

The ADVENTURES OF ZACK & MAX

VOLUME 5

Max in Space!



ICOM®

About The Story

Volume 5 of “The Adventures of Zack and Max” explores new radio technologies, both digital and satellite. The writers are again the students from the Lake Washington Ham Club (KC7OIO) at Ben Franklin Elementary School in Kirkland, Washington. Under the leadership of Mr. Dave Condon (KI7YP), the students set out to learn about amateur radio in space, specifically digital radio, satellites, and satellite orbits. Fortune came the club’s way when Andy Hoskins (KE7HRJ), father of one of the students and a rocket engineer for Aerojet, suggested the club take a field trip to Aerojet’s nearby facility where they build propulsion systems for satellites.

One Saturday, the students from the club with the help of Andy and his Aerojet colleague Brien McCrea (KE7WB), made links through an amateur satellite right from the parking lot of Ben Franklin! Icom America provided the equipment and technical knowledge to make the satellite links possible. Brien used his Icom dual band radio and a home brewed, hand-positioned beam antenna to track the satellite. The students were able to talk to people thousands of miles away—all the way from Alaska to California—with just their Technician privileges. At the same time using Brien’s laptop, they also learned how to track when and where a satellite pass would occur.

This edition of the comic book was made possible by a team of writers that included Safa Mohammed (KE7HQX), Melanie Morris (KE7HRA), Mia Juric (KE7HQO), Claire Kruller (KE7AXJ) led by elected student editor Christa Hoskins (KE7HVF) who was assisted by writer Rachel Roberts (KE7HQQ). Many parents and members of the Lake Washington Ham Club supported the project through encouragement, transportation and assistance. And club leader Mr. Dave Condon (KI7YP) who has mentored hundreds of student hams to receive their licenses, provided guidance.

Special thanks to Andy Hoskins (KE7HRJ) for all of his hard work in coordinating field trips and story writing gatherings, and Aerojet for the tour of the facilities that served as inspiration to the writers, to Brien McCrae (KE7WB) for the execution of the satellite links for the club, and to M2 Antenna Systems for the contribution of 2 eggbeater satellite antennas to the club.

Kayoko Nakajima, professional cartoonist and illustrator, has created another splendid piece. Ray Novak (N9JA) and Maureen Blomgren (KD7QDZ) of Icom America not only produced and sponsored but also underwrote the publication.



Pictured from left to right; Mr. Condon and Christa Hoskins planing and editing the comic book with their friend Max. Christa with her dad, Andy Hoskins, and below our writers during their field trip to Aerojet.



I'm so glad we found Max at Field Day.

Yeah, I was getting a little worried. I'll have to keep a better eye on him in the future. By the way, it's your move.

I am so hungry!

I'll get it!

Hello? Oh, hi! That would be awesome! Okay, how about some driving directions.... Uh-huh, okay, and then left at the fork. OK! See you at the Ham Club meeting tomorrow. It'll be up at our old school parking lot this time, right? Don't worry, Zack will bring Max.

Zack and Max, that was Christa from the Ham Club, you know - KE7HVF. We are going on a tour with Mr. Condon's class next week to where they build satellite rocket engines!

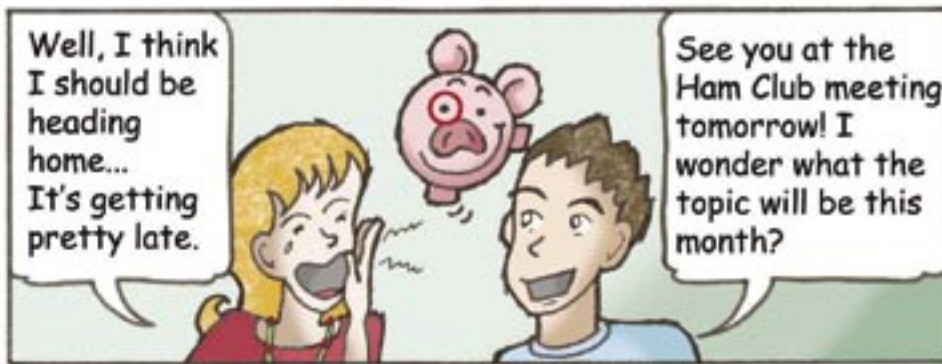
Fork?!
m-m-m-m

Wow!
That sounds like fun!

Did she say
Mr. Chocolate's
class? Mmm.

It will be neat to see real spacecraft rocket engines. But we CANNOT let Max get lost again. You know how much trouble he can make.

Oh, Yeah!



At the Ham Club meeting in the school parking lot...



We can track low orbiting satellites on the laptop with a program that tells us when one will pass overhead and from what direction. There are dozens of AMSATs built by different countries all around the world - I know of some built by countries like Brazil, Argentina and Japan.



What's an AMSAT?

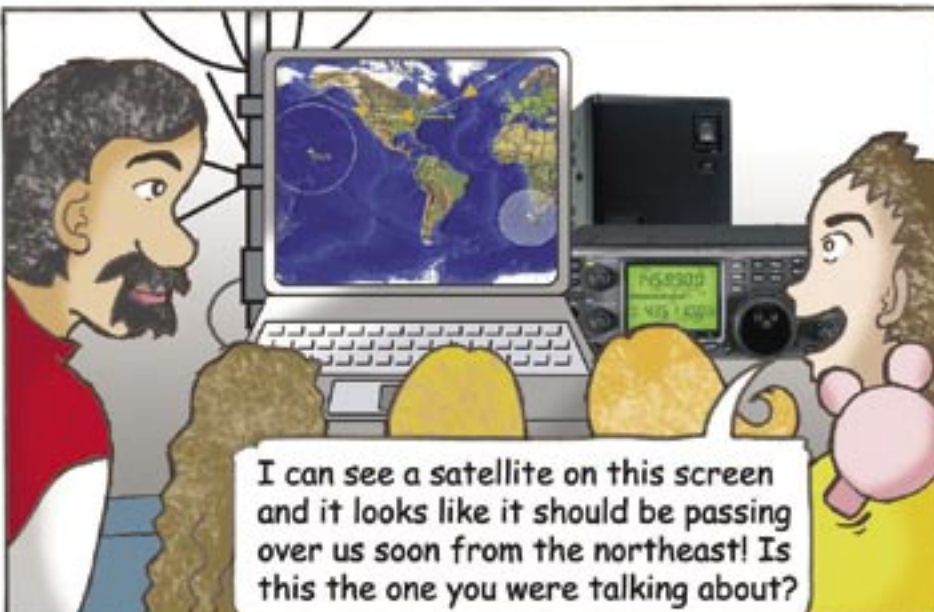


It stands for AMateur SATellite. AMSAT is a world-wide group of amateur radio operators (hams) who share an active interest in building, launching and then communicating with each other through non-commercial amateur radio satellites. The small satellites are known as Orbiting Satellites Carrying Amateur Radio, or OSCAR.



Sounds like fun! I have heard of amateur satellites, but never actually made a contact through one before.

Well, Mady, this your lucky day! Today, we're going to use my IC-910H that I have rigged up with a PS-125 power supply to this beam antenna-- right here in the parking lot. But for a more permanent set up, you should use set up your 910H base station with a mounted directional or omnidirectional antenna* in your ham shack.

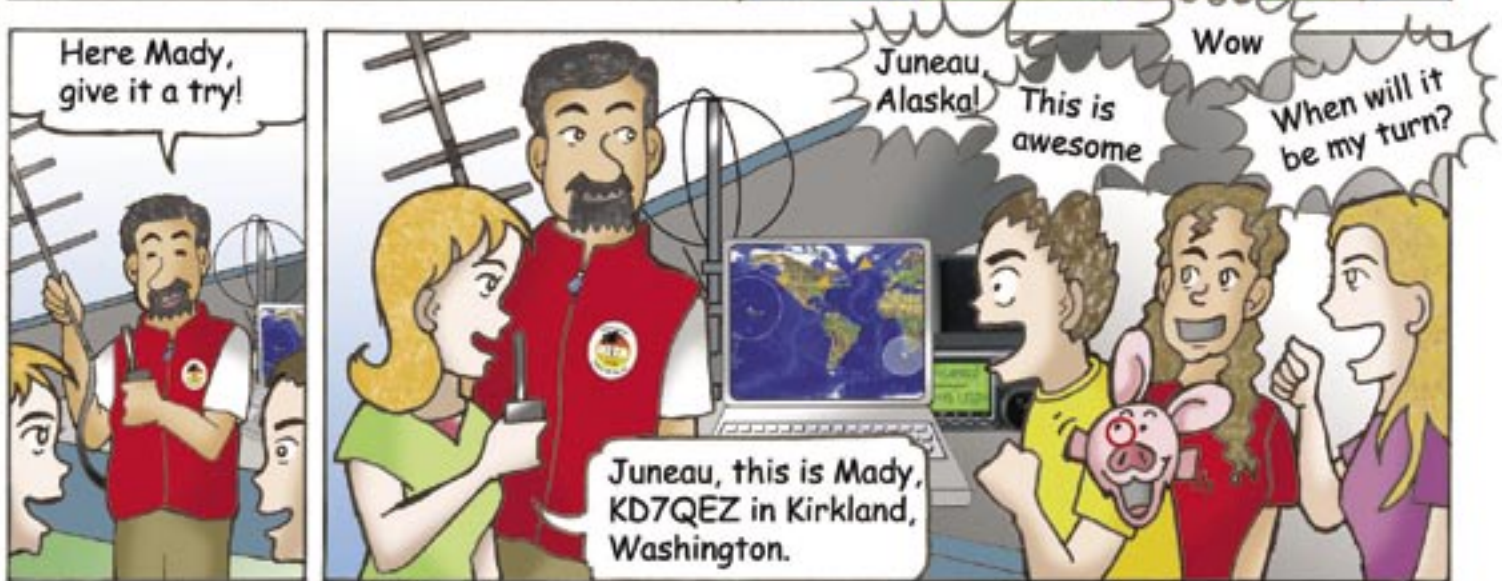
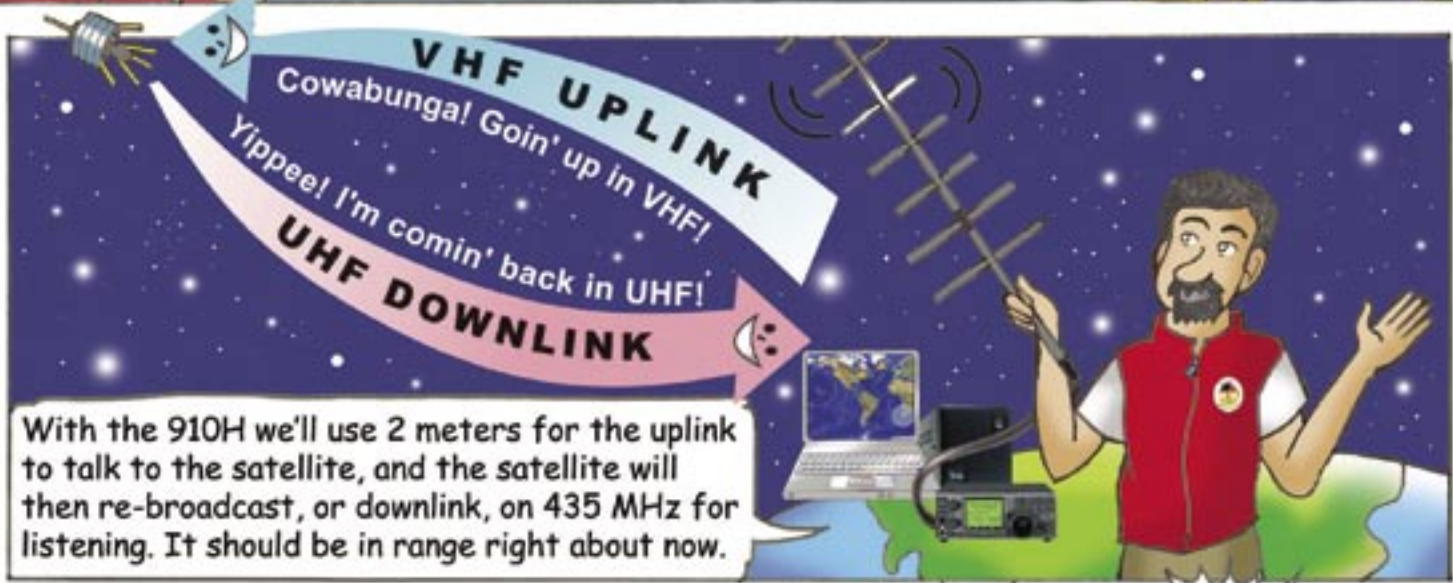
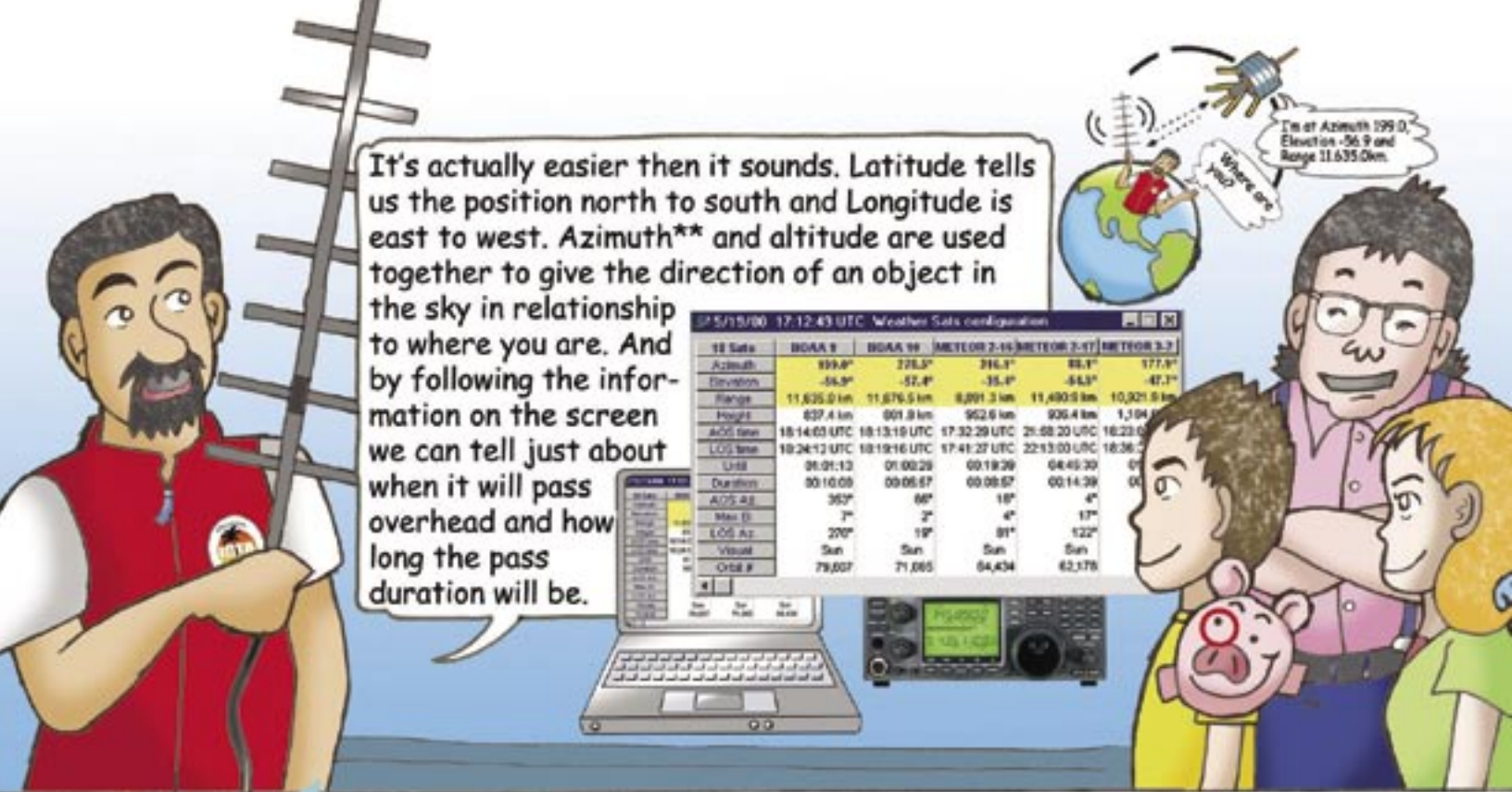


I can see a satellite on this screen and it looks like it should be passing over us soon from the northeast! Is this the one you were talking about?

Yup, that satellite's pass will start in a couple of minutes. The software gives us the satellite latitude, longitude, azimuth and max elevation, as well as the pass duration.



*An omnidirectional antenna is an antenna that radiates power uniformly in all directions. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antenna_%28electronics%29



**<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Azimuth>



We'll track the satellite as it travels over our heads until it disappears in about 10 minutes over the horizon in the south west.

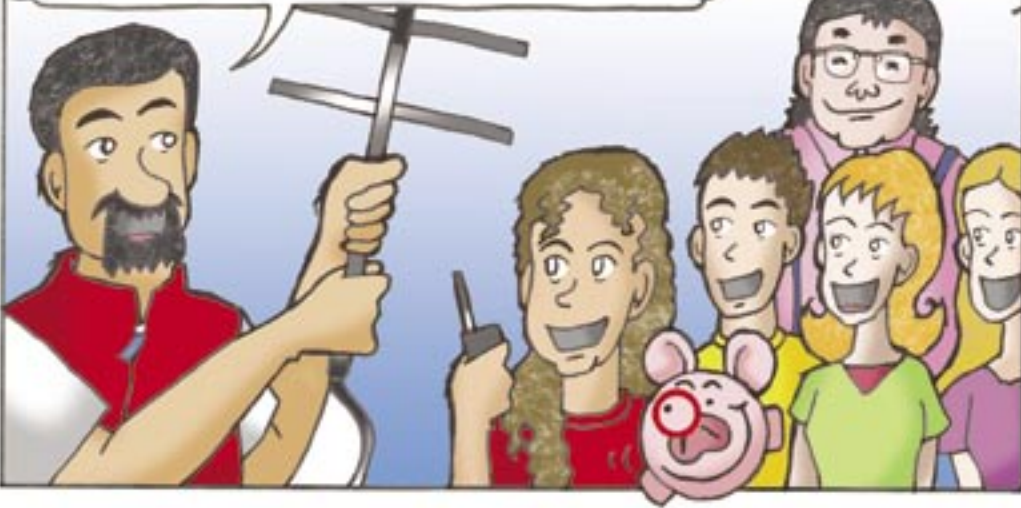
This is so cool! The satellite works just like our local 2 meter repeater on the hill, but is a lot higher and has way more range!

That is some serious DX work on only a Technician license. Thanks, Brien, this is just great for the kids!

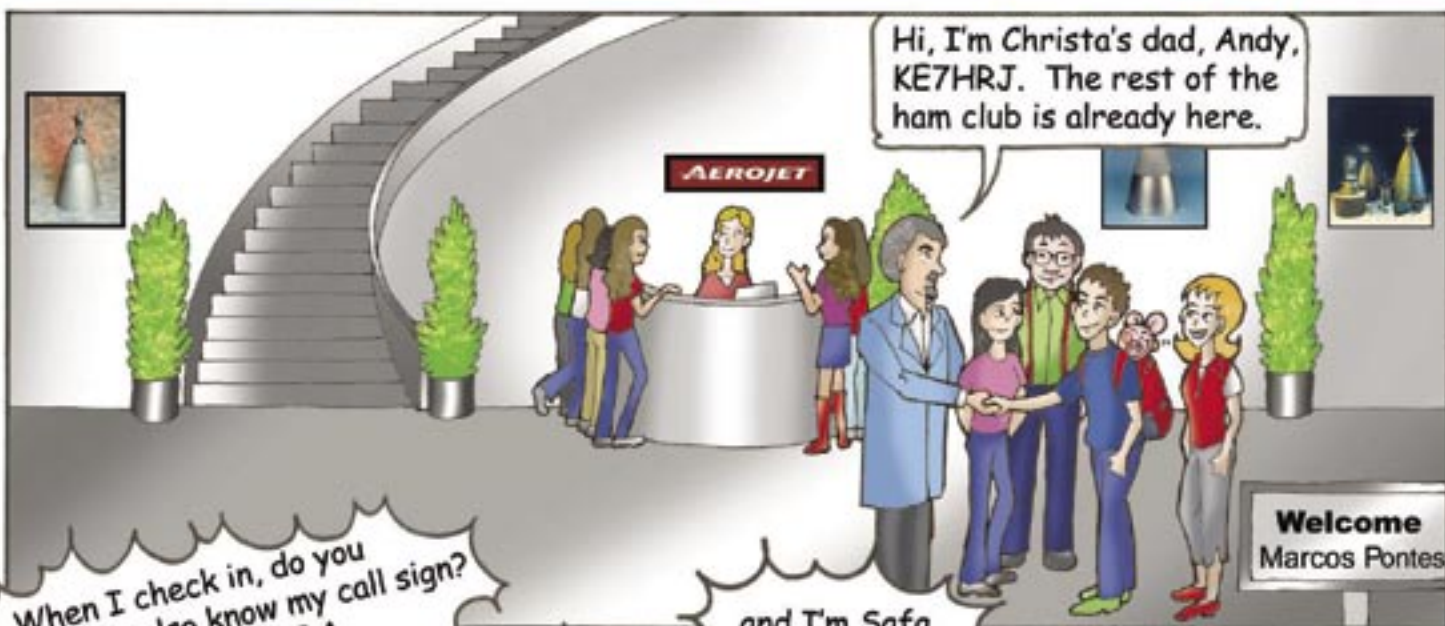


We'll get a few more kids to take a turn here, we've got a few more minutes. When you come to Aerojet, you'll be seeing how we make and test the systems that make the satellites go and, you'll see how we use radio!

Thanks, Brien! This has really been inspirational.



A few days later at Aerojet...



I just learned that today, by coincidence we have a real astronaut here visiting our Space Shuttle engine team. Meet Lieutenant Colonel Marcos Pontes, PY0AEB, the first Brazilian astronaut, who was part of the 13th International Space Station Crew. He's here today with others to take a look how we can move satellites in space.



Glad to meet all of you fellow hams!



Nice to meet you!



So, how long have you been an astronaut?



Well, first, I was a jet pilot and then became an experimental pilot for many years. I joined NASA and I trained for a long time before I could fly on any missions. Now, I train other astronauts.



We dream about becoming astronauts as kids. Every astronaut actually trains for as long as 10 years before they might go on a mission. It takes a long time to learn to eat, sleep and move like an astronaut.



It is great that you are hams! Radio communications are a really big part of space travel.

One time we had to rely on ham operators for backup communication for the Space Station. There was a docking problem with the re-supply spacecraft and we were in danger of losing our normal relay satellite connection. So, we activated the Space Station Ham Contingency Network for the first time. Those guys did an awesome job!***



They must mean me! I just landed here, they won't miss just one treat!"



Study hard, keep talkin' on the radio, and enjoy your tour!



***<http://www.arri.org/news/stories/2006/10/31/100/>



“Machine Shop”



“Kitchen”

Kids, this is where we clean all the parts before we assemble them. We call this place the “kitchen”. You’ll find lots of large sinks in here, but no pots and pans.



"Assembly"

Here you can see some of the propulsion systems for the satellites. These propulsion systems go on the Global Positioning System, or GPS, satellites.

I have heard of GPS. You can use special electronics that figure out your exact location anywhere on earth by receiving radio signals from the satellites.



You can see what the astronauts meant - radio is an incredibly important part of ALL spacecraft!



Andy, how do you know a satellite's position? How do you figure something like that out? I mean, you help make it go up into space, and move around and stuff, but how do you keep from losing the satellite?

Zack! That wasn't subtle; they'll think you lost Max!



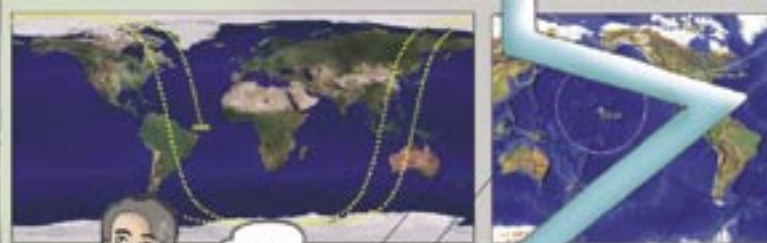
Good question, Zack! We use radio signals! A radio signal from earth with a time code on it is sent up to the spacecraft. The spacecraft then "bounces" the signal back to earth. The amount of time it takes for a radio signal to get from earth to a satellite and back lets us figure out how far away it is. I think there's a poster in the measurement room that shows this....

Measurement Room



“Measurement”

Hi there, Andy!
Hi, fellow hams! This is where we measure things!
You are right, Andy.
To be able to build anything, you have to measure everything!
And radio signals help us every day! It's just one of our tools.



Hi!

WOW!



Have you ever lost anything... in space?



Well, no, not exactly... you see we know that all radio waves travel at the speed of light, and knowing that can help us figure out the distances.



We should learn more about this to help us keep track of Max!

I think you should try being more organized first!

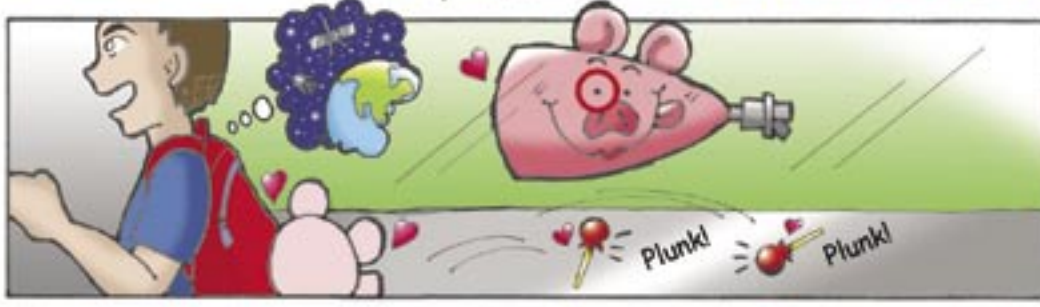
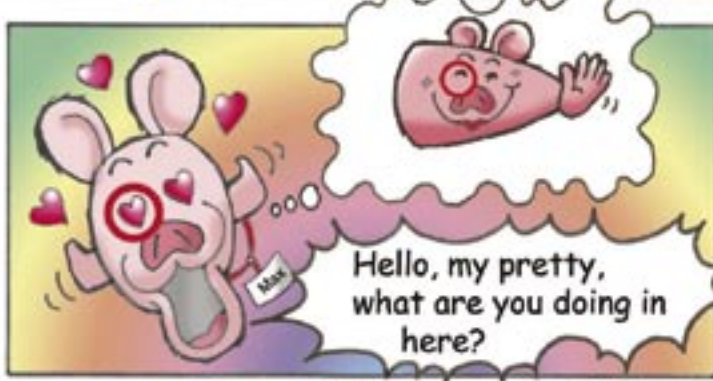
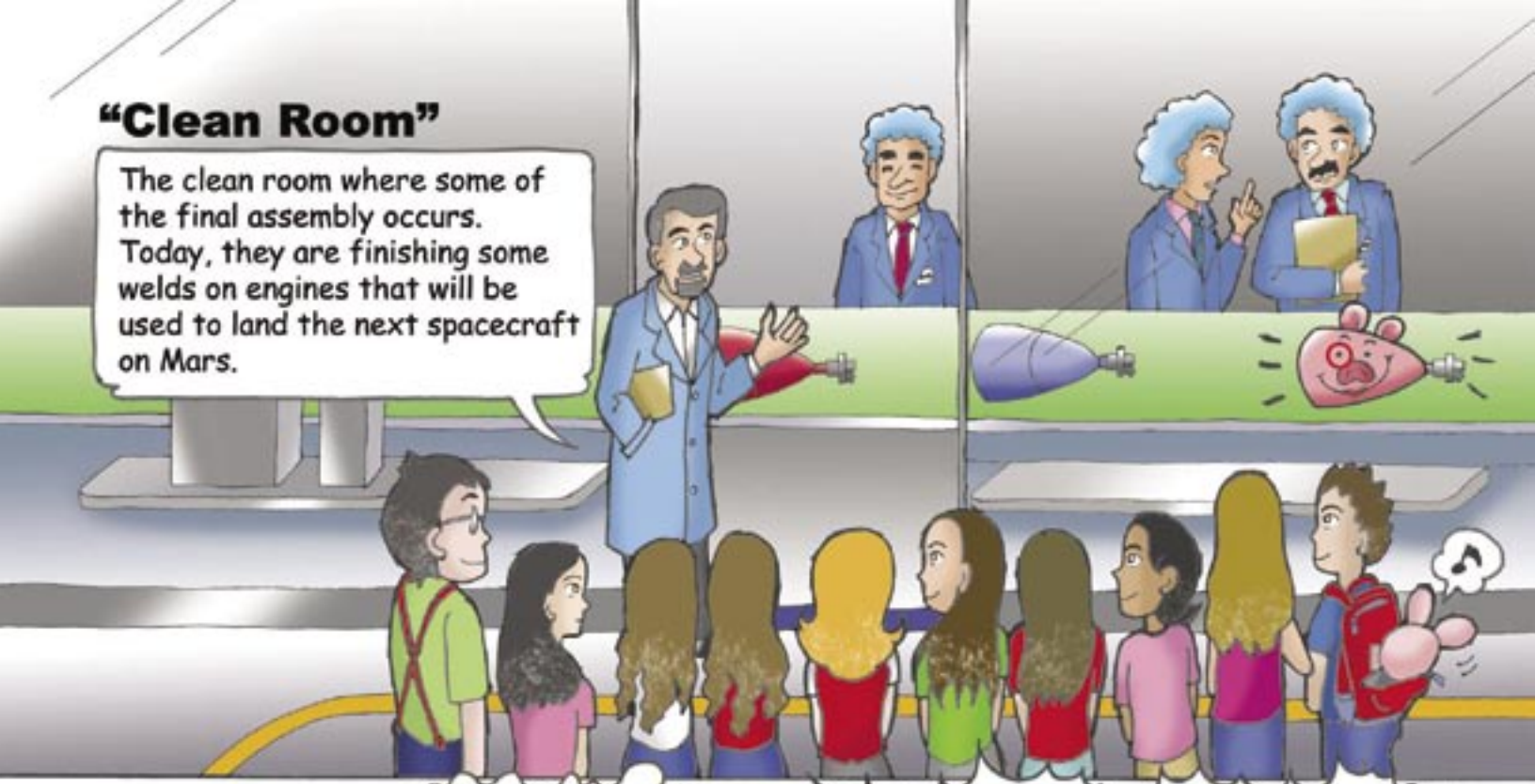


Let's move on to one of our many clean rooms. You'll have to look through the windows to see what's going on so we can keep everything clean as can be!



"Clean Room"

The clean room where some of the final assembly occurs. Today, they are finishing some welds on engines that will be used to land the next spacecraft on Mars.



Hi everyone! Glad you could make it! I'm on my way to the vibration lab. Andy, mind if I tag along?



Hey, Mr. Condon, I was wondering, do you have the D-STAR repeater up and working yet?

Yes!



What exactly is D-STAR?

Well, Rachel, I'm glad you asked. D-STAR is a new digital radio mode. It sends digitized voice, or DV, transmissions along with low-speed data. It is like having packet link and FM voice operating together.



One of the cool things about D-STAR is that the data link can carry your call sign and automatically register your radio at the nearest repeater, sort of like a cell phone. Then, if someone calls for your call sign from outside your area, the computer that controls the digital radio system at the repeater tower routes the call sign and the digitized voice signal through the system's internet gateway to the D-STAR repeater tower nearest you - all automatically!

You can even hook up a GPS sensor to your radio so your position can be sent on the data link along with your voice. Then people can track your exact location.

GPS port



Wow! D-STAR sounds out of this world! Mady...are you thinking what I'm thinking?

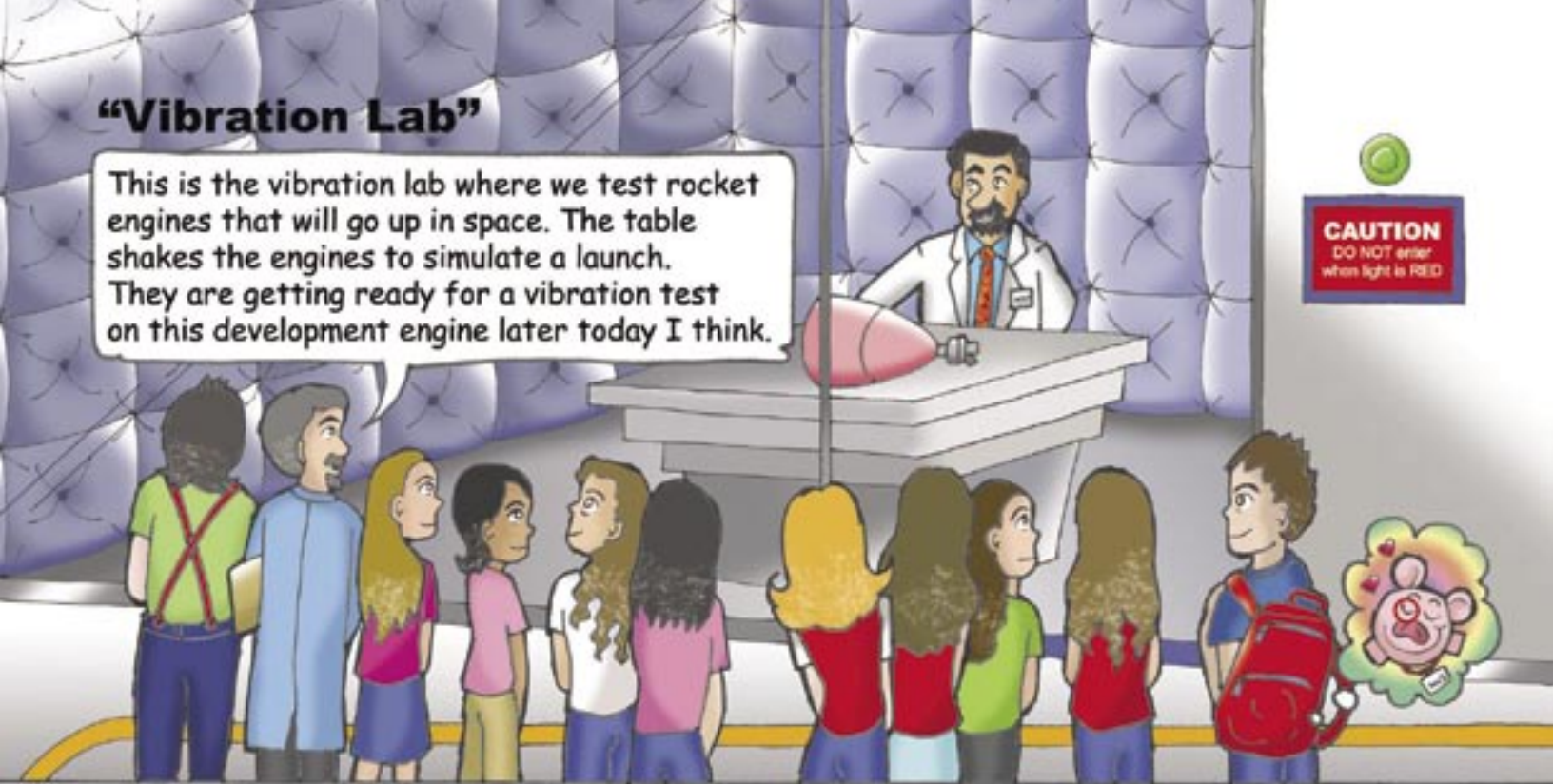


Really, Zack, calm down, We'll find Max... are you SURE you checked everywhere?



"Vibration Lab"

This is the vibration lab where we test rocket engines that will go up in space. The table shakes the engines to simulate a launch. They are getting ready for a vibration test on this development engine later today I think.



That sounds really neat! But the entire room is like padded! Is that so it's soundproof?

That's right Mady! Even though the large table is being shaken, the whole room will feel the vibrations and it can get very loud in here!

Let's go to the test lab now where we fire the engines.

Whoa!
I'm an astronaut!
AND I have a jet pack for
space walks! Cool



I'm floating....



This is fun! Wow! There are a lot of interesting looking things up here! I wonder if any are amateur satellites!



"Hi!" Wait a minute, there seems to be something down there on the moon! I better take a closer look.



Curious! Are they carrying radios? I'll try and talk with them...let me see---

I forgot my radio!
How will I talk with them?





111
Max's dream

Hi! I'm from earth!
Can you hear me?

Yes of course. You didn't
need a radio, we're right here.

I miss my friends,
and want to go home.
Can you use your
radio to help me get back?

Of course we can....

Hey, this looks like a D-STAR radio! It will automatically
link me to the repeater nearest to Mady and Zack!

You should try not to get lost
and stay in touch with friends.

It would if you were on earth! Silly earth piggy!
You will have to go to the Space Station, and try
from there! These radios work with our repeater
here! They're great for keeping everyone in touch!

Bye!

Thanks, I'm off!
Why oh why did I forget my radio!

Help! I need to use your
radio to get me in touch
with my friends on earth!

Yes, of course! Come on in
and we'll set you up!

I hope this works! Maybe they're near the communications room where the IC-910H will pick up my signal.

We'll be passing by Mady and Zack very soon now.

Mady and Zack

WOW!

This is Max, KE7PIG, calling KD7QEZ for Mady and Zack in Kirkland, Washington.

"Communication Lab"

This is KD7QEZ. Max, is that you? How are you?

Yes it's me, and I am OK! I want to come home!

What are you doing? We are all worried about you! We can't find you! Zack is very upset!

Oh, I'm just in space traveling in a rocket ship around the earth.

Well you'll just have to stay there until we can send someone up there to relieve you. I have got to go now...

What! Wait!

How do I get down? I want to come home! I'll starve up here!

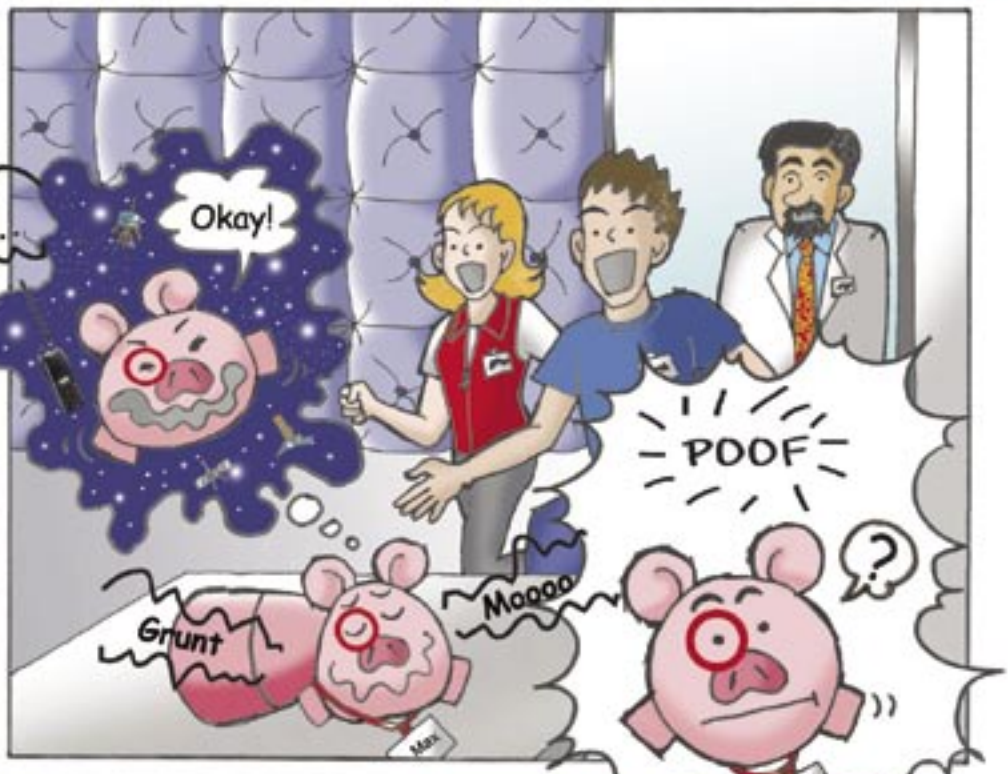


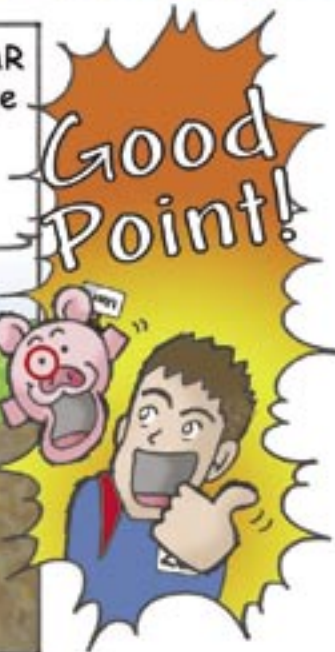
Well, he wasn't really in my bag... you know Max. We were talking and then he just seemed to disappear! We were looking at all kinds of things in the manufacturing building and then we met up with Brien, and then we were walking along and talking about D-STAR....



Max's dream

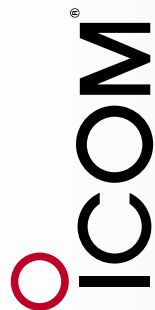




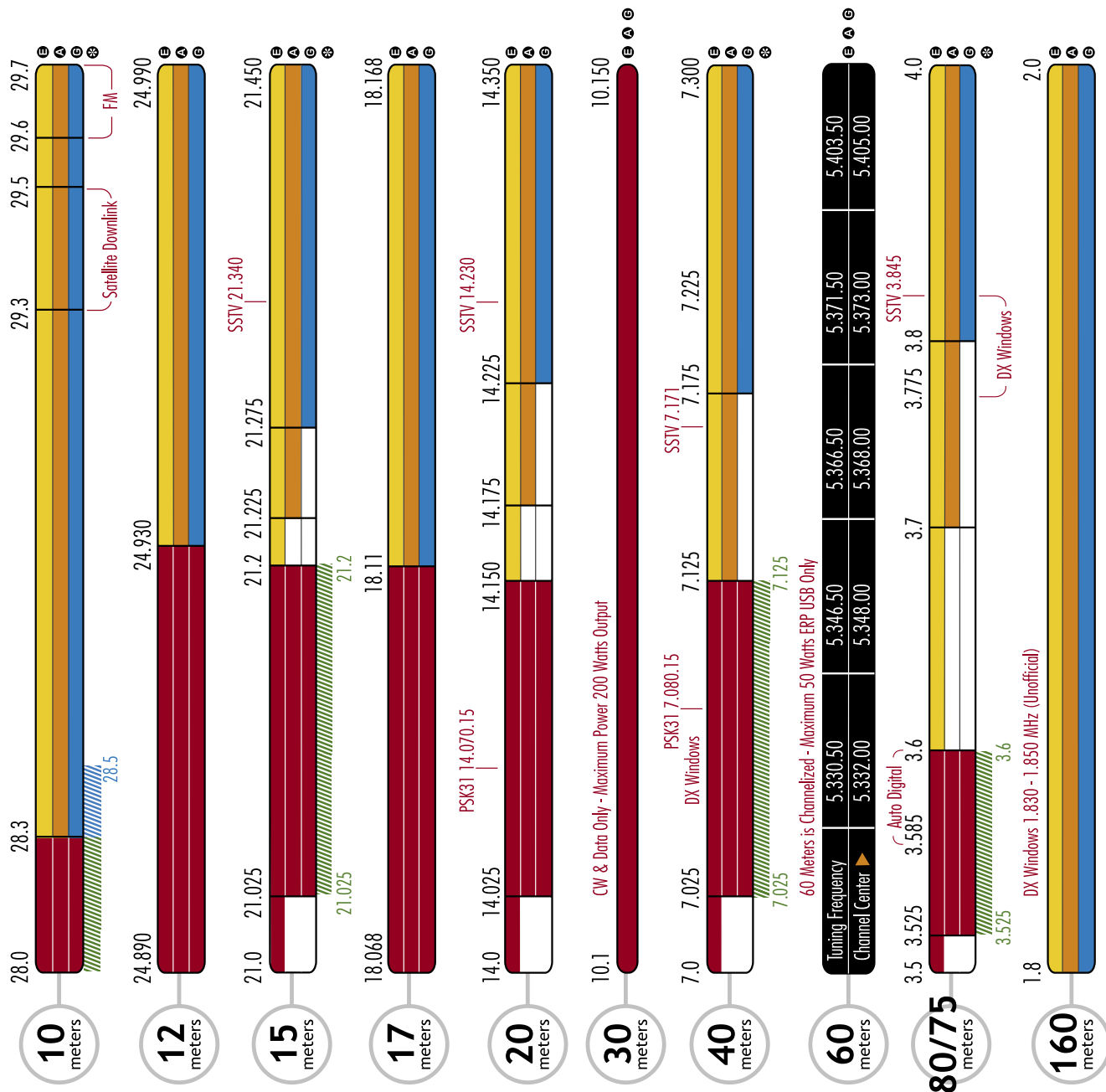




Radios pictured from top to bottom, left to right are handhells, IC-T91A, IC-V82, IC-91AD and mobiles, ID-1, IC-2820H, ID-800H, IC-7000 and the IC-2200H.



U.S.A. Amateur Radio HF Band Plan



- Extra Voice - CW - Image
- Advanced Voice - CW - Image
- General Voice - CW - Image
- CW - RTTY - DATA
- Novice Technician - CW
- Novice Technician - Voice
- No Privileges

E Extra A Advanced G General
N Novice and Technician

Under restructuring, all Advanced license classes retain their operating privileges.



More Space Information For Young Hams



SPACE CAMP®

Young hams interested in the U.S. Space Program should check out Space Camp. Located in Huntsville, Alabama, Space Camp uses space to excite and educate children between the ages of 9-18 in the fields of math, science and technology. Teamwork, self-confidence and communication will be achieved through state-of-the-art simulations, missions, rocket building and robotics.

The camp covers everything you need to know about Space Shuttle Systems and life aboard the Orbiter and Space Station. Try out space food, learn to sleep in space and even how to go to the bathroom in space!

Train on the Multi-Axis trainer that spins you all around. Take a turn on the 5-Degrees of Freedom Chair (it's like a chair floating on air). Be like Apollo astronauts preparing for their trip to the moon by taking a walk in the 1/6th Gravity Chair! And strap on a jet pack — an MMU, that's NASA talk for a Manned Maneuvering Unit. Space Campers also train in rocket construction to build and launch their own one-stage model rockets.

Space Academy®, for kids 12-14, is an increased intensity program of astronaut and mission training and academics. Simulated missions to a space station and crew rotation highlight the week.

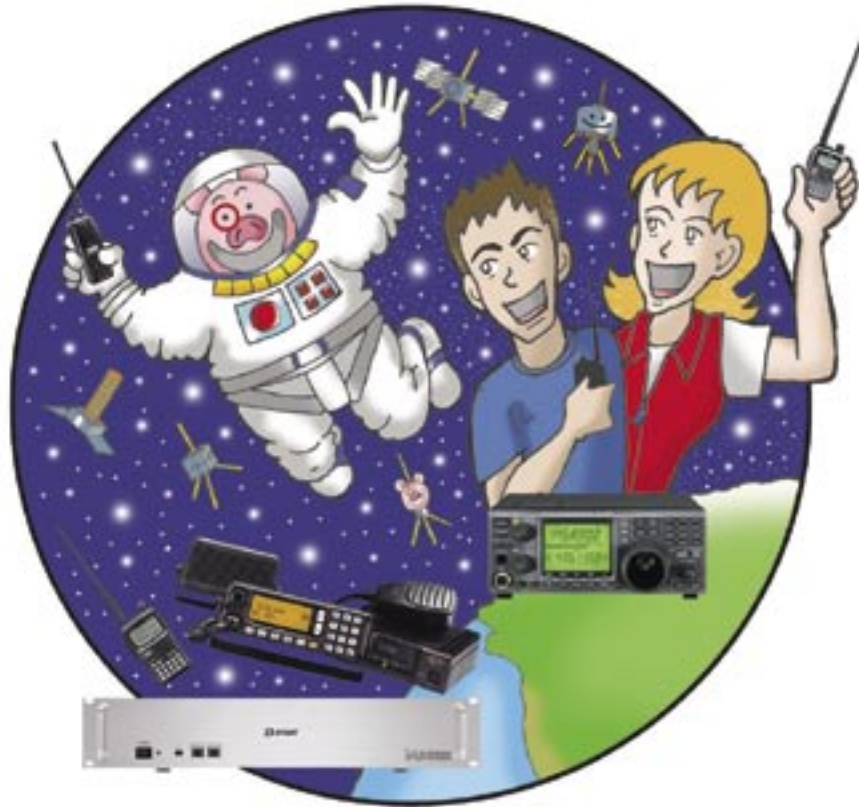
The Advanced Space Academy® program is for young adults between the ages of 15-18 and offers a college-accredited program through the University of Alabama-Huntsville (UAH). All Advanced Space Academy participants will earn one hour of Freshman-level general science credit from UAH.

Parent/Child Space Camp®, for kids ages 7-12, is also available.

For more information, check out the Space Camp website today!

<http://www.spacecamp.com>

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