

Spark Gap

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Field Day 2007 Offers a Learning Opportunity for HF Newcomers

NEWINGTON, CT, Mar 12, 2007 — Although Field Day 2007 is still more than three months away, many ham radio clubs and groups already have begun making plans for this year's event, Saturday and

Sunday, June 23-24. Field Day has always been an ideal time for new hams to become more proficient operators and for prospective licensees to get "bitten by the Amateur Radio bug." That may be even more the case during Field Day 2007, as many radio amateurs gain new HF operating privileges because of the rule changes that went into effect February 23.

"This is an opportunity to get new or upgraded licensees on the air for some active mentoring and active learning," says ARRL Regulatory Information Specialist Dan Henderson, N1ND. "Field Day 2007 will be a chance to learn and grow, but above all, it will be a lot of fun — and for many there is perhaps nothing more fun in ham radio than ARRL Field Day."

The numbers support that claim. Last June, more than 32,500 operators took part in ARRL Field Day — some as individuals but many more as part of a club or group. The League saw some 2200 Field Day log submissions for the 2006 event, during which nearly 1.24 million completed contacts went into the log — not a record but up a little from the previous year.

While no longer a licensing requirement, Morse code (CW) remains a very popular Field Day

operating mode, perhaps because CW QSOs are worth twice as much as phone contacts. Last year some 56 percent of Field Day contacts took place on SSB, while nearly 42 percent were on CW (the rest were digital contacts).

Henderson points out two small changes in the Field Day rules starting this year. First, participating stations may only complete one satellite contact for bonus points via a single-channel FM-mode spacecraft (Rule 7.3.7.1), and it must be an Earth-satellite-Earth contact. "This will allow more stations to access this very limited resource," he says.

Field Day 2007 Activities

"Amateur Radio stands at a juncture where we can embrace both the old and new," Henderson says. He notes, too, that the variety of available operating modes — traditional and experimental — contributes toward Field Day's status as the most popular annual operating event.

"Field Day is truly the time where we bring Amateur Radio to Main Street USA — a great time for 'the Bug' to bite as many people as it can," Henderson says. "Use Field Day 2007 to open up Amateur Radio to the next generation of radio amateurs on *your* Main Street! It's up to us to make it happen." ■

Thanks!

Thanks to our presenter last month, Brian Murrey, KB9BVN. He not only put on a great demonstration but gave us some great ideas for Field Day. Look for some of his ideas at Field Day 2007.

*The Official
Newsletter of the
Mid-State Amateur
Radio Club*



Mid-State Amateur
Radio Club
P. O. Box 836
Franklin, IN 46131
www.midstatehams.org

ARRL POSITION ON THE AMERICAN RED CROSS BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY

Last year, the American Red Cross announced that it was implementing a background check procedure which would be mandatory for its staff and

volunteers. Many ARRL members, including those who are also Red Cross volunteers, and ARES members who provide emergency communications for the benefit of the Red Cross, have questions about this policy, and whether or not it applied to them. ARRL offers the following information on this subject, so that ARRL members can decide for themselves whether or not to

participate in this program. This information is subject to change, however, as ARRL and the Red Cross have commenced some discussions about the application of the Red Cross policy to Amateur Radio operators providing emergency communications. Should any of the following information change, ARRL will modify this posting immediately, so please review this page periodically.

ARRL will not attempt to advise members what organizations they should or should not support, or the extent to which they should comply with policies that such an organization requires in order for them to accept volunteer Amateur Radio communication services. However, we feel compelled to caution ARRL members to read *very carefully* any request for, or consent to the collection or disclosure of, personal, normally private information from a served agency. ARRL members should carefully consider what is being requested; for what purpose the information is needed; to what use the information will be put; and to whom it will be disclosed.

While there have been conflicting statements by local chapters, the National Headquarters of the American Red Cross apparently intends to require that all radio amateurs who provide communications for the Red Cross submit to a background check. Their policy applies to all partner organizations that do not themselves conduct criminal background checks on their members. ARRL, of course, does not conduct background checks. Some ARRL members are willing to submit to a criminal background check in order to volunteer to provide communications for the benefit of the Red Cross. The Red Cross has delegated the conducting of the background checks to a separate, private company. The private

company has a consent form which is a requirement for the background check. The deadline for compliance with this Red Cross requirement, twice postponed, is now March 31, 2007. After that date, the Red Cross indicates that they will not accept volunteer services from those individuals who have not complied.

Initially, the Red Cross' requirements included more than a criminal background check. Volunteers were also to be required to grant permission for the Red Cross' background investigation company to conduct a "credit check" and a "mode of living" check as well. Additionally, the Red Cross indicated that the only criminal background check they would accept would be from its own investigation company, "mybackgroundcheck.com." On February 6, 2007, the Interim CEO and the National Chair of Volunteers of the Red Cross jointly announced that the policy had changed; that only criminal background checks would be required of Red Cross volunteers; that credit checks would not be required except where separate permission was granted; and that mode of living checks would not be conducted on volunteers under any circumstances. However, the Red Cross' investigation company consent form still includes consent to the conduct of an "investigative consumer report." The Federal Trade Commission's definition of that term specifically includes "mode of living" checks and certain credit checks. The consent form that is required by the Red Cross, therefore, would permit both credit checks and mode of living checks, and not just criminal background checks.

The new consent form used by "mybackgroundcheck.com" does not disclose to the person consenting to the search that he or she is in fact granting permission to have a credit check or mode of living check performed, but only makes reference to a "consumer investigative report" without explaining it. Although the Red Cross promises that it will not conduct a mode of living check or a credit check of volunteers, its contractor continues to require permission to conduct such investigations. ARRL has inquired of the Red Cross as to the reason for this, but to date has not received a satisfactory explanation.

Should the Red Cross clarify or further modify its background check policy in response to ARRL's written inquiry and the negotiations commenced thereby, we will provide that information immediately for the benefit of ARRL members and ARES participants.



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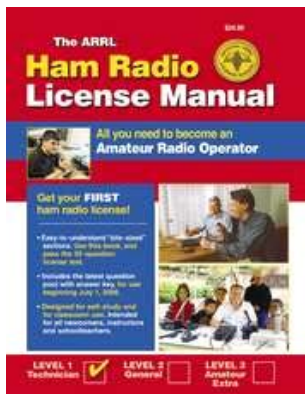
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Technician Class Begins Soon



The next Technician Class begins March 21st. All classes will be held in the White River Township Public Library located at State Road 135 and Smith Valley Roads. Classes will begin at 7 PM and end at 9 PM.

Classes will be held on the following Wednesdays; March 21, March 28, April 4, April 11, April 25, May 2 and May 9. There will not be a class on April 18.

MARC Members are encouraged to attend at least one class session to offer support for both instructors and students.

Needed is an instructor for the last class on May 9th who is willing to teach Electrical & RF Safety. Contact Linda if you wish to volunteer.

Reminder...

If you haven't already done so, please remember to get your dues paid to Brenda Haler, KC9EBL. Also if you will let Linda Harshbarger, KC9GCH, know if you are a member of ARRL that would be greatly appreciated. We recently updated our information with the ARRL and wish to keep our records up-to-date.

24th Annual Columbus Hamfest On Tap for March 31, 2007

Sponsored by the Columbus Amateur Radio Club, the event will feature our VE Testing Team led by KA9OOH, Dave Wendt. The VE team is expecting a record turnout as this will be the first Indiana Hamfest following the no code ruling by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

The event will be held at the Bartholomew County Fairgrounds Community Building in Columbus, Indiana.

According to Dave, the team is ready to go and has plenty of forms for the event which looks to exceed the extremely good turn-out last year.

The event runs from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. with an admission price of \$5.00 at the show or \$4.50 in advance. Door Prizes will be awarded including the Grand Prize of a Kenwood TM-V708A 2meter/440 mobile radio.

Flea market space is available. For more information, see the website at <http://www.qsl.net/carc> or contact Marion Winterberg, WD9HTN, 812-342-4670. His email is carc_in@yahoo.com.

For more information on testing contact Dave Wendt, KA9OOH at 317-881-6531 or via e-mail at veteam@midstatehams.org.

See you there!

WA9RDF
Repeater
146.835/
146.235 MHz
151.4 Hz PL
Tone

Weekly Net
Every Sunday
at 7PM EST

***Tune in to hear
the ARRL
Newslines!***

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club sponsors a weekly traffic and social net on our repeater. The net begins at 7:00 p.m. local time, and features local news, announcements, and NTS traffic, as well as rebroadcasts of Amateur Radio Newslines.

Weekly Net

Make sure to check out our weekly net, held every Sunday at 1900 (7 PM) local time.

This is a great chance to meet other local amateur radio operators and test your operating skills.

Newsline is often played, allowing net participants to get the latest news about the amateur radio hobby.

For those without the license or means to check in over the air, we offer an email check-in. Just send an email with your name and contact information to

netcontrol@midstatehams.org and we will record your check-in!



Mid-State Amateur
Radio Club
P. O. Box 836
Franklin, IN 46131
www.midstatehams.org
317.887.2558

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2007 Schedule of Events

Public Service Events and/or Educational/Testing Opportunities

MARCH 2007

17 **MARC Meeting - 8 AM**

VEC Testing immediately following the meeting (approx. 9:30 am)

Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN

19 **National Weather Service - Indianapolis - Spotter Class - 7 PM - 9 PM**

Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN

21 **Technician Class - 1st class - Linda Harshbarger, KC9GCH, Instructor**

White River Township Library Community Room, SR 135 and Smith Valley Road.

Check our website for directions to the Library and for a full schedule of classes.

28 **Technician Class - 2nd class - Chris Frederick, KG9ZIJ, & Robert Boyce, KC9KFT, Instructors**

White River Township Library Community Room, SR 135 and Smith Valley Road.

Check our website for directions to the Library and for a full schedule of classes.

31 **Columbus Hamfest**

Bartholomew County Fairgrounds, Columbus, IN

MARC will be conducting VE testing at the Hamfest.

APRIL 2007

4 **Technician Class - 3rd class - Bob LaGrange, N9SIU, Instructor**

White River Township Library Community Room, SR 135 and Smith Valley Road.

Check our website for directions to the Library and for a full schedule of classes.

11 **Technician Class - 4th class - Matt Payne, KB9UJE, Instructor**

White River Township Library Community Room, SR 135 and Smith Valley Road.

Check our website for directions to the Library and for a full schedule of classes.

14 **15K Mini Marathon Pre-Race, Indianapolis**

To volunteer or for more information contact Mike Palmer N9FEB at

www.indyhams.com

15 **North Central Indiana Hamfest, Miami County 4-H Fairgrounds**

Sponsored by Grant, Miami, Blackford & Kokomo ARCs

Talk in 147.345

21 **MARC Meeting - 8 AM**

VEC Testing immediately following the meeting (approx. 9:30 am)

Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN

25 **Technician Class - 5th class - Dave Wendt, KA9OOH, Instructor**

White River Township Library Community Room, SR 135 and Smith Valley Road.

Check our website for directions to the Library and for a full schedule of classes.

Mid-State Amateur Radio Club

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the **THIRD SATURDAY** of each month in the basement of the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, Indiana 46131.

See our website, www.midstatehams.org, for maps on how to get to our meeting.