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Amateur radio Field Day at Mills Park

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Jun 26, 2020



For a full 24-hours, the members of the Benton Amateur Radio Society will take part in the National Amateur Radio Field Day exercise from 1 p.m. Saturday to 1 p.m. Sunday at Mills Park at pavilion one in Bryant.

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.

Organizers ask anyone who attends to wear a mask due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Field Day is a showcase for how Amateur Radio works reliably under any conditions from almost any location to create an independent communications network, according to a news release.

"Ham radio functions completely independent of the internet or cell phone infrastructure, can interface with laptops or smartphones, and can be set up almost anywhere in minutes. That's the beauty of Amateur Radio during a communications outage," said. David Isgur, N1RSN, communications manager for ARRL, the national association for amateur radio ,

ARRL represents amateur, or "ham," radio operators across the country.

"In today's electronic do-it-yourself 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 or emergencies if the standard communication infrastructure goes down," Isgur said.

Anyone may become a licensed amateur radio operator. There are more than 725,000 licensed hams in the United States, as young as 9 and as old as 100. And with clubs such as the Benton Amateur Radio Society, it's easy for anybody to get involved in central Arkansas.

For more information, contact K5BKT, Peg Porterfield at 501-794-2172 or k5bkt@nwla.com.