(GA) D-Star Takes Center Stage at Dayton

D-Star made a big splash at this year's Dayton Hamvention. People from all over the world converged on Dayton to announce, celebrate and discuss what's going on with D-Star. D-Star is truly a world-wide phenomenon. It was originally developed in Japan. The Trust Servers are in Texas. Gateway software comes from Icom in California and Japan. It (the gateway) runs on Linux. D-Rats software comes from Dan Smith, KK7DS in Oregon. There are D-Star repeaters all over the US as well as places like England, Germany, Italy, Russia, Brazil, Argentina and Australia.

But nowhere are there more D-Star repeaters per square mile than right here in Atlanta. Thanks to Robin Cutshaw, AA4RC, this is the home of the DV Dongle (http://www.dvdongle.com) and the D-Plus software which makes repeater linking possible. Ed Woodrick, WA4YIH, John Davis, WB4QDX and Georgia D-Star, Inc. have given us the D-Star Calculator, the D-Star Info web site (http://www.dstarinfo.com), the SE D-Star Weather Net and now the D-Star Info Newsletter (available online at the website).

Even Atlanta's Ham Radio Outlet is a big part of D-Star. Nobody is a bigger advocate of D-Star than Mark Holmes, KJ4VO. (Kevin O'Connell, KL0RG, runs a D-Star repeater in Ketchikan, Alaska. He told me that he caught the D-Star bug while talking to Mark in the Atlanta HRO store.) These great Atlanta resources are joined by a host a host of other Atlanta Hams who are eager to help by offering advice, information and help or just by talking on and about D-Star.

So while Dayton is thought by many to be the Mecca of Ham Radio, Atlanta just may be the Mecca of D-Star.

* * *

For a few short days in May, all of these Atlanta resources moved to Dayton. Georgia D-Star shared a booth with the Texas Interconnect Team, which runs the D-Star Trust Servers (essentially root DNS so the repeaters and gateways can find each other). Ed set up the KJ4BDF repeater at the Hamvention for some demonstrations as well as to allow repeaters from all over the US to talk to attendees. (That's right, had you been listening to WD4STR or W4DOC, you would have heard conversations between attendees and others.)

Robin had a booth dedicated to the DV Dongle.

There was a D-Star Pizza night just for "eyeball QSOs". Dave Humphries, G4ETG from England was there. If you were part of drive-time on the 146.82 machine back in October, you may remember Dave's visit to Atlanta.

The D-Star Forum and Special Icom evening gathering provided updates on D-Star deployment in Alabama by Greg Saratt, W4OZK, D-Star deployment in Georgia by John Davis, WB4QDX, as well as experiences from Northern Illinois and Chicago. Dan Smith, KK7DS, provided an update on development of D-Rats and Robin Cutshaw, AA4RC brought us up to date on DV-Dongle development. He's been busy and has some things in the pipeline that will take the Dongle in a new direction. Stay tuned for more details.

The Texas Interconnect Team discussed the Trust Servers and explained how a single hardware failure caused a prolonged outage of a key server and what steps have been taken to make it easier to recover from future such problems.

All in all, Dayton was a wonderful experience with lots of D-Star and lots of ham friends. Heck, there were even some things there for non D-Star hams.

As always, please send comments and suggestions to KE4FOV@Bruner.us.