

Eagle Project Ideas

Involving Amateur Radio

Thoughts provided via email groups and Facebook in early February 2013:

- My sense is the best projects come from finding out the needs of the served organization, not providing them something that is not on their "wish list". Perhaps the scout should interview leaders at local Ham clubs, ARES groups, etc. to find out their needs and pick something from that list that intrigues him.
- I know something my husband helped with a few years ago at my son's elementary school that sounds somewhat like an Eagle project was helping the school get a ham shack set up for their amateur radio club. They had a teacher who wanted to run a club but needed help getting an antenna set up on the roof and the necessary equipment set up and linked to the computer in her classroom and so forth. Our son later became the first member of the club to get his license. Maybe a local school (of any age) or other public organization in his area would like to have a ham radio or ham radio club set up but needs some help to get started?
- Gwinnett ARES recently installed permanent stations at county hospitals. Maybe he could make a project out of coordinating and installing amateur antennas at local hospitals. We have fully equipped radio rooms, but just a UHF and VHF antenna at a hospital would be of great help in an emergency.
- Organize an Ecom info session at next JOTA or Field day event.
- We had a scout here set up a ham station in a fire station so that the in case of emergencies, it would become a net control and a link into emergency services.
- I remember reading a few years ago of an Eagle Project that made J-pole antennas to be located and installed at evacuation centers (fire halls?) around the city/town so that they would be in place when/if needed. Low cost, homemade, and easily made by boys.
- Have the scout get in touch with his local Races officer, there may be a number of projects that the RO may need some help with. I am very active with Baltimore County RACES we have a ham station at the county EOC, the state EOC and at each of the hospitals in the county. we also have GO kits at the County EOC that can be dispatched to the field as necessary. It took time and effort to install the antennas, pull the feed lines etc. it also took many hours to put the go kits together. funding for much of the gear came from a homeland security grant. one potential Eagle project would be to work with County officials to get a grant for some vhf transceivers power supplies portable antennas etc. on put together some races go kits in pelican cases. a more ambitious project would be to work with the county to put up a races repeater. not as far fetched as it might sound. If the County has a half way decent radio shop (ours in Baltimore is outstanding) they probably already have some surplus gear that could be pressed into service, thy no doubt have some good antenna sites for police , fire ,

and public works dispatching, what they might not have is the manpower to take on the project but is a scout came forward volunteering to be the project manager he might get the green light.

- I would say help build a couple of "GO Kits" for the local ARES or RACES teams.
- Maybe develop interaction plans (letters of agreement) between a served agency (American Red Cross, Salvation Army, etc) and the amateur club/organization? Execute a plan to establish a ham radio station in or near a emergency comm center? If the NWS is the served agency, maybe develop a storm spotter program?
- Help organize your local Hospitals with their ARES radio team. Towers, Stations, Radios, Go-Kits... hold a drill once you have team committed and in place. You might get some assistance from local Radio Clubs and EMA offices as well as your State EMA
- Have him get in touch with the local health department or emergency management and see if they need any Go kits or radio installed I had several life scouts build MRC (medical reserve) radio go kits from parts the MRC bought using grants
- ICS 217 - Communication Resources List. These are used by emergency communication types to develop communication plans during an incident. This is always difficult to do for a COML (Communication Unit Leader) when deployed to an area he/she is not familiar.
- Can you teach the technician class license course?
- One Eagle Project that has been done in the past in some locales is raising money to buy and install 2 meter antennas and feed lines at pre-designated shelter or emergency locations, such as schools, EOCs, and Red Cross chapters. In an emergency, hams can easily bring their own radios, but having the antennas pre-installed saves lots of work and time, especially in bad weather.
- Help to upgrade a repeater for emergency power: organize donations for equipment, organize the manpower to get it there and installed, organize the testing of it; I saw in a newsprint article somewhere where a scout rebuilt the shelter shack for a repeater: organized the donations of material, got the cement laid, shelter built, new coax to the antenna, scouts portaged the material up to the actual site (about 200 yards from the road access). It was pretty cool when it was done.
- Raising funds to just be raising funds is prohibited. Make sure it is funds to implement your project. Other part that will be tough is the requirement to involve your troop. Don't forget the project must benefit the community/nonprofit, involve supervision and involve the boys in the troop.
- Can he organize a JOTA station for his council as an Eagle Project? This may involve Market / promote the event, locating operator(s), Setup / Teardown, submit paperwork, Offer Merit Badge or Pins.