



Unsung Hero Receives Award

"America's quiet warriors are the legion of ham radio operators, who are always ready for backup duty in emergencies..."

- Paul Harvey, Radio Personality

Ham radio operators are the unsung heroes during times of chaos and uncertainty. They are unpaid and often uncelebrated, but are the voice of calm and reason when the world can be at its scariest. Founded in 1952, the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) is a public service provided by a reserve (volunteer) communications group within government agencies in times of extraordinary need.

Fred Varian is one of those unsung heroes who has been actively watching over our City for the last 28 years. As a Ham radio operator, Fred works alongside Plano's Public Safety Director, Police Chief, Fire Chief, and Emergency Management Director to provide a critical communications link in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during emergencies. Fred's many years of public service was honored at the Ham-Com Amateur Radio Convention held in Plano this year. Shane Stovall, Director of Emergency Management, says, "Fred's dedication and tireless effort in amateur radio and emergency communications has been a great benefit for the City of Plano and its citizens. His expertise is second to none and is highly valued by the City Department of Emergency Management."

Chadwick Stelzi-KD5UMO, Collin County AEC and NWS SKYWARN Liaison comments that "Fred unselfishly gives his time and shares his experiences to help others in the Amateur Radio community and to inspire and guide those that are interested in providing this support function to our served agencies." He continues with, "Fred's time and talents cannot go unnoticed and we always look forward to being in his presence, to take that experience forward, aiding us in becoming better operators."

Fred Varian's volunteer resume is as impressive as it is extensive. His service dates back to the late 70's and has put his time and effort into a huge number of services. He was a member of Plano's First Citizens Fire Academy Class, as well as being active in the Collin County K-9 Search and Rescue Team, Collin County Citizen Association, Collin County ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service) Club and Vice President of Ham-Com. Fred's finest accomplishments include the hours he puts into helping at the EOC. "As his role as the Area SKYWARN Liaison, Fred is the eyes and ears in the field," said Ron Timmons, Public Safety Communications Director. "He relays important and crucial information from area spotters back to the EOC."

Mr. Timmons, who helped present Fred's honor, sums it up best. "Fred is the rare individual who really doesn't care who gets the credit, he just wants to make sure the job gets done." Volunteering is about giving back to the community and making it stronger. People like Fred Varian are excellent examples of people making a difference in those communities.

On May 18, 2011, Governor Rick Perry declared the week of June 20 - 26, 2011, to be Amateur Radio Operator Week. Governor Perry writes, "In times of crisis - such as Hurricane Ike or the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 - when other forms of communication may be inhibited or rendered unavailable, amateur radio operators relay critical information. At this time, I encourage all of Texas to learn more about amateur radio and to recognize the contributions amateur radio operators make to our great state, both in times of crisis and in times of calm."