
Every year since 1987, Carole Perry, WB2MGP, has highlighted the achievements and potential of young radio amateurs at her Dayton Hamvention® Youth Forum. Her efforts were recognized this year with her induction into the CQ Amateur Radio Hall of Fame. Here, Carole shares the highlights of this year's Hamvention youth forum.

Dayton 2018: 31 Youth Forums and Counting...

BY CAROLE PERRY,* WB2MGP



Photo A. The 31st Hamvention Youth Forum, organized by Carole Perry, WB2MGP (center), featured eight young hams presenting on various aspects of amateur radio and their own ham activities. (Photos by Charles Kirmuss, WØCBK)

I could scarcely believe I was welcoming everyone to the 31st Hamvention® Youth Forum. More incredibly to me, it was just as exciting as it was the first time in 1987. The difference, of course, is that now it is a 3-hour forum with huge support from many of the manufacturers as well as from amateur radio clubs and organizations from across the country.

The first of my eight young presenters this year (*Photo A*) was Sujay Ojha, KK6SET, 11 years old from Santa Clara, California (*Photo B*). Sujay was a presenter last October at my youth forum at Pacificon in California. Sujay has volunteered with his dad, Suresh, W6KTM, to help with emergency communications in Nepal during earthquakes. He brought two of his modified antennas for display as he spoke about "Schools, Scouts, and Service." How wonderful that he has had international volunteering experience with ham radio at age 11.

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Next up was 16-year-old Matthew Spiker, KE8FGB, from West Virginia. He has a General Class license, is a member of the Opequon Radio Society and hosts the Eastern Panhandle Traffic net every Wednesday. His topic was "Building an Inexpensive APRS Tracking Device with a Raspberry Pi." Matthew got into ham radio through software defined radio. His confidence at the podium was apparent to all.

Bryant Rascoll, KG5HVO, is 14 years old and from Montgomery, Alabama. He gave an excellent presentation on "The 2017 Dave Kalter Memorial Youth DX Adventure to Costa Rica." This is a wonderful event and opportunity for youngsters to participate in a DXpedition. For more information go to the YDXA website: <www.qsl.net/n6jrl>. Bryant is the Section Youth Coordinator for the Alabama ARRL section. He enjoys DXing, contesting, antenna building, and CW. He is also active in Skywarn operations, Mini-Maker Faire, Field Day, and major ARRL contests.

Seamus Bonte, KE8GTT, is a 13-year-old from Columbus, Ohio. I met Seamus last October at the Great Lakes Hamcon, where he gave an excellent presentation at my youth forum there. His topic at Hamvention was "Mesh Networking for Emergency Communications." Seamus also plays sports ... such as wrestling, football, and basketball ... and the bagpipes. This talented young man has a YouTube channel on games and gaming. He goes with his dad, Troy, AC8XP, to meetings at the Maxtown Mesh Society.



Photo B. Hamvention Youth Forum presenter 11-year-old Sujay Ojha, KK6SET, and his dad, Suresh, W6KTM, from Santa Clara, California, at the Radio Club of America booth.

Mason Matrazzo, KM4SII, is 15 years old and is from Clemmons, North Carolina. Mason recently did an interview with me on Neil Rapp's "Ham Talk Live." He gave an excellent preview of his Hamvention talk on his "DXpedition to Iceland." Mason made a wonderful presentation about his experience in Iceland with the weather and many other factors that he encountered on this fun adventure. He also enjoys swimming and hiking; and is interested in geography.

My next presenter, Violetta Latham, KN4ATT, piqued the curiosity of many hams with her topic of "How I Do Ham Radio Without Internet." Violetta is 13 years old and is from Green Castle, Pennsylvania. She and her family lived "off the grid" for five years. Although she had her Extra Class license, she was never active until her family moved; and the day they set up equipment, she started working towards a goal of contacting 100 countries; and got it all in 11 months. Violetta gave a delightful and informative presentation.

Thomas Cholakov, N1SPY, is 12 years old and is from Pembroke Pines, Florida. Thomas has spoken at two of my youth forums at the Orlando Hamcation. His topic at Hamvention was "Electronics Projects for Young Hams." He presented projects that he has personally done, and from which he learned basic principles of electronics. Thomas is interested in helping other young people develop an interest in radio and in electronics. He got his Extra Class license at 11 and does various projects from chasing satellite signals to building antennas. He records his projects and shares them with friends.

Tucker Dunham, KD2JPM, is 17 and from Washington, New Jersey. He displayed his project, "Solar Powered Digipeaters." He is a junior in the electronics program at Warren County Technical School and is a member of the 721st Mechanized Contest Battalion in Warren County, NJ. In an emergency, moving data is key. Tucker demonstrated a plan in which small, portable, self-sufficient digipeaters are deployed in strategic places to provide a data communica-

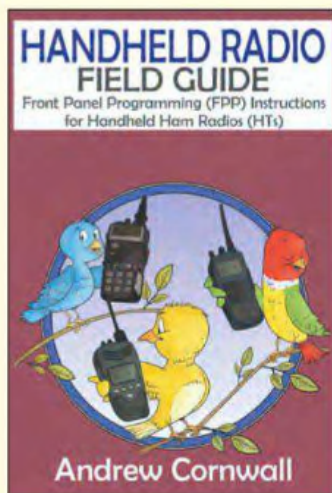


Photo C. Wyatt Law, AI6V, of Long Beach, California, was the winner of this year's "Young Ham Lends a Hand" contest. In this photo, he's helping younger hams with digital contesting.



Photo D. The ICOM 7200 HF rig door prize was won by Hari Rebba VU2SPZ (L), father of RCA Young Achiever Dhruv Rebba, KC9ZJX. Helping Hari hold the carton is S. Suri, VU2MY, the founder of India's National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR).

what's new



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tions backbone. He had an actual model of his project on the stage for members of the audience to examine. This was the wonderful concluding presentation of an exceptionally talented group of young people at the youth forum. I was so proud to have been the moderator.

Lending a Hand

After the presentations were over, I announced the winner of the “Young Ham Lends a Hand” contest. This year's winner is Wyatt Law, AI6V (*Photo C*), who is 18 years old and is from McBride High School in Long Beach, California. Devon Day, KF6KEE, the co-advisor of

the high school's Amateur Radio Communications Club, says local adult clubs call on Wyatt to volunteer for radio events because of his eagerness to help and his knowledge and dependability. Wyatt says his “favorite part of the hobby is spreading it to other youth and contesting.”

This contest is open to any ham age 18 or younger who has demonstrated one of the basic tenets of amateur radio by volunteering for community service; helping the elderly or military personnel; or teaching and/or coaching other young people to get licensed. The winner receives a \$100 prize. Nominations



Photo E. RCA President and DX Engineering Chief Operating Officer Tim Duffy, K3LR (center, smiling), enjoyed the youth forum and later presented DX Engineering gift certificates as prizes.



Photo F. Commemorative telegraph keys were also given as door prizes. Here, Ray Novak, N9JA, from ICOM (2nd from left) and his son (far left) assist RCA “Carole’s Monitors” in distributing prizes.

should be sent to me at <wb2mgp@gmail.com> prior to April 1st of each year.

Ham Community Support

My total appreciation goes to the wonderful sponsors of the 31st Hamvention Youth Forum. ICOM deserves special thanks for its fabulous support and donation of jackets, backpacks, and HTs to each presenter. Ray Novak, N9JA, also donated an IC 7200 HF rig as a door prize (*Photo D*).

The Radio Club of America (RCA) donated a \$100 stipend check along with an RCA Young Achiever award to each presenter. KENWOOD donated a TH7400 HT radio, MFJ donated matching antennas for the ICOM radios along with chest harness pouches for the presenters. Heil Sound donated BM-017 earphones, and QCWA donated \$100 for the "Young Ham Lends a Hand" contest. The Delaware Lehigh Amateur Radio Club donated to that contest as well.

DX Engineering donated ten \$100 gift certificates (*Photo E*), and ARRL donated ten \$50 gift certificates. L'Anse Creuse ARC donated 11 \$50 and \$100 gift cards via MFJ, along with the printing of the youth forum prize tickets. Amateur Callsign, via Pete Varounis, an excellent radio historian, was another sponsor, and AMSAT donated "Getting Started" books for each presenter.

Charles Kirmuss, WØCBK, a member of my RCA Youth Activities Committee donated matching mics for the ICOM HTs and 10 telegraph keys that he had custom made as a 30th Youth Forum commemorative item (*Photo F*). Charles also donated the \$100 stipends for the presenters; as he has done for the past five years. He is a staunch supporter of our youth initiatives.

Special thanks to all the RCA volunteers, better known as "Carole's Monitors," wearing their yellow ribbon necklaces and taking care of everything that needs taking care of at the forum. My friends Bob Roschewsk, KA2PBT, and Kevin Murray, W2KDM, can always be counted on to bring the young ham group they tutor at Warren County Technical High School, to hand out door prize tickets and to assist at the prize table at our forum.

It takes many volunteers, along with the incredible support of the Dayton Amateur Radio Association, to make the youth forum into the special event it is for our young hams every year. I officially invite my readers to recommend young speakers for next year's Hamvention Youth Forum.

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