

Amateurs in Action

Recounts of ham radio operators who have used their time and skills to help others in a time of need



Seizure in Exmoor

Just before 11 pm, on the warm summer Friday of 18 August 2017, Mike Everett M6MGE of Bristol, UK, was sitting at home with his radio tuned to the local (GB3WR) repeater. Suddenly, a request for help from a man camping in Exmoor, over 60 miles away, came over his radio. The caller announced that his 12-year-old daughter May was suffering from an epileptic seizure, and needed immediate medical help, but they had no cell signal where his family was staying.



Mike Everett M6MGE

I'm a home amateur radio operator, and we just use it to chat to people around the country and further afield, said Mike. But very occasionally something happens like this. I've been licensed for five years and this is the first time I've ever had to do this. Some people would be a bit hesitant, but I was more than happy to help.

The 24-year-old electronics student heard the call made by Jon Matthews G6ASK, who had taken his mobile radio with him when he and his family went camping at Exmoor. May said that the type of seizure that she was experiencing was life-threatening because it prevents oxygen from going to the brain for way too long. *I ran to my car and called on the radio for emergency assistance and just waited for someone to come back to me, Jon said. Mike called 999 right away, and was able to relay messages, including medical instructions and updates, between dispatch and Jon. Within twenty minutes, paramedics arrived at the campsite and took May to a nearby hospital, where she was treated. If it weren't for us with radios, I don't think she would have got help in time — it could have been a worse outcome.*

According to first-responder Garry Austin-Thompson, who was first on the scene, *She suffered from extreme epilepsy, and it was vital to restore her oxygen levels, particularly to the brain. There wasn't a moment to lose...and the radio hams played a vital part.* He said it sounds like she'll make a full recovery.



Mike, May, and Jon reunited in person



Garry Austin-Thompson

You can read this story in the [BBC](#), the [West Somerset Free Press](#), and the [Mirror](#).