

MARS is getting ready for ARRL Field Day, June 22–23, and there’s plenty to do. This year we will be operating from [Farmers Branch Fire Station № 2](#). This location has both inside and outside operating possibilities. If you have a pop-up canopy, you could operate on the patio if the weather’s nice.

We plan to operate class 3A. We’ll have two 100W HF stations, a QRP HF station, a “Get On The Air” (GOTA) station, a VHF / UHF station, and a Winlink® station. We could substitute the QRP station with another 100W station if someone could volunteer to set one up. Otherwise, the challenge has been made: Can the QRP Station make more contacts than a 100W Station?

We have a bunch of antenna options but haven’t made all the decisions yet. We’ll be using a combination of vertical and wire antennas. We need someone to manage the antenna farm.

Andy Smolenski, KI5YLX, has volunteered to be our chef. Contact Andy if you’d be willing to help. There will be a meal signup sheet on the website in June.

And we need volunteer department heads. **Feel free to wear more than one hat:**

- **Antenna Farm Lead** is responsible for organizing the antenna farm.
- **Light Pole Wrangler** (see below).
- **Operating Room Lead** organizes the operating room.
- **Band Coordinator** makes sure we don’t have two rigs on the same band at the same time, we stay within the 3A classification, and that antennas and filters are appropriately used.
- **Field Day Rules Specialist** is thoroughly familiar with the rules and be available to answer questions.
- **RF Exposure and RF Safety Specialist** will review the antenna site plan, do the math, run the models, and keep us safe from evil RF.
- **Safety Officer** keeps a watchful eye for possible hazards and fills out the Safety Checklist.
- **Deputy Safety Officer** watches out for safe operations when the Safety Officer isn’t.
- **Scoring Champion and Bonus Points Lead** makes sure we get all the bonus points we can, compiles the log, and makes the online report to ARRL.
- **Station Lead** brings another 100W HF station.
- **GOTA Station Lead** is responsible for the GOTA Station operations and recruits GOTA coaches.
- **GOTA Coaches** are experienced hams who coach new or returning hams in operating the GOTA station.
- **VIP Tour Guide** is an enthusiastic ham that will show off ham radio to guests and get them on the air at one of the stations.
- **Messaging Bonus Points Lead** will send out radiograms using Winlink®. We will have a Winlink station but maybe you’d like to bring your own VHF rig and get it set up for radio email. This is a great opportunity for you to get hands on experience using Winlink.

Let me know if:

- You would like to bring your own rig.
- You would be willing to champion a satellite station.
- You would like to lead the educational activity.
- You would like to champion the *Dummy Load Challenge*.

The fire station has a large open field for antennas and we’ll need volunteers help set up masts and guy wires. There are some trees that could be used for wire antennas. There is also a pair of light poles about 50 feet apart just asking to be used to support a 20-15-10 fan dipole. So we’ll need a **Light Pole Wrangler** with a good throwing arm, sling shot, or potato launcher to lasso the top of these poles.



MARS 2024 Field Day Plans — May 1, 2024



We're open to topics for this year's educational activity. If we don't get a suggestion, we're going to learn about fan dipoles. We've read about them but you may have never set one up. Saturday morning we'll talk about what it is then build and install one during the antenna setup time. We'll sweep it with an analyzer and see what how well it works. In the afternoon, we'll put it on the air with the multiplexer and 3 HF rigs to see how well it keeps the promise. Let me know if you'd like to lead this educational activity or have a suggestion for a different topic.

What's the *Dummy Load Challenge*? It's not in the rules. We're going to get on 160m using a dummy load and see how many contacts we can make. The **Dallas Amateur Radio Club's** site is about one mile down the road. We'll invite Irving, Plano, and Richardson to participate as well. Will it work? We need someone to lead the Challenge. We'll start with 160m for the first contact then run up the bands with the other stations to see how many bands we can use to make a dummy load contact. This might be good for a soapbox article to send to ARRL.

We need a coax run of at least 200 feet from the radio room to an antenna in the field. Some hams have already volunteered to bring coax, but if you're willing to bring 50- or 100-foot runs of good quality coax with PL-259s, please let me know.

If you have an 8-foot ground rod you'd be willing to donate for a semi-permanent installation at the fire station, let me know. Okay, it'll be permanent unless you want to pull it back out of the ground. An 8-foot length of half-inch leaky copper pipe is good as long as we can sink it into the ground. We can install the ground rod on Friday afternoon.

If you have suggestions, questions or wish to volunteer please send me an email, FieldDay@KB5A.org. We also talk about Field Day at Hams and Eggs every Saturday morning at the [Whataburger at 190 and Old Denton](#).

—73 **Ron Reeves, NN5R**, Field Day Marshal