



Lake County
Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service ®
Amateur Radio Emergency Services ®
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For Immediate Release

Sheriff Emergency Radio Group To Sponsor Zion Grade School

Libertyville, Illinois, September 27, 2005 – The effectiveness of Ham Radio during disasters, once again proven during Hurricane Katrina, will make its way into East Elementary School in Zion, Illinois. This is the latest school to join a growing educational program called the ARRL Education and Technology Program (ETP), also referred to as “The Big Project”. The ARRL is the National Association for Amateur Radio.

“The idea hit me during a class project” said Nathan McCray, sixth grade teacher at East Elementary School in Zion. “I gave each student a spring clothes pin, and asked they make something out of it”. “One of my students made a telegraph key from it. Being a ham myself, it hit me like a ton of bricks. This is the perfect opportunity to get these gifted kids interested in amateur radio and other wireless communications. The Big Project was a perfect fit for our Enrichment Program.” McCray said.

Each participating school must be sponsored by a local amateur radio group. “Our school will be getting exceptionally strong support from our local ham community” something he considers essential to the success of this project in their school. “I approached the Lake County Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (R.A.C.E.S.) group because I know they are the most experienced”. “They work with the Lake County Emergency Management Agency during any severe weather situations, as well as community service communication support to the many running, canoeing, and bike events through out the year”. The Libertyville based R.A.C.E.S. group will purchase the initial lesson materials and will serve as a technical resource to the teacher. Later in the program, each school will get a complete Amateur Radio station obtained through generous industry sponsored grants.

"The current--and expanding--count of schools participating in “The Big Project” stands at 165, with only one other school in Illinois so far, " says McCray, “This is going to be a great program for the kids. Other teachers are excited about it and want to get involved too”.

For more information on the Lake County R.A.C.E.S. Group, please see their web site at: www.races.org, or by email at: lcraces@races.org .

For more information on the ARRL Education & Technology Program, go to: <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/tbp/>

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