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Amateur Radio “Field Day” Demonstrates Science, Skill, and Service

Members of the Central Michigan Amateur Radio Club will be participating in the national Amateur Radio Field Day exercise, June 22 – 23, at Rayner Park in Mason MI, next to the Ingham County Fairgrounds. Since 1933, ham radio operators across North America have established temporary ham radio stations in public locations during Field Day to test radio equipment and to showcase the ways that Amateur Radio can be depended upon for emergency communications

Field Day operations begin at 2:00pm Saturday, running until 2:00pm Sunday, and there will also be a “Get On The Air” station set up where anyone can come and (with help of a licensed “ham”) experience talking with other “hams” across the country first hand.

For more than 100 years, Amateur Radio — also 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 2018. “It’s easy for anyone to pick up a computer or smartphone, connect to the Internet and communicate, with no knowledge of how the devices function or connect to each other,” said David Isgur, Communications Manager for the American Radio Relay League, the national association for Amateur Radio. “But 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. That’s the beauty of Amateur Radio during a communications outage.” Isgur adds that, “Hams can literally throw a wire in a tree for an antenna, connect to a battery-powered transmitter and communicate halfway around the world,”

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.” Anyone 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. ***Anyone interested can take amateur radio license examinations at the CMARC Field Day site at 1:00pm Saturday.***

For more information about Field Day, please contact Kenny Hazlett (K8NNY), CMARC Public Information Officer, at “K8NNY@mail.com” or (517) 348-5513 or visit “www.arrl.org/what-is-ham-radio”.