

From Ages 9 to 18, They Stole the Show at Dayton

It's hard for me to believe that I actually spoke the words, "Welcome to the 27th annual Dayton Youth Forum," while greeting the audience. The theme, the tone, the state of the world is obviously always different every year.

The one constant, however, is the way the young presenters always steal the show. This year I had six technically creative and talented youngsters ranging in age from 9 to 18. They all had varied and interesting topics, and did great jobs in presenting their work.

Our first young presenter at the Youth forum was **Jacob Keogh, KD0NVX**, who is 16 years old. I first met Jacob back in November 2013 when he participated in my Youth Forum at the ARRL Midwest Convention in Lebanon, Missouri. His topic was "Amateur Radio: Development, Social Role, and Modern Benefits."

Garner Fleming, KK4CLY, is 15 years old and spoke about "How DXing Can Increase Your Knowledge of The World." Fellow RCA member and good friend Rich Siff, W4BUE, "discovered" Garner through his numerous efforts with young people getting licensed via his club K4AMG.

Scott Elias, KD0WBB, is 9 years old and hit the ball out of the park with his presentation on "SOTA: Mountain Top Portable Ham Radio." Scott showed fabulous slides of his adventures on Summit On The Air experiences. He is a third generation ham and was rooted on by his dad and grandfather who were right there, as always, with their support.

Rohan Agrawal, KJ6LXV, is quite an accomplished 12-year-old ham. Rohan was on my Youth Panel at Pacificon last November in Silicon Valley, California. This self-motivated youngster's topic

was "Bluetooth APRS Text Messaging and Tweeting Systems." I refer you to <http://www.takingonthegiant.com>. *You gotta love it.*

Next up was **Kyle Watt, KD2DWC**, who is 18 years old. He did an amazing demonstration for us using a 3D printer to make tools for his talk on "Rapid Deployment of Antennas for Portable Operations." Lots of people stopped by the Youth Booth to get an up-close look at how a "band in a bucket" actually works.

The last of the impressive speakers that morning was **Divyam Mishra, KD0OOE**, who is 14 years old. Divyam has a few claims to fame. First, he is a student from the BARC Jr. group (Boulder Amateur Radio Club) who has sent young presenters to 24 of my Youth Forums during the years. Under the tutelage of founders Rip and Ellie Van Winkle, who were unable to attend for health reasons, their speakers "shine" every year. They were missed.

Fortunately for the future of BARC Jr. and the rest of us, a most capable coach stepped up to help Divyam this year. **Paul Bailey, WD0AIO**, worked with Divyam on his presentation "Ham Radio and Your Heart at the Same Frequency." Divyam was the 2013 winner of the "Young Ham Lends a Hand" contest.

Action at the Dayton Youth Booth

Many folks from the audience stopped by the Youth Booth after the forum to talk with the kids and to see their live demos. The spinoff of opportunities for these youngsters, that is a result of presenting at the Youth Forum and from the ability of the adults to speak with them afterwards, is simply incredible. It is an honor to be part of this "ripple effect."

E. Michael McCardel, KC8YLD, was invited by me to speak at both of my forums. He is the vice

wb2mgp@gmail.com



Photo A. Young people flocked to the Dayton Hamvention@ Youth Booth to meet the young Youth Forum presenters and to get an up-close look at the objects of their talks. (Photography courtesy of WB2MGP)

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Photo B. 2014 Dayton Youth Forum speakers included, from left, Jacob Keogh, KD0NVX; Scott Elias, KD0WBB; Divyam Mishra, KD0OOE; Kyle Watt, KD2DWC; Garner Fleming, KK4CLY; and Rohan Agrawal, KJ6LXV.

president for Educational Relations at AMSAT-NA. E. Michael was a terrific speaker who gave invaluable information about resources for teachers and instructors that AMSAT has to offer.

Youth Forum Supporters

Ray Novak, N9JA, from ICOM America surprised the audience by informing us that the entire forum was being streamed live. I will announce the URL well in advance for next year's live streaming.

N9JA and ICOM have supported the Youth Forum for the past 25 years. Besides being a staunch supporter of our forum, ICOM is a major contributor to the Boy Scouts Jamboree and many of the scout activities on the air.

Our good friend Al Eckman, WW8WW, and his team from Lowell High School in Michigan were there to record the whole session and create the DVD sets that we offer for free to anyone who requests them.

We kicked off the 3-hour forum by inviting two Dayton Amateur Radio



Photo C. Longtime Youth Forum Director Carol Perry, WB2MGP, found it hard to believe she welcomed the packed room for "the 27th annual Dayton Youth Forum. The theme, the tone, the state of the world is obviously always different every year." As always, the forum was a huge hit at the Dayton Hamvention®.

Association members who are running the Dave Kalter Memorial Youth DX Adventure to invite members of the audience to participate and spread the word about this exciting opportunity for young hams. **Don Dubon, N6JRL**, and **Jim Storms, AB8YK**, explained that this year three young hams and their parents will be traveling free to PJ2T in Curacao to operate as DX.

It should be easy to get WAK (worked all kids). On a personal note, Dave, who became a silent key in November 2013, was a dedicated, wonderful person who advocated for young hams. We became friends when he was in charge of forums at Dayton, and I will miss him and his warm ways every year. Be sure to look

up the YDXA on the website and think about recommending it to youngsters you may know. The 2014 trip was July 14 -18, so look into it for next year.

Winners All Around the Forum

The last hour of the forum, as always, was spent giving out prizes to the young presenters, door prizes for children in the audience and for the supportive adults who make up our "love" audience.

I personally thank all the very generous co-sponsors of our Youth Forum: ICOM America, Kenwood, MFJ Enterprises, Radio Club of America, Charles Kirmuss, Ten-Tec, L'Anse Creuse ARC, AMSAT, Delaware

Lehigh ARC, CQ magazine, and Slow Spokes Bicycle Club.

Two ham friends who have made themselves indispensable to the logistics and behind the scenes running of a smooth 3-hour forum are president emeritus of RCA **Stan Reubenstein, WA6RNU**, and **Ralph Irish, W8ROI**, our prize manager.

Youths Reaching Out to Their Communities

The winners of the 2014 "Young Ham Lends a Hand" contest, originally sponsored by **Evan Rolek, K9SQG**, and myself were announced at the forum.

Anna Veal, W0ANT, and **Robert Mohr, KC2WCQ**, were this year's winners. You will be reading more about these young, service-minded hams in a future column.

It's not too early to recommend youngsters who would like to be presenters at the 2015 Youth forum to contact me. We already have 3 presenters signed up who were in attendance at this year's forum.

Hope to see more and more supportive hams coming to the forum every year! It's a wonderful movement to be part of.



Photo D. The Youth Booth had a steady stream of visitors — both young and old — throughout the Hamvention@ weekend in May.



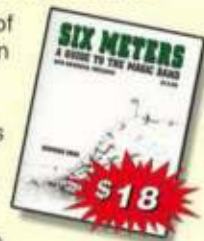
Photo E. There were many volunteers who helped out at the Dayton Youth Booth.

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