



The Ham Radio Promoter

The newsletter for radio clubs participating
In the Ham Radio Promotion Project
“Working together to recruit new Amateurs”



Issue number eleven

<http://www.neoham.org>

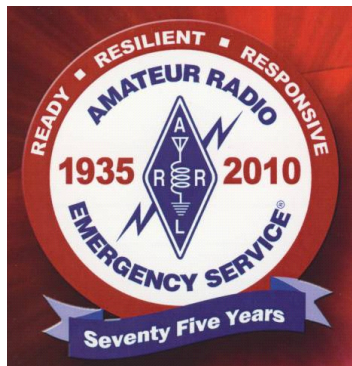
September 2010

Promoting amateur radio's Emergency services

It's up to us to spread the word

This year marks 75 years since ham radio's emergency service began providing communications during emergencies. A strong history of using our radio expertise is something to tell the public about.

If your club has an active role in local emergency preparedness, it should consider a communication effort targeted at the press and area officials.



Better to educate the public and the officials *before* an emergency or drill

than during it.

The ARRL produced a postcard to send to area media and officials. with the logo shown above and the words: “It’s our birthday, and you are invited.” The text points out that ham radio people are a critical part of your region’s emergency planning. “Our new digital and analog systems, all staffed by volunteers, are ready, resilient and responsive.”

The card invites people to hear about local people “who volunteer their technical skills and equipment to keep their neighbors safe.” Space is provided to add the local ham radio contact information.

Postcards were distributed by the ARRL to the Public Information Officers and Section Managers for local use. While this is an experiment in public relations, it provides local clubs and ideal vehicle to establish links with key reporters, editors and emergency officials.

Please circulate this newsletter to your radio club's officers and directors. Thanks!

Fall is a good time to plan your Club's promotional year

Lots of ways to be “radio active”

During the next 12 months, radio clubs will have a variety of opportunities to publicize themselves and recruit new members. It all begins with a plan. While Field Day is the most obvious event to showcase your club and its emergency communication capabilities, there are many more.

A good foundation is to identify the club's major goals, including building recognition among local hams, the media, emergency officials, educators and other target groups. Then develop promotional plans to accomplish this. Some examples:

- **Publicize meetings** to local amateurs and the press by sending releases, e-mails, newsletters and using social media and personal invitations.
- **Plan presentations** to local groups such as scouts, schools, or churches at shopping malls, club meetings, libraries, senior centers etc. Use the updated promotional video <www.neoham.org>
- **Offer a class** to introduce the public to ham radio and provide instruction for the Technician license.
- **Produce a club brochure** describing your activities, meetings, nets, classes, and how to join.
- **Launch a club Website** or update yours. ■

WorldRadio Promotion Column

WorldRadio Online publishes a column on promotion and recruitment every other month. You can read it *free* on the Internet. Go to <<http://www.cq-amateur-radio.com>> and click on the WorldRadio box to open the current issue.

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• **Northern Ohio ARS**, Elyria, OH, Contact: W8KYZ, tporter161@oh.rr.com. • **Northwest ARS**, Houston, TX. Contact: KD5KR, kd5kr@arrl.net.

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• **Upper Rio FM Society**, Albuquerque, NM, Contact: N5ZGT, n5zgt@arrl.org • **Warren ARA**, Warren, OH. Contact: K8OUA, k8oua@yahoo.com.

• **Western Reserve Emergency Communications Society**, Chagrin Falls, OH. Contact: N8QZ, n8qz@yahoo.com. ■

It's time to update your Promotion Project toolkit

Things change, including PR techniques

The Promotional "Toolkit" is a 50-page instruction manual covering various techniques for publicizing ham radio. This reference book was part of the radio club package sent to each club when they signed on.

We trust that you have your copy and use it.

While sending hard copy news releases was once the gold standard, it has been replaced to a degree by electronic communications. Today, the Internet offers newer, easier, less-expensive alternatives to "snail mail." Using cell phones and texting, along with Facebook and Twitter, should be in your club's list of distribution channels.

Traditional media still deserve to be part of your publicity tools however. For example, recent surveys show that the number one people's choice for local news is television (64%) followed by newspapers and the Internet.

One interesting advantage of electronic media is the potential for immediate feedback and dialogues. Quite a contrast to the old one-way news release. But on-line chats do require that a club have someone ready to participate.

Club websites provide a valuable way to offer easy access to radio club news. Basic information, including key press contacts and club officers, will insure that the media knows who to call when they have questions. Adding the club newsletters and previous news releases along with photos of various activities such as Field Day can often help reporters develop stories.

One challenge in having a radio club website is keeping it current. To avoid the content from being stale and out-of-date, update information regularly.

Times change, and promotional techniques do also. So try to keep up with the newer approaches and use them. ■

Promotional Panorama

Ideas from here and there

Club meeting publicity:

We received a copy of the Placitas, NM Sandoval Signpost from Mike Langner, K5MGR, containing an article announcing a radio club meeting.

The headline reads: "Sandia Vista Amateur Radio Club to hold initial meeting in July."

The text includes details on the meeting date and time, plus general information on ham radio and its emergency communication role. Club contact information is also included.

Despite club meetings being regarded as "routine," and perhaps not worth a news release, this club proves the value of getting the word out.

You never know!

Ham literature from ARRL:

It's good to have ham radio promotional literature on hand to use as handouts or attachments to news releases. Check out the available materials from the League's forms and media warehouse.

Go to:

<http://www.arrl.org/brochures-and-exhibit-materials>

Among the literature: "Hello Radio," an introductory ham radio piece; "When All Else Fails," that talks about emergency communications; and "We Do That," emphasizing amateur radio's links to today's technologies.



Brochure for schools:

The ARRL also has a brochure for clubs doing outreach with local schools. If your club plans school contacts, read the

materials presented at: <http://www.arrl.org/outreach-to-teachers-and-schools> Instructions are given for ordering copies of "10 Good Reasons, 3 Ways to Do It," which is intended for use in meetings with school officials.

Social networking grows:

More people in all age groups are visiting social networking sites. 88% of those ages 18-34; 69% of those 35-49; and 41% of persons age 50+ claim to have visited in the last 30 days.

Source: PRSA Tactics ■

Social networking 101:

Is it time to Tweet & Twitter?

Or is it for the birds?

Among the many communication options to consider for promoting amateur radio is a category called social networking. Since it could be useful for your radio club, it probably warrants checking it out.

Internet-based social media include Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, blogs and your own news site. In 2009, adults spent 26.5 hours a month on the Internet, so there's an audience waiting. Twitter is among the most popular, with 105.8 million registered users and growing at 300,000 new users each day.

Take a look: A good way to see how these sites operate is to visit them. The ARRL is on Twitter, so go to <http://www.twitter.com/arrl> and note the content. For an individual Twitter user, note how Lloyd Colston, KC5FM, does it at <http://www.twitter.com/kc5fm> or simply explore the various options by doing a Google search.

On Facebook, KC5FM suggests looking for the Altus Skywarn Association, which was one of the early adopters of social media. They include a calendar to announce club meetings, and a link to bring weather information to the page. Also visit <http://altusem.blogspot.com>.

Potential uses: The interactive benefits of social networking allow clubs to participate in a dialogue with individuals, including reporters and editors. Answering questions on line can be a major benefit, but clubs will need to be accessible and ready to provide answers. Being prepared with information has always been a sound practice when dealing with the press, and it's even more important in the Internet age.

Link ups: Having a radio club Website containing information about your meetings, nets, officers, and a newsletter archive can be linked to various social networking sites. This can cover many routine questions that don't require an on-line response. Keeping your site up to date is important. If yours appears to offer history rather than current info, you'll lose visitors. So keep it fresh and refreshed! ■

PUBLICITY BASICS Tips for improving your Radio club's newsletter

Every club needs a newsletter. Whether it's printed or on-line, it serves several important functions. It announces upcoming events such as meetings, records various activities such as Field Day, serves as a voice for club officers and members, and much more. Here's a checklist for your own newsletter:

Content is what makes a *newsletter* a newsletter. Include newsworthy items of interest to your audience: the members.

The function of a newsletter can include providing a communication link to members, delivering information on a regular basis, promoting certain goals and providing a historic record of the organization.

Good editing makes the difference between a poor newsletter and a good one. Information gathered is written in factual, journalistic style.

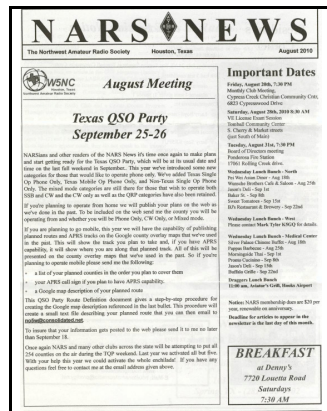
The first sentences tell readers the who, what, where, when and why. Following are details.

Good writing keeps things simple. Avoiding needless words is a prime rule and is found in the paperback book *The Elements of Style*, by Strunk and White.

Design should follow a standard newspaper layout grid of columns, headlines, and standard text as shown by the sample above from the Northwest Amateur Radio Society of Houston.

Typefaces: This newsletter uses Times New Roman for its body text because it's readable. Headlines are set in Arial bold. We use Publisher software to create this newsletter. Keep the number of typefaces to a minimum. Two or three is about right.

Help? Have a question regarding newsletters? Let us know. <deverelogan@gmail.com> or give us a call at (440) 352-8292. ■



Use this news release on 75 years Of ham radio's emergency service Fill in the blanks and send it out!

Local hams observe 75 years of volunteer emergency service

(Your town and date) Local amateur radio operators are celebrating the 75th anniversary of its Emergency Radio Service from September through December 2010. This program of the ARRL—the national association of Amateur Radio — has provided “ham radio” emergency communications for agencies such as the Red Cross, Salvation Army and countless emergency operations centers in the worst of times. Their trained radio communication volunteers give thousands of hours of community service for free.

In the (your town) area, the (club or ARES group) has been providing this community service for many years.

“The fastest way to turn an emergency into a disaster is to lose communications,” comments (club spokesperson and title). “In events such from ice storms to Hurricane Katrina , when normal communications were down or overloaded, amateur radio operators filled requests for communications aid. In the first hours and days of a major event, amateur radio is often *the* source of information on the type, scope and reactions needed to save lives.

Recognition of this capability led to formal agreements with FEMA, DHS, NOAA and other federal, state and local agencies. When cell phones, the Internet and electricity go out, they call on the hams.

Among well-known events involving volunteer amateur radio operators were the Earthquake in Haiti, the 2010 Hurricane Ike in Texas, the 2006 Hawaii earthquake, the 2006 floods in the Northeastern states, and Hurricanes Katrina, Wilma and Rita in 2005.

For additional information on the Amateur Radio Emergency Service and amateur radio, go to: www.arrl.org/ares-anniversary.

(Local contact information) ■