

“Responsibilities, Actions and Reactions”

(Part two)

During the few short years that I have been a licensed Amateur Radio operator, I have heard all types of and examples of Amateur operators on the air. Some good and some not so good.

This brings about, “WHAT ARE OUR RESPONSIBILITIES,” and how should we react with operators. We’ve all had “ELMERS.” If you became a Ham 25 years ago, or further back, or even in recent years in some cases, do you remember being corrected when you made an Oops, and when you were corrected you took it as training and followed the rules and procedures, and you did not blow up in their face the way a lot of people do these days. Well, of course, you took it as training because chances are that if you had reacted badly you may not be on the air today.

The following is an excerpt from one of Riley Hollingsworth’s many speeches. There are a lot of good things in it that needs to be heard by a lot of folks on our bands today.

- (1.) Giving a little ground—even if you have a right not to—in order to preserve Amateur Radio and not cause it to get a bad name or hasten the day when it becomes obsolete.
2. Being aware that we all love Amateur Radio, and there’s no need to damage or disgrace it just to save face.
3. Keeping personal conflicts off the air. Settle your arguments on the telephone, the internet or in person. Just keep them off the air and do not involve the entire amateur community.
4. Operating so that if a neighbor, niece or nephew or news reporter hears you, that person will be impressed with Amateur Radio.

5. Realizing that every right carries responsibilities, and just because you may have a right to do certain things doesn't mean its right to do them in every circumstance.
6. Not operating so that whoever hears you becomes sorry they ever got into Amateur Radio in the first place.

OK, we are all familiar with the Amateurs Code, but let's look closer at what the six parts of it means and says to us.

The Amateur's Code

ONE

"The Amateur is Considerate...He never knowingly uses the air in such a way as to lessen the pleasure of others."

*Tuning up on nets for long periods, excessive mic gain or running power when not needed all tend to aggravate our neighbors on the air and lessens everyone's enjoyment of being on the net or in the group, we need to ignore it when someone does this and not feed their egos by saying things. Obscenity and suggestive or vulgar language are inappropriate on the amateur bands.

TWO

"The Amateur is Loyal...He offers his loyalty, encouragement and support to his fellow radio amateurs, his local club and the American Radio Relay League, through which Amateur Radio is represented."

If you are not a member of the ARRL, join and if you are a member of the ARRL support them and keep on being a member. Is everything the ARRL does to my liking? Certainly not, but quitting the League will not give you the leverage you need to make your voice heard to your Section Manager, Vice-director, or Division

Director. The same goes for being a member of your local club and the Ares/Races.

THREE

"The Amateur is Progressive...He keeps his station abreast of science. It is well built, efficient and controllable. His operating practice is above reproach."

*No, this doesn't mean that you own all of the latest gear to the exclusion of food and clothing. Rather, is your equipment in good repair? Is your transmitted audio clear and comfortable to listen to? Is your transmitted CW free of chirps and key-clicks? Also, is your power supply clean so that your transmitted signal is free of AC hum? Do you have control of your equipment such as the VOX and other systems?

Not only should the equipment be kept abreast of science, but the radio amateur needs to remain on the cutting edge of operating techniques and rules changes. Part 97 continues to evolve with changes in the technology used by amateurs and with changes in society at large.

FOUR

"The Amateur is Friendly...Slow and patient sending of traffic when requested, friendly advice and counsel to the beginner, kindly assistance, cooperation and consideration for the interests of others; these are the marks of the amateur spirit."

*Be an Elmer! It certainly is difficult to seemingly answer the same questions over and over again through the years, but it's something we must do to maintain a healthy and vibrant Amateur Radio Service. All of us were beginners at some point in ham radio. Sometimes we just need to step back and reflect on the patience of those that helped us. Remember, we only pay back our Elmers by being a good Elmer to others.

FIVE

"The Amateur is Balanced...Radio is his hobby. He never allows it to interfere with any of the duties he owes to his home, his job, his school, or his community."

SIX

"The Amateur is Patriotic...His knowledge and his station are always ready for the service of his country and his community."

*The history of amateur radio is rich with the accounts of amateurs who have performed admirably in times of disaster for their communities or when their country called in time of crisis. Even today amateur radio operators train themselves and are ready to track storms, assist in damage assessment, assist public safety personnel when their communications are disrupted, and provide a vital link for families trying to reach loved ones in the first hours after disaster has struck. From Kuwait to Oklahoma City to Kosovo to East Timor, also the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and hurricanes Katrina and Wilma in 2005, and other hotspots around the world, hams were there.

Of all the points in the Amateur's Code, Number Six is the most important. In fact it is for this reason alone that the Amateur Radio Service remains chartered and has access to spectrum that is likely worth well into the trillions of dollars. Enjoy it, have fun, but above all, remember that we are a service and if we should ever prove to no longer perform our function as a service to the public, amateur radio will cease to exist.