

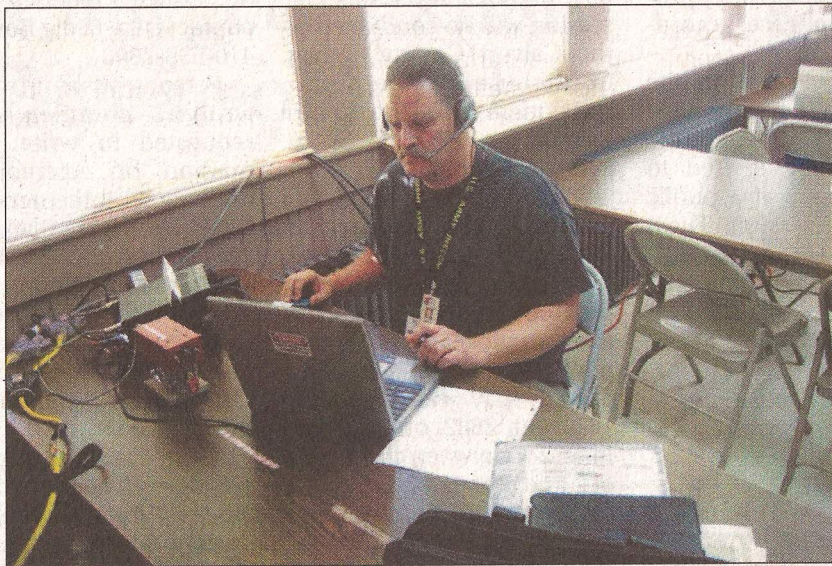
Amateur radio field day to be held at marine museum

By **KATIE FITZPATRICK**
Staff writer

County residents can learn how members of the Calvert Amateur Radio Association provide communication during emergencies June 22 and 23 at the National Field Day for Amateur Radio.

From 3 to 8 p.m. this Saturday and from 8 a.m. to noon Sunday, the association will have its equipment set up at the Calvert Marine Museum for anyone interested in learning about amateur radio and how it can be of use in times of emergency.

David Weaver, president of the association, said the public is invited to see how “the hams,” or amateur radio operators, set up equipment in emergency situations. The event will be an “emergency practice test,” he said, and the public will be able to see how the hams run their equipment off emergency power and how they are able to communicate with



Submitted photo

David Moore of North Beach participates in last year's Calvert Amateur Radio Association's Field Day. CARA will host another field day event this weekend at the Calvert Marine Museum.

other radio operators throughout the U.S. and Canada.

CARA member John McCall

said the field day is the association's “big public expo” to show people ham radio is “still alive

and well in the 21st century,” and that it still remains the only reliable means of communication in emergencies.

“We’ve proved it in the ‘Snowmageddon,’” McCall said, referencing the large snowstorm that fell on Southern Maryland in February 2010.

During that storm, the Drum Point community, where McCall lives, was “out of communication for about four days, and the only way we could communicate with anyone was through” ham radio, McCall said.

Weaver said CARA has existed since 1954 and has always been available for the county to use as “a backup to their communications” during severe weather when electricity is lost. In the past year, according to a press release from the association, hams have helped with their work in wildfires, floods, storms, tornados and other crises.

“When electricity goes out, we

still have the ability to [communicate] over our radios,” Weaver said.

Since the field day is part of a national event, about 30,000 operators will be “up and running” that weekend, Weaver said. He said CARA hams will be establishing communication with them and testing their preparedness for emergencies.

“If [people] have any interest in radio or communications at all, they should come by and see what we’re all about,” Weaver said.

McCall said some of his favorite things about ham radio are the challenge of seeing how many different places around the world he can communicate with and also that radio operators provide a service.

McCall said in previous years, turnout at the field day has depended on weather, but he’s hoping for a good crowd this year.

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