

Microvolt

Monthly newsletter of the Utah Amateur Radio Club

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Activities and Events



Hams just wanna have fun. Each ham has their own version of what's fun, because beauty is in the eye of the operator. Often, the modern ham finds joy in not just strictly radio, like with contesting or nets, but as it's combined with an event or activity, such as an historical date, an ultra marathon, or the Santa Net as well. These make amateur radio seem a little more relevant, attached to something they might be acquainted with; they make radio appear as a means to an end, not the end itself. So, what kind of activities involving amateur radio do you consider fun?

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Cover – Activities and events

The reason we have activities lies in the root of the word itself: we are an active bunch, admittedly some more active than others. Do we absolutely need activities to keep our interest in ham radio? For many, not really, but they *are* somewhat motivational for a lot of newer amateurs, the ones who haven't been with the craft long enough to experience the full spectrum of what it has to offer.

Some organized activities

There are many great “activities” that are not included in of this discussion, such as club meetings, potluck dinners, Morse code practice, and exam administration, even awards, such as [WAS](#), [WAC](#), and [DXCC](#). The kinds of activities and events we're referring to are those whose primary goal or purpose is not radio itself, but uses radio as a means to achieve the goal, and include the following:

- Preparedness Fairs
- EmComm (emergency communication)
- Club, civic, church, and fair presentations
- [Special event stations](#) that highlight an historical milestone or achievement, such as the Apollo moon landing or the Transcontinental Railroad
- Field trips (to a repeater or [WebSDR](#) site) that include an amateur station
- Fox hunting, ARDF (amateur radio direction-finding), and triangulation
- Digital (FT8, mesh, Lora, APRS) exploration
- Weather spotting and reporting
- [POTA](#), [SOTA](#), [JOTA](#), [YOTA](#), [IOTA](#), etc., are reasons for people to build something manageable and get outdoors, and maybe even outside the high-noise environment of the city
- DIY and [homebrew](#) projects, even programming
- [Amateur radio RVing](#)
- Researching and [writing about radio topics](#)
- Parades, celebrations
- Festivals, parties
- Aeronautics (aviation, spacecraft, drones)
- Bike, foot, and road races (ultra-marathons, Baja)
- Ballooning
- [Teaching amateur radio courses](#)

Reasons to stay active

The term “remaining active” has a dual-purpose meaning, in that 1) we often seek reasons to engage



in more radio-related functions by participating in activities that *sustain amateur radio* and 2) we often look for ways to stay (physically, mentally, emotionally) active by using amateur radio as a reason for us to *sustain the activity*. For example, setting up a radio station in an ultra-marathon foot race gives us a reason to provide radio service in a meaningful way, while giving us a chance to be outdoors and enjoy the craft in yet another way.



Social activity

Because ours is a hobby *of* introverts *by* introverts, we often shudder at the *social* word. It's very comfortable and convenient to remain behind closed doors, yet be able to contact the world from an armchair. Still, we've gained an unfortunate reputation for being sedentary because of our propensity for being anti-social, due in some part to the technical nature of our craft. If at all physically possible, get outside (your house, your mental barriers) and operate outside the box. Hams just want to have fun.

Microvolt editorial staff