

'Seconds save lives'



Rick Shanklin, warning coordination meteorologist at the National Weather Service in Paducah, Ky., led a SkyWarn storm spotter training course on Tuesday at the Mt. Vernon Outland Airport. Attendees were able to sign up as spotters for severe weather for the NWS after learning about the features of severe thunderstorms. RORYE O'CONNOR/REGISTER-NEWS

# SkyWarn Spotter Concepts class held

By RORYE O'CONNOR

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MT. VERNON — A class on Tuesday taught the basics to helping the National Weather Service warn the public during severe weather.

The SkyWarn Spotter Concepts class, taught by Rick Shanklin, warning coordination meteorologist at the National Weather Service in Paducah, Ky., taught about 60 people how to identify elements of severe thunderstorms and when to report them to the NWS.

Keith Hertenstein, of the Jefferson County Emergency Management Agency,

said last year's event had about 100 people attend and organizers were hoping for a similar turnout.

Shanklin said he and his team teach about 60 such training courses each year, both on-site and through webinars.

"We've been doing these for a couple decades," he said. "We've had really good participation in (webinars) as well."

Shanklin said the class is a requirement for individuals to become storm spotters for the NWS, but it doesn't make them storm

"I like to take pictures. I have never chased storms, but around here it's not easy to do."

DAVE STOUT

experts.

Dave Stout of Woodlawn attended Tuesday's course. He said he traveled on mission trips to both Tuscaloosa, Ala., and Joplin, Mo., after the cities' respective tornadoes, and his work with Motorola and police radio also contributed to his interest in severe weather spotting.

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