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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEWS SUMMARY: Salem Area Hams Gear Up to Set Long Distance Contact Records and Practice Emergency Communication Skills.

Salem, June 28th, 2003 — Hundreds of Salem Amateur Radio operators will work 'round the clock this weekend to set up field radio communication stations, get on the air, and contact thousands of other operators in the US and Canada as part of participation in the American Radio Relay League's Field Day.

According to Dean Davis, Field Day Coordinator of the Salem Amateur Radio Club, Field Day is the annual "shakedown run" for the ARRL's National Field Organization.

"Field Day is a way for hams to get outdoors and have fun under some difficult conditions," Dean Davis says. "But it's also a chance to fine-tune emergency communication skills. We use generators and battery power, and we set up antennas in the field. The idea is to put together self-sufficient, working stations quickly and begin making contacts."

Trained amateur radio operators have been effective in establishing emergency communications nets during floods, fires, earthquakes and other major disasters, including the events of September 11th. These amateur radio operators are members of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES). In this capacity, they have voluntarily worked for a variety of public organizations providing disaster services, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, State and Local Emergency Management Agencies, and the National Weather Service Skywarn Program.

SUMMARY: Salem Amateur Radio operators to contact thousands of other hams throughout North America in the nation's largest ham radio on-air event.

WHO: Licensed Amateur Radio Operators in greater Salem.

WHAT: Hams will set up and operate field radio stations to contact other hams throughout the US and Canada over 24 hours. Objective is to see who can make the highest number of contacts during the contest period.

WHERE: Willamette Mission State Park, North of Salem

WHEN: June 28th and 29th

WHY: Participation in the American Radio Relay League's Field Day. Amateur Radio operators practice communication skills under primitive conditions, with generator and battery-powered equipment and portable antennas. Special awards are given for "alternative" power sources such as solar, wind and methane. Field Day is a competition as well as a "trial run" for emergency communication skills used during disaster situations. Photo opportunities, interviews, activities of local participants in important national Amateur Radio event. See all Amateur Radio communication modes in action, including voice, code, packet radio, teletype, and satellite.

CONTACT: Dean Davis, 503-540-3270, or check out the Salem Amateur Radio Club's home page on the Internet at <http://www.w7saa.com>.

