

REPORT OF THE

ADHOC COMMITTEE ON SCOUTING

Document 28

Activity during the period from July to January has been rather limited. The staging of the Boy Scout Jamboree in the US and the EuroJam in London during the summer of 2005 provided distractions to the routine day-to-day scout activities. A great deal of the effort of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) was directed away from typical programs such as Radio Merit Badge, Jamboree-on-the-Air, and similar elements of interest to this committee.

In the midst of a scouting year of National and International programming, some basic activity of the committee continued. Effort continues to:

- Examine and re-tool the brochure material currently published by the ARRL. It has been the general consensus of the committee that this material is inadequate and needs to be re-examined with a view to bringing it in tune with today's youth. In the experience of the committee members, approaching the introduction of Amateur Radio through the eyes of an adult simply does not get the message across to the average youth.
- Based on a survey of the "upper management" (Council Commissioners and their staffs) of the NE Region of BSA it was determined that:
 1. A very small number of Councils encourage their units to participate in Jamboree-on-the-Air each fall. While there are shining examples of troops and packs enthusiastically participating, the number is small in comparison to the huge number of troops and packs in the BSA program.
 2. When asked if these leaders would like to schedule a Council-wide informational presentation on Amateur Radio and its emergency communications role, the response was 100% positive.

Other issues that have been raised by committee members as a result of their investigations point to the need to get away from the idea that our (ARRL) program is aimed at recruiting new hams. The emphasis should be aimed at the fun activities; making Amateur Radio an enjoyable experience. One respondent said, "Emphasis should be on the fun things like ARDF and the digital modes. De-emphasize 'talking'. This will naturally come later. Focus on events including radio control, satellite activities." He also noted that older kids are interested in public service and emergency communications.

It must be realized that Radio Merit Badge and the components of the Amateur Radio program such as Jamboree-on-the-Air are but a minute part of the overall scouting experience. They do not take on the importance that we would like. The aim of the committee is to improve the image that Amateur Radio presents to the youth in the scouting programs. This can be accomplished by vastly improving the product the ARRL provides.

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