Atlanta Hams Support the Atlanta Science Festival Expo 2018

March 24, 2018 – Piedmont Park, Atlanta, GA

By: Joe Domaleski, KI4ASK
(on special assignment from ARRL Georgia Section Manager, David Benoist, AG4ZR)

On Saturday, March 24th several Atlanta-area amateur radio clubs combined efforts to put together an impressive display of amateur radio technology at the 2018 Atlanta Science Festival Expo (https://atlantasciencefestival.org). The festival itself takes place during most of the month of March at various venues around the city. The largest and final event is the Expo, which draws in upwards of 20,000 attendees and 100's of exhibitors. The Atlanta Radio Club, Gwinnett Amateur Radio Society (GARS), North Fulton Amateur Radio League (NFARL), Alford Memorial Radio Club and other area hams pitched in to make the amateur radio exhibit one that won't be quickly forgotten.

My wife Mary Catherine (KI4HHI) and I showed up shortly before noon. We brought an HT to monitor the special event station W4Y, which was active on VHF Simplex 146.520 MHz. Newly licensed hams Diane Pete (KN4KSD) and her son Colby Pete (KN4KSE) were the first to greet us on the air. When I say newly licensed, this mom and son duo had been licensed for less than a week and they were already telling others about the hobby! Diane was walking around Piedmont Park allowing visitors to talk on the air.

Here is Diane Pete (KN4KSD) giving kids a chance to talk on the air. Her sign says "Come say Hello on Ham Radio"

The booth itself was very impressive and featured several activity stations, information for those wanting to know more about the hobby, and how to get licensed by going to

the special website (http://atlantahams.com). When we got there, I had to go around the back of the tent because the front was so crowded.

View from the back of the tent, you can see the line forming in the front. That's Jim Stafford (W4QO) in the chair leaning in about to answer a question.

Lots of literature on display for the information seeker. Not pictured but standing nearby was Martha Muir (W4MSA), our section Youth Coordinator. She was busy answering questions when I took the shot.

One of the more popular stations was the CW practice area. Here is Newton White (N4EWT) helping a visitor try out code while Ralph Pickwick (KJ4CNC) looks on.

Here's my YL Mary Catherine Domaleski (KI4HHI) explaining how the HT works to an interested young family.

Here's another picture of Jay (KJ4CNC) talking to members of the public. Yes, careful readers will note the typo in the banner provided by the event staff.

Paul Kelley (W4KLY) and Mary Catherine (KI4HHI) are ready to answer your questions about amateur radio.

One of the more "shocking" activities was the demonstration of a Wimshurst Machine with W4QO, KN4KSD, KN4KSE.

Jim (W4QO) and Paul (W4KLY) had visitors form a circle, hold hands to create a circuit, and a little shock was transmitted from the Wimshurst Machine to the astonished visitors.

Here's Atlanta Radio Club President Jim Reed (N4BFR) and yours truly Joe Domaleski (KI4ASK) hamming it up after Jim demonstrated what I hope will be my next "toy", a Flex Radio. Hi Hi.

This was a great expo on a beautiful spring day in Piedmont Park. What made the event extra special was the impressive display of partnership by local amateur radio clubs to demonstrate the hobby to the public. Hope you'll join us next spring for the 2019 Atlanta Science Festival Expo.

Here's a list of many of the hams who pitched in to help that day:

Mark Coleman - KJ4YM

Joe Domaleski - KI4ASK

Mary Catherine Domaleski - KI4HHI

Jay Drew - KC4JD

Josh Drew - KM4MVK

Paul Kelley - W4KLY

Colby Pete - KN4KSE

Diane Pete- KN4KSD

Ralph Pickwick - KJ4CNC

Martha Muir - W4MSA

Jim Reed - N4BFR

Norm Schklar - WA4ZXV

Jim Stafford - W4QO

Newton White - N4EWT

(And several others not listed…)