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Radio Club to host Field Day

Thirty years of emergency communications capability to be celebrated at Metfield Skills Park. *by Staff Reports | June 20,*

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NORTHWEST ARKANSAS -- The Bella Vista Radio Club, the largest Amateur Radio Club in Arkansas, will celebrate its 30 years of existence and publicly demonstrate "ham" radio portable emergency communications capabilities on Saturday, June 24, at Metfield Skills Park in Bella Vista.

The "Field Day" demonstration by amateur radio operators nationwide will begin with opening ceremonies at 12:30 p.m., with a proclamation by Bella Vista Mayor John Flynn declaring the week of June 18 "Amateur Radio Week in Bella Vista." Also attending the opening ceremonies will be Bella Vista Property Owners Association chief operating officer Tom Judson and JB Portillo, Bella Vista Community Television host.

Throughout the "Field Day" demonstration, the public will be invited to "get on the air," talking with other ham operators nationwide under the guidance of a Bella Vista Radio Club member. Another activity, sure to be fun for children and adults alike, is radio direction finding or "fox hunting," where small radio receivers are used to find hidden transmitters around Metfield Park.

"Hams have a long history of serving our communities when storms or other disasters damage critical communication infrastructure, including cell towers," said Tom Northfell, W5XNA, Bella Vista Area Radio Club field day coordinator. "Ham radio functions completely independent of the internet and phone systems, and a station can be set up almost anywhere in minutes."

Amateur Radio (ham radio) is a popular hobby and service that brings people, electronics and communication together. People use ham radio to talk across town, around the world or even into space, all without the internet or cell phones. It's fun, social and educational and can be a lifeline during times of need.

Field Day is ham radio's open house. Every June, more than 40,000 hams throughout North America set up temporary transmitting stations in public places to demonstrate ham radio's science, skill, and service to our communities and nation. It combines public service, emergency preparedness, community outreach, and technical skills in a single event. Field Day has been an annual event since 1933 and remains the most popular event in ham radio.

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