

# Hamming It Up On the Radio

By Annie Piekarczyk / STAFF

To “hams” like Jim Stafford, amateur radio is no different than using a telephone to call someone in another state or another country. Instead of “I’ll call you tomorrow at 7 o’clock,” it’s “Let’s meet on this frequency tomorrow at 7.”

Amateur radio, widely known as ham radio, is one of many ways people communicate across states, countries and the world. Radio controllers, called “hams,” use different modes of radio communication equipment to communicate with other “hams.” Sometimes it’s just a hobby or used for recreation, and other times it’s used for public service.

On Saturday, June 27th, you can see for yourself what ham radio has to offer. The North Fulton Amateur Radio League, which serves Roswell, Alpharetta, Johns Creek, Sandy Springs, Milton and all of North Atlanta, will be showcasing what amateur radio is all about. The NFARL will be hosting their annual Field Day, a 24-hour event held at

the Waller Park Extension, during which radio controllers will be available to assist anyone who is interested in learning more about amateur radio and how it works. It begins at 2:00 p.m. Saturday and runs until 2:00 p.m. Sunday.

The purposes of the NFARL club include furthering amateur radio as a hobby, being a social club and providing forms of emergency services to the community. In 2006, the NFARL had a dwindling membership of about 6-10 people in attendance for their monthly “meetings,” which used to be just dinners. In a matter of years, the NFARL grew exponentially and now has over 260 active members participating in monthly meetings, which are now no longer just dinners, but educational presentations and lectures.

Ian Kahn, 2009 Field Day Chairman for the North Fulton Amateur Radio League, said Field Day has a three-fold purpose. One is for it to be an emergency preparedness drill, and as such, all the radios will be operated using generators,

batteries and solar power. Two, it’s a chance for the NFARL to publicly demonstrate their skills. Kahn said it’s the NFARL’s chance to educate people about amateur radio. “They can touch the equipment, see it and act on it. It’s a lot of fun for us as controllers to teach [the community] what we’re doing.” he said. And lastly, Kahn said it was a chance for NFARL radio controllers to sharpen their skills and approve their ability to set up equipment efficiently and safely for the public.

Even though Field Day will be a 24-hour ongoing event, the entire week of June 22nd – 28th will be Amateur Radio Week, as proclaimed by Roswell’s Mayor Jere Wood.

While ham radio has a lot to offer the community as far as public service goes, what intrigues most “hams,” including Kahn, is the ability to communicate with people across the world. Kahn has personally communicated with someone as far away as New Zealand – his furthest reach, but also admits that there are local radio controllers who communicate cross-country on a regular basis. “We

have members in our club who have spoken to people on every continent, and just about every country in the world,” he said.

Morse code used to be the primary means of communication, but technology has advanced amateur radio so far that talking over the air is no longer much different than talking on the phone. However, Stafford, an amateur radio operator of 50 years and member of NFARL, still prefers morse code and uses it pretty significantly.

At last year’s Field Day, the NFARL scored in the top five percent nationally for contacting people outside of the country and in other parts of the world. In terms of the number of people who showed up at last year’s Field Day to learn more about amateur radio, the NFARL came in second place in the nation.

To see how amateur radio works or to get some first-hand experience with it, check out Field Day. Everyone is encouraged to go. The NFARL also has monthly meetings that can be found on their website at: [www.nfarl.org](http://www.nfarl.org).



Patrick Adamson  
Owner, Adamson Construction



## WINDOWS NEED REPLACING?

COMPARE THE QUALITY THAT IS STANDARD WITH ADAMSON WINDOWS \* ALL QUALIFY FOR ENERGY TAX CREDITS AND ARE INSTALLED BY ADAMSON CONSTRUCTION

**LOW OVERHEAD  
ALLOWS PATRICK ADAMSON TO PASS  
THE SAVINGS ON TO HOME OWNERS:**

- No Salesmen = No Commissions
- No Huge Showroom
- Almost Zero Advertising - 90% of Business From Referrals by Satisfied Home Owners!
- No Celebrity Endorsements
- Volume purchase power through Alside

Helping to lower costs for families in your neighborhood:

RIVER TERRACE • CHICKERING • FOX HALL  
LAURIEN PARK • OXFORD MILLS • MICHAEL'S POND  
KIMBAL BRIDGE CROSSING • WILLOW SPRINGS HANES  
LANDING • BROOKFIELD WEST • SUMMERFIELD

For a Free Consultation  
404-259-5138 or email  
[patrickadamson@comcast.net](mailto:patrickadamson@comcast.net)



Photo by Jonathan Copsey/STAFF

The North Fulton Amateur Radio League receives a proclamation from Roswell’s mayor and council. Pictured (l-r) members of the NFARL, Ian Kahn (in blue), Mayor Jere Wood and Councilwoman Becky Wynn.