

AMATEUR RADIO IN SCOUTING & OTHER YOUNG PEOPLES GROUPS

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I will relate some of my experiences and how I promote amateur radio in Scouting. These examples can easily translate to most youth groups. I will show ways you can get help from your local radio club and emergency disaster groups (AREA, RACES & Red Cross). How you can promote amateur radio as an Eagle Project. Also how I use the Internet to multiply my efforts with the grass roots ScoutElmer award. And successful ways the pros teach amateur radio to young people. Finally, why you must get involved now in promoting ham radio to young people and feeling great about it.

TEACH BY EXAMPLE

The best way to interest a young person is to show them. Don't tell them benefits; let them experience the benefits. It will require more of your effort, but in a time when kids have cellphones and can talk over the Internet, you must prove the value.

Case Example: Our Troop was on top of Half Dome on the 6th day of a 7 day backpack trip in the Yosemite Park. It was Sunday and we were having our "Scout's Own" (non-denominational religious service). Some of the boys said they wished they could share this experience with their parents' back at home 350 miles away. I reached for my HT and said we could. Using a combination of repeaters, hams and a phone as the link to the boys' non-ham parents, we had a communication link set up within 5 minutes. Passing traffic for 15 minutes about our backpack over the last 6 days in the wilderness.

Be creative how you demonstrate and make it fun. Don't hinge everything on using ham radio as a way to get emergency help on the trail. Most of the time you won't have an opportunity to use your radio for emergency communication. Our Half Dome demonstration snagged 6 new hams.

USE ALL OF YOUR RESOURCES

Consider Radio Clubs, your local ARES, RACES & Red Cross group are your partner in promoting ham radio.

Encourage your Eagle Scout Candidates to work on ham relate Eagle projects. There are many very important projects that need to be done.

Case Example: I was asked by an Eagle Scout candidate from my Troop that he wanted his Eagle project to be related to his interest in ham radio emergency communication. I was especially please because I was the one to get him into ham radio with my Yosemite Half Dome demonstration mentioned earlier in this article.

It wasn't difficult to find at least a dozen projects that could be done for the local Chapter of Red Cross Communication or City RACES group. But his decision was clear when he was told his project could have an effect on all 35,000 student in the city he lived in.

He would plan, build and install j-pole antennas on 5 separate School District EOCs. This is a primary radio path between all school and the City EOC. Should phone lines go down in this City that has 8 earthquake faults these antenna permit Huntington Beach RACES to communicate within the School EOCs.

This project involved over 150 hrs of antenna building and other activities that introduced non-ham to ham radio. The 3 regional newspapers wrote full page articles and ham radio benefited from this project.

Contact your local RACES, ARES, Red Cross or other emergency communication group for a work assignment.

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