After a young ham from India took part in WB2MGP’s youth forum at Dayton, Carole was invited to take part in an amateur radio education conference in Hyderabad. Here’s her story...

Young Hams Are Focus of Conference In India

BY CAROLE PERRY, WB2MGP

In 2015, a talented young ham named Tom Jose, VU2TO, was sponsored by the National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR) in India to speak at my Dayton Hamvention® Youth Forum. Tom’s experiences at Hamvention and his warm welcome by all the hams he met was extremely appreciated by his escort, the founder of NIAR, Mr. S. Suri, VU2MY. He invited me to visit their institute in Hyderabad, India, and Michael Kalter, WB8CI, the Dayton Amateur Radio Association’s Treasurer, who played a big role in Tom’s appearance at my Youth Forum, encouraged me to accept the invitation.

The NIAR was founded in 1983 as a non-governmental organization (NGO) and registered in Hyderabad as a public society. One of its main goals is to spread the awareness of amateur radio activity to the people in India. The NIAR is encouraged by the government of India, several state governments, the World Bank, etc. The volunteers at NIAR assist schools, colleges, institutions, and individuals in forming their own amateur radio clubs.

In December 2016, I flew to India to visit with the principals of NIAR and to speak at their Education Conference (Photo A). It was an amazing experience. Mohan Suri, VU2MYH, and his father were the organizers and hosts of the conference, sponsored by NIAR, which had teachers, administrators, and students in attendance. There were close to 200 people in the audience. Students come to the institute for classes and have the opportunity to work the club station, VU2NRO, under the tutelage of experienced operators who volunteer there.

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Photo A. The dais of speakers at the educational conference sponsored by the National Institute of Amateur Radio in India.

Photo B. Middle school-aged young hams at the NIAR educational conference.
The day of the education conference, I got to meet many teachers, a principal, and middle, high school, and college students who have benefited from the resources of NIAR to initiate and sustain amateur radio programs (Photo B).

I was also given a tour of the grounds (Photo C), which includes their offices, a library, a lab, a club station, a wonderful museum, a conference hall, a QSL bureau, classrooms, and a guest house.

Ham Radio in Education

In my presentation at the roundtable on Amateur Radio for Education and Skill Development, I described the goals for recruitment and support of young people into ham radio of the organizations who were supporters of my trip to Hyderabad. The Radio Club of America (RCA), Quarter Century Wireless Association (QCWA), ARRL, MFJ, ROHN Products, and CQ magazine were all donors of well-received gifts given out to the students and administrators.

I shared with the audience my goals, teaching methodology, special curriculum, and experiences of having taught "Introduction to Amateur Radio" to 6th, 7th and 8th graders at a Staten Island middle school for nearly 30 years. There were lots of questions afterwards, including some from people who are considering implementing a ham radio program at their schools, and from youngsters who wanted to know why they should become involved with amateur radio. I spoke about all the things that we, as teachers, have in common despite cultural differences; and about what a great motivational tool ham radio in a classroom can be. It was truly an honor to be able to share ideas and experiences with such eager and enthusiastic conference participants.

There were several other excellent speakers on the agenda with me. I was accompanied by RCA President Emeritus Stan Reubenstien, WA6RNU, who spoke about international Boy Scouts and amateur radio. This informative talk was also very well-received.

Young Hams on the Agenda

It was inspiring for me to listen to the young speakers as well (Photo D). There was a presentation by Shaik Mahboob Ali, a 10th grade student from Focus High School on "Working Principles of Wireless Devices." Another presentation was on "A Working Model of a Mini Radio" by Sayed Taqi Abbas Kazeemi, a 9th grader at the same school (Photo E). Abdul Muneed, a physical science teacher at their high school, accompanied the students. All the speakers were excellent, providing very informative and interesting presentations throughout the daylong conference.

My personal thanks to Mr. Mohan and Mr. S. Suri for the invitation to participate in this exciting event that holds the potential for many more joint ventures in the future. Their gracious hospitality and enthusiasm to work with RCA, QCWA, and the other supporters of young hams on future projects was inspiring.
We learned of the Radio Amateurs Civil Emergency Service (RACES) wing of NIAR that provides equipment and volunteer manpower to assist the local administration in any emergency, or natural or manmade disasters. Young Tom spoke about his volunteer role with ARES at my youth forum.

A High Number of YL Hams
One of the observations Stan and I made was the high number of female young hams in attendance (Photo F) and the big number of female hams who volunteer at NIAR. One such wonderful lady who was a remarkable help to us was Ms. M. Bhanumathy, VU2BL (Photo G). She is a retired manager at Hindustan Aeronautics Limited in Hyderabad. She is presently a member of the NIAR Governing Council. Many thanks to her and to the Jose family as well for their incredible hospitality.

The trip to Hyderabad was a vehicle for me to fulfill one of my goals, which is to get young hams on the radio and communicating with each other worldwide. They can share facts and ideas about each other’s culture and history. Importantly; the young hams can communicate about all that they have in common.

To learn more about the National Institute of Amateur Radio, visit www.niar.org on the web, or listen for club station VU2NRO on 14160 kHz.

Photo D. Shaik and Sayed giving their presentations at the education conference. See text for details.

Photo F. The number of female students we met in India was impressive.

Photo E. Sayed, a 10th grader, presenting a working model of a mini radio.

Photo G. Carole with Ms. M. Bhanumathy, VU2BL, a member of the NIAR Governing Council.