

Minutes of the East River Amateur Radio Club meeting held on January 1, 2018 at Bellacino's in Princeton, WV. <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 7pm by Matt Morris KC8LGS, ERARC President. There were 17 members and guests in attendance. Matt welcomed everyone to the meeting especially new member Charles Hampton KE8IHN. He introduced himself.

Hooger Fisher W4OF read the minutes of the November 6 and December 4, 2017 meetings and they were approved.

Bruce Puckett KJ4YTR gave the Treasurer's report. He paid two power bills for the '49 site in the amounts of \$15.23 and \$16.41 and reimbursed Roger Stefancic KC8GLR \$29.98 for antenna rope for the Club. He deposited \$45.00 in donations and dues and the Bluefield Area Foundation grant. ***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. "Some are working," he said. The link between 145.49 and 147.06 is working well as is the link between 442.45 and 53.37. He mentioned that you may hear some 'DX' on the 440 but it is most likely coming thru the 6M side. He has been working on Echolink a lot lately and it is at about 95%. The receive on the repeater is great but the audio going back to the computer is noisy with poor audio. He thinks that the sound card on his Echolink computer is the problem. APRS has been sidetracked while working on the Echolink problem but it is on the way to becoming a reality again. The new APRS hardware and software include the latest innovations and have all of the 'bells and whistles', he said. The new software can support packet also. His timeline is Echolink, APRS and then packet. Keith Jennings AD8L said that 11 year old Jaiden Borich KE8GDP is using Echolink a lot and hopes to get some other young people interested in Ham Radio. Keith said that Jaiden was tickled pink when he received his first QSL card from Texas via an Echolink contact.

Roger Stefancic KC8GLR said that he monitored some of the Skywarn® Appreciation Days (December 1-2) activity and that there was not a lot going on when he could listen. The Monday net is at 730pm

followed by Steve O'Dell's N8SNR ARES net (except on the first Monday of each month).

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.

Roger Stefancic said that there were three new Technicians and two new Generals at the November 11, 2017 ERARC VE test session.

Don Anderson announced that he has the Technician and General questions pools as Word documents if anyone needs the study guides. Email Don for a copy. He again stressed that anyone studying for a Ham license NOT take online tests over as questions WILL be missed. We've seen this at testing sessions. The problem is that one takes a 35 question test a few times and does not see ALL of the possible questions unless they sit down for hours and take the tests over and over and over. We have had people testing and saying that we gave them test questions that they have never seen before.

John Abraham KE4QOX was recognized and although he was not on the agenda to speak, was given a few minutes to do so. He said that he had come back to see if the Club had considered joining their/his linked repeater system but he had the feeling that we did not want to join. He said that they/he didn't need our repeaters now anyway and he left the meeting at that point.

Matt asked if anyone had seen or talked to George Leedy KJ4BXS recently as he has had some medical problems. Don Anderson saw him earlier this week and said that he was getting stronger and healthier.

Matt asked for a motion to officially ask for speakers to contact a member in order to be put on our agenda for a particular meeting. This way, the leadership will know what the subject matter will be and have time to possibly do research on that subject. Roger Stefancic made the motion as voiced, seconded by Steve O'Dell to accept the motion. A vote was taken, the motion passed.

Matt asked how the membership felt about meeting at Bellacino's. Discussion. He asked that we meet for 6 more months and then decide if we would continue to meet there. Although Matt paid \$25 room fee tonight, the management said that we could meet for free, eat there or not, but to NOT bring in any outside food. Discussion. We will continue to meet there for at least the next 6 months.

Matt mentioned that he had read an article in the November issue of the SERA Repeater Journal <http://www.sera.org> about the HEART (Healthcare Emergency Amateur Radio Team) alliance between Healthcare facilities and disaster communications via Ham Radio. (Eastern Virginia HEART information: <http://dw.evhc.org/demo/index.php/communications/heart> ) Western Virginia is included and growing and is spearheaded by Glen Sage W4GHS in Hillsville, Va. Matt would like us to look into such a program in order to provide a public service for our healthcare system and citizenry.

The meeting was over at 0752pm.

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 Pctn?
- ~~(13) Possible linking our repeater(s) to KE4QOX's system~~
- (14) June 2018, Technician Study manuals for three local libraries?