

The Essence of a great Ham Radio Operator

by Dave Lugo, W5TAZ



Four score and 7 years ago, our fore fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty by those wishing to secure a better life. These were great words spoken by a great man. Abe Lincoln had no idea the enduring legacy these words would instill in his fellow country men.

Old Abe felt all men were created equal, and strived to make it so. His famous speech lasted only 2 minutes, it was over with so quickly that the photographer didn't get a photo of him giving the speech. The only photo of the historic event was one of the president leaving the podium after the speech was over.

I can relate ham radio to his words today. Social stature aside, all of us in the hobby have a common thread that binds us together, we all love Ham radio. No social classes, just license classes. With the right amount of desire anyone can have the license class they want.

Technician, General and Extra, Doctor, Lawyer, Indian Chief as well as the blue collar grunts that make this country strong. All alike having earned through the process of studying and taking the required tests have earned the privilege to play Ham Radio.

Those of us with these privileges, remembering the good ol' days of CB radio, wishing to secure a future for ourselves and our families on the ham bands to be free to radio with out the burden of Smokey reports, or someone keying on you and saying "Bam, Bam, Bam" or asking "Are you Mad About It?", secure a lifetime of good friends, camaraderie, technical assistance and knowledge for the advancement of the art of ham radio.

Most operators, coming from the 11 meter band, leave it behind never to return again. Some of us still return on a rare occasion to visit the friends we have left behind, or do a little recruiting for our hobby. It's not the band you run, It's how you run it!

Being of a clear conscience and pure heart, in the pursuit of the ultimate radio contact one must inevitably find himself in competition with others. Even though we seek to "out do" our often worthy opponents, we still try to help them do as well as ourselves and tend to share our great contacts and rejoice for them as they are successful.

Always being there to help out those in need is the backbone of the everyday ham radio operator. A fine radio operator is worth his weight in gold when it is his time to shine. Ready to go the extra mile for his fellow hams and the community in which he lives. He always runs a good clean station and never operates in a way that lessens the enjoyment of others on the bands.

Making one's self available to leave their family and serve their communities in those times that are often dark and trouble some is a worthy endeavor indeed. Although it may come at the most inopportune time for us personally, we still do what our communities need from us when we can. Working diligently to aid anyone in need of our communications skills

and being humble in the process is a way of life for the amateur radio operator.

Most of the Ham radio operators I know are good honest folks. Able to be trusted and generally great people to deal with. Being around this caliber of fine people forces me to be better myself. How can it not? My grandpa used to say "You dance with the one that brought you".

The thing about ham radio is that it is such a diverse hobby that everyone gets what they want out of it. If you are satisfied with being a technician class operator then it is ok. If you want to go all the way to Extra, then go for it!

There are so many different modes of operation that once you find what you want to get out of the hobby, seek out the operators that can help you with the information you need and set your self up the best station you can. Most are eager to help and all you have to do is ask.

Having such a diverse hobby with such a wide variety of interests is an asset to those we help from time to time. If one mode will not get the job done, there are always others that will.

With the onset of the tragedy in New York city, we as hams must prepare ourselves for what may be some very dark days in the future. Many hams like to tinker with QRP rigs. Small but very efficient someday they may provide much needed communications for the country.

CW, the forgotten mode of operation is a very good example of what we as hams can provide if needed. The communications of our great nation will surely be attacked if war breaks out and we as hams will be ready to provide help in this and many others.

Learn your skills well and be prepared, this is the essence of a great ham radio operator. Be there when you are needed, Elmer all you can to ensure there are more of us out there, hold nothing back and be the best Radio Amateur you can be!

Learn how to work world wide propagation, learn the characteristics of propagation so you can make an educated guess on what kind of band conditions will be prevalent on any given day.

Being a Ham is a big part of my life. Overall, a positive experience has came out of it. I'm sure I have allot to learn in some areas and someday I may reach that point where I feel I have nothing left to do radio wise. But one thing for sure, between now and then I will continue to do my best to be as good an operator as most of the hams I have met as well as those that will come into my life in the future setting the standard that I try to impose on myself.

Someday if the time for me to shine ever presents itself on one of these dark days, I only hope that I to, can step up to the plate and show everyone what the **"Essence of a great Ham Radio Operator"** is.

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God Bless America!
Land of the Free, Home of the Brave,
Defenders of the Faith!