

I want to pass on some information to as many of you as possible that might just spark a bit of interest in obtaining Ham radio (Amateur Radio) Licenses. Currently there are six (no seven) club members with licenses and most of us find that the Ham Band of 2 meters is far more reliable to use on our trips than the CB. Signals are clearer and perfectly understandable, without the usual sound or modulation problems CB's have. The signals also travel much further.

I've been licensed since 1974 and over that period of time have participated in many emergency situations and events. From tornadoes to forest fires...

I led classes for about 7 years in Modesto, CA, setting up a classroom and station in one of the local High Schools. We ran the classes both on weekends and week nights. I'm happy to say that I assisted over 350 people in getting licensed and advancing with upgrades. These were men, women and children ages ranging from 6 to 85. People of all walks of life and mental abilities.

Heck folks, it was fun and still is.

I also taught two summer school classes in a grade school there where I set up three stations and had students communicate with folks from all around the world. At first there was concern that I wouldn't have enough sign up. Soon that was no longer a concern as we had over 60 students signed up and had to break it into two groups in order to make it work. The Principal and Superintendent were regular visitors, making contacts with people from all over themselves. These classes were centered around the topics of Social Studies, Math, Science, Electronics, Language Arts and computer skills. It turned out to be very popular and each student wrote papers about their experiences, contacts and what they got out of it all. The Principal and Supt. did the same. At the end of the summer school session I put all of them together in a large newsletter that they all took home with them as well.

From that experience I licensed over forty kids and adults. They also all learned Morse Code. Yes, it was fun and exciting to see the lights go on over their faces and the excitement in their eyes.

I have also made contact with many notables, including Senator Barry Goldwater, President Gerald Ford, King Hussein of Jordan, and the first amateur operator allowed to operate in outer space, and on a Shuttle no less, Owen Garriet, W7LFL. I was one of his over 23,000 contacts made over the two hour period he had permission to operate. My location was standing in a corn field in South Dakota using a handy talkie, with less than one watt of power and a dipole antenna that I had constructed for the job. I've had so many experiences that they are way to numerous to go into, but to say the least, each has it's own special meaning to me.

Well so much for that. Anyway you get the idea... I'm available... Materials for learning can be found at Radio Shack, on line at the www.ARRL.com site, as well as at www.w5yi.com Gordon Wests web site. I challenge each of you to challenge each others friends and mates in obtaining your licenses and making this a better prepared club for events and emergencies. You will have six (no seven) "elmers"

available to assist you through any hurdles you may encounter. I just volunteered them to assist...

Phil