

## President's Message

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### **IS AMATEUR RADIO NOT COOL ?**

I really enjoy writing this little piece every couple of months. It gives me a chance to wax poetic, or should that be prophetic? The collective we spend a lot of time at meetings, coordination boards, breakfasts, campouts, and electronic store counters talking about ham radio and what a great hobby it is. Alternatively, we spend a lot of time complaining about that ^\$&\$&@# who ties up repeater air time because he/she doesn't know when to quit. Great, lots of fun. But something is missing – does anyone see any “kids” around. I grew up in the 60's when shortwave radio was a mind boggling futuristic pursuit. Now its Internet, chat rooms, and texting. Is Amateur Radio not cool ?

Over the past two months, I helped teach an electronics merit badge class for my son's scout troop (he happens to be a 14 year-old extra class). Lots of kids – lots of soldering, lots of ooh gee look at that's – not one even asked about how to become a ham. Is Amateur Radio not cool?

Time to stop and think. Are we the last practitioners of the hobby? All of the 220 spectrum management won't make a difference if there are no new radios (forgive me, those of you who actually know how to modify a radio and know International Crystal's address by heart) and no new people out there to use them. I used to bemoan the appliance operator, now I welcome him/her. We need to spend some real time encouraging our friends and progeny that Amateur Radio is every bit as cool as text messaging. That when the power goes out, so does the internet and probably the cell phones. That when mother nature unleashes her fury, it is the hams, not the “texters” who get the message through. We are a valuable community resource that supports emergency communication free of charge to the community we serve. We need to put our best foot forward at bike rallies, fund raisers, etc., to show not only our peers, but our kids, that radio is not only important, but its fun as well. Amateur Radio is an important part of our lives and the lives of our communities. We are more than just antennas and (heaven forbid) TVI. We give more than we take and are happy to serve when called upon. Above all, we are cool.

See you at the meeting