

# Field Day Press Kit

We may still be in the depths of winter, but Field Day planning has begun in many clubs and groups.  
**The plans you make now will bring big changes later.**

**Be a PIO hero and bring in 500 FD points for your group  
before you ever touch a radio!**

As you plan Field Day:

Instead of heading to a mountain top, how about a WalMart lot?

Being in a conspicuous public place is good for **100 points**

Instead of just telling your fellow hams and club members,  
how about telling the newspapers and local radio and TV?  
Press release samples are available at <http://www.arrl.org/pio>

Having a media release or link is good for **100 points**

Instead of manning the radios, how about manning a public information  
table with brochures, signs and a smile?

Having a public information table/center is good for **100 points**

Instead of gladhanding the mike, how about shaking hands with  
your areas elected officials and politicians?  
A sample invitation is in your Field Day packet

If an invited, elected local officials visits you earn **100 points**

Instead of talking TO a served agency, how about inviting one of their  
leaders come down and visit you, perhaps even getting to  
talk on your radio?

If an invited official served agency representative visits **100 points**

**Total = 500 points!!**

***Keep an eye on the monthly CONTACT!  
for updates and more information  
<http://www.arrl.org/current-contact-issue>***

## **The Four Steps Toward Successful Field Day News Releases**

### **By Jim Mulvey, KS1A**

When last year's local club's Field Day publicity didn't make it into the newspaper, the Publicity Chairman couldn't understand why! After all, he wrote a news release and mailed it with plenty of time to spare. Still, it was passed by. Why? Because there are very specific steps you must follow to **ensure that:**

- 1. The right person actually reads your release. (Most are thrown out after a quick look.)**
- and**
- 2. They print it.**

#### **Step 1. Know what you're up against.**

First, the old days of the Spartan "just the facts" news release are over. At one time, all you needed to do was a straightforward "who, what, where, when and why" in the first paragraph with no editorializing. It's still being taught that way in journalism school, but it's not the way it's done in the real world!

#### **Step 2. Understand that the biggest problem is having your release tossed in the trash.**

At every media outlet (newspapers, television, and radio stations) there is one person who opens the news release mail. They can get a ton of releases every week; they are gathered up and opened by hand one-by-one, and unfortunately, they are almost all fluff from companies announcing the upgrade of a new improved food container, (yawn). The person must make a quick decision as to the importance of each one. He only reads the first paragraph, and he's usually standing over a wastebasket. Get the picture?

You must make sure the release is of interest to the readers. **If your town paper is the Billerica News, then make sure that "Billerica Radio Amateurs" are mentioned prominently! You must catch the person's attention with the first couple of lines in your release or out it goes!** Worse, the person who opens the release may make a decision based upon what your envelope looks like. If it's very amateurish-looking, you may not even get a serious first glance. When writing the release, walk the fine line between making it exciting and keeping it factual.

#### **Step 3. Delivering your release to its target.**

We've included a sample news release for you to "customize" for local consumption. A good way to get it thrown away is to just drop it in an envelope and mail to your media outlet. That's not enough! Call the station or newspaper and ask for the city editor or assignment editor (for radio and TV). Get a name. Then, ask for the fax number or direct email address.

**Fax it to them! The fax is the fastest way to cut through the protective layers a company uses against their telephone and mail. While each outlet has their own preferences for receiving things, a fax will generally get through more often than an email. Send your release a week in advance.**

BINGO! The right person now has your release. It's separated from the usual pack; now you have a very good chance of getting the publicity you want and need. **Resend everything again the day before the event.**

#### **Step 4. The Closer.**

**Include a contact telephone number.** We've actually had newspapers call us back and ask to do a full story on the club! Getting publicity is more of an art than a science. It's important to remember that just writing and sending it isn't enough. Follow the steps, sound friendly but confident, don't try to come off as if you're promoting something as important as a medical breakthrough. Be sure to mention that the site looks great for cameras and photographers. Give them the name of a contact person and best time to show up. Follow through and you just may score with every release you send.



## PUBLICITY TIP SHEET

*-Ideas to help you promote Amateur Radio Week and Field Day-*

1. Retype the enclosed news releases onto your club letterhead. Be sure to fill in your club's name and contact in the appropriate blanks. Feel free to lift any text from this release and add it to one you've already created.
2. Mail or fax the news releases to the city editor of your local paper, radio and television stations. Follow up with a telephone call within a few days to see that it was received and offer any additional information. When making follow-up calls, first ask the reporter if he or she is on deadline and if there would be a better time to call back.
3. Promote Field Day as a serious training exercise that prepares local Amateur Radio operators in the event of local or statewide emergencies. This is also a good time to promote the purpose of the Simulated Emergency Test in October.
4. Avoid Amateur Radio jargon in any press materials and in conversations or interviews with media representatives.
5. Designate someone who will be able to greet media, talk about Amateur Radio and explain what is happening at your Field Day event. Be sure the person you pick is your most articulate spokesperson.
6. Take a lot of good *action photos* of your Field Day event. If you are interested in submitting your pictures for possible use in *QST* or elsewhere, be sure to use a good camera and use high resolution .jpg electronic pictures – the more pixels, the better. Avoid taking shots of people just standing about or backshots of people on a radio. Get faces. Get smiles! Get pictures that show movement and action in them.
7. Give the enclosed backgrounders to reporters looking for more information or use them to help you write up your own publicity materials.
8. Approach your local cable TV and radio stations with the ARRL public service announcements. If they're aired, you'll get good exposure for Amateur Radio, Field Day and other club activities. The audio public service announcement can be downloaded right off the web at <http://www.arrl.org/public-service-announcements> .
9. Post colorful, easy-to-read fliers in prominent places: libraries, supermarkets, schools, etc.
10. Invite your mayor or other local official to your Field Day site. Have him or her make a few contacts!
11. Write a letter to the editor of your local paper and invite readers to visit your Field Day site and learn more about Amateur Radio.
12. Volunteer to speak about Amateur Radio at a local Rotary, or other club meeting. Information and tips on how to give such a talk is available on the web at <http://www.arrl.org/swiss-army-knife> and whole programs are at <http://www.arrl.org/campaign-1> .
13. Check with your local Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. Participating in your Field Day event may help them earn a merit badge.
14. If your club has a Web page, make sure you pass the URL on to the media with whom you are working. Publishing local contacts for possible new hams is important for following up!
15. We created a special flier telling people about the non-emergency community services ARES and other hams do for their neighbors. You can download a .pdf file of it at (*this is a long address!*) <http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Media%20&%20PR/2010%20FD%20and%20Contact/Spec%20Event%20Flyer%20for%20viewing.pdf> or you can order it from <http://www.arrl.org/shop/Forms-and-Media-Warehouse/>
16. Take the PR-101 course! <http://www.arrl.org/pr-courses> It has all the info you will need to succeed.

For Immediate Release

For additional information contact:

Your name

Your Address

Your Phone numbers

Your e-mail address

**“Who ya’ gonna call? \_your town’s\_\_\_ Radio Hams!”**

Public Demo of Emergency Communications June 23-24

**Your City, ST Date** – Despite the Internet, cell phones, email and modern communications, every year whole regions find themselves in the dark. Tornadoes, fires, storms, ice and even the occasional cutting of fiberoptic cables leave people without the means to communicate. In these cases, the one consistent service that has never failed has been Amateur Radio. These radio operators, often called “hams” provide backup communications for everything from the American Red Cross to FEMA and even for the International Space Station. Your Town’s “hams” will join with thousands of other Amateur Radio operators showing their emergency capabilities this weekend.

Over the past year, the news has been full of reports of ham radio operators providing critical communications during unexpected emergencies in towns across America including the California wildfires, winter storms, tornadoes and other events world-wide. When trouble is brewing, Amateur Radio’s people are often the first to provide rescuers with critical information and communications. On the weekend of June 25-26, the public will have a chance to meet and talk with \_\_\_your town’s\_\_\_ ham radio operators and see for themselves what the Amateur Radio Service is about as hams 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 backyards around the country. Their slogan, "When All Else Fails, Ham Radio Works" 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 35,000 amateur radio operators across the country participated in last year's event.

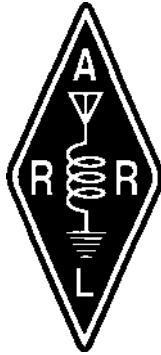
"The fastest way to turn a crisis into a total disaster is to lose communications," said Allen Pitts of the ARRL. "From the earthquake and tsunami in Japan to tornadoes in Missouri, ham radio provided the most reliable communication networks in the first critical hours of the events. Because ham radios are not dependent on the Internet, cell towers or other infrastructure, they work when nothing else is available. We need nothing between us but air."

In the \_\_\_\_\_ *locality* \_\_\_\_\_ area, the \_\_\_\_\_ *group name* \_\_\_\_\_ will be demonstrating Amateur Radio at \_\_\_\_\_ *location* \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ *date* \_\_\_\_\_. They invite the public to come and see ham radio's new capabilities and learn how to get their own FCC radio license before the next disaster strikes.

Amateur Radio is growing in the US. There are now over 700,000 Amateur Radio licensees in the US, and more than 2.5 million around the world. Through the ARRL's Amateur Radio Emergency Services program, ham volunteers provide both emergency communications for thousands of state and local emergency response agencies and non-emergency community services too, all for free.

To learn more about Amateur Radio, go to [www.emergency-radio.org](http://www.emergency-radio.org). The public is most cordially invited to come, meet and talk with the hams. See what *modern* Amateur Radio can do. They can even help you get on the air!

###



**Media Preparation and Follow-up**  
**Steps to take the day of, and after,**  
**your Field Day event**

**The Day of the Event:**

1. Make one more call to the media if time allows.
2. Be sure all elements are in place.
3. Be sure each person knows his or her role.
4. Greet media representative(s). Get their business card.
5. Have printed fact sheets or backgrounders ready.
6. Don't interrupt or interject during media interaction unless absolutely necessary.
7. Be sure media representative has accurate spellings of names, titles and callsigns.

**After the Event:**

1. Thank media representative(s) if appropriate.
2. Be sure to get ample copies of coverage.
3. Share coverage with participants, club members and the ARRL.
4. Look for "secondary exposure" opportunities.
5. Continue ongoing press relations.

## Sample Proclamation

While there is no bonus for having an official proclamation issued by state or local authorities, it is always a good way to stir up interest and public awareness.

On occasion clubs will seek to have the local town or city mayor/officials proclaim an "Amateur Radio Week.." While there is no bonus for such a proclamation, it is good recognition for the club and amateur radio. *The following is a rough draft of language for a proclamation. Modify it to fit your local city or regional leadership.*

-----

Whereas, Amateur Radio operators are celebrating over a century of the miracle of the human voice broadcast over the airwaves; and

Whereas, Amateur Radio has continued to provide a bridge between peoples, societies and countries by creating friendships and the sharing of ideas; and

Whereas, Amateur Radio Operators have also provided countless hours of community services both in emergencies and to other local organizations throughout these decades; and

Whereas, these Amateur Radio's services are provided wholly uncompensated; and

Whereas, the State also recognizes the services Amateur Radio's people also provide to our many Emergency Response organizations, including \_\_\_\_\_ add local and gov't served agencies \_\_\_\_\_; and

Whereas, these same individuals have further demonstrated their value in public assistance by providing free radio communications for local parades, bike-a-thons, walk-a-thons, fairs and other charitable public events; and

Whereas, the \_\_\_state/city\_\_\_\_\_of \_\_\_\_\_ recognizes and appreciates the diligence of these "hams" who also serve as weather spotters in the Skywarn program of the US Government Weather Bureau; and

Whereas, Amateur Radio once again proved its undisputed relevance in the modern world in 2005 by providing emergency communications when other systems failed in the devastation of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in the USA and in the Tsunami catastrophe overseas; and

Whereas, the ARRL is the leading organization for Amateur Radio in the USA; and

Whereas, the ARRL Amateur Radio Field Day exercise will take place on June 26-27, 2010 and is a 24 hour emergency preparedness exercise and demonstration of the Radio Amateurs' skills and readiness to provide self-supporting communications without further infrastructure being required; now

Therefore, I \_\_\_name\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_title\_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_place\_\_\_\_\_, do hereby officially recognize and designate June 18 – 24 as

**Amateur Radio Week  
In the \_\_\_\_\_place\_\_\_\_\_**

Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Seal.....

**Put this on your club letterhead if you have some**

**Your name**  
**Street**  
**Town, State**  
**YOUR PHONE!**  
**Your Email address**  
**Date**

**Title and name**  
**Address**  
**Address**  
**Town State zip**

Re: Invitation to meet with us June **(date)**

Dear **title name:**

As **title** of the **club**, I am writing to cordially invite you to meet with the Amateur Radio operators of your community and members of **club** at **location** on June **date(23 or 24)** between **time and time**. This is the National Field Day for Amateur Radio people. Throughout the country, ham radio operators will be setting up radio stations in unusual locations and making contact with others as a display of their emergency communications capabilities.

In the past year alone, ham radio's people have made headlines with their work in the wildfires, floods, storms, tornadoes and other crises. The hams provide emergency communications for many government and civic organizations in disasters. In addition, they provide supplemental communications when normal systems are rendered inoperable or overloaded. Hams have been called (and correctly), "The people behind the curtain that made the heroes look good."

Like most communities, **(town)** doesn't expect a major emergency. But they happen, and losing communications quickly can turn an emergency into a real disaster.

We will be inviting the press to drop by, and will have brochures, information packets and other materials made available through the ARRL, the national association for Amateur Radio, explaining our work.

I hope that this plan meets with your approval and look forward to your visiting this event. It should be fun and is also a validation to the hundreds of Amateur Radio volunteers who have spent thousands of hours providing emergency communications, public service work and other benefits throughout our community and region. If you need more information or would like to confirm your visit please contact me at the phone number above.

Sincerely,

**Your name**  
**Club title**