

HAM

Many people would hear the term HAM and wonder what exactly that means that means as they play an anagram and try to decipher the term into some sort of jumble word game. Well to tell you a small history behind the meaning is that HAM does not phonetically stand for anything what it does mean is that it is an individual that has perused up the hobby and is so taken by it he or she wants to show off what he knows and what he or she has learned. Like the old colloquialism “He’s just a ham” that’s all only it is strutting their knowledge in a good way not to just show off but to entice others to be interested.

People have made remarks about why we do it, even some actual younger members of our club have commented that what is the point, or that is something for retired, old, crippled, disabled, people who have nothing better to do with their time and or money. Not true although you may see some Amateur Radio enthusiasts that go beyond the top in all so far as getting the best equipment on the market, the tallest tower, the largest antenna, and some of the most powerful amplifiers they could find or that a company could manufacture. Then you have the modest that treat the hobby just as it is suppose to be. They find a regular radio “RIG” and then gets an antenna that meets their needs for what they want to do. This is a common radio operator, and there is nothing wrong with that either. Then you have operators “Amateur Radio Operators (Ham’s)” who with all their knowledge and learning and understanding want to go beyond the store bought aspect of equipment so they not only exercise their physical capabilities but their mental expertise by constructing radios, antennas, and amps of their own though some of what they are doing is for the highly advanced operators the good majority is open for experimentation. That is what being a Ham is all about using bare essentials to devise and build something of your own and make it work with out having to run to the store and throw down your credit card. Any one could do that and the feeling you get when some one hears you and they tell you sound great what kind of equipment are you using well you cannot imagine the feeling you get when you tell them that you built it yourself or that it is a “Homebrew” you are filled with such excitement that it entices you to want to do even more and like the word HAM means now you want to share what you know to help others experience that same feeling and that same sense of accomplishment that you get from trial and error until you have accomplished what you have set out to do. As for it being for retired, old, crippled, disabled, people who have nothing better to do with their time and or money, you could never have been so wrong the fact that it happens to be more in the aspect that a demographic portion happens to want to do more with their time and life then just sit back on a porch swing and twiddle their thumbs says a lot. The fact that disabled people want to advance their selves so that they can be more self reliant and put some notches under their belt so they are not looked down upon because they are not different but challenged by some either mental, or physical difficulty they want to better them self making them more independent it not only helps their esteem, their well being but it also boost their moral with the feeling of accomplishment of having to do something on their own or with very little help, That is the true challenge.

Now some people would also ask well who do you talk to and why, this is something else that can be answered simply every one who has on or who is an operator.

Well lets examine that statement; As an Amateur Radio Operator you could speak to any one in the world, any where in the world. This means with what you have learned all though you are constantly learning you could talk to different people in different countries who are amateur radio operators, have open discussions, forums, get to know one another, set up regular scheduled meetings on the radio, maybe when time and money permits if you should visit an other country you will not only have made a friend to talk with but you could get together and meet and get to realize and say to your self it as if we have known each other for years, you get to discover a whole other way and culture of life you may have know existed but now have made a friend who can show you around and when he is in your home town you can do the same, this is how making friends is all about just think if everything was like this through out the world then maybe there would be no need of political fences, arms, and war, peace is the mutual understanding and sharing and caring of things for all kind, there would only be physical borders but as far as people there would be no boundaries.

People ask well what do you get out of it why do you spend your money and do not make anything on it, it makes no sense!

Well there you are seriously wrong; first let me begin by saying that it gives one a feeling of self reliance, a sense of accomplishment, a feeling of helping. Our society has become so obsessed and driven by the mass media to become part of this seeming never ending technological wave that will never end. Well as with every thing all things have a beginning and an end that is life but this wave has made people so dependant that they loose any concept of independence. Take for instance the Cell Phone, great little gadget, since its conception which has only been a decade or so it seems as if people don these things as if it is a part of their person and they would be lost with out it. Talk about addiction when ever you see someone walking around they almost always have this little life saver up to their ear talking away. What would happen if there was a black out in your town, city, or even state, can't happen it was not too long ago that we had a power out up and down the eastern seaboard. So much for can't happen what would you do and this lasted for almost an entire week. Scary, well how do you think people that needed Police, Fire and Medical treatment felt, probably like the world was coming to an end what else could it have been? No cell phone, no computer, no television, no cable, no MTV, what could you do. Well as an Amateur Radio Operator the city would have to rely on us to make calls, locate certain people, relay messages, and coordinate field communications for them because we can operate with a minimal amount of power and still talk to people around the world. It has been a basic mannerism to help others as we were taught by our parents. There is no monetary gain to be had by doing this as a matter of fact if you needed help and find that you can not get something done not because it is beyond your scope but because either you are just not able to physically capable of doing it yourself "If I only had some help" goes through your mind. Well as a Ham we are like a close knit community always there and always willing to help out when the need arises and the payment is that you were able to help out in a time of need and if you were in the same position that you would be grateful for that same help. Not only does it help out some one else but it is a learning experience for all concerned. You would have what ever it is you needed to get done, and you and the others may have

learned a new approach to getting a job done that you may have never thought of until then. You also learn that it may not have been so difficult as you thought and thus you have added a new learning experience to your thought library so the next time you just may not need to seek help but just sit down ponder your situation and figure out a way you could complete the task your self, or you would be available to offer your assistance in either a physical or mental manner to some one else facing the same dilemma as you did once.

As an Amateur Radio Operator we enjoy our hobby and the fact that we can share and spread what we learn with others through simple word of mouth or by way of deeds in helping others understand and join the ranks of accomplished operators.

Membership, the meaning of this word is to belong, to be a part of something, to represent something. When you become a member of what ever club you may join in this field of amateur radio you have a small responsibility of attending meetings, paying dues and offering new and helpful ideas so others may learn more and enjoy such as yourself. The annual fee is a fraction for what you receive in return you belong to an organization that strives to better them self, that is there when you need them, and is willing to help out in all manners either dealing with amateur radio or personal things you will make new and exciting friends, acquaintances, and even buddies. It tends to expand your learning, experience in so many other areas of life you may have not even dreamed of, like making friends across the many thousands of miles with out ever having to leave your home. Visit far away places you never thought you could ever visit and like I stated previously in some instances more then not you may even bump into as well as plan to meet others you may have encountered on the radio and whom you may near had meet otherwise and be glad for that experience.

So any time that you hear someone say; oh that is for old men and a lady has no business doing that, or they don't know what they are talking about just stop and think just how limited and narrow minded that persons thinking really is. With Amateur there is no gender, no age limit except for the extra portion class as regulated by the FCC other then that if you have the ability to read and comprehend and want to try your hand at something you never tried before that is not only something to talk about but pretty impressive then this is the road to take there are all walks of life that get interested in the hobby of amateur radio from the regular every day home maker, to the blue collar worker to executive board members of large corporations, doctors, lawyers, as well as students, and even soldiers, visually impaired, the handicapped even the hearing impaired. Once you have undertaken this hobby it will and could possibly take you any where. It depends on how limited your vision and wants are. Some young individuals have used it to help them later on get top jobs in electronics, engineering, and even learn how to communicate not only on the radio but in many other areas throughout life like public speaking, teaching, and even vocational instruction. So as a "HAM" or an Amateur Radio Operator you are not just someone fooling around trying to talk on a box like two soup cans tied together with string. I consider the majority of operators an invaluable piece of the worlds infrastructure and basic line of defense and emergency communication and they all with their varied backgrounds and educations as well as life experiences have a lot to offer. So in this instance it take just a little effort to join the ranks of such well rounded individuals that make up this ring of Volunteer professionals.