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Man uses ham radio to rescue woman

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ST. GEORGE -- Hal Whiting of St. George was driving in the Arizona desert between the Grand Canyon and the Utah border, looking for an old plane wreckage with his two sons and some friends when they were flagged down by a group of people.

The group said a woman was injured by an ATV rollover and asked for a satellite phone. Whiting didn't have one but, lucky for them, he's an amateur ham radio operator.

Whiting set up his equipment and made an emergency call. "This is K-I-2-U. Break, break, break. I have emergency traffic," he announced into his radio.

Ralph Magee, over 50 miles away, responded to his call.

"He replied back, and I asked him if he had clear contact with, which he said he did. And then I said I need a 911 emergency call made," said Whiting.

He says the Mohave County Sheriff's Office dispatched a helicopter from Phoenix. Whiting stayed in contact with Magee and the sheriff's office the whole time.

"It's about an hour and a half that we were on the radio. It's quite a ways out there."

The woman was transported to a Las Vegas hospital. She's expected to make a full recovery.

Whiting said he doesn't consider himself a hero. "It's what I train for, it's what I practice doing. I've done emergency training with them, participated in various exercises with the public health department," he said.

He said he's grateful he was prepared and glad he could set a good example for his sons.

"Jared's comment was, 'You know, this gave me a really warm feeling.' After this was all over he told me that."

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