NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Ham radio operators will demonstrate emergency communications in Calhoun County on June 28-29

COLUMBIA, S.C. -- The Columbia Amateur Radio Club will hold its annual “Field Day” operation at the Calhoun County Emergency Operations Center on June 28-29.

The public is invited to attend this nationwide event, in which radio amateurs across the country will test and show off their emergency communication capabilities. The event begins at 2 p.m. and runs 24 hours. The Calhoun EOC is located at 1736 Old State Road, Gaston, S.C.

The club, along with thousands of radio amateurs across the nation, will attempt to make contacts with other operators, or “hams,” using a variety of emergency communication technology, including Morse code, voice and data transmissions.

Visitors have the opportunity to operate a radio at a “get on the air station” with the supervision of a club member, and can also learn how to obtain their own FCC radio license.

“Field Day is a time when we get together and work with our radios and gear,” CARC president Ronnie Livingston said. “All who visit are welcome to not only eat with us, but to also talk with folks around the United States, if not around the world.”

Despite the Internet, cell phones, e-mail and other modern communication methods, every year whole regions find themselves in the dark. Tornadoes, fires, storms, and ice leave people

without the means to communicate. In these cases, the one consistent service that has never failed has been amateur radio.

Radio operators have provided backup communications for everything from the American Red Cross to FEMA and even the International Space Station. Hams can send messages in many forms without the use of phone systems, internet or any other infrastructure that can be compromised in a crisis.

"We hope that people will come and see for themselves, this is not your grandfather's radio anymore," said Allen Pitts, spokesman for the American Radio Relay League. "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."

The hobby of amateur radio is growing. There are now more than 700,000 amateur radio licensees in the US, and more than 2.5 million around the world.

Livingston acknowledged the growth of the hobby, which some refer to as the one of the oldest "social networks."

"A telephone is for calling a friend, but a radio is for making a friend," Livingston said. "The Columbia Amateur Radio Club invites you to attend and enjoy yourself."

CARC has been in existence for more than 40 years. A service-based organization, club volunteers provide critical communications support for outdoor events in the Midlands. In the past year the club has supported Walk MS, the Harbison 50K, Friends of Sesqui 5K, Run Wild, Lexington Medical Center's Colon Cancer Challenge, and the Tour de Cure. The club also provides educational outreach to community groups such as the Boy Scouts of America, and at events such as the annual Mini Maker Faire at EdVenture.

To learn more about amateur radio, volunteer opportunities, and Field Day here in the Midlands, visit the Columbia Amateur Radio club online at www.W4CAE.com.

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Photos of our club in action can be found on our website. Please attribute to the Columbia Amateur Radio Club: http://w4cae.com/category/media/pictures/