

## Ramblings – A Ham Editorial

On-Air Training

Idaho Falls Bishops' Storehouse

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### Introduction

Welcome to the net. I hope that all of the new frequency changes went smoothly. I hope that last week's exercise was beneficial in preparing you for the real thing this evening. We had a really good showing last week with the recheck. You should know that the decision to change the frequencies was not an easy one. In fact, we've talked about it off and on for over a year. Following the 20K band plan is a good thing and I'm pleased that we've finally been able to pull it off. I commend each of you for making the effort and helping to make the transition to the new regional frequencies smooth.

### Editorial

I know I've got most of you poised on the edge of your seats wondering what N7TMS is going to pull out of his hat tonight. Well, there will be no impromptu frequency changes; no pop quizzes; no new protocols. Tonight, I want you sit back, relax, and ponder with me for a few minutes. I am going to catalog tonight's training as an editorial. Thank you in advance for your patience while I ramble for a few minutes.

It doesn't happen often around here, but I see it or hear of it frequently enough, of operators stepping over lines. I mean things like inappropriate transmissions or disrespect and rudeness. I know that an amateur's code of conduct is framed by soft grey lines...all the more reason to stay well within the lines.

Now lest you believe that I'm about to step on a soapbox and start waiving my fist and calling down fire and brimstone...no, there will be none of that tonight. Just relax for a few minutes. Recent experiences have caused me to look inward: How am I doing? Are my radio activities or attitudes riding the line? To check myself, I often refer to ["The Amateur's Code" penned in 1928 by Paul Segal, W9EEA](#). I have a copy in the front of my operating binder and glance at it periodically when I'm looking something up.

I quote:

The Radio Amateur is:

CONSIDERATE never knowingly operating in such a way as to lessen the pleasure of others.

LOYAL offering loyalty, encouragement and support to other amateurs, local clubs and the American Radio Relay League.

PROGRESSIVE with knowledge abreast of science, a well built and efficient station, and operation beyond reproach.

FRIENDLY with slow and patient operation when requested, friendly advice and counsel to the beginner, kindly assistance, co-operation and consideration for the interests of others.

These are the hallmarks of the amateur spirit.

BALANCED Radio is an avocation, never interfering with duties owed to family, job, school or community.

PATRIOTIC with station and skill always ready for service to country and community

Unquote.

Allow me to share a remark or two about each point. Considerate and Friendly go hand in hand. Am I considerate of others? Am I patient and quick to be helpful? Am I a patient net control station when

operators don't follow instructions? Am I also patient when I'm the operator and things are not being run the way I would run them? Am I considerate of others and particularly their interests?

Are we loyal to the ERC program and still keeping balance in our lives? For many of us, the ERC is a church calling. It is easy in some circumstances to use it as an excuse: "I have to be there; it's my calling." "I have to get on the radio tonight; it's my calling." Many of you know that I eat, drink and sleep this stuff. I think I push the envelope sometimes. It's easy for me to get my priorities out of whack. However, on Sunday, I "sacrificed" an ERC meeting to stay home to celebrate my daughters 15<sup>th</sup> birthday. Was it the right choice? Absolutely. So what does it really mean to be loyal? To me, if I'm loyal, then I attend training meetings and exercises and events even if I feel like I don't have anything to contribute. I go to support those that made the effort and I often have fun and come away learning something anyway.

Last month I attended the Rigby Region training meeting. Did I have to go? No. But I felt like I should. I showed up, uninvited and unannounced. Kevin told me when I arrived that they were doing weather spotter training. That was the fourth weather spotter training I've attended in the last 18 months. Did I need to be there? Not even! But I had a ball rubbing shoulders with good friends like Lynn Harshbarger and Kevin and Glenna and Larry and Paul and Kim and Gary and Kris and so many others.

So, back to The Amateur's Code. What about progressive? Segal said, "...with knowledge abreast of science..." (Excuse me for a second. I might put one foot on the soap box here.) We talk with many operators that earn their Technician license and call it good. It is good. It is a great achievement and an open door to a whole new world of communication, preparedness, and peace of mind. However, it is important to realize that amateur radio is not the same as the TV or the broadcast radios in our cars. It is not always going to "just work"—maybe atmospheric conditions have changed, your antenna system is defective, you're transmitting on the wrong mode, or any number of other scenarios in good or adverse circumstances. Understanding the technology and the science just a little deeper will take your preparedness to the next level higher and help you to be a little more self-reliant. An Amateur Extra license is not beyond your reach, but it is not for the faint of heart. I would, however, encourage everyone to strive for at least a General class license. Okay...I'm stepping off the soap box.

Yes, I was drawn in somewhat by the emergency preparedness aspect of amateur radio, but the guiding principles outlined in Segal's Amateur Code are what hooked me. The comradery, friendliness, helpfulness and the sense of belonging---and I don't mean belonging in terms of membership in an organization like the ERC or ARES, I mean belonging in the sense of inclusion, others, old timers, accepting me into the fold if for no reason other than the fact that I had a FCC call sign like them.

## Conclusion

The Boy Scouts got it right—Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind. And I guess, my mom had it right, too. She's the one that always said, "Remember who you are." Now that I'm all grown up, "Remember who you are" means more to me than just the ecclesiastical implications of yester-year. And yet, it was as applicable 4 decades ago when I went outside to play with my friends as it is today when I key the mic and talk to my friends.

I remember that I am Considerate, Loyal, Progressive, Friendly, Balanced, and Patriotic. For me, that's what amateur radio is all about. Thank you Paul Segal for reminding me periodically why I do what I do. Let's play nice out there.

That's all for tonight. I'll see you all next week. Until then, 73. This is N7TMS, back to net control.