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MCARA

Press Release

Ham Radio Operators show off for Martin County residents

Public Demo of Emergency Communications June 28-29, 2008

Stuart, FL, June 19, 2008: Thousands of Ham Radio operators worldwide will be showing off their emergency capabilities next weekend. In the past, the news has been full of reports of ham radio operators providing critical communications in emergencies including the California wildfires, Oregon and Michigan storms, tornadoes and other events. During Hurricanes Francis, Jean, and Wilma Amateur Radio – or “Ham radio” - was often the ONLY way people could communicate, and local volunteers as well as many other “hams” traveled 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 28-29, the public will have a chance to meet and talk with these ham radio operators and see for themselves what Amateur Radio is about. They’ll be 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.

An annual event called “Field Day”

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 construct emergency stations in parks, shopping malls, schools and back yards around the country. The slogan, "Ham radio works when other systems don't!" 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 34,000 amateur radio operators across the country participated in last year's event.

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"We hope that people will come and see for themselves, this is not your grandfather's radio anymore," said Allen Pitts of the ARRL. "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."

In the Martin County area, the Martin County Amateur Radio Association (MCARA) and Martin County ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service) will demonstrate Amateur Radio at Sandsprit Park, 3443 SE St Lucie Blvd, Stuart, FL. The public is invited to come see ham radio's new capabilities and learn how to get your own FCC radio license before the next disaster strikes.

There are 650,000 Amateur Radio licensees in the US, and more than 2.5 million around the world. Through the ARES program, ham volunteers provide emergency communications for thousands of state and local emergency response agencies, all for free.

To learn more about your local Amateur Radio activities, go to <http://www.mcaraweb.com/> . For an article on the local Field Day activity please visit: <http://www.mcaraweb.com/article-1213195751.html> . Everyone is invited to come out, meet, and talk with the hams. See what modern Amateur Radio can do. They can even help you get on the air while at the event!