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ARRL Rocky Mountain Division update – April 2009
Division website: www.RockyMountainDivision.org

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===== Field Day: Map your site for other Hams and Visitors =====

Whether it's to be enjoyed with a bunch of friends, a local club, or an ARES group, in the mountains or in the city, Field Day is only two months away! We hope you and your club are gearing up to be a part of the fun.

ARRL once again offers a useful feature on its website: A tool that displays Field Day sites and information across the United States and Canada, thanks to Google Maps. While you or your club members may know where your particular Field Day site will be located, the real beauty of this feature is that it informs other Hams, prospective Hams, or visitors where Field Day efforts will take place in their areas. Is your site shown on the map?

Head over to <http://www.arrl.org/contests/announcements/fd/locator.php> to see what Field Day sites are nearby, or to add yours. This tool is only as good as the number of people who make use of it, so please post your site and spread the word to all the Hams you know, especially those new to the hobby.

Information packets and rules for the 2009 event are available for download at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/announcements/fd> See you on the bands this June 27-28!

===== 2009 Rocky Mountain Division Convention =====

About ONE month remains til the 2009 Rocky Mountain Division Convention (May 29-31). Have you made plans to join close to 250 hams (and growing) in beautiful Estes Park, Colorado...gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park? Registration online and by mail is happening right now, and special hotel rates have been negotiated for convention attendees.

Among the guest speakers: Harold Kraemer WJ1B (ARRL Chief Operating Officer), Gordon Hardman W0RUN (2009 Desecheo Island DXpedition participant and chief engineer of Alpha Radio Products), Mike Gruber W1MG (ARRL EMC Engineer and contributor to "The Doctor Is IN" QST column), Cheryl Muhr, N0WBV, YL columnist for WorldRadio Online (formerly WorldRadio Magazine), Editor for YL-Harmonics the Young Ladies' Radio League's (YLRL) Bi-monthly magazine, and Brian Milesosky N5ZGT (Director, ARRL Rocky Mountain Division).

Nearly 30 technical and non-technical forums, great meals, transmitter hunts, special event station W1AW/0, and much more await you. Not to mention one heck of a time meeting and greeting hams from all over the Division and country. It'll be a great event with a very fitting theme: "Amateur Radio: Resilient, Relevant, Ready"

The hotel, where the Convention is being held, is almost at full-capacity, so reserve your room soon!

Please mark your calendars and visit the Division convention's website at <http://www.hamconcolorado.org> for more details, including registration information. Join us for a great time at an awesome venue!

===== Rocky Mountain Division HF Net =====

Our next monthly Rocky Mountain Division HF net will occur next week to disseminate information and give us a chance to meet you and your ideas in QSO. Here are the details:

DATE: Wednesday, April 8
TIME: 7:30 PM MDT (see note below)
FREQ: 3939 kHz +/-

(Note on time: The New Mexico Roadrunner net occurs on this frequency and is usually finished by 7:30pm MDT. In the event that it's still in progress at that time, we'll begin the Division net immediately afterwards.)

Propagation has been mediocre the last few nets, but we'll press on regardless!

===== Tech Tip of the Month: Bargain items from the swap tables =====

Starting this month we will provide a Tech tip that might be useful to our members, particularly new Hams. If you have a concise tech tip you'd like to offer for a future Division-wide email, please send an email to Vice-Director Dwayne Allen WY7FD (wy7fd@arrl.org).

This month's Tech Tip is offered by Vice-Director Dwayne Allen WY7FD:

The Hamfest season for 2009 is ramping up. Hams are dusting off old treasures and getting them ready to find new shacks in which to reside. Most Hams will at some time or another will purchase an item at a bargain from a swap table. For the most part these items will work as presented. Years ago, I bought a power supply from a table one of the many hamfests I have attended through the years.

This power supply worked flawlessly for about 15 years. A few weeks ago, the current output fell to about half of what I needed. 15 years, I did get my money's worth. Being the penny pinching Ham I have become of late, I started repairs on the power supply.

First I unplugged it from the 120 VAC outlet. Then I removed the cover and saw that it had a substantial filter capacitor. I thought I should discharge the capacitor. I wanted to remove the AC supply fuse before doing this. I don't know why, I just did.

This is the point where I got an earth-shattering eye-opener. The fuse that had been working so well for the last 15 plus years was a piece of number 6 gauge copper wire. That's right; there was no protection for the primary side of the power supply at all.

I think that a bargain is a great way to stock your shack. But, this one could have cost a whole bunch more. Failure to buy an item that only cost 59 cents brand new could have caused major damage to my home and cost many times more than what I saved.

So, when we purchase these great deals we should check out the simple things first. Checking to make sure the fuses are the proper ones is far too simple. To procrastinate here could be disastrous. If you are selling an item, make sure you aren't passing along a fire trap. Fuses are not too expensive.

Have fun with your hobby and be safe!

===== Upcoming hamfests, tailgates & conventions =====

April 25 Utah ARRL State Convention (South Ogden, UT)
April 25 Central New Mexico Spring Tailgate (Albuquerque, NM)

April 26 Mesilla Valley ARC Beanfeed (Las Cruces, NM)
May 22-24 Wyoming ARRL State Convention (Casper, WY)
May 29-31 2009 Rocky Mountain Division Convention (Estes Park, CO)
July 18 Pikes Peak Radio Amateur Association Megafest (Monument, CO)
August 14-15 Duke City Hamfest (Albuquerque, NM)
August 16 Denver Radio Club Hamfest (Golden, CO)
September 25 Alamogordo Hamfest (Alamogordo, NM)

Links to websites belonging to the above events are found on the Rocky Mountain Division site:
www.RockyMountainDivision.org

If you're organizing a Hamfest, convention or tailgate, please consider having your event ARRL-sanctioned. Sanctioning details can be found at <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/hamfests/>

===== Upcoming on-air activities =====

In addition to chewing the rag with fellow hams, here are some additional on-air activities which await you on the airwaves.

Upcoming special event stations: <http://www.arrl.org/contests/spev.html>
Upcoming contests: <http://www.arrl.org/contests/calendar.html>
Operating awards: <http://www.arrl.org/awards/>

===== Final note... =====

Please touch base with your Section Manager if he can be of assistance to you:

Jeff Ryan K0RM (Colorado): <http://www.arrl.org/sections/?sect=CO>
Don Wood W5FHA (New Mexico): <http://www.arrl.org/sections/?sect=NM>
Mel Parkes NM7P (Utah): <http://www.arrl.org/sections/?sect=UT>
Garth Crowe N7XKT (Wyoming): <http://www.arrl.org/sections/?sect=WY>

Vice Director Dwayne Allen and I continue to welcome your concerns, questions or ideas regarding ARRL policies. See you on the airwaves!

73,
Brian Milesosky N5ZGT, Rocky Mountain Division Director
Dwayne Allen WY7FD, Rocky Mountain Division Vice-Director
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