



## Second Century

# Ham Radio Lives in You

*In my 9 years at ARRL thus far, I've learned many things about ham radio, and foremost among them is that ARRL, the organization, is not ham radio. ARRL doesn't make ham radio happen. You — the individual ham, the club, the Section, the community — you make ham radio happen. Ham radio doesn't live at 225 Main Street, Newington, Connecticut. It lives wherever you live.*

*QST*, the membership journal of ARRL, is a perfect example of this. Any magazine is a reflection of the audience it serves, and *QST* is perhaps even more so, because its readers *write* what goes into the magazine. Though the *QST* staff does a fair amount of soliciting material on specific topics, most of what you see in the magazine is what hams have been moved to write up and send in. In that sense, *QST* is very much a reflection of its audience, and of the ham radio community.

Occasionally, *QST* receives emails and letters from hams who feel that *QST* ignores a part of the hobby that they and their friends enjoy. Characteristically, these missives claim that the writer's favorite aspect of ham radio should be held up as something to learn more about and to aspire to, and that *QST*'s lack of focus on it is disappointing — perhaps even calculated — and this should be rectified.

These messages, when they appear, are nearly identical in their spirit and concerns, and the only thing that sets them apart from each other is the ham's favorite aspect of the hobby. Name any part of ham radio you can think of — microwaves, contesting, AM, high-end DXing, vacation-style DXing, giant towers, simple wire antennas — and someone has written to lament the lack of it in *QST*, and decry what they see as a glut of material on some other, less-worthy aspect of ham radio.

Behind each of these messages is a fear that something beloved will be overlooked, forgotten, lost, and a belief that *QST* can and should do something to prevent that from happening. While I certainly sympathize with wanting to guard against the loss of something cherished, I also feel that these concerned hams could use some reassurance as to who's truly in charge of which parts of ham radio fall by the wayside, and which parts survive.

Who's in charge? Hams are. You are. Ham radio lives and breathes on the air, and in the ham community. It's true that ARRL's mission is to advance the art, science, and enjoyment of amateur radio, but we at ARRL HQ — including those of us at *QST* — take our cues from the community. We see what's being written on internet message boards and other social media platforms. We attend forums and talk to hams at conventions. And, in terms of *QST*, we read the manuscripts that hams submit, which are an indicator of what the community is moved to share with others. *QST* has always been written by hams, for hams.

So if you want to see something specific in *QST*, by all means, write it up and send it in for consideration. The main exchange of ham radio knowledge occurs in the community of folks out there on the air — that's been the case for more than 100 years — and *QST* reflects that community. If you want the community to know about something you value, *QST* can help amplify your voice, to help shape the community.

Anybody can send in a manuscript at any time. We have an author guide at <http://www.arrl.org/qst-author-guide> that offers a great deal of information about what we're looking for. Take a look at it and consider writing that article you've been thinking about for months or years. Don't let your favorite niche of ham radio be lost to time; write a how-to, let other hams know what they might be missing out on. Having an article accepted in *QST* can be part of your ham radio legacy. Speak up; write it down. Let the community know how and where ham radio lives in you.

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