

Talking Points for a General Audience

- Severe Weather Reporting - Not everyone is a meteorologist but everyone has an interest in severe weather - especially when it is bearing down on them. Just about everyone has either been involved in a severe weather event or has seen them on the news. People are captivated by the raw power involved. Plus, storm spotting or Skywarn has a bit of wow factor associated with it that can be punched up with some good storm photos. Just don't mention "Twister".

Discuss training with the National Weather Service, the reports you see on TV originate with storm spotters in the immediate area, and that Amateur Radio is used to coordinate the storm spotting operation.

- New Developments - Mention new projects and technologies that are being developed in the Amateur Radio community like the HSMM effort, APRS, and ARISS. (HSMM = High Speed Multimedia - <http://www.arrl.org/hsmm/> high speed digital networking for doing video, voice, data, etc. over short distance at the present time but getting more and more range as the project develops.)

The HSMM project will appeal to the tech heads in the group. They will be familiar with WiFi, wardriving, etc. The HSMM project is like that but bigger, better, faster, sexier, etc. This can get real technical real fast. I would suggest just hitting the high point and taking questions from the tech crowd after the talk.

APRS could be a difficult concept to discuss with people when you start talking about GPS receivers, TNCs, and other acronyms associated with the system. APRS is really easy to explain if you compare the system to trailing the bad guy in a James Bond film. Everyone gets that and also has some great wow factor to it. If you have a live Internet connection, this is something you can demonstrate live through the findu.com Website. Just be sure to have an APRS volunteer out driving around the town.

ARISS should be popular, especially with all of the press that NASA has been getting. There is a lot of information already out there about the long history between NASA and Amateur Radio.

- Public Service - The 9/11 attacks and the Dept. of Homeland Security have really given the general public a heightened sense of public service and we can appeal to that. Mention the EMCOM grants from the DHS, the long history of public service that the Amateur Radio Service has from MARS, 9/11, Shuttle Columbia recovery, national hurricane nets, forest fires, etc. Also discuss the various served agencies we work with and the Memorandums of Understanding we have with them. This is a great time to play the *Amateur Radio Today* video. I usually close with that.

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- For audience members 30-something and under, or a computer group, relate echolink and IRLP to instant messaging.
- When hams get licensed, it's more than just a piece of paper. It's about being part of a larger worldwide community and getting involved.