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I am working with the Yuma Amateur Radio Hamfest Organization (YARHO) to reconstruct the Yuma Hamfest and ARRL Southwestern DIVISION Convention. We are trying to replicate as much of the previous events as they were, and also improve facilities and events, particularly for RVers. I am also helping coordinate the QUARTZFEST weeklong RV ARRL Convention, and integrate activities between these two events.

The fairgrounds have undergone a significant renovation, with new facilities, and even better locations for RVs, including a real RV Park with full hookups, and a new Convention Hall and huge new paved parking facilities. If we can get enough participation in the 2025 Hamfest we could afford to book the new facilities in 2026 and 2027. Meanwhile, in 2025 we will be using a large new RV parking area, with lots of room to accommodate Towed vehicles alongside, as well as lots of room for slideouts and Tailgating booths right alongside the rigs. The RV lot access road will be a new entry route as shown on the attached overview slide. We also are planning a RVers Pot Luck for Friday night right among the rigs like we used to have in previous Yuma Hamfests. As before, there will be limited power for running radios and tailgating demos, and things like ventilators and CPAP devices, but not for powering-up rigs. Many RVs have already added Solar systems with inverters to sustain dry camping, and small generators. I have added the RV Groups to our newsletter email list, and soon we should have the website running for all to access. If there are questions or concerns, go ahead and send them to me for now. (Yes, I will be there in my Southwind with my Jeep as a toad).

This newsletter tracks the progress of the 2025 YUMA Hamfest/Convention until the Web Pages are updated, which should be soon.

Jeanne (KC7GRP) , and I travelled to YUMA on August 18th and had dinner with the YARHO Hamfest organization leadership (Jeff Weeks, (W7JLW), Tom (WB7OUT), and John Ham (NORHZ). We outlined the plan for Monday's meeting at the Yuma Fairgrounds with Fairgrounds Management, and what we expected to achieve by Monday Afternoon.

At the Fairgrounds on Monday, our team joined the Fairgrounds Commission and our new volunteer leader of the YARHO-sponsored event, Paul Curtis (KK7NWZ). We first defined the goals for the meeting and re-stated our intent to reconstruct the Hamfest/Convention and develop the event across the next three years and beyond. We reaffirmed the Fairground Commissions' rates for the event, and also for some options and alternate opportunities. We reconfirmed the dates for 2025, 2026, and 2027 and discovered in reality that the available weekends were always the 3rd weekend of February. This makes the dates for upcoming Hamfests: 21/22 Feb. in 2025, 20/21 Feb. in 2026, and 19/20 Feb. in 2027. We then confirmed these dates with the Manager as our selections. We discussed the terms and conditions and discovered they were the same or similar to previous Yuma Hamfests, but several changes in the Fairgrounds layout and facilities needed to be addressed.

We walked around the Fairgrounds and reviewed the changes that have been made to the facilities which were substantial, but generally to our benefit. For next year's event the parking layout has changed. We will be using a new very large grass parking area to the North-East of the Fairgrounds, which is all smooth grass with individual lanes for vehicles and RVs to park side by side. Access to this lot will be from a new road from the North, which should simplify the RV and Camper's access and egress. Much of the area East of the main (Theater) building has been reduced to a Grassy field, which will be used for Tailgating Sales. The smaller tent and camping facilities to the North of the Tailgating area remain the same, and will also accommodate Tailgating like before.

Two new additional sites in the original location have been identified for use for meetings and presentations. They have facilities and can accommodate Screens and Projectors. The food concessions are planned to be operated by the Scouts, and we will arrange for them to provide similar foods and beverages as the previous concessionaires did.

One of the most remarkable revelations was that the Spectacular brand-new Convention Hall is FINISHED ! This along with its brand new huge paved and lit parking lot, and adjacent lots, which they are right now equipping with RV Camping facilities (Full Hookups) as well as another large fenced grassy field adjacent to it, that would make a great overflow Tailgating area. These facilities we will not be using this coming year, but we are working with the Fairgrounds commission to transition to these facilities in the future. All-in-all the meetings were a terrific success, and we have begun the process of opening up the Websites, meetings, and Zoom Sessions that are coming soon.

We are working on the activities, including the Saturday Night Dinner which will be the same "Famous Dave's" Brisket fare, and the evening event will be more formal, with our Master Of Ceremonies, Gordon West (WB6NOA), and as guests of honor, our own Congresswoman Debbie Lesko and her husband Joe Lesko (W2SSH) who are members of the West Valley ARC here in Maricopa County, and who have done so much Nationally to publicize Amateur Radio and further our cause.



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