Gateway Council, Prairie du Chien (WI) Troop 320 JOTA Report

Local council name and number: Gateway Area Council, Seven Rivers District
Unit number: Troop 320
Amateur call sign used: KB9SCT
Amateur call signs heard and worked:
K1BG
KE5GYQ
N5TBC
AB5A
W8STA
W2S
W7PX
K6QWR

States contacted:
Massachusetts
Mississippi
Texas
Ohio
New Jersey
California
Montana

Countries contacted:
United States

Number of stations participating in your JOTA event: 1

Number of participants in JOTA:
Cub Scouts: 0
Boy Scouts: 11
Venturers: 0
Girl Scouts: 0
Radio amateurs: 2
Visitors: 0

We enjoyed our first ever Gateway Area Council Prairie du Chien Troop 320 Jamboree On The Air on Saturday, October 15, 2011 from noon-4pm CDT. Preparation for the event began earlier in the week at a regularly scheduled weekly meeting where the Scouts were presented a short introduction to Amateur Radio by two local ham radio operators, Todd Knapp (N9ZWY) and Mark Oehler (KB9SCT). In preparation for the event on Saturday, they learned how to spell their names phonetically.
The Jamboree On The Air event was held in conjunction with a fall camporee that included a hike and marching in an Oktoberfest parade. It was held at the Scout headquarters at LaRiviere Park located just south of Prairie du Chien, WI, in Southwestern Wisconsin.

There were two HF stations set up using an Icom IC-7410, an Icom 756 Pro II, two Hustler vertical HF antennas were used, a 4BTV and a 5BTV. Band conditions on HF were intermittent throughout the day and the contacts were made on 10, 15 and 20 meters. With the seemingly massive pile-ups on the calling frequencies, the Scouts learned that it sometimes takes quite a bit of patience and persistence to make it through to achieve that one contact. Names, locations and favorite sports teams were the most popular exchanges.

Narrative from Todd, N9ZWY: In terms of the things that were amusing, there were situations where one of the boys would sit down with me at the radio not being very overjoyed at first, but when he realized he was talking to another boy clear across the country, he perked right up. Honestly there were a few boys who fell into that category. Some of the questions the boys asked were pretty hilarious, in terms of the fact that they really didn't know what to ask. The cool part is that every one of the boys did their best and all but a couple seemed to really enjoy the experience.

Many of the Scouts were amazed at the stations that were heard, especially some of the international stations including Austria, Great Britain and Ireland on 10 meters.

It was a great day and a great experience for the Scouts, Leaders and Amateurs. Respectfully submitted by Mark Oehler, KB9SCT