



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Amateur Radio “Field Day June 23-24 Demonstrates Science, Skill, and Service

Jackson County Amateur Radio Association members will be participating in a nationwide Amateur Radio Field Day communications exercise, June 23-24 at Vancleave High School. Since 1933, ham radio operators across North America have established temporary ham radio stations in public locations during Field Day to showcase the science and skill of Amateur Radio. This event is open to the public and all are encouraged to attend.

For over 100 years, Amateur Radio — sometimes called ham radio — has allowed people from all walks of life to experiment with electronics and communications techniques, as well as provide a free public service to their communities during a disaster, all without needing a cell phone or the Internet. Field Day demonstrates ham radio’s ability to work reliably under any conditions from almost any location and create an independent communications network. Over 35,000 people from thousands of locations participated in Field Day in 2017.

Coastal regions have experienced communication failures after major hurricanes in the past. If there’s an interruption of service or you’re out of range of a cell tower, you have no way to communicate. Ham radio functions completely independent of the Internet or cell phone infrastructure, can interface with tablets or smartphones, and can be set up almost anywhere in minutes.

Hams can literally throw a wire in a tree for an antenna, connect it to a battery-powered transmitter and communicate halfway around the world. Hams do this by using a layer of Earth’s atmosphere as a sort of mirror for radio waves. In today’s electronic do-it-yourself (DIY) environment, ham radio remains one of the best ways for people to learn about electronics, physics, meteorology, and numerous other scientific disciplines, and is a huge asset to any community during disasters if the standard communication infrastructure goes down.

Any one may become a licensed Amateur Radio operator. There are over 725,000 licensed hams in the United States, as young as 5 and as old as 100. And with clubs such as JCARA, it’s easy for anybody to get involved right here in Jackson County. For more information about Field Day, contact Lloyd Kirk wb5hup@jcsmsara.org.