

Amateur Radio

The original "talk radio"

Information on Amateur "Ham" Radio in the Columbus, Georgia & Phenix City, Alabama area.

More Information

- Columbus Amateur Radio Club
Meets 2nd Thursday
Main Columbus Library 7:00PM
www.w4cvy.org
info@w4cvy.org

- Russell County Radio Club
Meets 1st Thursday
Russell Co. EOC 7:00PM (ET)
www.rcrc.us
ki4map@rcrc.us

- American Radio Relay League
www.arrl.org
or
www.hello-radio.org

How do I get started?

The entry-level license is called the Technician license. Volunteers give the written tests locally.

Information on study materials may be found at the www.arrl.org web site.

Morse Code is not required for any ham license but still in common use by many hams who enjoy it.

Contact either of the clubs listed above. Come to a meeting or send us an e-mail. Valley area hams can answer your questions and help you get on the air!

Ham Radio... *They Still Do That?*

Amateur Radio is alive and well in the Chattahoochee Valley and worldwide! In the area from Columbus to Auburn there are several hundred licensed hams. Clubs meet monthly in Columbus and in Russell and Lee Counties in Alabama

What Does a Ham Do?

Amateur Radio is a broad hobby based on 2-way radio. Here are some of the things that you might try:

- Talk to other local hams using a hand-held radio or a radio in your home or vehicle. We're a pretty friendly bunch (and, we're known to look for excuses to have a meal together).
- Talk "DX" to distant hams. Track how many states, countries, continents or remote islands you have contacted.
- Send & collect QSL cards to document your contacts.
- Connect your computer to a ham radio and make text-based contacts (without the internet).
- Participate in SkyWarn Weather nets. When severe weather threatens the valley, hams get on the radio to relay real-time eyewitness weather reports to the National Weather Service.
- Participate in Field Day every June and other special events. Local hams set up temporary operating locations for fellowship and to demonstrate emergency readiness.
- Use APRS to track high-altitude balloons or satellites.
- Join a DXpedition to a remote location & get on the air from there.
- Point a directional antenna skyward to see if you can make a contact via satellite or even by bouncing your signal off the moon!
- Build your own antenna or radio components from scratch or from a kit.

Public Service

Amateur Radio stations are in place in every hospital and every county emergency operations center in the Columbus region plus in some state and federal agencies. In addition, several major area businesses have ham rigs. Volunteers have earned their ham licenses to be able to operate these stations if

normal communications are disrupted or overwhelmed during an emergency.

During the aftermath of hurricane Katrina, hundreds of amateur radio operators responded to the Gulf region and volunteered thousands of man-hours providing emergency communications.

Who are Hams?

Men, women, kids, teens and senior citizens, anybody can be a ham.

Some are interested in electronics, some just like to talk. There is no age limit, upper or lower.

Locally, you will find city, state and federal employees, private businesspeople, soldiers, and white and blue collar employees.

Hams That You Know

- Walter Cronkite
- Gen Curtis LeMay
- Brig Gen Paul Tibbets
- Col Marie Collins
- Chet Atkins
- Joe Walsh
- Kevin Mitnick
- Art Bell
- Herman Munster

So, It's Like CB?

Well, not really. Both are two-way radio services and many hams have or have used citizens band radios too, but there are differences.

CB Radio is designed for short-range, low power voice use. The normal range is 1-5 miles with a power limit of 4-12 watts and all the channels are in one band near 27MHz. Modifying a CB radio is illegal.

Most ham radio operations are conducted in 14 bands between 1.8MHz to 420 MHz, although other bands are available up to around 275 GHz. The maximum legal power is 1500 watts and transmissions may be voice, video, Morse Code and a variety of digital modes. Hams can modify or even build their own radios.