A Call From The Mountain

January 2020

Welcome to *A Call From The Mountain,* the official newsletter of the Overlook Mountain Amateur Radio Club.

My wife Lucille and I want to wish everyone a very Happy New Year and hope you enjoy the first edition for 2020!! We were striving for a monthly newsletter, but believe it or not, retirement is much busier than anticipated!! We may do bi-monthly, or even quarterly, depending upon the happenings in our household. We very much appreciate your feedback and welcome your submissions.

It was good to see all of you at our first meeting of the year at the Woodstock Ambulance Company on January 14th and it's always good to see new faces! With that in mind, please note the following information on our new meeting time, dates and location.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

MEETING TIME, DATE & LOCATION CHANGE:

Our new president Dave Brooks secured a new meeting location until further notice. In order to accommodate our club, we had to change the meeting day and time.

Date: **Third (3rd) Wednesday**
Time: **6 p.m. to 8 p.m.**
Location: **Kingston Library Community Room – 2nd Floor**
55 Franklin Street, Kingston, NY 12401

Schedule change as follows:

2020			
2/19/2020	5/20/2020	8/19/2020	11/18/2020
3/18/2020	6/17/2020	9/16/2020	12/16/2020
4/15/2020	7/15/2020	10/14/2020	

Please note, you will be notified of any change to this schedule by OMARC email and on the OMARC net.

We are hoping to have presentations more often at our monthly meetings. Past topics have included DMR, project demonstrations, various RPi topics, antenna designs, and trip reports from emergency activations. If you have an idea for a presentation you'd like to do (or like to see) contact David Millman KD2MQE at kd2mqe@yahoo.com

NATIONAL AMATEUR RADIO WINTER FIELD DAY

National Amateur Radio Winter Field Day Exercise is coming up on Saturday, January 25 and Sunday, January 26, 2020. It is our third year at **Ferncliff Forest, 68 Mt Rutsen Rd, Rhinebeck, New York.** Signs will be posted along the highway. We need operators to cover the radios overnight, and set up begins at 9 a.m. Saturday morning. Tear down will begin on Sunday at 11 a.m. Invite your friends! Bring warm clothes!

"We are excited to be back at Ferncliff Forest for our third year," said OMARC President William Brooks. "It's an opportunity for local hams to organize long-distance emergency communications under more difficult weather conditions. Ferncliff Forest is also a great place to meet and talk with neighbors about how this volunteer work helps our community preparedness."

This is a great opportunity for local hams to organize long-distance emergency communications under more difficult weather conditions; Ferncliff Forest is also a great place to meet and talk with neighbors about how this volunteer work helps our community preparedness.

There are over 725,000 licensed hams in the United States, as young as 5 and as old as 100. Over 35,000 people from thousands of locations will participate in Winter Field Day in 2020. Be a part of something big!

ELECTION RESULTS

President	Dave Brooks K2JLV
Vice President	Alan Greczynski KD2LHX
Secretary	George Hucker K2KMM
Treasurer	Frank Fiore KD2EYH
Director	Charles Henry KD2BID

Congratulations on your new positions!

Email Dave Brooks k2jlv@arrl.net for more information or questions.

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Hello OMARC Members,

I would like to invite you all to participate in Thursday Night Net at 8pm on our 805 repeater. I hope to hear you on the air for what is always a lively discussion.

Best regards,

Dave Brooks, K2JLV

OMARC member WB2QEI has become silent key

I am sad to report that Ellsworth L. Johnson, WB2QEI a member of OMARC became a silent key at 92 years old. Career wise, he was an IBMer, based out of Kingston, NY. Among his many accomplishments at IBM, he received an inventor's award and was awarded several patents. He also served with the Merchant Marines during WW2, and the US Army in the Korean War, and worked full time at a local radio station while he was in school. He was remembered at the January meeting by the membership. Condolences go out to his surviving family and friends.

ARRL News

The AARL.org website has a lot of great detailed information. Here are a couple of items of interest:

ARRL—The national association for AMATEUR RADIO™
225 Main Street
Newington, Connecticut 06111 -1494 USA
860-594-0200
www.arrl.org

ARRL On the Air podcast premieres on January 16

ARRL's new **On the Air** podcast for those just getting started on their amateur radio journey, will debut this Thursday, January 16, with a new podcast posted each month.

The podcast is a companion to the new bimonthly On the Air magazine, which is already on its way to member subscribers. On the Air magazine editor Becky Schoenfeld, W1BXY, will be the host of the new podcast. Both the podcast and the magazine are aimed at offering new and beginner-to-intermediate-level radio amateurs a fresh approach to exploring radio communication.

Read more about the podcast here: http://www.arrl.org/news/arrl-on-the-air-podcast-premieres-on-january-16

Texas Scout Leaders Promote Amateur Radio as a Communication Resource

12/31/2019

In 2017, Category 4 Hurricane Harvey left the region of Texas where Assistant Scoutmaster Scott deMasi, KC5NKW, lived under water. With roads flooded, bridges washed away, and cellular service and power out, deMasi said it soon became clear that his Scout troop's emergency preparedness plan wasn't designed for a storm of this magnitude. It was frustrating, deMasi says, to discover he couldn't reliably reach all of Troop 839's 100 Scouts and their families to check if they were okay or to organize relief efforts as a unit. Something had to be done.

After the waters receded, deMasi and Assistant Scoutmaster David Godell came up with a plan that would not leave the troop incommunicado after a major weather disaster. With 15 years' experience as a radio amateur, deMasi suggested encouraging Scouts and parents trained to become ham radio licensees.

“It’s a lifesaving skill, and it helps us to be prepared,” Godell said. (“Be Prepared” is the Boy Scouts motto.)

An initial interest meeting was set, and Scouts were given links to study materials and offered transportation to examination sites, but participation was low. So, deMasi and Godell worked with a local radio club, the Texas Emergency Amateur Communicators, to organize a 1-day Technician licensing class that also would fulfill most requirements for Scouting’s Radio merit badge.

In addition, the two Assistant Scoutmasters bought inexpensive handheld radios that they programmed to frequencies the troop would use, so after the class, the Scouts would receive the equipment needed to continue using their new skills.

Armed with their radios, more than two dozen licensed Scouts and adults began utilizing their newly earned communication capability at Scouting events. During campouts, they radioed information to patrols across the camp. On these occasions, the troop practices a “no cell phone” policy; ham radio provided the means to stay in touch with others.

At service projects, they communicated directions to Scouts spread throughout a wide area. Having radios and opportunities to regularly use them gave the Scouts confidence to get on the air. Seeing licensed Scouts with their handheld radios also encouraged other Scouts to get licensed as well.

“Once the Scouts got radios, others wanted radios,” Godell said.

Some Troop 839 members participated in the annual Jamboree on the Air (JOTA), talking with other Scouts in several other states and in Central America.

“You could see eyes light up,” deMasi recalled. — Adapted from a Scouting Magazine ***blog post*** by Michael Freeman

Australian Bushfires Causing Major Telecommunication Outages, Hams on Duty

Wireless Institute of Australia (WIA) President Greg Kelly, VK2GPK, says the bushfires in Australia have caused significant disruption of telecommunication services in the states of Victoria and New South Wales. Radio amateurs are supporting relief operations and communication.

WICEN (Wireless Institute Civil Emergency Network) in New South Wales reports it has been active assisting in a number of multi-agency activities during the bushfire emergency, in its role as a support squad of the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA) operations center in Bega. WICEN teams in NSW and in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) have sent a team to Bega to help re-establish radio communication services, disrupted by fire activity.

WICEN and other VRA squads continue to support the Rural Fire Service (RFS) at various Fire Control Centers and the Bushfire Information Line. Other WICEN members remain active with the RFS and the State Emergency Service.

Kelley has asked radio amateurs in International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) Region 3 to monitor the emergency communications frequencies, per the IARU Region 3 band plan, whenever possible, as well as repeaters. "Amateurs seeking to establish emergency communication should use these EMCOMM frequencies in the first instance, or repeaters if available," he said in a statement posted on the IARU Region 3 website.

"Radio amateurs who are volunteers for [WICEN and other emergency communication organizations] should keep themselves updated," Kelley advised. "Emergency

communication is one of the main reasons radio amateurs have access to RF spectrum. Please assist if and when you can."

The IARU Region 3 emergency "center of activity" frequencies are 3.600, 7.110, 14.300, 18.160, and 21.360 MHz. These are not net frequencies, but they are recommended as starting points for emergency traffic, and activity may extend 5 kHz above or below the designated center frequency.

South of NSW in the state of Victoria, WICEN VIC reports that the amateur repeater network is largely off the air, possibly due to a lack of power. "Some sites may have been directly affected by fire," WICEN VIC said on January 4. "It could be some weeks until the sites can be reached for inspection."

ARISS Next-Generation Radio System Ready for Launch to Space Station

Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) reports that its first Interoperable Radio System (IORS) flight unit -- serial number 1001 -- has been delivered to NASA's Johnson Space Center for launch in early March. The IORS represents the first major upgrade in ARISS equipment on the International Space Station since Amateur Radio gained a permanent presence onboard the ISS in 2000. In December, ARISS received approval from NASA Safety to launch the IORS on SpaceX CRS-20 and stow the radio system on the ISS for future installation.

"The IORS is a foundational element of the ARISS next-generation radio system and is an incredible engineering achievement by the ARISS hardware team," ARISS International President Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, said. "This first element delivery will support easier radio mode transitions and enable new, exciting capabilities for hams, students, and the general public."

The new system includes a higher-power radio, an enhanced voice repeater, and updated digital packet radio (APRS) and slow-scan television (SSTV) capabilities for both the US and Russian space station segments. The IORS consists of a custom-modified JVC Kenwood TM-D710GA transceiver, an AMSAT-developed multi-voltage power supply, and interconnecting cables.

The IORS set to launch in March will be installed in the ISS *Columbus* module; a second flight unit is expected to be launched later this year for installation in the Russian *Service* module. The ARISS hardware team will assemble four flight units -- and 10 IORS units in all -- to support onboard flight operations, training, operations planning, and hardware testing.

ARISS International President Frank Bauer, KA3HDO.

"Future upgrades and enhancements to the next-generation system are in various stages of design and development," Bauer said. "These include a repaired Ham Video system -- currently planned for launch in mid-to-late 2020, L-band (uplink) repeater, ground command operations capability, LimeSDR signal reception, a microwave 'Ham Communicator,' and Lunar Gateway prototype experiment."

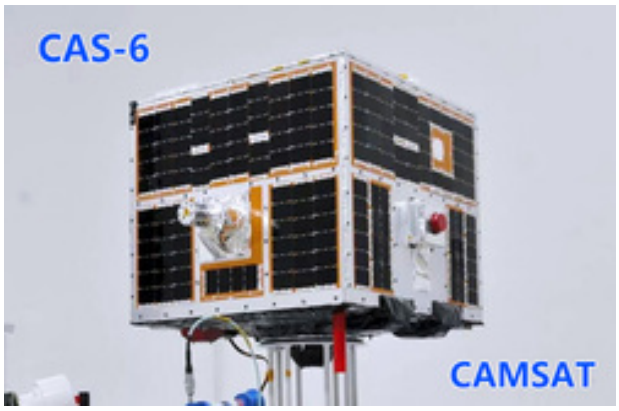
Bauer said a lot of "heavy lifting" remains to prepare the IORS for operation on the space station. "ARISS has 92 engineering requirements and our operations Phase III safety review to complete," he explained. "The space agencies take a position of 'trust, but verify.' Thus, these engineering and safety 'verifications' all need to be closed out before the IORS can be unstowed and turned on. This will be the ARISS hardware team's focus over the next few months."

Bauer reminded that ARISS is almost entirely run by volunteers and encouraged donations for next-generation hardware developments, operations, education, and administrative functions.

CAMSAT Says CAS-6 Activation for Amateur Use Has Been Delayed

Chinese Amateur Satellite Group (CAMSAT) CEO Alan Kung, BA1DU, told ARRL this week that some problems with the precise attitude determination of the newly launched CAS-6 amateur radio satellite have delayed deployment of the antennas. The satellite was to have been put into service within 3 days.

"If the V/UHF antennas are deployed now, additional torque may affect determination of the satellite attitude," Kung said. "Engineers need to modify and upload the software, which will take some time." He said that taking into consideration the upcoming long Chinese New Year holiday, the test work is planned to be completed sometime in late February or early March. At that time, VHF/UHF antennas will be deployed, and the amateur radio payload will be available for use.



Kung points out that the satellite's CW beacon has been turned on, although the antenna has not yet been deployed. "If you have a 'big ear,' you may be able to receive weak signal leaked from an undeployed antenna on 145.910 MHz," he said. "A polyimide cover on the antenna chassis can help to leak some RF signal."

CAMSAT has provided *CAS-6 Satellite Digital Telemetry Description* and *CW Telemetry Beacon Encoding Format* documents. -- *Thanks to Alan Kung, BA1DU*

ARRL Contest Calendar

Upcoming Contests for Calendar year 2020

January 2020		**February 2020**	
1	**Straight Key Night**	10-14	**School Club Roundup**
4	**Kids Day**	15-16	**International DX – CW**
4-5	**RTTY Roundup**		
18-20	**January VHF**		

FOR FULL CALENDAR VISIT: HTTP://WWW.ARRL.ORG/CONTEST-CALENDAR

From the Doc's Desk (KJ2DOC):

Thanks to Paul (AC2UQ) for sharing the following articles.

Southgate Amateur Radio News

Grey Line Propagation

http://www.southgatearc.org/news/2020/january/grey-line-propagation.htm#.Xhe2Ti2ZNPM

Grey line propagation provides surprisingly long distance radio communications at dawn and dusk sometimes when other forms of ionospheric propagation may not be expected to provide signal paths of these distances.

This mode of propagation is widely used in ham radio, often providing signals from the other side of the globe at dawn and dusk.

When listening to signals coming in via grey line propagation, it is particularly interesting to hear how the signals come up in strength and then fall away again. It is also possible to hear how the propagation moves as the dawn or disk line changes and first stations in one area and the next are making contacts via the grey line.

Find out how grey line propagation arises and how it can best be used.
https://www.electronics-notes.com/articles/antennas-propagation/ionospheric/greyline-propagation.php

Paul found another gem from the Herald Tribune in Sarasota:

When the system crashes, radio is ready

Billy Cox

Sarasota ham radio hobbyist Bill Sexton retires from the Military Auxiliary Radio System at age 91

SARASOTA — The man who saw the future was surprised to get this kind of response. The old newshound insists he wasn't fishing for one.

On the off chance that anybody would even care, 91-year-old Bill Sexton had submitted his three-page obituary in advance, just to make it easier on the poor slob on the other end who might someday draw the short straw.

Included in the bio were references to his reporting for UPI, his stint at Newsday as editorial page editor and foreign correspondent, and a photo of Sexton with former Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping. The image shows Sexton towering over Deng as he signs Sexton's copy of "Selected Works," an anthology of the Communist potentate's speeches and essays.

Sexton's obit also alluded to an essay of his own, from a journalism trade journal in 1969. In it, he proposed "individually-tailored, computer-driven editions of daily papers as a response (to) the TV's hijacking of print dailies' ad revenue and audience."

Although cyberspace was decades away, "digital technology existed for imprinting individual subscribers' postal addresses on periodicals," he noted. Sexton advocated "expanding the reserved digital space to accommodate articles of unique special interest to the addressee such as local government and sports news."

That worked out well.

Sexton also wanted to leave readers with this: When the inevitable apocalypse comes, a technology no less passe than the printing press just might keep civilization from completely unraveling.

Radiowaves — America's medium of choice ... in 1935.

"In the event of a catastrophic hit on telephone systems, particularly cellphones, MARS is a backup to normal military communications, because it would be the only 50-state communications system independent of infrastructure," Sexton says. "Everything else depends on Earth stations that can be put out of business in several ways."

Bill Sexton would know this because, in 2016, he literally wrote the book on it — "Army MARS at 90: Helping Protect the Homeland." For a decade or so, Sexton was the public information officer for a long-running but largely obscure network of volunteers skilled in ham radio. It's called the Military Auxiliary Radio System, and its uncounted civilian

members are ready to respond in the event of a digital infrastructure collapse or sabotage.

A nuclear detonation could accomplish that. So could a cyberattack. But the most likely scenario already blitzed the planet in big way, during the 19th century. It was called the Carrington effect. “It’s the one thing we have no control over,” Sexton says.

On September 1, 1859, astronomer Richard Carrington was the first to notice humongous explosions erupting on the sun. With Earth’s atmosphere intensely ionized by those solar flares, the auroras of polar lights dazzled skygazers as far south as Cuba and Hawaii. Magnetometers recorded disturbances worldwide; sparks flew from telegraph stations, and entire offices caught fire.

Since then, solar storms have periodically wreaked smaller-scale but not insignificant havoc on the planet’s electrical grids. In 2012, one science journal put the risk of a Carrington-scale event radiating Earth by 2020 at 10 percent. The National Research Council, in 2008, projected a solar storm of that magnitude could cost the U.S. as much as $2 trillion during the first year alone. Full recovery, added the NRC, might take anywhere from four to 10 years.

With communications satellites blinded and terrestrial receiving stations fried, MARS volunteers would then theoretically plug local communications gaps to supply the Pentagon with details on regional damages.

“We had drills all the time,” Sexton recalls. “It’s kind of like a roll call to see how much of America is left.

“Basically, you would check in with everybody and make your presence known, and you might receive instructions to report which runways at SRQ are still intact, is the bridge across the river open, how many ambulances do you need, that kind of thing. Under those conditions, you’d probably be communicating with the control tower on walkie-talkies.

“Fortunately, the circumstances never arose. It’s like at the fire department. What do they do? They stay ready. But most of the time they play pinochle.”

The group that would eventually become MARS formed in 1925, three years before Sexton was born. Known as the American Radio Relay League, it was a response to the U.S. Army Signal Corps' call for civilian ham operators in order to save money.

Sexton grew up shortly thereafter, in the so-called "Golden Age of Radio." He got hooked on serials like "The Lone Ranger" and "The Shadow." Even as radio's popularity yielded to more visual media, Sexton didn't want to let it go.

"I totally endorse the richness of radio over television. Because I could more precisely see it in my head," he says. "There's no way I could see something more vividly on TV as I could in my head, to hear a voice showing me the tears trickling down a cheek, the shock of hearing a door creaking open and seeing the dead body lying on the floor."

Sexton also appreciated the medium's subversive potential. His favorite uncle Hale was a ham operator in Owensboro, Kentucky. Hale had boorish neighbors who would play their radio so loudly through the open windows at night, the noise irritated all within earshot. So Hale built a transmitter that generated static, targeted whatever frequency the boors tuned into, and repeatedly drowned them out with white noise.

"Just think," Sexton ruminates. "Perhaps my uncle was the creator of cyber warfare."

Sexton became a ham operator as soon as he retired from newspapers in 1990, back when learning Morse Code was still a licensing requirement. He joined MARS the following year, before retiring in 2019 "when I felt incapable of handling the encryption. I guess you could say the computer finally got the best of me."

For awhile there, ham radio was Sexton's own internet, before the internet. Sitting in his own little space at night, huddled over his gear, exchanging news and sweet nothings with people he would never meet, in places he would never visit, Sexton made contacts in more than 100 countries. The adventure was like fishing — you never knew what you'd reel in.

Today, Sexton's equipment is stored in a shack in the backyard. He hoists himself onto his walker and shows it all off: the power supply, the transmitter, the microphone, Morse key — all that stuff still works. He

dons the baseball cap bearing his civilian radio handle, N1IN, as well as his MARS identity, AAA9PA.

Hanging framed on a wall back in the house is an official tribute from MARS acknowledging Sexton's being "faithfully and honorably" retired. He also has a Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award from 2017, in "grateful recognition ... for National and Community Service."

He apologizes for the obit. He didn't intend for it to be published early.

"It was an ego trip," Sexton says. "I just wanted somebody to remember me."

https://www.heraldtribune.com/news/20200113/when-system-crashes-radio-is-ready

The following is from the Washington Post article by By Harrison Smith Dec. 10, 2019 at 6:26 p.m. EST

Note from Paul: I didn't know that the UPC 'Bar Code' was developed by a Ham, George Laurer K4HZE. He was working for IBM in North Carolina at the time. A native of New York, Laurer served in the US Army during World War II after being drafted while he was still a junior in high school. He graduated from the University of Maryland in 1951 and spent 3 decades working for IBM. Washington Post and ARRL links provided.

Bar code lead developer George Laurer K4HZE SK

ARRL reports the radio amateur who developed the bar code, **George Laurer K4HZE**, passed away December 5, aged 94

The lead developer of the bar code system that became the now-ubiquitous Universal Product Code (UPC), George Laurer, K4HZE, of Wendell, North Carolina, died on December 5. He was 94. While an electrical engineer with IBM in North Carolina's Research Triangle Park in the early 1970s, Laurer led the effort to develop the bar code system. The UPC, composed of 30 unique black bars and a 12-digit number, allows retailers to identify products and prices as they are scanned. It was used for the first time in a retail setting in 1974.

Laurer also later patented one of the first handheld UPC scanners, according to his obituary. As The Washington Post reported, “The bar-code concept had originated in the 1940s, when N. Joseph Woodland designed a bull’s eye-shaped system of concentric circles, inspired by the dots and dashes of Morse code.” Woodland became a colleague of Laurer’s at IBM, and Laurer considered him “the father of the supermarket scanning system.”

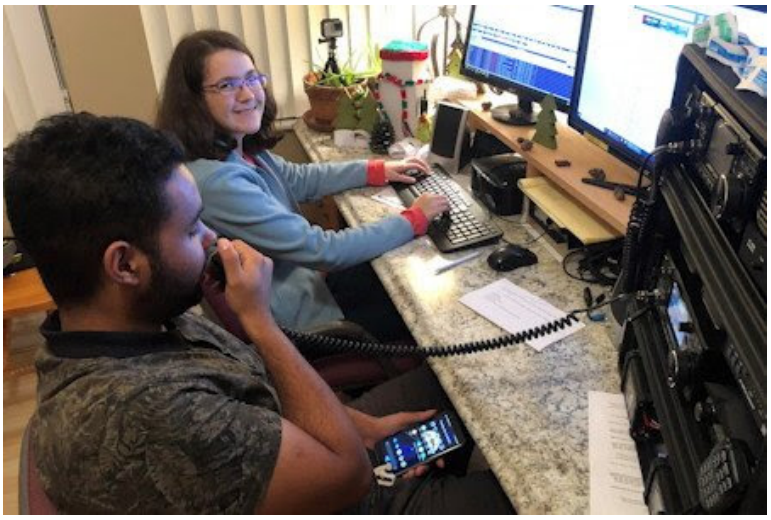
A native of New York, Laurer served in the US Army during World War II after being drafted while he was still a junior in high school. He graduated from the University of Maryland in 1951 and spent 3 decades working for IBM.

Accounts describe Laurer as an inveterate tinkerer, even up to his final years. IBM never patented the bar code system, but made it publicly available in order to sell the associated hardware.

Washington Post story: https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/obituaries/george-laurer-an-inventor-of-the-modern-bar-code-dies-at-94/2019/12/10/75b03f6e-1b5c-11ea-8d58-5ac 3600967a1_story.html

Source ARRL: http://www.arrl.org/news/view/bar-code-lead-developer-george-laurer-k4hze-sk

From KB6NU's Ham Radio Blog



Here in the US, we reserved 4 1×1 special event callsigns: K8Y, K8O, K8T, and K8A (Y O T A). 15 youth operators across the US rotated these calls throughout December.

They made 10,474 QSOs using SSB, CW, digital modes, and satellites. Some operators used the callsigns during contests such as CWops CWTs, Phone Fray, FT Roundup, and the RAC Winter contest.

Tunisian amateur Khalil Bouzemmi, who met Faith Hannah, KD3Z at the South Africa YOTA camp in 2018, stopped by the Lea family home in Florida on Christmas Day to operate K8O.

We asked US operators for their favorite aspect of YOTA Month. Mason, KM4SII said, “Operating wise – it was definitely the pileups…I love a good pileup. Apart from that, it was great getting to be part of a group of youngsters that are all into the hobby. Even though we weren’t physically working together, we all got to be part of the YOTA program over the air.” Audrey, KM4BUN says “My favorite part of YOTA month was getting the wonderful experience of talking to other youth all over the world and sharing our experiences. Me and my brother both were wonderfully surprised every time we got a call back from a fellow youth who was eager and excited to be there. It gives us hope to know the future of Amateur Radio is in the hands of these great kids.”

In Canada, David VE7DZO signed VE7YOTA. He made 458 QSOs on CW. He said, “My favorite part was seeing all the YOTA stations on the air throughout December and seeing all the high energy youth activity.”

Mathias, CE2LR of Chile activated XR2YOTA. He even met another youth operator from Chile, Manu CA3MPR, through YOTA month. They made 1,535 QSOs on CW, SSB, and digital modes. Mathias said, “It was great to meet Manu CA3MPR and work many friends.”

Youth from the Americas had lots of fun spreading the word about youth in amateur radio and made 12,467 QSOs in the process. The event was a great prelude for the first ever camp to be hosted in the western hemisphere in June.

Bryant Rascoll, KG5HVO coordinated the efforts of the seventeen operators and the logs for the US stations. “I learned much during the month about the importance of teamwork and communication…just like baseball,” Bryant said about his role as coordinator. “I think YOTA month was a great success considering the short amount of time we had to plan this all out. I had a lot of fun operating this event, but it was even more rewarding to see other youth here in the Americas make tons of QSOs during December.” As part of his responsibilities, Bryant also managed Logbook of the World accounts for the

US stations, the **QRZ.com** pages for all the callsigns, maintained an operator schedule, worked with YOTA month manager Tomi, HA8RT, and reported in to the YOTA camp committee in the Americas.

Globally, almost 129,000 contacts were logged using 48 callsigns, all operated by hams under the age of 26. 2,569 operators (both youth and non-youth) requested and received an award based on the number of YOTA contacts made as of January 14. Statistics are available at **events.ham-yota.com**.

The post **YOTA Month a Success in the Americas** appeared first on **KB6NU's Ham Radio Blog**.

Give up on Emcomm

January 9, 2020

By Dan KB6NU

On reddit, a fellow wrote:

Our radio club has had a pretty solid relationship with our county's department of public safety for many years. That has since begun to dry up now that they have a new communication system that seems to check off all their boxes. As a result, they aren't including us in real emergency situations like they used to and they're reluctant to participate in our emergency tests where we practice. In short, I think the marriage is about over.

I'm wondering how other EMCOMM-based clubs find themselves these days in terms of their relationships with local agencies. Is the love for amateur radio EMCOMM drying up everywhere? If it's not in your area, can you describe how it's going and what your club is doing to keep the idea alive?

I'm asking because as a member of our leadership team, I'm very close to recommending we just sever ties altogether in a formal manner and drop to one drill a year or every other year. The amount of energy our team puts into organizing one of these just isn't being reflected by the partners we're trying to serve and the juice just isn't worth the squeeze.

The responses to this post are all over the map. There were plenty who agreed with the original poster:

- “EMCOMM has been slowly dying for a long time.”
- “I work in the agency that manages emergency systems for my city and ham radio emergency participation is a joke to them.”
- “Ham radio as a service is dead. Let’s all move on …”

At the other end of the spectrum, there were these comments:

- “This is the opposite of my experience here in a rural, agricultural county in California. I don’t get a sense that this is a trend.”
- “We have 30+ members who have taken the ICS training and understand what our place ought to be: that is, assist when requested and stay out of the way.”
- “Our local Emergency Management department utilizes Amateur Radio during emergency activations in several areas.”

Even at the positive end of the spectrum, it’s clear that emergency management has gotten way more sophisticated over the past couple of decades. For us to continue to serve, we are also going to have be more sophisticated. I’ve said this before, and I’ll say it again: Amateur radio needs something like AMSAT for emergency communications. That is to say an organization that is advancing the state of the art in amateur radio communications.

Along with that, we have to participate more fully with the emergency management community. That means going to their conferences and publishing papers at these conferences and in their publications. Maybe I’m not close enough to what’s happening, but I just don’t see that.

Along those lines, I think that while our Public Information Coordinators are doing a good job of getting amateur radio on the nightly news and into newspapers, someone should be concentrating more on raising our profile in the emergency management community. Most of the people watching the news aren’t the people who are going to be making the decisions on how big or how small a role that amateur radio is going to play in their emergency management plans.

Note from Paul: This article may stimulate some serious thinking among club members and others about OMARC's relationship with the Ulster County Emergency Communications organization.

I hope it does, since I think the relationship varies from 'abysmal' to 'none'.

Let's start a dialogue on this! Final thoughts on the importance of active communications:

NEW FEATURE: WHAT DOES AMATEUR RADIO MEAN TO YOU?

After reading the below article, our former secretary Paul Brown posed an idea for future editions of *A Call From The Mountain*. Please send us your thoughts…The tagline on your email should be INVITATION RESPONSE. Lucille will include them in this section. Please note responses may be edited for grammar and clarity.

Foundations of Amateur Radio

What does Amateur Radio mean to you?

One Ham's response:

Over the years I've been asked what the hobby of amateur radio is all about. My response has evolved over time, but it started with the lure of simple point-to-point communications. The antidote against such an example is that a mobile phone does that and more. Of course if you're already in the hobby you know that there is a massive difference between the two, but if you're an onlooker that is not nearly as obvious.

There are other problems with an answer like that. It doesn't cover the spirit of the hobby, the intent, the reach, or any of the other aspects of our pursuits that keep us all coming back for more.

I was asked recently to provide a credit to a fellow amateur for providing inspiration for an episode. Since then I've reflected long and hard about the nature of inspiration and what causes me to contribute and participate.

The reality is that my inspiration comes from all manner of nooks and crannies, from articles I read, videos I watch, discussions I have, activities I participate in, builds I make and emails I exchange. Not to mention friendships, random comments, shower thoughts and flights of fancy.

My understanding of our community of this hobby continues to evolve as I participate and contribute.

I think that underlying all of this is the expansion of my mind, my interests, my exposure to new things is what makes amateur radio such a massively interesting activity.

When I started I had no inkling that between learning how to solder and what a Fourier transform is lies this immense field of individual and community activity. What other hobby has the ability to link astronomy, moon, camping, community, planning, building, drilling, sound, language, antennas, internet, computing, valves, maths, propagation, mapping, transport, emergencies, physics, competition, camaraderie, satellite, soil, ionosphere, sun, batteries, old, new, invention and exploration?

In addition to the technical aspects there's the whole library of human interaction, teaching, learning, giving and receiving, socialising, friendship, discussion and debate to scratch the surface.

In amateur terms I'm still a babe in the woods and the more I learn the more I realise that this is likely to continue for the rest of my life.

For me, amateur radio is the binding force between interests. It's about wonder, curiosity and inspiration. It's about trying and failing, about testing and learning, about thinking and doing.

The magic for me is that you can do this at any level. As a 10-year old with a freshly minted license, or as a 90-year old with a twinkle in your eye. You can approach this as a scientist, or as an educator, as a submariner, or an accountant, as a truck-driver or a boiler maker, from young to old and anywhere at all, amateur radio is just plain interesting.

As for giving credit. I'd like to credit you for your contribution, for your participation and for your excitement.

Keep up the wonder and continue to make this community your own. In the end amateur radio means different things to different people.

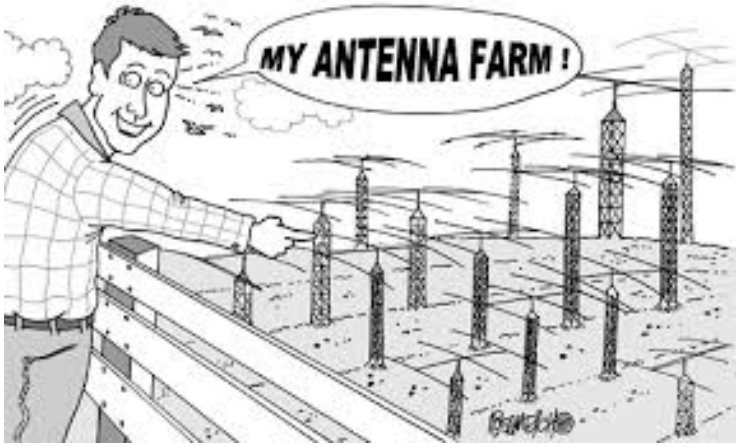
What does amateur radio mean to you?

I'm ***Onno VK6FLAB***

http://www.southgatearc.org/news/2019/december/foundations-of-amateur-radio-28-12.htm#.Xh9y-CNOnct

Laugh Out Loud

This looks about right!



MORE PICTURES FROM LAST YEAR'S WINTER FIELD DAY

Comments:

Your photos, comments and suggestions are always welcome!!
Please email: lucille.a.lang@gmail.com

Looking forward to the next issue.

"Doc"

73