



Daniel Romanchik, former ARROW president, during amateur radio field day at 801 Airport Dr. on the Airport Soccer Fields, on Saturday, June 27, 2026. Khalil-Lullah Ballentine

Ham radio is a colloquial name used for amateur radio.

Both Forgacs and Romanchik have nurtured their interests in radio from a very young age. Forgacs was 13 when he first got his license and Romanchik was younger than 10 when he first began.

Another goal of these field days is to encourage people to pick up the trade. Romanchik has taught thousands of people as a licensed amateur radio instructor, which he said is a way to guarantee new members.

Once the 24 hours end, ARROW members will pack their radios and antennas into their cars and head home where they continue to enjoy their craft.

“It’s really a hobby of hobbies,” Forgacs said. “We all nerd out about a lot of that stuff.”



Photos from ARROW's amateur radio field day set up at 801 Airport Dr. on the Airport Soccer Fields, on Saturday, June 27, 2026. Khalil-Lullah Ballentine

While the club has been around since the early 1970s, it wasn't until more recently that it was as active as it is today.

Daniel Romanchik, 71, a former president and radio teacher, moved to Ann Arbor and started a revival effort with a friend around 2000. The club then began rebuilding its identity.

"We talked about ham radio one day, we talked about getting it back, getting it going again, and we were successful," Romanchik said.



Photos from ARROW's amateur radio field day set up at 801 Airport Dr. on the Airport Soccer Fields, on Saturday, June 27, 2026. Khalil-Lullah Ballentine

“No matter what’s going on with the public infrastructure and everything else, we can still communicate for everyone,” Forgacs said.

“We don’t need anything else, that’s what amateur radio is used for a lot,” he added.

ARROW has worked to promote amateur radio activities across Washtenaw County since 1972.

In addition to field days, the club offers classes for gaining amateur radio licenses, holds meetings for members to practice their skills and assists local groups by providing emergency and public service communications.



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ARROW also happens to be a top performer in this national event, consistently ranking as a top 20 performer over the last few years.

Performances are based on a grading scale created by the ARRL, which adds an incentive for club participation. Last year, the club finished 25th out of more than 30,000 submissions.

The greater motivators for Forgacs and many ARROW members stems from an interest in exploration, technology and practicing how to keep communication lines open in the event of emergencies.



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The field day is promoted by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), and the mission is to establish as many contacts via radio waves as possible. It is a competition involving over 30,000 clubs nationwide, according to the ARRL.

“Our radios hear on this site with antennas on this site, to around the U.S., or even we’re hearing some people out of Europe,” said James Forgacs, 44, ARROW’s president and Saline resident.

This weekend in particular looked good according to Forgacs, because of the weather and flow of the radio waves.

From 2 p.m. Saturday Jun 27, until 2 p.m. Sunday June 28, operators with the ARROW club participated in a 24-hour marathon near the  fields by Ann Arbor Municipal Airport, 801 Airport Drive.

More information can be found on their [website](#).



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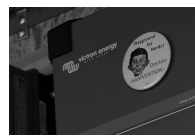
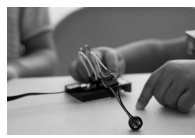
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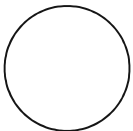
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Washtenaw County amateur radio club, ARROW, during the annual amateur radio field day at 801 Airport Dr. in Ann Arbor, near Ann Arbor Municipal Airport on Saturday, June 27, 2026.



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