

Minutes of the East River Amateur Radio Club meeting held on February 6, 2016 at The Valley Country Restaurant, Green Valley, WV. <http://www.erarc.com> local emergency HF freq: 3.860+-5. Backup meeting location at Burger King, Bluefield, Va. The meeting was opened at 657pm by Keith Jennings NO8P, ERARC President. There were 21 members/ guests in attendance. Keith welcomed everyone.

Hooger Fisher W4OF read the minutes of the January meeting. There were no changes made and the minutes were approved.

Keith gave the floor to Matt Morris KC8LGS, Mercer County, WV ARRL Emergency Coordinator. Matt had contacted the local Civil Air Patrol squadron concerning their possible use of amateur radio as an adjunct for emergency communications. The CAP is the stand-alone auxiliary of the United States Air Force and they use their own communications systems. There are amateurs in the CAP but the two entities are separate in function. Steve O'dell N8SNR and Matt went to the 911 center recently and took the hand held and mobile radios home to charge the batteries and check their functionality. Two out of three Radio Shack dual band handheld have batteries that are acceptable. Steve took the mobile radio home and has used it for the Mercer Co. ARES net. Its hardwired battery set does not hold a charge for very long. The Motorola handhelds are not viable. Gary Kadar N8GK suggested that we have a 120V multi-plug-in unit at the storage rack for these radios and that we could go to the 911 Center and rotate their charging cycles. Matt said that a Ham Club in Charleston is planning on holding a Technician Cram Session sometime in March for anyone that wanted to get licensed. He asked the membership if we would be interested in holding our own cram session locally. Discussion. Don Anderson WD8OOR said that he has something almost better than a cram session. He has a WORD document with all of the Technician questions and only the answers are with them. There are no dis-tractors or designations such as a,b,c or d. He has had potential candidates go thru the whole test three times, from beginning to end in one sitting, and the pass rate has been greater than 95%. Discussion. It was decided that is the situation arises, we would rather disseminate Don's WORD document instead of a cram session. Gary said that the ERARC VE team would have no problem in setting up a special testing session for any self-study or cram session but he would not want the VE team to actively participate in the cram session AND testing due to possible impropriety issues. Matt has been attending the Mercer County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) as a representative of Princeton Community Hospital and as the ARRL EC of Mercer County. Gary asked if he would also represent the ERARC and he said yes. Gary thanked him on behalf of the Club. Matt had asked us to think about any 'wants'

or 'needs' that we could possibly get via grants that he could fill out on our behalf. Discussion. Items mentioned (1) 440 radio for 911 Center (2) a new HF radio for the Communications Trailer (3) a new HF antenna for our use, Yagi vs. Hex Beam (4) New HF rig for 911 Center ((Gary said that it would be nice to make this one a remote HF base for members to use)) and (5) Keith said that it would be nice to find a larger place to meet that had food. Greg Dominguez N3MPR asked if there were any Mercer County plans in place for disaster use such as school cafeterias, gymnasiums, etc. Matt said not that he is aware of. Greg said that in Maryland, they knew where shelters would be placed and went to those sites and practiced using Ham communications to find any problems that could arise. Keith acknowledged these father/son visitors Heath and Bryce Havens and Johnny and Jaiden Borich. They are interested in getting their Technician licenses.

Keith gave the Treasurer's report. **WE STILL NEED A VOLUNTEER TO BE OUR TREASURER! WE ARE STILL ACCEPTING DUES FOR THE 2016-2017 YEAR! \$15 per Amateur and \$1 for additional Ham at the same address. We appreciate your supporting local Amateur communications in our community.**

He also mentioned that there are around 800, 000 Hams in the US and that there have been increases in initial licensing from year to year within the past three years. The Charleston, WV hamfest is on March 25, 2017. Hooger passed around a flyer for the April 15, 2017 hamfest sponsored by the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society.

Don Anderson repeater report: 147.06 working well but the remote base is not online. The 442.45 is working well as is the 444.45 DMR. John Riddle's N8RIG 53.37 machine is linked into the 442.45 and is working very well. There are frequent contacts on 6M and thus 442.45 from North Carolina. Jay Belt K8CTI has put together the 220 repeater components on the bench and it is working well. We are awaiting an assigned frequency. The 220 will be linked to the 220 machine on Dismal Peak, Giles County, Va.

Roger Stefancic KC8LGR reminded us of the Monday night (except meeting nights) Skywarn net at 730pm. Steve O'dell N8SNR reminded us of the Mercer County ARES net that follows the Skywarn net each Monday.

Gary: AN ARRL VE TEST SESSION THIS SATURDAY, FEB. 11, 2017 AT 9AM AT THE MERCER COUNTY 911 CENTER.

Old business: Don Anderson made a motion, seconded by Bill Sowers K8WBS to give a free one year membership to any new local Technician licensee. Discussion. A vote was taken, the motion passed. Harold Hodges N8NCP asked if we could have some blank membership cards available for the upcoming VE test session. The answer was "yes" .

"To Do" list: via Roger: check the 440 radio at the 911 Center. He says that it is not working.

Bill Sowers asked if we could have a DMR class sometime in the near future. He has a radio but is still having problems with the whole "DMR" thing. It was mentioned that David Sexton AB8D was retiring soon and he would be the man to give such a class. He and DMR are doing well together, it was reported. The meeting was over at 0748pm.

Submitted by Hooger Fisher W4OF, ERARC Secretary.

ERARC

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