

## Member Spotlight

# Carole Perry, WB2MGP

Carole Perry, WB2MGP, is the moderator of the Hamvention Youth Forum and Instructors' Forum; a recipient of numerous Amateur Radio awards; a director for Radio Club of America (RCA) and the Quarter Century Wireless Association (QCWA); a member of ARRL, DARA, Antique Wireless Association (AWA), and Brandeis Women, and is a contributing columnist for *CQ Magazine's* "The Young Radio Amateur" column."

With such a high level of involvement within the ham community, it may come as a surprise that Carole was licensed in 1976 after being dared by some of her engineering colleagues at Rapid Circuit Inc., where she worked at the time as an executive secretary. She quickly fell in love with the hobby, and took her newfound enthusiasm with her when she left the corporate world to teach middle schoolers.

### Combining Passions

In 1980, Carole developed a curriculum for an "Introduction to Amateur Radio" class, which she taught at Intermediate School 72 in Staten Island, New York. She worked with sixth to eighth graders for 24 years, and her program was so successful that it was used to educate nearly 950 students each year.

"It was no secret to my students that I especially loved making astronaut contacts in the SAREX [Shuttle Amateur Radio Experiment] program," Carole recalled, but the real joy came from being able to share her ham radio knowledge with her students. Carole wouldn't even let her retirement in 2004 hold her back from educating youth about the benefits of ham radio.



Carole Perry, WB2MGP, is an advocate for showcasing the talents of young hams.

### Success at Hamvention

In 1987, Carole was named Hamvention's "Amateur of the Year," and was asked to moderate what was supposed to be a one-time forum, discussing her work with ham radio in the classroom. The presentation was so well received that it became an annual staple at Hamvention, and 31 years later, the Hamvention Youth Forum is one of the most popular aspects of the event.

Potential Youth Forum presenters go through an interview process, which takes place months in advance of Hamvention. After the interviews, 8 – 10 youth presenters are chosen by Carole to participate in the 3-hour event. She also invites a guest speaker, and due to the growing popularity of her forum, they've been able to secure well-known figures within the ham community, such as Dr. Tamitha Skov.

As moderator of the forum, Carole gets to work closely with many of the young presenters, and she remains in contact with them for years after. Many of them are now in technical schools and pursuing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) careers. Carole couldn't be prouder of them, saying, "I have been privileged to showcase some of the most creative and talented young hams from all over the world." The feeling is certainly mutual, as many of her past presenters have shared that they attribute much of their successes to the inspiration, support, and networking opportunities the forum offered them.

After 31 years, Carole finds her inspiration from the support and energy of the forum's guest speakers, presenters, attendees, and even manufacturers that sponsor the event. It's a lot of work to coordinate, but it's all worth it, Carole said, because "you can feel the love when you're at the podium there."

### Future Advocacy

Besides her work on 2018's Hamvention forum, she's using her position as Chair of both RCA's and QCWA's Youth Activities to start an initiative that aims to set up technology programs at underperforming schools across the country, even donating necessary resources.

Carole's dedication has no bounds, and for anyone looking for a little Amateur Radio inspiration, look no further than Carole Perry.