

Minutes of the East River Amateur Radio Club meeting held on October 6, 2014; Ryan's Steakhouse @ Bluefield, VA.
<http://www.erarc.com> local emergency HF freq: 3.860+-5

The meeting was opened at 700pm by Harold Hodges N8NCP, ERARC President. There were 16 members and guests in attendance. All were welcomed.

Hooger Fisher W4OF read the September minutes. The minutes were approved.

Roger Stefancic KC8LGR, ERARC Treasurer, gave his report. He paid a phone bill in the amount of \$22.01, paid for a new 145.49 repeater, paid for a new Arcom controller and deposited \$15.00 in memberships. DUES ARE BEING

ACCEPTED NOW, THANKS. They are still \$15.00 per year and only \$1.00 per additional member at the same mailing address. There are still two Sam's Club memberships through the ERARC if any member is interested. It's \$45 per year.

Harold asked Don Anderson WD80OR for an update on the new 145.49 repeater and controller. Don said that the units are connected on the bench and that he is going through a very steep learning curve on trying to learn the processes for programming the controller. There are 200 auto-dial memories available and the access to these memories is quite different as compared to the CAT controller on the old '49 machine. Arcom has been very helpful in trying to answer his questions and he is very thankful for that. The Tazewell County 911 Center is what now answers a 911 entry. The weather radio will be re-connected so that we will have that function back. The unit will accept 7 or 10 digit phone numbers after cutting the phone interface on. It can store and play messages for upcoming events as just like the CAT controller did. Almost all of the user codes consist of numerals and special characters are used in programming the unit.

Brian Leedy KI4URO introduced Derrick Ruble, the Tazewell County 911 director, to the membership. Derrick said that they have a "one-button" connection to the surrounding 911 centers in other counties. Jay Belt K8CTI suggested that we just leave the 911 call as is and then have Tazewell transfer the call to another County if needed. This would save a lot of programming evolutions and KEEP IT SIMPLE. He said that it takes a 3-digit entry to bring up a dial tone, then enter the 7 or 10 digit phone number needed, then enter a 3-digit numeric to bring down the phone call. Jay also reported on the 442.45 repeater that was on the air weeks ago but was short-lived. It turned out that the repeater itself was loaded up with mouse scat and shut the machine down. He had to send it off for repair at a cost of \$277.45. A motion was made by John Riddle N8RIG, seconded by Steve O'dell N8SNR to pay this bill. A vote was taken. The motion passed. Jay said that he is going to reconnect the Doug-Hall interface which will allow connection to other local repeaters.

Michael Akers KB8WVU brought a scrapbook of ERARC newspaper clippings from 1959 to around 1994. It was passed around for viewing.

Gary Kadar N8GK mentioned that Roger Stefancic had participated in the September ARRL VHF contest and was only able to make 4 contacts from his home QTH.

Brian Leedy again introduced Derrick Ruble to the group and wanted conversation on how the Club could help the Tazewell 911 Center and solicited any comments on our capabilities. Hooger said that our repeaters were connected to hard-lined phone lines, not cellular links, and that in an emergency, we would have a much better chance of making an emergency phone call from our homes/vehicles for emergency usage. John mentioned that the Club members had volunteered their time and expertise in Mercer County when flooding wiped out the phone system. We were on standby at Matoaka and the Mercer County 911 Center to provide communications to and from the affected areas. Jay said that the 146.955 repeater on Onieda peak was more useful for Tazewell County-proper as well as the 147.06 machine at Windmill Gap in Mercer County as compared to the 145.49 machine in Bluefield. He said that the 145.49 site is able to operate continuously for up to one week due to generator and battery backup systems in place. Gary mentioned that Bluefield Regional Medical Center has UHF/VHF capability onsite and that the Mercer County 911 Center has VHF/UHF/HF capability onsite. Derrick said that the Tazewell 911 is the busiest and largest 911 center in operation west of Roanoke. The county has no cellular service for about one third of it. He has 26 employees and would like to get a majority of them licensed as Amateur Radio Operators. They are working on an inter-operability UHF/VHF system between them and the Virginia State Police and repeaters in the Bluefield area and on Big "A" mountain in Russell County, VA. Amateurs would have access to these frequencies, he says. John said that on HF, there may be a net control station in Texas, for example, to handle traffic from this area due to the propagation of HF frequencies. Harold said that the WV phone nets are on 3.810 and 7.235 at three times a day, depending on propagation. Gary mentioned that the Club has generators, antennas, tower trailers, radios, etc. and can setup in almost any location and provide EMCOMM.

John told Derrick that we would be happy to hold Amateur licensing classes and testing for the Tazewell County 911 personnel. Gary told of the "Cram Session" that we participated with at Bluefield State College for regional Emergency Services personnel in which the question pool was gone over completely twice and then a test session was given. There was a 75-80% pass rate. John mentioned the capabilities of Packet radio communications re: computer to computer via Ham Radio. Brian suggested that Derrick keep in contact with Jay Belt since they work together in the radio businesses and Jay can see what kind of needs that the 911 Center needs.

Harold mentioned that the McDowell County 145.45 machine is getting a new antenna soon and should increase usage and activity on that machine.

Hooger mentioned that Bob Frazier's WB8NRK son, Phillip, had passed away two weeks ago and that he and Ginny KF4YBU visited with Bob and Joyce at the funeral home. Gary mentioned that David Cox N8DBC's mother had passed away several weeks ago.

Bruce Puckett KJ4YTR won the 50/50 drawing.
The meeting was over by 0803pm.
Submitted by Hooger Fisher W4OF, ERARC Secretary.

ERARC
P.O. Box 1362
Bluefield, WV 24701