



Lake County
Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service ®
Amateur Radio Emergency Service ®
1303 North Milwaukee Avenue
Libertyville, IL 60048



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For Immediate Release

New Hams in the Making, or Can You Hear Me Now? . . .

Libertyville, IL July 11, 2009 – The discussing consisted of ohm's, volts, watts, and frequency in kilohertz, but these prospective new amateur radio operators were listening closely as the instructor Richard F. Gillette, (FCC radio call sign W9PE), helped the class of 14 students learn the basic requirements for electrical theory, radio procedures, rules and regulations and electrical safety in preparation to take their FCC test to earn the privilege of operating within the frequencies set aside by the federal government.

Amateur radio, often called ham radio is a hobby as well as a service where the radio operators also called "hams" provide voice and data transmission of messages in support of many running, bike, and canoe events in the community. The term amateur refers to the fact that these volunteers donate their skills, talents, and abilities at no cost to the community, but their capabilities are at a professional caliber or above.



These future radio operators learned how they can use various modes of transmission to send their messages. Morse code, though no longer required to earn your license is still in use to cut through static where voice conversations may be difficult to understand. New technology available to these new operators allow them to send email type messages, complete with attachments like excel spreadsheets and photos, using the reliable radio frequencies when the internet is not functioning. This mode of operating became needed during disasters like the hurricanes that affected the Gulf of Mexico several years ago.

We now consider ham radio to fall into three main categories. The first is the love of experimenting, or building new projects that may not exist right now. This has eventually created many new standards we now use everyday such as "packet radio" or the sending of blocks of information over the radio frequencies. The next main category in ham radio is contesting. This is a competition where you try to talk to as many other radio operators around the country or world on specific frequencies, over a given time frame.



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The last main category is communicating during public service events. These events quite often operate under conditions where you must “rough it” on your own by providing your own electrical power, food and shelter in remote locations, over extended periods of time. These are also similar to Emergency Communication or “EmComm” exercises allow these radio operators to test equipment and procedures used during actual disasters.

After an all day session of learning about the electrical facts, rules, regulations and electrical safety, they had



access to the FCC volunteer examiners from the Lake County ARES/RACES radio group, who administered the FCC test for their Technician class license. After the test, each candidate had their test corrected and learned if they passed or not. For those who passed, they will discover their new FCC issued call sign on the FCC web site in just a few days, and be able to “get on the air”.

The Lake County ARES/RACES group is a trained volunteer group of Lake County amateur radio operators who donate their time and talents in support of the Lake County Emergency Management Agency.

To learn more about Amateur Radio, how to earn your FCC license and learn about Emergency Communication in general go to: www.WeDoThat-radio.org

For more information on the Lake County Emergency Management Agency, see their website at: <http://www.lakecountyil.gov/ema>

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

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