Street. For more information call 242-6218.

Crittenden July 4

Ebenezer United Methodist Church and the Crittenden, Eclipse and Hobson Ruritans will host their annual July 4 celebration at Ebenezer United Methodist Church on Highway 17 and Eclipse Drive in Suffolk. Opening ceremonies begin at 10:30 a.m. followed by the parade at 11:30 a.m. Food sales will be offered from 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Free rides, a dog show at 1 p.m., raft race at 3 p.m., music at 7 p.m. and fireworks at 9 p.m. For more information, e-mail Ebenezer Church at churchnews@ebenezerchurch.net or call 238-2359.

Wednesday, July 5

American Legion

American Legion Post 49 in Smithfield normally holds its general membership meeting the first Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. However, due to the Independence Day holiday the July meeting will be held one day later on Wednesday, July 5. All honorably discharged veterans, active duty service members, and members of the Guard or Reserve forces are welcome to attend. The American Legion Hall is located at 818 South Church Street. For more information call 357-9239.

Thursday, July 6

Forbes to hold office hours

Congressman Randy Forbes will have a district field representative from his office hold open office hours on Thursday July 6, from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Smithfield Library at 255 James Street in Smithfield. Tammie Bebout will be available to provide assistance with a variety of constituent services and discuss issues facing the region. While an appointment is not needed, in fairness to everyone, visits will be handled on a first-come, first-served basis. Constituents who need further information or special accommodations may contact Congressman Forbes' District Office in Chesapeake at 382-0080.

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Staff Photos by Dan Steele

Ran Primmar and Bruce Powell adjust equipment in preparation for Field Day radio activities.

Prepared with a call sign

From IoW to around the world, amateur radio operators prepare for emergencies

By Dan Steele
Staff writer

Amateur radio operators staged a drill Saturday, part of a nationwide effort to plan for disaster scenarios.

Working in cooperation with the Isle of Wight Sheriff's Department, the operators of the Western Tidewater Radio Association conducted radio operations and experiments at Isle of Wight Courthouse June 25 and as part of the annual Amateur Radio Field Day, where amateur radio operators, or "hams," practiced making contact with other operators around the nation and world.

"The main point of the field day is to experiment with different situations that might arise during a disaster," said Chris Peters, member of the WTRA. "The idea is to figure out different configurations of antennas that we can create using only what would be available in an emergency situation, and which setup works the best."

Three home-constructed antennas were made from wire rope and raised up on pine trees in two different shapes and frequencies, two using HF, or high frequency, and the other using VHF, short for very high frequency.

One of the HF antennas was hung in the shape of a pyramid over a branch, while the other two were strung in horizontal lines between trees; the two different methods were part of the groups experiments with reception of incoming and outgoing radio waves.

"Overall, I'd have to say that the triangle shaped antenna worked the best," said Peters. "We received and transmitted signals a little better on that one than the other two, although they worked very well."

The use of two different frequencies in the experiment, as Peters explained, has to do with the range and capacity of radio waves and their transmission.

The hams play a critical role during emergency situations, working with state and federal authorities to provide communications through emergency operations centers, often in areas with no power. The system helped rescue and other emergency services communicate during the power blackouts that followed Hurricanes Floyd and Isabel.

"Due to the amount of hurricanes that hit the area, we maintain four permanent stations at the Sheriff's office consisting of two dual-band radios, one HF station, and a two-meter packet station, in addition to the dual-band and two-meter VHF packet station found at the emergency shelters in Smithfield and Windsor High Schools" said Bruce Powell, another member of the WTRA.

The hams also work with the National Weather Service as visual

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The logo of the Western Tidewater Radio Association.



What do those terms mean?

Amateur radio lingo

•**Antenna** - the component designed to send and receive radio waves

•**Frequency** - the measurement of the number of times that a repeated event occurs per unit of time. To calculate the frequency of an event, the number of occurrences of the event within a fixed amount of time are counted, and then divided by the length of the time. The result is measured in hertz (Hz), named after the German physicist Heinrich Rudolf Hertz. One Hz means that an event repeats once per second, 2 Hz is twice per second, and so on. In radio, Hz measures the amount of radio waves received in a second.

•**Radio waves** - a form of electromagnetic radiation that is created by putting an alternating electrical

current through an antenna, the energy taking the form of waves. Other types of electromagnetic radiation are infrared, visible light, ultraviolet, X-rays and gamma rays.

•**Radar** - a method of detecting objects at a distance by bouncing radio waves off them. The delay caused by the echo measures the distance.

•**Packet station** - a computerized radio that sends bundles of digital information to another location's computerized radio.

•**Repeater** - an electronic device that receives a weak or low-level signal and retransmits it at a higher level or higher power, so that the signal can cover longer distances without degradation.



The "hams" set up in the field beside Boykin's Tavern. Amateur Radio Field Day was held simultaneously in Isle of Wight and Franklin last weekend.

To VHF or HF

Ham radio operator Chris Peters explains the difference between radio frequencies.

"The HF frequency has a longer wavelength. Because the actual radio waves themselves are longer, they can travel over a much greater distance than a VHF can. They also have the ability to bounce off the part of the atmosphere known as the ionosphere, meaning that they can actually go up, hit the atmosphere, then come back down a little farther than something that travels in only a straight line like a laser can go around the curve of the

earth."

The VHF has important uses, despite its limited range. "Because of the compact nature of the radio waves we can pack more information into a radio signal with a VHF," explains Peters. "Neither VHF or HF are really better than the other; the two simply have different advantages, depending upon what you want to do." A weather balloon antenna which would raise a VHF wire antenna up to 75 feet into the air for both comparison of vertical reception versus antennas deployed horizontally and as a backup VHF antenna was scheduled to be deployed but was unable to be raised when the balloon itself ruptured during the helium filling process.

What's Happening?...

with you, your neighbors, your community...

Let us help you get the word out!



Send us your ideas for stories, items for the community calendar, letters to the editor,... tell us about people, places and events that impact the lives of residents in

Isle of Wight and Surry Counties.

Send the who, what, when, where, why and contact information by

fax: 357-0404

email: news@smithfieldtimes.com

telephone: 357-3288,

mail: P.O. Box 366, Smithfield, VA 23430

or visit the office located at 228 Main Street in the heart of downtown Smithfield

The Smithfield Times offers the Community Calendar to promote events of community interest by nonprofit or community organizations within this area. The deadline for submitting items is noon Monday for the current week's issue.

CALENDAR

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Friday, July 7

Training School reunion

The IWT/Westside High School 2006 Reunion will be held the July 7-9. Registration and get together is July 7 at 7 p.m. The memorial service will be held July 8, 10 a.m. at Westside Elementary, followed by a banquet at Holiday Inn Olde Towne Waterfront, 8 Crawford Pkwy., Portsmouth beginning at 6:30 p.m. A worship service will be held July 9, 11 a.m. at Smithfield High School auditorium and a luncheon will follow.

Monday, July 10

Day camp

The annual children's day camp will be offered at the FFA-FHA Camp at Morgarts Beach, north of Smithfield. The dates are July 10-14 and August 7-11, 8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. daily. Children from kindergarten to grade six will participate in the day camp. Space is available for 170 children each week. Activities included at the camp are swimming, crafts, music, outdoor games, nature study, manners training, character studies, and Bible stories. Children will also experience history re-enactors, hay rides and water safety training. There is a charge for the camp, but no child will be turned away for lack of monies. For more information call 357-4456 or 357-5218 or go online at www.carrolltonchurch.org.

IoW NAACP

The Isle of Wight branch of the NAACP will meet Monday, July 10 at First Gravel Baptist Church in Smithfield. The executive board meets 6:30 p.m. and the regular meeting begins at 7 p.m. For more information call 357-5222.

IoW Citizen's Assoc.

Dr. Bruce Venter, assistant superintendent of schools will be the guest speaker at the Isle of Wight Citizen's Association meeting, Monday, July 10, 7 p.m. at the Carrollton Library. The meeting is open to the public. For more information call 357-5352.

Students honored

•Smithfield resident Michael L. Hendrick traveled to San Diego, Calif. to accept the Department of the Navy's Meritorious Civilian Service Award, the highest honorary award granted by the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center, San Diego. Hendrick is the son of Russell and Patty Hendrick of Carrollton and lives in Smithfield with his wife and three children.

•Stacey Alena Moody, daughter of Jean and Jonny Moody, was named to the Dean's List at the University of Virginia for the spring semester 2006. Stacy earned a 3.8 grade point average.

•Ryan Hunter Odom received a certificate of academic honor and was named to the Dean's List at Ferrum College.

•Kathleen Shaw of Carrollton and Jordan Schreiber of Smithfield were two of 263 students selected to Longwood University's President's List for their academic achievement during the spring 2006 semester. Both students earned a perfect 4.0 grade point average.

•Crystal A. Seals of Surry was named to the dean's list for the fall 2005 semester at Virginia Tech. Seals is a senior majoring in mining engineering.

Wednesday, July 12

Hurricane Preparedness

A Hurricane Preparedness for Businesses Forum will be held Wednesday, July 12, noon - 1 p.m., presented by the American Red Cross, Hampton Roads Chapter at the Chamber of Commerce, 100 Main Street, Smithfield. A light lunch will be provided. There is no charge to attend. To register call Terry Honig at 357-3502.

Thursday, July 13

La Leche League

La Leche League of Southampton County will meet on Thursday, July 13 at 10 a.m. to discuss "The Advantages of Breastfeeding". Babies and toddlers are welcome. For more information call 516-6117 or Pam 562-6189 for more information or directions.

Cheerleader Tryouts

Cheerleading tryouts for the Smithfield High School varsity and junior varsity teams will be held July 13-14, 5:30-7:30 p.m.; and July 15 from 8 a.m. until finish at the Smithfield High School gymnasium. Participants must attend all three day sessions. For more information call Kim Summerlin at 357-4982.

Saturday, July 15

Mercedes dinner

Tickets are still available for the new C230 Mercedes Benz being raffled off for needy children in the area. The raffle is part of the YMCA fundraiser for Bright Beginnings program at area YMCA centers. Tickets cost \$235 and include dinner, dancing and the car auction. The event will be held July 15, 6 p.m. at the Newport News Marriot Hotel, located in City Center in Oyster Point.

Girl Scouts need volunteers

The Girl Scout Council of the Colonial Coast is looking for adult volunteers to serve in the Isle of Wight service unit. To volunteer, or for more information call 357-2070.



At your local
library

Holiday closings

The Smithfield, Carrollton, Windsor and Surry branches of the Blackwater Library system will be closed Tuesday, July 4 in celebration of Independence Day.

Smithfield Library

Goose on the Loose

Mother Goose on the Loose, an award-winning early literacy program, is Thursdays and Fridays at 10:30 a.m. The program is for children from birth through 3 years. The 30-minute program uses ritual, repetition, positive reinforcement, developmental tips, nursery rhymes, puppets, musical instruments, colored scarves and book reading.

Magic show

The Amazing Krendl will perform Wednesday, June 28 at 1 p.m. and again at 3 p.m.

Craft day

Make a magic mirror Wednesday, July 5 at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. All materials provided.

Story time

Storyteller Denise Bennett will perform July 12 at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Weekly story hour

Book bunch for grades K-5, Mondays at 2 p.m. Story on Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Carrollton Library

Summer reading fun

Three craft workshops

Carrollton Public Library
14362 New Towne Haven
Phone: 238-2641

Claremont Public Library
Phone: 866-8627

Smithfield Public Library
255 James Street
Phone: 357-2264, 357-4856

Surry Public Library
11640 Rolfe Highway
Phone: 294-3949

Windsor Public Library
18 Duke Street
Phone: 242-3046

On the Internet:
www.blackwaterlib.org

highlight the summer reading program, which will be held Wednesday, July 5, from 1-2:30 p.m.; and Thursday and Friday, July 6-7 from 10-11:30 a.m.

Windsor Library

Battle of the bands

Local teen bands are invited to participate in the "Battle of the Bands," on Saturday, July 29, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. To register call 242-3046. Participants can register through July 14.

Craft day

Crafts and a bookmobile visit on Wednesday, July 5, 2-4 p.m. All materials provided.

Bingo day

Bingo for children ages 3-5 from 2-2:45 p.m. and at 3-4 p.m. for ages six and up.

Story hour

Weekly story hour for ages 3-5 on Fridays at 10 a.m.

RADIO

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weather trackers.

"We work with the weather service to report the actual weather conditions in an area," said Powell. "Like other radio waves, radar travels in essentially a straight line and because the earth curves, the radar systems used by the weather service are limited by physics. We work to give them the 'ground truth,' what conditions are actually like in an area which might be experiencing severe weather."

The WTRA use hand-held radios to connect with the Isle of Wight Courthouse amateur repeater. The device both listens for and transmits radio signals simultaneously, giving the operator the capability to communicate with Richmond or virtually any other city in the world through a repeater network, a feat which WTRA President Jim Wise immediately performed, connecting to a ham station in Venezu-

ela. The hams later contacted other Field Day operations in nearly all of the 50 states and Canadian provinces.

In addition to natural disaster services, because of the close proximity of the Surry Nuclear Power Station, the hams take part in simulated emergencies involving radiation. "We work with the official emergency responders from the federal, state, and local agencies in a support role to provide communications in case of worst-case scenarios," said Powell.

The radio relay league will also let people maintain contact with friends and family caught in the disaster areas.

"People who barely keep in touch will use the system to check in on people they know in emergencies," said Wise.

• Dan Steele may be reached at 357-3288 or at dsteale@smithfieldtimes.com.

Free hurricane guide

A free Virginia Hurricane Guide, published by the Virginia Department of Transportation, is available at The Smithfield Times office, 228 Main St.

The guide includes evacuation routes for the Tidewater area, as well as information on disaster supply kits and emergency management agency phone numbers.



Upcoming government meetings

•Isle of Wight County offices, the Town of Windsor and the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles will be closed July 3-4 in celebration of Independence Day. The Town of Smithfield will be closed July 4.

•Smithfield Town Council, 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, July 5, (preceded at 7 p.m. by informal one-on-one discussion opportunities between council members and the public), The Smithfield Center, 220 N. Church St., 365-4200

•Claremont Town Council, 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, July 5, town center, 4115 Spring Grove Ave., 866-4827

•Surry Board of Supervisors, 7 p.m., Thursday, July 6, General District Court Room at Surry Government Center, 45 School Street, 294-5271

•Isle of Wight Board of Supervisors, 5 p.m., Thursday, July 6, 2nd floor; county courthouse, 17100 Monument Circle, 357-3191