

FOR PPARES WEBSITE & REFLECTOR
Pikes Peak Amateur Radio Emergency Service (PPARES)
Supporting the
2012 American Diabetes Association Tour de Cure
16 June 2012

The Pikes Peak Amateur Radio Emergency Service (PPARES) is honored to be invited to provide the communications support for the 2nd Annual Running of the American Diabetes Association Tour de Cure (ADATdC) on 16 June 2012 (Event including maps: http://main.diabetes.org/site/TR?fr_id=8021&pg=entry). The bike event is held in in northern Teller and Southern Douglas Counties with the start/finish at the Woodland Park High School. There are Mountain Bike Trail Ride, a Family Route, a 25 Mile, 50 Mile, 86 Mile, and a Run/Walk events that help raise funds for diabetes research through pledges that each rider has received for the miles they will ride or run/walk.

The ADATdC depends on PPARES to report race progress. This includes informing race officials to the progress of race leaders as well as the sweep teams and alerting them to incidents such as rider breakdowns or injuries, etc. By doing so, these dedicated amateur radio operators provide important information to race officials as they strive to maintain a safe racing environment. This is a great training ground for real-world emergencies.

Besides being a wonderful public service event, it is a special training event for the Pikes Peak Amateur Radio Emergency Service (PPARES). While the event (except for the mountain bike route) takes place on state and county roads, it is typical of the Teller County challenging terrain in which PPARES can be called upon to provide back-up emergency amateur radio communications for the the Teller County Rural Fire Districts, Sheriff's Office and Office of Emergency Management.

While amateur radio UHF and VHF repeaters are available to support the event in this area with hand held radios and low power mobile rigs working easily from a few points along the routes, a number of the points require station positioning and antenna ingenuity, as well as additional transmitter power to support the event just as would be required to support a real forest fire or other serious incident in Teller County.

The amateur radio UHF repeater is part of the EmComm Colorado repeater system, which is exclusively for emergency and public service support. From its location at Devil's Head the system covers the route 100% but not perfectly. We are fortunate that it is there.

Additionally, PPARES has an on-going relationship with the motorcyclists (Gold Wing riders) and their use of 11 meters to communicate between the two groups - PPARES and Gold Wing riders. It's a little unusual to find amateur radio groups actually cooperating with CB groups, but when you have CB operators with professional skills (e.g., pilots) who know how to properly communicate, the mode and frequency is really irrelevant. It's the quality of the operators. BTW we're going to try to communicate with them again this year too.

This is a great time for the current PPARES members who are not as familiar with operating in the rural challenging areas of our district to work with seasoned veterans to learn the techniques of establishing communicating in this challenging environment. Contact Rob, N7LV, Event Mission Coordinator (n7lv@amsat.org) or sign up at the PPARES Volunteer Website: <http://www.wavelinedata.com/ARESPSE/Default.aspx>.

PPARES is an all-volunteer organization made up of Ham Radio operators who have undergone special emergency training (URL: <http://www.chalkcliffs.net/ppares/news.php>). They provide back-up emergency radio communications in times of community disasters such as forest fires, tornadoes, 911 outages, or other such incidents. They work with El Paso and Teller County emergency response organizations, such as Fire, Police, Emergency Management, National Weather Service SKYWARN Program, Red Cross, Salvation Army, etc. To be a responder, each member has to be a licensed Ham operator, been trained in emergency response procedures and practices, and maintain their proficiency in the field by participating in multiple public service events and served agency exercises each year.

Contact: PPARES Public Information Officer, Bill Hecker, KC0ET, KC0ET@arrl.net