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## 'Ham' operators keep stake connected

**Member oversees net of 250 radio operators in Pasadena wards**

By Kathy Bence

Southern California Public Affairs

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PASADENA, Calif. — Paul Morgan is helping local members of the Pasadena California Stake prepare to communicate in the event of an emergency.



Photo by Kathy Bence

*Though an injury left him with disabilities, Paul Morgan, in yard with his wife, Judy, watches over radio net in Pasadena California Stake.*

For three years, Brother Morgan has served as the radio net control for the Pasadena stake emergency communication system. There are 250 amateur (ham) radio operators in the stake's six wards.

"It's my job to monitor the radio nets of each ward and to conduct a net for the stake leaders," Brother Morgan said. "The nets are like a weekly 'roll call' to practice and make sure radios are functioning and batteries are charged."

Injured 25 years ago, Brother Morgan has been confined to a wheelchair and has limited use of his arms.

"With a few minor modifications to the controls, I was able to operate the radio," he said. "While I have a lot of physical restrictions, my mind and my vocal chords work fine so this has been a perfect way for me to serve in the Church and, in the event of an emergency, provide a way for the Church to serve the community."

He was quick to add that amateur radio operation has turned into more than service.

"This is now a hobby that I enjoy," Brother Morgan said. "I'm able to reach outside of my restrictive environment and talk with a lot of interesting people."

Within the last four years, Brother Morgan, along with more than 300 other Pasadena stake Church members, has taken a stake-sponsored crash course to obtain an amateur technician license.

Raymond Bence who, for the last five years, has been overseeing the stake's emergency preparedness efforts and teaching the amateur radio classes, spoke about the success of the Pasadena stake program.

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Brother Morgan and Brother Bence attribute the unique success of the stake's emergency preparedness efforts to Pasadena California Stake President Raymond O. Lowry.

"President Lowry has made emergency preparedness a priority," Brother Morgan said. "One of the ways he's done this is by his example — he and his counselors took the class, became radio operators, and check in weekly on the stake net and their individual ward nets. They encourage all the bishops and high council members to do the same."

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