

Friedrichshafen HAM RADIO 2015 Hosts International Youth Gathering

The just-ended HAM RADIO 2015 in Friedrichshafen, Germany hosted an international gathering of Amateur Radio youth. HAM RADIO sponsors reported that more than 17,000 visitors attended the combined HAM RADIO and the Maker World 2015 events - about the same as in 2014. HAM RADIO celebrated its 40th year this year and attracted visitors from around the world to the shores of Lake Constance.



"HAM RADIO 2015 went really well," said Steffen Schöppe, DL7ATE, chairman of the German Amateur Radio Club (DARC), which co-sponsored HAM RADIO and marked its 65th anniversary this year. "It met our expectations in every way. We are very pleased with the supporting program, such as teacher training, the Ham Rally, and the presentations."

On Saturday 27 June, German Youth Coordinator Annette Coenen, DL6SAK, and IARU Region 1 Youth Working Group Chairman Lisa Leenders, PA2LS, jointly hosted the International Youth Meeting.

IARU Region 1 sponsors a "Youngsters on the Air" (YOTA) program - a 1-week summer youth exchange program involving 75 youthful radio amateurs and prospective hams from 22 countries - held this year in Italy. Region 1 also sponsors a YOTA Month program each December. <http://www.ham-yota.com/>

One main discussion topic concerned the difficulty of obtaining an Amateur Radio license in some countries. Roadblocks cited included fees, minimum age, exam locations and levels, and availability of learning materials.

Presentations included the introduction of the new Youth Contest Program in IARU Region 1 and the youth contesting initiative at 9A1A and 9A1RBZ - the "Amateur Radio in School" station of the Croatian DX Club. An Amateur Radio course has been integrated into the elective courses at the Technical School Rudera Boskovica in Croatia. <http://www.ham-yota.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/International-Youth-Meeting-2015.pdf>

Each year there is a beginner's class, and students who pass can participate in 9A1RBZ activities. Since 2012, some 165 youngsters have completed the class. Aspiring young contesters are paired with experienced contesters at 9A1A. In 2014, nine youngsters joined the world-class 9A1A team for the CQ World Wide RTTY contest. By this year, 39 percent of the Croatian DX Club members were between the ages of 16 and 19.



Marija, 9A7MSM, operated in a RTTY contest last August as 9A1RBZ.

"Youngsters are not interested only in mobile and Internet communications," the club concluded. "If you approach them in an appropriate way, they are recognizing Amateur Radio as a very interesting hobby." 9A1A will host an international youth contesting team twice a year starting in 2016.

The IARU R1 Youth Contest Program plans to pair teams of about six visiting young operators with about six home country operators at well-known contest stations throughout Europe. It will get under way this fall with a four-contest 2015/2016 schedule.

Several *PowerPoint* and synchronized-audio keynote lectures from HAM RADIO 2015 are available on the Documentary Archive website <http://www.dokufunk.org/index.php?lang=EN>.

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