



Planning for Upcoming Events in October

By Al Simons WA1TYB

We have two events coming up in October for which I need volunteers: **Shakeout 2026** on October 15th, and the "**Just for the Helena of It**" (JFTHOI) race on October 18th.

Shakeout is an earthquake-based exercise, raising awareness of how to prepare for and behave during, an earthquake. Lynn, K7WGR, will conduct a net on the morning of the 15th at a time TBD, as he has done for several years in the past.

New this year, we have been requested to participate in a state exercise on October 6th. We will activate the four stations we have pre-positioned around town at the State DES, Department of Health and Human Services (DPHHS) Emergency Preparedness Division, St. Peter's hospital, and the Lewis and Clark County EOC at the airport. The State DES and DPHHS both have staff who are licensed but are unfamiliar with their stations and need our help to train. I will recruit people to staff these four sites, and will train them beforehand so we build our support capabilities. My goal is to have at least one

Upcoming Events - 2026

CCARC monthly meeting – Sept. 14, 7 p.m. at the Salvation Army, 1330 Hudson St. or the Google Meet link available on our n7rb.org/meetings-nets page

Technician License Class - A six-week prep course hosted by CCARC will start September 9, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. at the Salvation Army.

CCARC Annual Picnic – September 12. 3-6 p.m. at Lewis and Clark County Fairgrounds, first shelter on the left when you enter. RSVP with Marla - mkulib@gmail.com

Just For The Helena Of It race - October 18. Mark your calendars if you would like to help support this 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

relatively experienced and one newer ham at each site. If you are interested in learning about one or more of these stations, please contact me.

73, Al.

Brass Knuckle Gang! By Devin Felix N7NHT BKG #107 & MT OG

What is BKG you ask? That's a great question, and to put it simply we are a law-abiding, FCC respecting gang 4 amateur radio operators!

We are governed by three very specific bylaws:

First and foremost–NEVER TALK ABOUT BKG!...Except, u should actually talk about it ALL THE TIME and bring it up 2 everyone u meet!! Spread the word. Recruit the worthy. 2m CW needs MORE operators!!!

Second–The Proper Roger–Members must make a thoughtful effort to send at least one “Proper Roger” per contact (QSO). Failure to do so may result in EXCOMMUNICATION!!

Third–The QRL Formality–Always send “QRL?” (is the frequency busy?) before taking a frequency. This is done strictly as a formality on 2-meter-CW–BUT WE DO IT ANYWAY!!

Now that the silliness and seriousness of all the mumbo-jumbo is out of the way, we can get down to BRASS tax. BKG was created by Forrest KI7QCF to promote and have fun with 2m CW a little over a year ago. This was all made possible by a few people who discovered it was possible with a little solder and some firmware to modify a Quan Sheng 5W HT.

We originally began with a UV-K5 which is only capable of using a straight key. This is where the name was born. Most of these straight keys use brass contacts, so when we are sending we are “pounding brass”. Later iterations have made it possible to use the UV-K1 Mini Kong with an iambic paddle as we now have access to an internal keyer. This seems to be the preferred method going forward, but the name is too good to let go!

BKG has grown massively in popularity, especially amongst the SOTA crowd.

There’s just something special about beeping someone with an HT from a mountaintop.

As I watched the numbers slowly climb, I knew that I needed to get a number and bring BKG to Montana and claim that coveted State OG status. To get jumped in and become a BKG member you must make a QSO with an existing member, so I began seeking out my strategy.

I looked at the map, and the two closest members were Forrest himself or the Idaho OG. Both being seven to eight hours away, I was slightly discouraged but not totally defeated. As I began plotting my journey southward to obtain such a prestigious title as the MT OG a friend, Charlie AK4WA, spoke up in a discord chat that he would be visiting Missoula from Washington the very next weekend. My wallet and sanity were saved!

I ended up meeting Charlie for a POTA activation near Lolo and the rest is history. I promptly got my number, 107, and after a couple more new POTAs on my way back to Helena I jumped Brett N7SKI, #109, in. This was a little over two months ago. We are now over 450 members in 42 states and 7 different countries and counting!

I will conclude this all with a few resources to check out if anyone is interested in joining the ranks of the illustrious Brass Knuckle Gang. First check out www.bkg.club. Here you’ll find a list of members, states/countries, and bylaws. There’s also a great little video explaining much of this by the shot caller himself, KI7QCF.

Which brings me to my next point, go check out his YouTube channel where most of this all started. He has a lot of great videos centered around CW and a bit of radio/antenna building.

Lastly, if anyone at all has ANY questions please don't hesitate to reach out to me. Got a Sheng you need modded? Let me know! Want that sweet BKG#? Let's get you jumped in! Just curious what all this craziness is? I'm all about it!

Hope to catch you on the air and until next time, 73!

Ham In The Park - Review By Allen Le Vie KH7AL

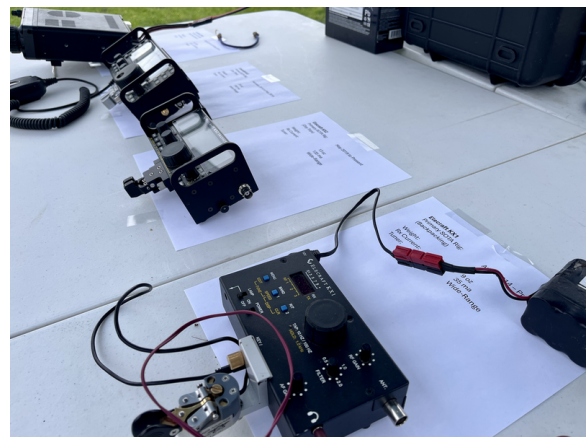
Our somewhat impromptu event on 15 August turned out to be a really enjoyable time. Together, we created a great ham radio demo day to help encourage people in our community who are interested in getting their license.



Effectively, this was our Field Day 2.0 — a proper public open house at JFK Park in East Helena, provided shade, picnic tables, and plenty of room to set up antennas.

The goal was simple: put ham radio in front of 'civilians' (my term of endearment for non-hams) in a welcoming, no-pressure environment. Since this was on a Saturday morning, it served as a greener alternative to our regular coffee meet-ups at the Red Atlas.

After Rob AE7AP got the coffee brewing he set up his linked-dipole antenna he uses for SOTA activations, along with a full backpack-friendly display of radios he has acquired over the years. He also had a collection of keys, and printed descriptions of each radio's capabilities.



Devin N7HNT brought his Elecraft KX-2 and demonstrated how to chase POTA and SOTA with a truly portable radio.

Bill N7MSI set up his radio-in-a-box that consisted of an Icom 7200 and a vertical whip. Again, we were able to share what it looked and sounded like to make several contacts on 20 meters SSB.

John AJ7MT brought out his portable ham satellite gear and was able to help a few folks make contacts with passing satellites.



I look forward to doing another event like this in the future. Thanks to everyone who came out to support it.

73, Allen

VE Exam Results By John KS7R

Volunteer Examiner (VE) exams were given on August 5, resulting in an Extra and General upgrade and a new Technician license. Congratulations to Joe Spear W7BYZ on his new Extra license and Michael Brady KM7FFQ on his new General license. Also, a special congratulations to Alex Summers KM7HGJ on her new call sign and Technician license.

Thank you to the VEs assisting with the exams: Matt AA7VG and Allen KH7AL. The next VE exam sessions are scheduled for Sept. 23 and November 4. If you're interested in taking an exam please register on hamstudy.org at least one week prior to the exam. If you have any questions, please contact John KS7R.

3-Summit Trifecta By Rob AE7AP

We had an enjoyable trip yesterday on the 3-Summit Trifecta, as recommended by Vick K7VK(SK). He was sure in our thoughts all day. None of the roads were stressful, and each of the summits was a super pleasant hike through open woods.

I think each hike was in the 15-30-minute range. We even saw a mountain lion that was kind enough to sit still for a photo. I am guessing it was a younger one because they usually pull off a nearly instantaneous silent vanishing trick. The day stayed very nice until the last summit, but even then we were able to make it back to the car just before it began raining.

I was able to work Dennis KR7Q in Stevensville, Bob WB7BWZ in Swan Lake, Brett N7SKI in Helena, Christian F4WBN in France, and Hugh KL7HM in Arizona on all three summits! I think this gave Dennis 3 completes! I was also able to work one Japan station and two Manitoba stations.



Is Your QRZ Page a Blank Wall or Needing an Update? Fix It This Weekend.

By Allen Le Vie KH7AL

What does someone see when they look you up on QRZ[.com] after meeting you; in a contest, a POTA chase, or a nice QSO on 20 meters? If they find it is either a blank page with your callsign and grid square, or nothing at all. That's a missed handshake.

If you are not familiar with QRZ[.com], every licensed ham can create a free account and set up a personalized page with details you care to share with the ham community.

A personalized bio page costs nothing and takes less than an hour to set up. It turns a callsign into a person — your shack, your interests, maybe a photo from your favorite POTA activation.

I recently overhauled mine. Instead of plain paragraphs, it's now a styled page that more closely matches my personal website's look and feel — colors, layout, a stats strip showing my SOTA totals at a glance. It didn't take a web developer. It took an AI prompt.

While you can use the basic page editor to create a page, you can make a much fuller site using HTML code. But here's the thing: you don't need to know how to code with HTML.

QRZ's bio editor accepts raw HTML if you switch it to source/code view. Tools like Claude, Gemini, or ChatGPT can write that HTML for you — you just describe what you want in plain English, copy the code it gives you, and paste it into the QRZ page editor.

It is all in the prompt.

You can try it out by copying this prompt below, but make sure to fill in your own details. Then hand it to your AI assistant of choice. If you'd prefer a different theme over a "clean, modern look", just alter the prompt how you want your page to look and feel:

>> "Write an HTML block I can paste into my QRZ.com bio editor. QRZ

only supports inline styles (no ``<style>`` tags or JavaScript). Give it a clean, modern look with *[add your color scheme — e.g., blue and gold, or 'match colors from my website [URL]']*. Include sections for *[add a short intro about you, your station/gear, and aspects of the hobby you really enjoy, whatever you care to share with the ham community (SOTA/POTA activations / DXCC progress / info about your pet cat Whiskers / whatever else you track)]*. Keep it mobile-friendly so it doesn't force horizontal scrolling on a phone.**

The AI will hand back a block of code. You can then copy and paste it into QRZ's source view, hit preview, and iterate — "make the text bigger," "add the photo titled 'example.jpg' at the bottom," "change the accent color to green", all work as follow-up requests. No syntax to learn.

** Steps to get to your QRZ edit page.**

- If you haven't already created a free QRZ page, it's easy to do so at:
<https://ssl.qrz.com/support/new-account>.
- Once logged in, hover over your callsign along the top navigation bar.
- Select, 'Edit [your callsign]'
- Then select 'Add or edit your biography text, fonts, etc.'
- Select the top-left button label 'Source'
- Be sure to delete what's there (or first copy and save it somewhere safe)
- Now you can copy and paste the AI-produced code here, and select 'Save'.

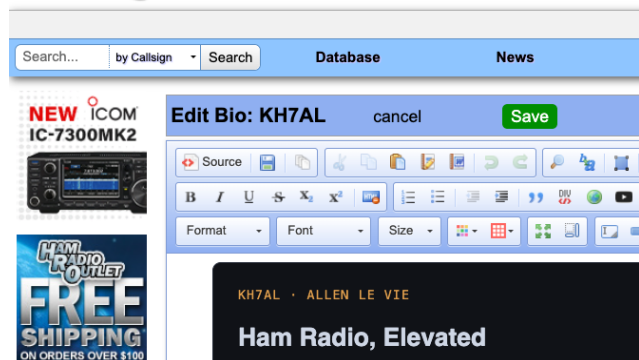
- Go back to review your page, making notes to further refine it until you're happy with it

If you are including photos, select 'Add or edit your pictures and QSL images'.

Upload the photos you would like to share on your page (don't forget to pick one as your primary for your page).

When finished, select 'Done' to return to your updated QRZ page.

Note: If adding photos, I recommend renaming them deliberately. That way you can prompt your AI of choice to "add 'example_photo1.jpg' below and in-line with the second paragraph", or you can just prompt your AI to something like, "add my ham shack photos to the bottom of my QRZ page. I uploaded and titled them "shack_1.jpg



through shack_6.jpg.”

A few tips from doing this myself:

- **Test on your phone**, not just the desktop. Ask for tables/columns that wrap instead of forcing a fixed width.
- **Static stats are fine**. While there are some widgets you can add to

pull external data like solar conditions, QRZ's HTML section can't pull live data. So if you show activation counts or award progress, you'll update the numbers by hand occasionally — still better than nothing.

- **Once your basic HTML page is written** you can use the traditional 'edit page' means to make minor changes, just don't forget to hit Save when you are done.

This isn't about vanity. A page that reflects who you are as a ham — your rigs, your interests, your ham journey — makes the hobby feel more like the community it is. Somebody chasing you at a park might read it and strike up a conversation next time instead of just logging a contact. If you want to give this a try but would like some help, just let me know.

Give it twenty minutes this weekend. Worst case, you end up exactly where you started — with a blank QRZ page.

73,
Allen
<https://www.qrz.com/db/KH7AL>

Is your station documented for the family you'll leave behind?
By Robert W5RBD

Signal & Legacy Services LLC helps amateur radio operators protect the value of their stations through professional documentation and fair-market valuation — before there's an estate. When a Silent Key's gear enters probate, families are left without inventory, without valuation, and without guidance. The result is equipment worth

thousands being donated, discarded, or sold far below value. Signal & Legacy provides a clear, professional record that protects the operator's lifetime investment and gives the family a path forward. Learn more at www.signalandlegacy.com — the contact form reaches the founder directly.

Editor's Notes

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

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

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