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Who are you?

In the past month, the ARRL conducted two surveys for information about PIOs. One was done using CONTACT! (last month's edition) and the other based on the PR email reflector. While the number of responses to the email survey was much larger, the results of both surveys were very similar. In the coming months we will be releasing the results of those surveys and discussing their implications.

Three of the key questions looked at (a) how people came into the role of PIO, (b) their background and (c) the levels of activity they had as PIOs.

a) How were you appointed to your position as ARRL PIO?

I was appointed by my SM	39	28%
I was appointed by my PIC	5	4%
I was appointed by my SM/PIC and also work for my club/group	14	10%
I was appointed by my club/group	38	27%
I was not appointed, I just volunteered myself	43	31%
Total	139	100%

b) Do you have a formal background in PR or news reporting?

Yes, a lot	34	23%
Some	28	19%
A little	19	13%
No	68	46%
Total	149	100%

c) How many stories have you personally sent to commercial media outlets in the past year? (Newspaper, Radio, TV, commercial websites)

More than 12	19	13%
6-11	21	14%
3-5	42	28%
1-2	35	23%
None	32	21%
Total	149	100%



When Talking to the Press, Don't Forget...

When we talk about Amateur Radio and promoting it as a learning tool for students, many hams forget that there is a major program that has been in place for years that has done remarkable work.

Mark Spencer runs the Education and Technology Program at ARRL. During the summer, teachers from everywhere come to the ARRL headquarters in Newington and learn to present technologies and wireless communications skills to students in new and exciting ways. For the staff at HQ, this is also a fun week as we truly enjoy seeing the excitement and enthusiasm of the teachers.

The results of the program have been significant increases in the levels of motivation and understanding of the students whose teachers attended the program. Many schools have

installed Amateur Radio stations, formed clubs and gone on to share their "discovery" of the possibilities of Amateur Radio in the classroom with others.

Brian Lloyd, WB6RQN, of Cameron Park, CA recently wrote about his experiences since attending the ETP.

*"I know that the ETP (Education & Technology Program) is not intended to emphasize getting one's license, but all the kids here at the school have gotten behind the concept and so has the administration. As of this past weekend *all* of my students who started in the Wireless Technology program at [the school] last year have now earned at least a technician license and all the students coming up are bugging me to let them participate too.*

And our repeater has become a big hit. We are starting to get teachers and students from other schools checking in via echolink. This has also prompted students to take radios home and monitor for activity. As I had hoped, this has motivated the students who are more interested in the act of communications than in the technology. Still, it requires them to understand something about the technology they are using so one aspect pulls along the other."

As you discuss Amateur Radio with the media, don't forget about the ETP program and the work ARRL members are doing to raise the levels of science education in the schools.



[News About Media for 2009](#)

In the dozens of media related publications that arrive at HQ monthly, there has been a consistent concern in the past months.

2009 is shaping up to be the *worst* advertising income year in decades for local media. Analysts believe double-digit declines could be led by spot television (-16%) and newspapers (-12%), analysts say. This will be especially bad for companies whose primary business is local TV and newspapers. Surprisingly, one of the primary problems is the bad automotive market. Car dealers are big advertisers with local media. Another is the growing transition to web based news outlets for local info and competition by major networks for national and world info.

For the PIO, this is a mixed opportunity. While there may be fewer local media options in your town, they will probably be far more ready to run with a good story that has true interest for residents. It also indicates that PIOs should not ignore local web based news sites when sending out releases.





Digital TV

FCC Calls on Amateur Radio Service for Assistance

Earlier in December, the ARRL received a request from the FCC asking that ARRL members to provide technical educational assistance to their communities concerning the FCC-mandated digital television ([DTV](#)) conversion scheduled for February 17, 2009.

According to ARRL Media and Public Relations Manager Allen Pitts, W1AGP, Amateur Radio clubs across the country are being asked to develop and implement plans to provide information throughout January and February about the DTV conversion in their areas. The FCC is leaving it up to the clubs to decide how to do this, as local groups understand the communities in ways that the FCC does not. Each community is a little different, Pitts said, so plans carried out by the clubs will vary from community to community. Interested groups should contact their ARRL Section Manager.

Pitts stressed that hams should *not* make "house calls," sell any equipment or do actual installations; the request is only to distribute technical information and FCC materials. He commented: "As we all know, some folks just never get the message until too late. Materials for presentations, education and many other activities are available [online](#). Beginning early January, FCC staff will contact Section Managers and leaders of interested clubs and, where possible, arrange to meet to share even more information, audio, visual and printed materials, as well as and training aids, with the clubs involved this effort. We know the time is short, but your aid in this now will be appreciated."

In early January, Pitts said that the FCC will ask Section Managers for the names and contact information of the volunteering groups. The FCC staff will then make contact with the groups, learn their plans and provide them with the media, brochures or other materials groups may need in this effort. Materials also can be downloaded from the [DTV Conversion Web site](#). FCC regional staff members may even come and visit with larger groups to aid in implementation of the group's plans.

"I really appreciate the willingness of the ARRL to actively participate in helping Americans with the transition to DTV and your helpful suggestions," said George Dillon, FCC Deputy Bureau Chief for Field Operations. "The DTV transition will be an historic moment in the evolution of TV. Broadcast television stations can offer viewers improved picture and sound quality and new programming choices. All-digital broadcasting also will allow us to significantly improve public safety communications and will usher in a new era of advanced wireless services such as the widespread deployment of wireless

broadband. Our goal is to engage the amateur community on a cooperative basis to help with the DTV outreach and to educate consumers."

Dillon continued that local Amateur Radio clubs might consider offering technical advice to consumers via telephone to those consumers who may encounter difficulty with the installation and setting up of their converter box. "Any assistance...will greatly help in the efforts of the FCC to ensure a smooth transition to DTV on February 17, 2009."

Pitts advises interested groups to keep in mind that they are to provide technical educational help only: "At no time should the hams enter someone else's home or install equipment. They should not broker or sell conversion boxes in any way. Clubs can provide such things as a call-in telephone number for technical help, make presentations at meetings, do demonstrations at malls or give talks to other groups -- whatever works in their community."

<http://www.dtv.gov/>

<http://www.dtv.gov/outreach.html>

(By the way... Did you know many states have laws that require anyone who actually works on, modifies or installs TV reception equipment for others, even if not paid, to have a TV Repair or TV Installer license? See comments at end.)



Resolve to be Ready

The national Ready campaign will also be running early in 2009 with the theme "resolve to be ready". Their campaign toolkit and logos are at <http://www.ready.gov/america/about/resolve2009.html>



Dr. Nunley – good, basic PR advice for free

Sherri Brower, W4STB, Section Manager for S. FL, spotted this website and sent it in.

<http://drnunley.com/articles/index.htm>

It has a lot of very good information in there on many topics helpful to a beginning PIO. While it is targeted to home-based businesses, many of his ideas and topics fit ham clubs and groups too. Here are some of the sections he has...

[How to Use TV, Newspaper, and Radio to Promote Your Web Site](#)--the number one way companies market their Internet presence.

[How to Get FREE Media Publicity with On-Line Press Releases!](#) Don't spend thousands advertising when the media will do it for FREE. But you have to know how!

[Seven Headlines to Energize Your Ads, Sales Letters, and Web Site Copy.](#) Effective ways to get a prospect's attention, build interest, and get the sale.

[Four Things You Must Do To Get Classified Ads That SELL!](#) How to write them, where to put them, and what makes people buy. Don't buy another classified ad before reading Kevin's article.

[Six Ways to Make Your Web Site SELL!](#) You've got your website up, but you aren't getting any sales. Here's what to do to get the dollars pouring in!

[How to Get Your Service, Product, or Idea on TV News!](#) Surveys show that people pay closer attention to local TV News than any other media source. So how can you get your business on local TV News for FREE?

[How to Get People to Trust Your On-Line Marketing!](#) Recent surveys show that many people don't buy things on the 'Net because they don't yet trust this new form of media. Here's what you can do to reverse that trend and energize your on-line marketing.

[How to Use Talk Radio to Promote Your Business for FREE!](#) Here are the step-by-step details on how to harness this popular and powerful media.

[Super-Charge Your Marketing With an Integrated Media Attack.](#)

[Starters for Start-ups.](#) Five Essential Steps for Marketing Your New Business.

[Public Speaking.](#) How to talk your way to an endless stream of new customers (even if you're shy of crowds!).

[Creative Marketing.](#) How to get great marketing ideas any time!

[How to Get Commercials That Work...](#)that bring in customers and make you money!

[How to Advertise on TV on a Home-Based Budget.](#) Welcome to the digital TV revolution...going on now. Incredible opportunities on the horizon for small business. It's the biggest change in TV in 50 years. Don't miss it!



Quote of the Month

In any moment of decision the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the *worst* thing you can do is nothing."

--[Theodore Roosevelt](#),



Seven Things to Remember When Making a Presentation

Gary Stine is a teacher and trainer who specializes in public speaking and has worked with major corporate leaders. He has a very good tips list for presentations! While the list is from 1996, people don't change that fast and the points are very valid.

"You set yourself apart by speaking before groups, just because so many people are intimidated by the idea. But there really is no need to be; you simply need the tools to do the job right. For example, focusing on communicating clearly instead of on trying to "wow 'em" often helps presenters to channel their energies constructively.

"The seven pointers below offer sound advice that will help you deliver more effective presentations with greater confidence..."

See his pointers at

<http://www.fiveoclockclub.com/articles/1996/11-96-GaryStine.html>





The Last Word

I didn't mean to fib. In fact, at the time I thought it was the truth. But for several weeks now the Chariman of the PR Committee, Bill Morine, and I have been joking about my telling him the year was "front loaded" and things get very quiet at the end back in January. It has been far from the truth.

Already in the works are plans for new audio and video public service announcements, updating the three major campaign themes and wrapping up things for 2008. Then came the email and phone call.

Bill, N2COP, and I had been talking about the DTV conversion issue and, while it is *not* a ham radio issue, it presented possibilities for us. Bill lives in Wilmington, NC where they already went through the conversion. I did some checking and learned about other groups working with the government in this effort. I thought for a while that pairing up with someone like the Meals on Wheels folks would be a nice thing, but then learned about many states having licensing laws that would cause legal hassles. In addition, we've all seen the YouTube video of the daffy, elderly lady who cannot figure it out. I can also visualize her wondering who took her diamonds. It wasn't worth it; actual hands-on help was dangerous and I had dropped the whole idea. Then in early December came the emails and call with George Dillon of the FCC - they asked for our help. So I quickly planned out a way in which hams *could* respond to the request in their own way but still stay out of trouble, and also make sure it was achievable in the short time left.

The Section Managers are the key. Of all people, they know their clubs best. I asked them to talk to their clubs about it. Requests went out on the ODV and SM reflectors five days before anyone else knew about it. But I also set things up so that the FCC itself will be providing materials and aids to the clubs identified through them. In this way SMs are not only asking clubs to do things, but they are also assured the clubs will receive the resources they need to accomplish it. Good leadership not only involves asking, it also must be enabling.

In the coming weeks we will see how it all plays out. For those groups who have taken this opportunity, it presents many positive PR and networking opportunities in a cooperative effort with other groups and organizations you may not normally meet. Even as I write this, several Section Managers have clubs already "chomping at the bit." For that, I say Thank You. I know the timeline is short, but that's not of our choosing. We can use this opportunity, or pass it by.

According to the plan agreed upon, field staff from the FCC will be in contact with Section Managers early in January to see which groups would like help and what

materials they need. Depending on the location and numbers involved, FCC staff may even come and speak with your group. If you have not done so, please talk to club leaders in your areas and, if they want to be involved, have them tell their Section Manager quickly.

-W1AGP