

News Release and Invitation

For Immediate Release

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Capital District Ham Radio Operators Demonstrate Modern Capabilities for Emergency Communications

Vienna Wireless Society Participates in 2007 Field Day, June 23-24

Vienna, VA – Local Ham Radio operators will join thousands nationwide in showing off their emergency capabilities the weekend of June 23-24. The annual “Field Day” combines sophisticated radio gear, tenting and outdoor barbecue to create a network that demonstrates the ability to sustain communications anywhere on emergency power. Participants in Field Day will be scoring points by making contacts all over the country and internationally from their outdoor stations. Behind the fun of this outing, hams are practicing their historical role of being available to local and national service in any emergency.

The Vienna, Virginia, Wireless Society (VWS) will operate their Field Day stations at Burke Lake Park from 2 PM on Saturday, June 23 to 2PM on Sunday. Look for the tents to the left of the main park entrance, just south of the Park Golf Course on Route 123. The public is invited to see what is going on. VWS will be operating a Get on the Air (GOTA) station where licensed hams will help you to make a contact. Who knows how far you may get?

Over the past year, the news has been full of reports of ham radio operators providing critical communications in emergencies world-wide. During Hurricane Katrina, Amateur Radio – often called “Ham radio” - was often the ONLY way people could communicate, and hundreds of volunteer “hams” traveled south to save lives and property. When trouble is brewing, ham radio people are often the first to provide critical information and communications. On the weekend of June 23-24, the public will have a chance to meet and talk with these ham radio operators and see for themselves what the Amateur Radio Service is about. Showing the newest digital and satellite capabilities, voice communications and even historical Morse code, hams from across the USA will be holding public demonstrations of emergency communications abilities.

This annual event, called "Field Day" is the climax of the week long "Amateur Radio Week" sponsored by the ARRL, the National Association for Amateur Radio. Using only

emergency power supplies, ham operators will construct emergency stations in parks, shopping malls, schools and back yards around the country. Their slogan, "When all else fails..." is more than just words to the hams as they prove they can send messages in many forms without the use of phone systems, internet or any other infrastructure that can be compromised in a crisis. More than 30,000 amateur radio operators across the country participated in last year's event.

"We hope that people will come and see for themselves, this is not your grandfather's radio anymore," said Vienna Wireless Society President, Jim Parsons. "It may be called 'Amateur Radio' because we are unpaid, but like your 'Amateur Volunteer Firefighters' that does not mean we're backwards! The communications networks that ham radio people can quickly create have saved many lives in the past months when other systems failed or were overloaded."

Over the weekend hams will be demonstrating AM, sideband, FM, digital, morse code and even satellite communications. Several clubs will also be experimenting with TV signals and incredibly high frequency equipment. It was from their practical experience as hams that many electrical engineers went on to develop the marvels of today's communications.

There are 670,000 Amateur Radio operators in the US, and more than 2.5 million around the world. Through the ARRL hams provide emergency communications for the DHS Citizens' Corps, Red Cross, Salvation Army, FEMA and many state and local agencies.

To learn more about Amateur Radio, contact Gary Nelson at 703-416-3229 or Peter Norloff at 703-938-4343 or go to <http://www.arrl.org/newham>. The public is most cordially invited to come, meet and talk with the hams.