

Field Day 2026

N6FRG

Calaveras Amateur Radio Society

Field day 2026 had arrived. It was the event of the year. It was America's 250th birthday under a crystal clear, blue sky. Old Glory was fluttering proudly in the breeze atop a 25-foot mast. A steady breeze annoyed anything paper. It was a perfect 75-degree day in sunny Angels Camp, California and perfect for operating.

Anticipation of full log sheets was high. A large banner was on the fence to grab the attention of passersby. HF, VHF, and GMRS stations were neatly displayed and powered up. Antennas were tuned and ready to "let their Hertz out." CARS was at the starting gate.

Walt – W6WGY, had raised our nation's flag high. His display included solar-battery power, a VHF, UHF, GMRS and FRS display complete with a mobile unit, HT's, handouts, signage and, my favorite – QST magazines from the 1960's – on display.

Michael – N6AXQ and his wife, Dee – KM6ELF, set up their battery-powered VHF and HF stations that included a skilled QRP backup operator, Sadie – "WW6PUP." She patiently remained stationed by her chaise and blanket .

Mark – N6IV came totally prepared for hot weather. A fan with a generator; battery backup for the rig rounded out his station. A truck-mounted mast supported an 80 –10m Doublet with 300-ohm twinlead connected to his Kenwood. His twinlead feedline had a unique in-line common mode choke around it to reduce ground effects.

El Presidente Steve – W6RXK and Mike – KB6USJ moved among the operating positions as ancillary operators and "go-fers."

Everything was ready, the clock was ticking and Dave – AD6AE was taking photos.

As 11:00 am approached, everything was checked and double-checked. What could possibly be missing?

Short answer – propagation! The ionosphere was an RF sponge, absorbing signals instead of reflecting them. The waves went out but failed to return. Except for a handful of contacts, the bands were nothing but static and white noise. It comes with the territory. The old phrase, "If ya' can't hear'em, you can't work 'em," rang clear. *Field Day 2026 was a bust.*

Maybe next year.

P.S. Barry – KO6FOB unfortunately could not make it.
73s

Dave
AD6AE



Mike – KB6USJ & Mike N6AXQ



W6WGY & N6AXQ Positions



Walt – W6WGY



Walt – W6WGY Display



"W6WGY Presents"



Mark – N6IV Station



Mark – N6IV Up goes the Mast



Dee – KM6ELF VHF



Mike – N6AXQ HF



Steve – W6RXK & Mike – KB6USJ HF



Steve – W6RXK & Mark – N6IV HF



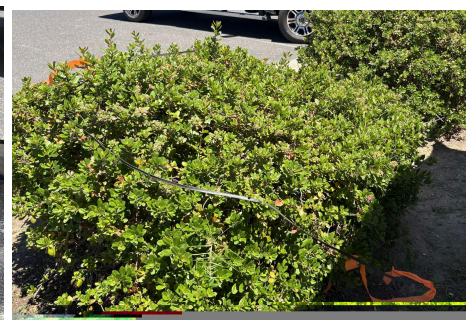
Mike – KB6USJ



Mike – KB6USJ & Visitor



Sadie – “WW6PUP” QRP



Mark – N6IV's CM Choke