

For Immediate Release
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Fort Myers Amateur Radio Club Brings History to Life for National Train Day 2026

FORT MYERS, FL – April 8, 2026 - As the nation prepares to celebrate **National Train Day on Saturday, May 9, 2026**, the Fort Myers Amateur Radio Club (FMARC) is gearing up for a high-tech (and high-heritage) celebration at the Railroad Museum of South Florida.

Marking the occasion, the club will be on-site and on the airwaves, transmitting in Morse code—a direct homage to the historic role of telegraphy in railway operations.

Where History Meets the Airwaves

National Train Day is observed annually on the Saturday closest to May 10, tracing its origins to 2008 when Amtrak introduced the holiday to highlight the significance of railways in American history. This year's collaboration between FMARC and the Railroad Museum of South Florida showcases the fascinating intersection of vintage and modern communication.

Event Details:

- **Date:** Saturday, May 9, 2026
- **Time:** 10:00 AM – 3:30 PM
- **Location:** Railroad Museum of South Florida, Lakes Park, 7330 Gladiolus Dr, Fort Myers, FL 33907

Attendees will have the opportunity to explore the rich history of the Railroad Museum while witnessing Morse code (CW) transmissions reminiscent of the telegraph's heyday. Licensed operators will also demonstrate modern voice and digital communication options.

Honoring the Pioneers of Communication

The event serves as a tribute to the innovators who made rail travel safe and efficient. While Samuel Morse developed the telegraph, **Granville Woods** invented "railway telegraphy" (the induction telegraph), which revolutionized the industry.

"Woods' system allowed messages to pass between moving trains and stations without direct electrical contact, using induction from existing lines. This innovation was a precursor to the wireless technologies we use today," noted the club.

"The telegraph was once the lifeline of railways, facilitating the smooth operation of train arrivals and departures," said **Bob Lewis, Past President of the Fort Myers Amateur Radio Club**. "Today, Amateur Radio serves a similar purpose, especially during emergencies when conventional communication systems fail."

Beyond the "dots and dashes," visitors will see:

- **Vintage Hardware:** Actual telegraph keys used over 100 years ago by railroad telegraphers.
- **Historical Literature:** A rare 1908 edition of *The Telegraph Instructor* by G.M. Dodge.
- **Global Connectivity:** Watch as "Hams" communicate with other operators across the globe in real-time.

This event commemorates the driving of the **Golden Spike** at Promontory Summit, Utah, on May 10, 1869, which marked the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in the U.S.

About the Fort Myers Amateur Radio Club (FMARC)

Established in 1957, FMARC is dedicated to fostering camaraderie, promoting electronics knowledge, and providing crucial public service during emergencies. An affiliate of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), the club meets at 7:00 PM on the last Tuesday of each month at the Lee County Emergency Operations Center.

For more information:

- **Amateur Radio & FMARC:** Visit www.fmarc.net
- **Railroad Museum of South Florida:** Visit rmsf.org

Image attached:

Step back in time at the **Railroad Museum of South Florida**, where the crackle of the airwaves meets the rumble of the rails.

As part of **National Train Day 2025** in Fort Myers, amateur radio enthusiast **Frank Richards (KB4VU)** brought history to life. This isn't just a display; it's a hands-on journey into the "original social network." Frank demonstrated the vintage communication methods that once kept the heavy iron moving, bridging the gap between the telegraph era and the digital age.



Photo by the Fort Myers Amateur Radio Club, Inc.