



Field Day 2026

By Allen - KH7AL



Field Day 2026 offered our club a new challenge. This year we decided to roll the dice and hold our Field Day on MacDonald Pass, west of Helena, at the Quigley Group Campground.

The gamble we took in picking this location depended entirely on Montana cooperating to provide us with nice weather. This year, it did not, but those that braved the conditions helped make it a memorable Field Day weekend.

Friday afternoon, Zhaun AI7BM and I headed up the hill to get things set up for

Upcoming Events - 2026
CCARC monthly meeting – July 6, 7p.m. at the Salvation Army, 1330 Hudson St. or the Google Meet link available on our n7rb.org/meetings-nets page
Glacier-Waterton Hamfest – July 17-19. Visit GWHamfest.org for registration details.
Elkhorn Endurance Run race support - August 1. Contact Rob AE7AP if you would like to help out for this fun event.
Coffee Net – Every Saturday at 9 a.m. on 147.22, Belmont Repeater. Eyeball @ Red Atlas at 9:30 a.m.
Trivia Net - every Sunday, 7:30 p.m. on 147.22. John Monson AJ7MT

the big weekend. Zhaun tent camped and I brought my RV trailer. The campground was nice with a lot of room for group camping. It sits just downhill slightly toward the Helena side, east of the pass. While we could hear some trucks as they labored up and over the pass, the road noise was not bad. Friday night we saw gusty winds and occasional rain showers, but not enough to dampen the campfire we made.

Brett N7SKI came up for a visit and brought his 2-meter CW modification he and Devon AJ7JO had recently built. The three of us took turns making FM, CW contacts with Devon in Helena. That was a fun experiment and a first for Zhaun and I.

Saturday morning I could hear rain on my camper. I knew we were in for a wet and cool Field Day. One of the first to arrive Saturday was newly licensed amateur Emmett KM7FYW. Since he's in middle school his mom, Steph, was nice enough to

drive him up and stayed all day for Emmett to experience Field Day.

The three of us worked together to hoist a folded dipole antenna in hopes to be able to work 160 to 6 meters. The trees around the club's radio trailer made hanging the antenna pretty easy and by 10 a.m. we were pretty much ready to go.

Ralph N3ZB came up from Elliston to join our efforts. He deployed an impressive hitch-mount mast and a textbook dipole. When Field Day started he jumped on 20-meters in his truck and began gathering the overwhelming number of contacts for our club's effort during the weekend. Thanks Ralph!



It didn't take too long for us to realize the folded dipole we were using had an issue. While it was resonant from 80 to 6 meters, and we could hear stations, we were having real difficulty making any contacts. We could hear but couldn't complete many contacts. We made the call to deploy an End Fed Half Wave we had in the trailer instead and saw an instant improvement in our communications.

In the club's trailer, several of us took turns helping Emmett (Technician class) on our Get-On-The-Air (GOTA) station. He did

great and logged 15 contacts over several hours of effort on the HF bands. Hopefully that inspired him to study and get his General class license soon.



As usual, the rest of us worked to get some contacts but we spent more time catching up with each other and sharing ham stories to maintain the CCARC tradition. As things were winding down Saturday evening I fired up the grill and the few of us there enjoyed some burgers, sides, and tasty beverages.



Later into the evening Zhaun, Brett, and I worked as a team to test our CW skills. We switched between calling CQ, and search-and-pounce. It was a fun time. And when the generator ran out of gas, leaving us in the dark inside the trailer, Zhaun fired up one of his many lanterns to keep us going while we operated on battery power.

I have to give an honorable mention to Brett for his efforts to land us the satellite contact bonus points. Saturday he tried twice but found the birds full of other hams, making it nearly impossible to break through. He didn't give up though. He drove back up to the campground around 5 a.m. Sunday to try another time and his efforts paid off, landing that celestial-sourced contact for the club.

Ralph netted over 350 contacts, raising our combined contacts under the N7RB's callsign to nearly 450 QSOs. Thanks to everyone who helped contribute to this year's Field Day event. Hopefully next year will provide us slightly better weather, but operating under the poor conditions was a good test for our club. Well done team.

ARRL Sweepstakes Success

By Rob - AE7AP

The June QST contains the results from the November ARRL SSB Sweepstakes contest. I placed first in the Northwestern Division in the Single Operator, Low Power category with a score of 78,352, including 472 QSOs and 83 multipliers.

A Special Thank You

By Dennis - KK7YFZ

I would like to extend a special thank you and recognition to Matt KM7DTA for gifting me a Bandhopper vertical antenna. Matt's willingness to help others extends far beyond myself, I'm sure.

Many thanks again, Matt, and best wishes.

VE EXAM RESULTS

By John - KS7R

A special Volunteer Examiner (VE) exam session was conducted on May 5 for Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) Public Health Emergency Preparedness staff. A regular VE exam was also held on May 14.

Those receiving licenses during these sessions included Mackenzie Mann KM7FYX, Julia Goar KM7FYB, Jacob Brown KM7FYA, Taylor Curry KM7FXJ, Colin Tobin KM7FWS, and Emmett Doyle KM7FYW.

A special thank you goes to the VEs who assisted with these exams: Al WA1TYB, John AJ7MT, Bill K7MT, Devin AJ7JO, and Brett N7SKI.

The next VE exams are scheduled for July 17 and August 5.

If you are looking to earn or upgrade your license, registration information is available through HamStudy.

Ferrite Beads

By Dennis - KK7YFZ

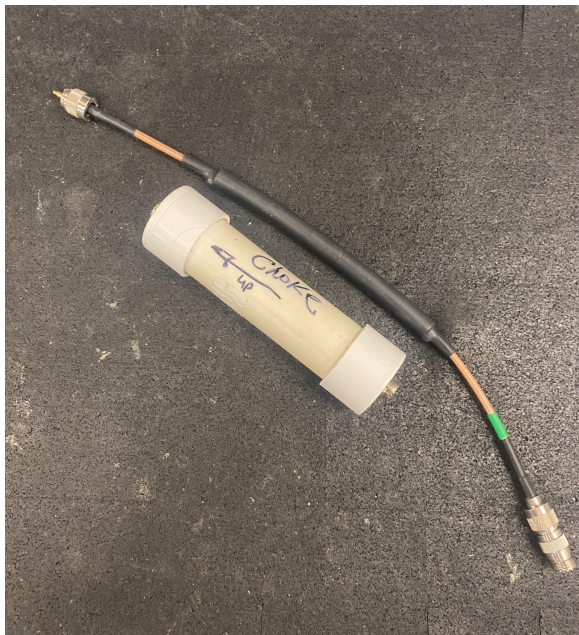
For any of us who haven't used these fun little items, here's an introduction.

Ferrite beads come in various sizes and are used to suppress interference and noise in electronic circuits. I'm showing some snap-on versions, which are my preference, as well as several premade versions. The premade styles work well in a fixed location, such as before entering the shack, but they

don't offer the same flexibility as individual beads.



I vote for the snap-on style. They can be attached to coax or wiring, they're cost-effective, and they're easy to remove if needed—even in the freezing cold.



If they're new to you, check them out. I've been getting mine from DX Engineering.

SOTA Activation - Red Mountain (W7M/CL-047)

By Brett - N7SKI

I activated W7M/CL-047, Red Mountain [24 May 2025] with Devin AJ7JO on a day that turned into far more adventure than expected.



The approach started with plenty of over-and-under downfall through the first third of the hike, slowing progress and making for a good workout before the route finally turned straight up toward the ridgeline. Once on the ridge, the climb became much more direct and the views opened up nicely.

After setting up on the summit, we kicked things off with a summit-to-summit contact with Allen KH7AL, always a great way to start an activation. From there, we worked several local operators on VHF before moving over to 20-meter SSB.

Conditions ended up being surprisingly good, and the highlight of the activation was logging F4WBN in France, along with a solid run of SOTA chasers.

I switched over to CW to see what else we could pull in, but after a while I happened to look west and noticed the smoke from the Jeriko Fire had changed dramatically. Earlier it had been just a faint column in the distance that didn't seem concerning, but now thick smoke was billowing high into the sky and growing quickly.



That was enough for us to call it. We packed up in a hurry and started down the mountain to stay ahead of any potential issues.

Overall, it was an outstanding activation with great contacts, a local summit-to-summit, unexpected DX into France, and a reminder that mountain conditions can change quickly.

Building CCARC's Next Generation

By Allen - KH7AL

At our June meeting, the membership approved all three motions related to the Membership Growth Initiative I put forward. Thank you to everyone who participated in the discussion and voted. The support for the plan gives us the green light to move from planning to execution.

The official launch date for the initiative is July 1, which starts the 12-month period we'll use to measure results and evaluate what is working.

Several key pieces are already in place. Our new club website is now live (n7rb.org) and

CCARC | N7RB HELENA, MONTANA

Ready to Get Started in Ham Radio?

Capital City Amateur Radio Club (CCARC) helps new and advancing operators in Helena learn the basics, prepare for license exams, and make their first contacts with support from local ham radio operators.

[Join the Next License Class](#)

[Visit a Meeting](#)

[Take an Exam](#)

CCARC's Google Business Profile has been established, giving prospective members a quicker on-ramp to find us and learn about amateur radio. Behind the scenes, we've also built much of the infrastructure needed to support future growth. Draft curriculum materials for both instructors and students are ready for our planned license classes, and automation tools are now in place to help ensure prospective students receive timely responses when they sign up. Notifications can be routed automatically to volunteers by email and through Slack, helping us respond quickly and consistently.

Our tentative goal is to launch the first Technician licensing class in September. The curriculum framework is ready; what we need now are volunteers willing to help teach, mentor, and support new operators as they begin their journey in amateur radio.

At its core, this initiative is about meeting people where they are. Some prospective hams are interested in emergency communications. Others are drawn to portable operating, digital modes, contesting, preparedness, public service,

experimentation, or simply learning something new. Our goal is not to steer everyone down the same path, but to help new operators discover the parts of the hobby that excite them and connect them with members who can help them grow.

Getting a license is not the finish line. It is the beginning of the journey. One of the strengths of amateur radio has always been experienced operators helping newcomers find their footing and build confidence on the air. This initiative is simply a structured way to continue that tradition.

It's up to all of us to help ensure our hobby continues to stay relevant and healthy into the future by helping new hams find their place in the hobby. If you're even slightly interested in helping with classes, serving as an Elmer, assisting with outreach activities, or supporting future club programs, please feel free to email me at: membership@ccarc-info.org. The framework is built. Now we need a few people willing to help us pass the torch to the next generations.

~ Special thanks to Bob N7PTM for his dedicated support of the club's website over the past few years, and to Al WA1TYB for his persistence in getting our club's Google Business page set up.

Let's see what we can build together over the next year and beyond.

92ND Annual Glacier/Waterton International Hamfest

Adventure, community, and cutting-edge radio communication collide in the heart of Montana's most stunning landscape this summer.

Registration is now open for the 92nd Annual Glacier/Waterton International Hamfest, taking place July 17–19 in East Essex, Montana, at Glacier Meadow RV Park.

Set against the rugged backdrop of Glacier National Park, this year's Hamfest offers an intimate and relaxed gathering featuring technical seminars, competitive radio contests, and unique outdoor activities.

Because of the event's close-knit scale, participants have a rare opportunity to build lasting friendships with fellow enthusiasts from around the world.

Whether you are already planning a summer trip to Glacier Park or looking for the ultimate weekend getaway, the Glacier/Waterton International Hamfest is your perfect July destination.

Visit GWHamfest.org for registration details.

40 Years In Ham Radio

By Thomas - KB2BCG

2026 marks my 40th year as a ham radio operator, so I decided to look back and reflect on my time in the hobby.

When I was first licensed, the two major operating modes were CW—which I think will endure forever—and voice. Voice covered both HF using SSB (and sometimes AM) and VHF, where FM was the preferred mode. Packet was in its infancy and, as people would say, “a solution in search of a problem.”

We tried using it for races, parades, and other events where hams tracked participants' progress, but it never quite

worked as expected. So we went back to voice.

Fast forward 40 years and the landscape has expanded greatly. CW is still here, voice is still here, and packet remains. But numerous new technologies and operating modes have been added to the mix. Satellite communications can now be done with a small radio and handheld antenna. Packet eventually found its problem to solve when APRS was built on top of it.

Looking back, however, it is the operators themselves who make this hobby special.

1. We are welcoming.
2. We are supportive.
3. We are willing to listen, learn, and share.
4. We are willing to get involved.

To everyone I have met during my years in amateur radio: thank you for making it a strange but wonderful experience.

I wish you good health and good DX.

73s,
Tom KB2BCG

An Honorable Mention

Our club's very own Sam Flynn KM7CBO not only graduated from Capital High School this year, but was also recognized by the Helena Education Foundation as one of 56 Distinguished Students.

Sam has been very active throughout high school, serving as Chapter President of Business Professionals of America, captain of the FIRST Robotics Team, trumpet soloist in both the Symphonic and Jazz Bands, a two-year varsity tennis player for the Capital

High Bruins, a youth group leader at his church, and a volunteer for Florence Crittenton Family Services.

On top of all those contributions, Sam also earned his Technician license in 2025.

After graduation, Sam plans to attend Montana State University to pursue degrees in Computer Science and Biological Engineering.

Best of luck, Sam—and keep your radio close in your future endeavors.

Editor's Notes

Thank you to all members who contributed articles, photos, operating reports, and announcements for this month's newsletter.

Editor: Marla Unruh KM7LIB
Co-Editor: Allen Le Vie KH7AL
Writers: CCARC members

Not yet a member of the CCARC?
Join today and help our club & community:
<https://n7rb.org/join-contact>

Capital City Amateur
Radio Club
Helena, Montana

