



Military
Heritage
Museum

900 West Marion, Punta Gorda, Florida 33950 | 941.575.9002
www.militaryheritagemuseum.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 12, 2024

Contact: Debby Steele, Marketing Coordinator
Email: dsteele@militaryheritagemuseum.org
Museum: 941.575.9002
Cell: 941.628.4121
Website: www.militaryheritagemuseum.org

Military Heritage Museum Receives \$61,115 Grant

Punta Gorda, Florida – January 12, 2024: Amateur Radio Digital Communications (ARDC), a private foundation that exists to support amateur radio and digital communication science and technology has awarded the Military Heritage Museum an education focused grant of \$61,115. ARDC makes grants that align with its mission to support amateur radio and digital communication science and technology. In addition to aligning with its mission, the project must align with at least one of their [grantmaking categories](#): Support and growth of amateur radio, Education, and Research and Development.

The title of the Museum’s winning grant is “Amateur Radio: Past, Present, and Future”. The project’s purpose is to educate the public on the history of amateur radio, including the long collaborative history of Ham Radio and the U.S. Military, especially with the Army Signal Corps. The project scope includes an understanding of the status of Amateur Radio today, with a goal to connect with visitors interested in learning more about this important part of communication history and its current applications. The scope includes conversations on the future of amateur radio and its projected impact on society. The project has three intersecting deliverables: an interactive, mobile exhibit that can be used both inside and outside the Museum walls; eight education-based and age-specific lesson plans, including hands-on activities; and the necessary communications equipment that will be supportive and aligned with the overall project theme and objectives. Target audience is Museum visitors who range from youth to adult seniors, and students in grades 3-12.

ARDC Executive Director Rosy Schechter, KJ7RYV shared her thoughts on selecting the Military Heritage Museum *“Museums are important for educating communities, and we are proud to support the Military Heritage Museum’s efforts in enhancing their amateur radio exhibit. This exhibit not only introduces visitors to the amateur radio hobby but also demonstrates its significant applications in both the military and civilian sectors. We look forward to seeing the continued success of this group and the positive impact that they will have on their community”.*

When the project is completed, visitors to the Museum will discover a permanent static exhibit that provides a historical time frame of the evolution of Amateur Radio, including the intersection between civilian and military applications. The Amateur Radio exhibit includes multiple interpretive artifacts, from the Civil War era to current state of the art equipment, each of which includes written dialogue on their usage. Theme based panels define the exhibit’s space, with each one utilizing graphics and photos aligned to the theme. Examples of themes include History of the Army Signal Corps, Pioneers of Amateur Radio, HAM Radio – How Does it Work, Getting your HAM Radio License, Public Service and Emergency Communications, Ham Radio and STEM, Military Auxiliary Radio System, Radio Technology and Experimentation.

From the early use of telegraphs to modern HAM radio equipment capabilities, students will learn all about the evolution of communications. Especially the impact of wireless technology, not only by the military, but also in everyday life. Whether it’s the school field trips to the Military Heritage Museum, the Saturday mini-camps, or the 5-week day camp, the Amateur Radio exhibit experience should be the highlight of their museum adventure. Don Kumpost, Ham Radio museum volunteer shared his experience developing the program "I especially enjoy working with young visitors to the museum, helping to pique their interest in communication technology and hoping they continue to learn how it works, as they will be the ones who go on to develop the new, future technologies."

The Military Heritage Museum Amateur Radio Club (MHM-ARC), call sign W7MHM, was created in 2022 by a group of both veteran and non-veteran volunteers focused on developing and coordinating the amateur radio experience. The club has been utilizing donated and borrowed equipment to support this mission. Funds from the grant will allow the club to purchase new equipment that will expand the capabilities to allow multiple modes of communications on almost all amateur radio bands, offering museum visitors an opportunity to listen and talk to amateur radio operators around the world via voice, morse code, and digital communications. Gus Hawkins, one of the radio club founders and W7MHM Station Trustee said that the station, and the new equipment we will be acquiring, will “allow us to better serve the Museum and its public by providing state-of-the-art communication opportunities. Opportunities for community service, public education, and just plain fun will significantly increase. We hope to make the station a true resource for emergency communications."

For further information visit www.militaryheritagemuseum.org or call 941.575.9002.

###