

**Mo-Kan Regional Council Provides
a Presentation at the Amelia Earhart Museum**

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In general, the Mo-Kan Regional Council of Amateur Radio Organizations Inc. is an ARRL affiliated organization which was established to serve the unique needs of the many Amateur Radio Clubs and Organizations in the Metro Kansas City Region. Kansas City is unique as it straddles two states, two separate ARRL Sections, several counties and many municipalities. Within the immediate metro area, there are over thirty individual amateur radio clubs of various interests, not to mention special interest groups, and vendors. The Council was established to coordinate activities of these various clubs and organizations to work together in promoting their individual interests, while joining our combined talents and resources during activities, projects, and events. When the Council was established in 2015, our territory was established as a 150-mile radius from Kansas City. Please check out <http://mokancouncil.org> for details.



During February 2024, I received an email from the Amelia Earhart Hanger Museum of Atchison, Kansas. Atchison is the home town of famed Aviator, Emelia Earhart. In the email, I was told that at the museum, they often get questions from visitors asking about Amateur Radio Operators having received possible distress message from Earhart shortly after the disappearance of her aircraft in the Pacific Ocean in 1937. I was asked if the Council could provide a lecture or a presentation at the museum on this topic.

Presentations is something the Council provides on topics such as Creating an Amateur Radio Club, and Managing an Amateur Radio Club like a Business to name a couple. It didn't seem like we couldn't prepare a presentation for the general public on a fascinating topic from the perspective of Amateur Radio. Working with the museum, we set the following objectives:

1. Explain what Amateur (Ham) Radio is,
2. Explain some radio technology, and radio theory; specifically, radio propagation,
3. The possibility that such messages could have been received in the Continental US,
4. And Amateur Radio's role in these events.

All of this would be framed within the assumption that Earhart and her Navigator, Fred Noonan as well as her radio equipment survived a crash landing somewhere in the Pacific Region.

In addition, it is anticipated that part of the audience may not be technology minded, so many of the aspects of radio theory and radio propagation would need to be explained in such a manner as could be understood by common members of the public.

I contacted the Council's Vice-Chairman, David Hinkley, KA0SOG to get his opinion... *"What a Great Opportunity!"* So together Dave and I began our research on the topic.

There is a nearly infinite amount of information on the internet about Ameila Earhart and her 1937 disappearance, not to mention many, many books and articles on the topic. It's also very interesting to

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see the many diverse opinions as to what may have happened to Earhart, how well her radio equipment worked or may not have worked, and where the remains of her aircraft might be. I did find that if we contacted any of the authors of the material either by email or telephone, all were receptive to our inquiries, eager to respond to us, very knowledgeable on their area of expertise, and very passionate about their opinions on the topic.

Our research also included our favorite topic; Radio! Naturally we wanted to make certain our technical information was correct, but we also wanted to include radio in the context of 1937. After all, as it was with aviation, radio was still a new and upcoming technology. As part of Dave's research, he obtained the assistance of the Amateur Radio Relay League, (ARRL) who pointed him to the 1937 Edition of the ARRL Operating Manual, and data regarding Solar and Band Conditions for 1937!



Cover Page of Our Presentation

As mentioned above, the Mo-Kan Council has created training presentations in the past, known as the Ham 400 Project. While a good friend and Mo-Kan Member, Herb Fiddick has prepared Ham 101 for new hams, the Council created Ham 400 for topics related to Amateur Radio Governance. We chose to use the same template and format, and started it with the Catalog Number of Ham 420 as the first in a potential series of Public Interest Projects. After collating and condensing our findings, the presentation deck came to 46 pages with the aim of providing an accompanying lecture by Dave and I of about 45 minutes to an hour.

We provided our first dry run rehearsal by providing the presentation to the Radio Amateur's Club of Johnson County, Kansas in Overland Park on March 22, 2024. This went pretty well overall, but we did find some issues, which was our intent. We did another rehearsal of the presentation for the Raytown Amateur Radio Club in May, which provided the opportunity to tweak and improve the presentation a bit more.

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David Hinkley – KA0SOG and Randy Schulze – W0ICQ

After scheduling and rescheduling the presentation date with the museum, a date of August 17, 2024 was agreed on for the formal date for the presentation.

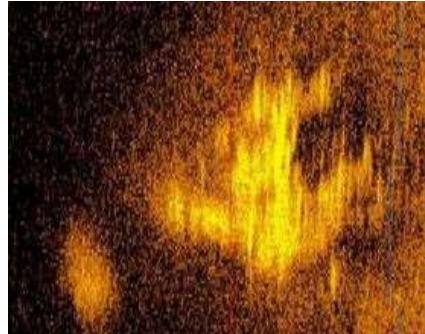
Over the course of developing the presentation, the museum asked if we might provide a working Ham Radio Station on the museum grounds on the date of the presentation. During our rehearsal of the presentation during March 2024 in Overland Park, we met Steve Everly – KCOVYS. Steve told us that he has managed several Special Event Stations at the Amelia Earhart Hanger Museum and would be happy to help us out! Dave and I agreed that Steve would be a good addition to our project, and placed him in charge of coordinating the working ham station.



Steve Everly – KCOVYS

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During Mid-July 2024, the local news was broadcasting stories about a conference hosted by the Amelia Earhart Hanger Museum that the Earhart aircraft had been found by a company known as Deep Sea Vision.



Sonar Image from Deep Sea Vision

Since the main assumption for our presentation was that Earhart and her radio equipment attached to her aircraft survived a crash landing, if this was Earhart's aircraft, it was doubtful that she nor her radio survived, and that our presentation would be moot. I spoke with Museum Director, Mindy Love-Pendergraft regarding this development, and perhaps the presentation should be cancelled. Mindi replied that while Deep Sea Vision's discovery is compelling, at this point in time it is not yet known what exactly is down there as it has not yet been confirmed that this is an airplane, and specifically Earhart's airplane. As such, the presentation should go on as planned!

About the end of July, the museum was ready to start an Advertising Blitz regarding our presentation at the museum. We supplied them with various photos from my collection of various Hams in action at various events over the years. The results were a pretty nice Facebook Advertisement:



CALLING ALL HAM RADIO BUFFS!

Ham 420 - Overview of Amateur Radio and Radio Propagation

Saturday, August 17
4:30 - 6 pm

AMELIA EARHART
HANGER MUSEUM
ATCHISON, KANSAS

Purchase Your Tickets Now!

SAT, AUG 17
Ham 420 - Overview of Amateur Radio and Radio Propagation
16701 286th Rd, Atchison, KS, United States, Kansas 66002...

★ Interested ▾

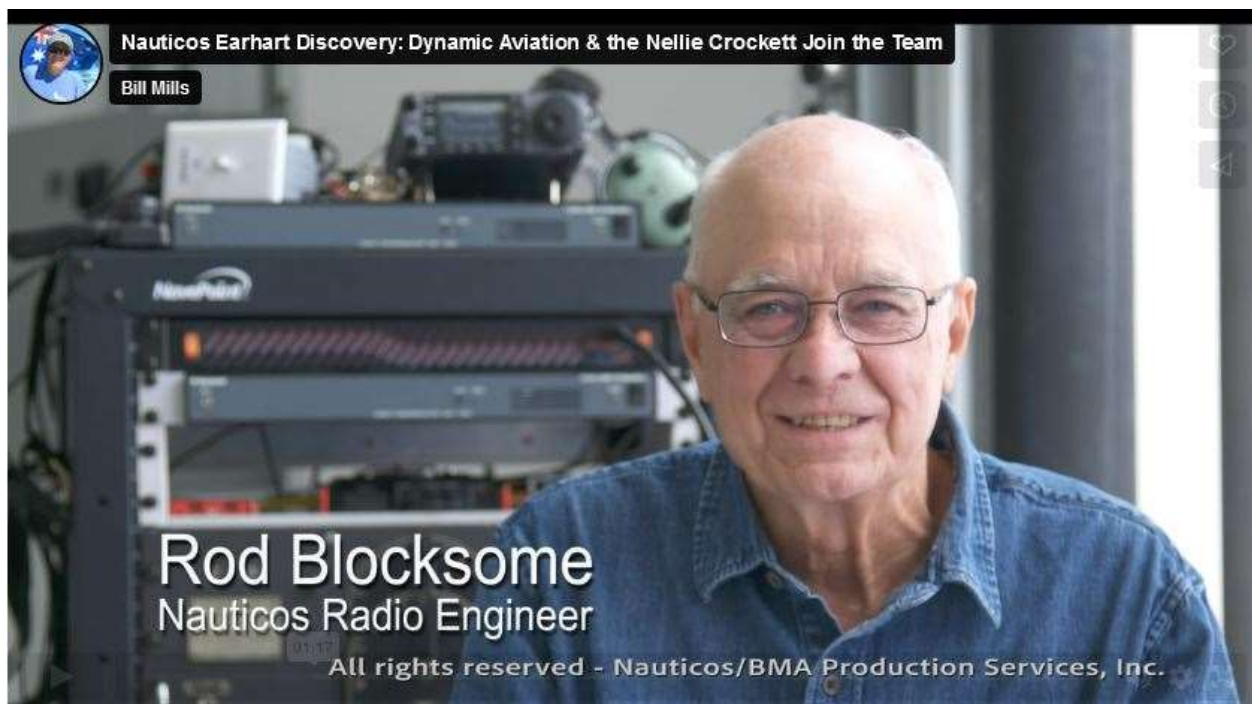
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When the Facebook Ad first came out, it did have some issues. The first one titled it as, “Ham 420 – Overview of Amateur Radio and Radio *Propaganda*.” We called the museum and they quickly changed Propaganda to *Propagation*. The other issue turned out to be a stroke of good luck! The ad said in conjunction with the presentation, there would be a display of “*vintage amateur radio equipment*.” We had no such equipment, and this had been explained to the museum very early on... How was this a stroke of good luck..?

The following day, I received an email from Rod Blocksome – KODAS in Iowa. I knew Rod as the former ARRL Midwest Division Director, and a retired Engineer from Rockwell Collins, a famed manufacturer of radio equipment. Rod said he saw the Facebook ad, and asked what vintage equipment we had on hand to display? I replied that we didn’t have any vintage equipment, and that the ad was an error. Rod replied with, “I can help out!”

Rod went on to explain that he was a Radio Engineer and Technical Advisor for Nauticos, a company who among other projects was involved in trying to solve the Earhart Mystery through the analyses of her use of radio up to the point where she became missing.

(Go to <https://nauticos.com/category/explorer-insights/> and make sure to watch the short video there!)



Rod went on to explain that he had the same make and models of the radio equipment used by Earhart on her aircraft, *and* the same make and model of the radio used on board the Coat Guard Cutter, *USCG Itasca* which was on station near Howland Island in the South Pacific to aid Earhart on her flight. Rod said he would be happy to bring these fully restored radios from his home in Iowa to the Museum at Atchison, Kansas to be on display in conjunction with our presentation.

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Thank You and Wow are understatements!!



So, after months of preparation the big day, Saturday, August 17, 2024 arrives.... I arrived at the Earhart Hanger Museum of Atchison, Kansas shortly after noon so I would have plenty of time to get a lay of the land and set up my computers and equipment for the presentation. Steve Everly has already arrived earlier and had the Special Event Station up, running, and making contacts. He was missing a part, so we made arrangement for Dave Hinkley to bring the needed power adaptor along.

For the most part, we're ready to go well ahead of our scheduled start time, but I have to admit that I was a bit nervous about this presentation. During my Information Technology Career, I've provided countless presentations to executives of Fortune 500 Corporations as part of the job and never had any angst. Many will recall that along with Eddy Paul – KY0F-SK, I have produced, promoted, and provided the Hams in Space Satellite Presentation all over the Midwest including twice at the Dayton Hamvention, and never experience any pre-show jitters.

This time was different. For previous presentation topics, I was the authority on the subject matter, if not the expert. I knew that the Amelia Earhart Mystery could be somewhat controversial and sometimes contentious. And while I may know a good deal about radio propagation, I am not an expert on the subject. I *knew* that there would be not only experts on the subject of the Earhart Mystery, there would also be experts on radio propagation in the audience.

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We had about 35 people attending our presentation, and yes, there were one or two Earhart Experts in the audience, and at least three or four radio propagation experts in the audience. After the presentation, one of the radio experts which I've known for years pointed out that we made one very minor mistake, but it was one so obscure that he doubted any one would notice.

The presentation went very well! Members of the audience asked thoughtful and relevant questions and I felt that the audience left our presentation a little bit more informed. Museum management told us that it was a very good presentation, and that we exceeded their expectations. Best of all, we had fun!

To see the Presentation Deck, go to: https://mokancouncil.org/Council_Resources/Ham420_V1.01.pptx

For more information about the Mo-Kan Council of Amateur Radio Organizations, Inc. Go to: <https://mokancouncil.org>

To contact the Mo-Kan Council by email: info@mokancouncil.org