

Minutes of the East River Amateur Radio Club meeting held on November 6, 2017 at The Valley Country Restaurant in Green Valley. <http://www.erarc.com> local emergency HF freq: 3.860+-5. Skywarn local simplex freq: 146.53. Our backup meeting location is at the Bluefield, Va. Burger King.

The meeting was opened at 705pm by Matt Morris KC8LGS, ERARC President. There were 19 members and guests in attendance. Matt welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially visitors/new members Chris McConnell KC8PAS, Princeton, Brenen McGraw KC8FIB, Anawalt and John Abraham KE4QOX from Hico, Fayette County, WV.

Hooger Fisher W4OF read the minutes of the October 2, 2017 meeting and they were approved.

Bruce Puckett KJ4YTR gave the Treasurer's report. He paid a \$14.18 power bill (for the '49 site) and he deposited \$93.00 in dues. A check to the Pipestem Christian Academy (memorial) went through the bank. (**WE ARE STILL ACCEPTING DUES for the 2017-2018 ERARC calendar year. The cost is still \$15 per Amateur and \$1 for additional Ham at the same address. ERARC P.O. Box 1362 Bluefield, WV 24701.** There is a downloadable application on the <http://www.erarc.com> website if needed. We appreciate your supporting local Amateur communications in our community.)

Don Anderson WD8OOR gave a repeater report. "They are working," he said. Keith Jennings AD8L said that the '49 is still having problems and Don said that it is probably the feedline and/or antenna. He hopes to get to work on this problem soon. Don has been doing research on APRS and said that versus packet, it's much more superior in terms of data transfer and it also allows tracking an APRS transmitter if need be. Discussion. He said that he is working on getting our APRS system back on the air and that the Windmill Gap site would be the preferred location for it. He said that for 5-10 watts, one can communicate mountain top to mountain top into the APRS system.

Roger Stefancic KC8GLR mentioned that the Skywarn® Appreciation Days are December 1-2 and that the NWS will be testing their capabilities to connect to any and all repeaters that they can. They cannot hit our '06 machine but it is linked to the '49 and they can hit that one. The Monday net is at 730pm followed by Steve O'Dell's ARES net. (No nets on first Mondays) Steve has ARES applications for anyone interested in helping with ARES functions. <http://www.arrrl.org/files/file/Public%20Service/fsd98.pdf>

Matt is also the Mercer County, WV, ARRL Emergency Coordinator. He again mentioned that The Community Foundation of the Virginias <http://www.cfvinc.org> awarded the Club a grant. He would like for any Club members to be present at their office on North Street in Bluefield, WV for a photo op as we receive the actual check. He hopes to get this done sometime really soon and hopefully after 330pm so that more members can attend. He and Greg Dominguez AF8GD are still attempting to talk to the Beckley, WV Red Cross officials about emergency communication. On another note, Matt would like to step down from the Mercer Co. ARRL EC position and would encourage anyone able to consider taking on the job. He feels that his forte is in promoting the Club and trying to obtain funding from any source available.

Gary Kadar N8GK reminded us about the **November 11, 2017 ERARC ARRL VE testing exam**, 9am at the Mercer County 911 Center. The cost is \$15 and testees

must bring copies of any Ham licenses, CSEs, etc. that morning. A legal photo ID is also a must.

Matt said that he would like the Club to consider moving to the Princeton Bellacino's for our January meeting and see how we would like it. He meets there sometimes with the Rotary Club and said that the food is good and the meeting room there is large enough for us.

Hooger gave a report on Jamboree on the Air with the Boy Scouts on October 21. The Scouts seemed to enjoy the event as did the ERARC volunteers. Thanks go out to Greg, Keith, Bruce, Roger, Hooger and even to Don Anderson for his help with the event. Hooger said that the mic cord for the Club's Yaesu FT100 was cracking and fraying and he purchased a replacement and installed it. He also mentioned that Thurman Williams WD4HTI's daughter had passed away and that we need to send a memorial to the Union Mission. Discussion. Bruce will take care of this. Hooger had gone to the Bluefield Va. library and found the Technician Study books that the Club had purchased. One expired in 2014 and had been checked out 17 times. The newer guide (expires 2018) had not been checked out any in its three years being there. Discussion. We will bring this up next year closer to the June expiration date.

Bill Sowers K8WBS said that Tracy Belcher KA8CFR has a lot of electronic components in his possession and would like to get them to someone that can use them.

John Abraham KE4QOX introduced himself to the membership and is at the meeting to see if the ERARC would consider linking (some of) our repeaters into his linked system. His system includes parts of WV, VA and NC and it all centers around a 'hub' that also eliminates the use of courtesy tones on each individual repeater. His major concern is keeping all of our Ham frequencies, keeping them busy and hopefully get more people involved in Ham radio. If we consider joining with his linked system, he will supply all of the link radios, controllers, etc. in order to do so. There will be codes that we can enter to cut off the linked system with our machines if need be. There were a lot of questions and discussion. We had to stop the meeting at 0805 and leave as the restaurant was closing, but we will continue to talk about this option and get back with John.

(Our Christmas Dinner / Meeting on December 4 will be at the La Fiesta Restaurant in Bluefield, Va. There will be an AYCE taco bar available for around \$8, drinks extra. Ordering off of the menu is still an option. More later.)

Submitted by Hooger Fisher W4OF, ERARC Secretary. ERARC P.O. Box 1362 Bluefield, WV 24701

"To Do" / 'wants' or 'needs' list. Items mentioned:

- (1) get 440 running at the 911 Center
- (2) *a new HF radio for the Communications Trailer*
- (3) a new HF antenna for our use,
- (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)),
- (5) Keith said that it would be nice to find a larger place to meet that had food.
- (6) Upgrading the DMR internet interface for more reliable availability
- (7) Get the APRS system up and running again
- (8) packet
- (9) Continue to look into the Amazon Smile program

- (10) Suggestion: list the DMR talkgroups, help pages, links, etc. on the ERARC website
- (11) new repeater site to replace 145.49?
- (12) Participate in the STEM / Explore program in Princeton?
- (13) Possible linking our repeater(s) to KE4QOX's system
- (14) June 2018, Technician Study manuals for three local libraries?