



W i l l i t s A m a t e u r R a d i o S o c i e t y



The objectives of the Willits Amateur Radio Society are:

- to promote interest in fellowship and fun in Amateur Radio;
- to further the cooperation between Mendocino County Amateur Radio Operators;
- to provide emergency or public service communications when normal means of communications are disrupted;
- to advance the state of the Amateur Radio art through individual and collective research;
- to conduct programs and activities so as to increase the general interest and welfare of Amateur Radio in the community including classes and testing;
- to support lawful, responsible conduct by its members and the amateur fraternity in general.

WARS OFFICERS for 2009

PRESIDENT: Tim Hanna, WB9NJS

SECRETARY: Elizabeth MacDougall, KI6TIB

TREASURER: Linda Morrison, KI6FRW

WEBMASTER: Danny Richardson, K6MHE

TRUSTEE OF W6MMM, Tim Hanna, WB9NJS

NEWSLETTER EDITORS:

Sharon Hanna, KE6YKY and Elizabeth MacDougall, KI6TIB

WEB PAGE: <http://www.k6mhe.com/wars>

MAIL TO: P.O BOX 73, WILLITS, CA 95490

The Willits Amateur Radio Society meets at 7:00 PM on the **fourth** Monday (not the last Monday) of each month except for December. The normal meeting location is the Brooktrails Fire Station on Birch Street in Brooktrails.

There is a weekly informal breakfast meeting held every Tuesday morning starting at 9 AM at Perko's Restaurant in Willits.

On the coast, there is also a weekly Koffee Klatch starting at 10:30 AM on Tuesdays at the Tradewinds Restaurant in Fort Bragg and an informal breakfast meeting held every Friday starting at 8:00 AM at Laurel Street Deli located adjacent to the Skunk Train Depot in Fort Bragg.

FROM CHUCK HEATH K6ZIZ:

Seminar on Propagation and Home Brew Antennas Attracts a Crowd

Over a dozen hams, old and new, attended a presentation May 16 in Brooktrails to learn about building your own antennas and the many different types of radio propagation. Numerous other areas of interest to Amateur Radio operators were discussed as well.

Tim Hanna, WB9NJS and Len Guinn, WA6KLLK led the seminar, offering not only valuable information but a hands-on course in building and soldering your own J-pole VHF antenna. Tim's Power Point presentation generated many questions from the participants during the four hour session. There were no "dumb" questions and old-timers added their comments to the questions raised by the newer hams.

Many handouts were also offered on multiple topics, including propagation, creating your own VHF antennas and using free cable tv coax in amateur radio applications. among other topics.

As an example, the handout entitled "Information That Every Ham Needs - All About Coax" was especially useful. The topic was underscored by numerous samples of transmission lines, passed out among the audience. The samples included the common 300 ohm TV ribbon line of 50 years ago all the way up to expensive Heliac transmission hardline, still used in most commercial broadcast applications and by some hams.

There was considerable audience participation, adding more depth to the topics under discussion. The different ionospheric layers were explained in detail, along with the importance of refraction and skip zones. The audience also learned about feedline characteristics and the difference between balanced and unbalanced transmission lines. On a more practical aspect, we learned the proper method to seal coaxial connections and how to correctly solder the PL-259 coaxial connector, the most common antenna connector in ham radio.

Other topics of discussion included theoretical vs. reality with respect to antenna gain claims, basic antennas, directive antennas, and measuring antenna performance. Tim showed his four element 2 meter quad antenna, something easy to construct. Len had a whole stable of home made antennas featuring wooden booms and welding rod elements. He pointed out they are not only fun to build but a real money-saver compared to their commercial equivalents.

The event audience included the leader of the Nice Amateur Radio Club who was impressed enough to invite Len and Tim to offer a similar presentation to their club in Lake County. Well done, gentlemen!

SUMMARY of the School District Tsunami test May 13th.

The school district exercise was thoroughly organized by John Lemmer, W6FQX. 20 hams participated on the county-wide repeater system. John Lemmer led two evening practice sections prior to the May 13 day. Greg Glavich, WA6RQX and owner of the county-wide repeater system worked over-time to complete the Fish Rock repeater for this event bringing the total county-wider repeater system to four repeaters.

11 school districts from Leggett to Pt. Arena involved plus Mendocino County Office of Education (MCOE). The sheriff's office was not involved nor was any police or fire department. Locations were only at school district offices, not at individual schools. Issues were discussed by email regarding the exercises including the following: Some equipment problems occurred in Fort Bragg and at MCOE but over-come with a little effort. The reports were too wordy which slowed down the process on copying. There were some weak as well as noisy signals and a constant reminder to speak up and slow down, as well as use the microphone with greater ability to project the voice. AF6AZ Eddie used a cross band repeater to his car from inside an office. At 12 noon the MCOE office staff went to lunch and that was the end of the exercise, while the volunteer hams donated their time setting up from early in the morning. All agreed to participated in more drills of this nature to be prepared for emergency communications.

The following hams participated.

MCOE W6FQX John
MCOE KI6TIB Elizabeth
MCOE: KI6ISO Dave (working as MCOE employee)
Manchester AF6MQ Scott
Anderson Valley KI6RIT Nick
Anderson Valley K2HSV David
Fort Bragg KE6EBZ Derek
Mendocino WB6GOX Richard
Round Valley WB9NJS Tim
Laytonville KF6UDJ Don
Leggett Valley KG6RHL Eddie
Willits KG6CTM Bob
Willits KI6ISV Tara
Potter Valley AF6AZ Eddie
Ukiah KI6MJC Marcella
Ukiah KG6PUF Jim
Point Arena W8CAT Cathleen
McNab K6ZIZ Chuck
McNab K6OKO Liz
County EOC W6JRC Jim
County EOC KI6IDU Joy

Steve Turner, Director of Maintenance and Operation at MCOE supervised the hams, and also had an amateur license many years ago. This event may inspire him to become licensed again. Paul Tichinin, county supervisor, sent a press release to the local papers about the Tsunami Drill. The more public the amateur radio community can be the more we can cover the county's communications needs.

REPORT ON THE HUMAN RACE

Tim Hanna, WB9NJS organized the hams for the Ukiah Human Race. As with many of these community events, this was an opportunity to participate as radio amateurs in an organized fashion such that in the event of a real emergency there might be a better chance at organization. Tim and John Lemmer set up a portable station with a 2-meter rig and tall j-pole on a Christmas tree stand. The used frequency of 146.520 was a major problem. First problem is that this frequency is also a commonly used frequency for travelers. Ukiah is only one mountain ridge from Lake County, a very popular destination resort for ham radio operators. There was strong interference during race transmissions from Lake County Hams. Secondly, some of the participants that were SAR volunteers used their own Search and Rescue (SAR) radios pre-programmed to this 146.520. General consensus is that the 146.520 is not recommended as a frequency for use during Search and Rescue and to be saved for emergency communication. If SAR radios are to be pre-programmed then another frequency would be a better choice than 146.520.

Weekly Nets

Here is the most current schedule of regular nets in Mendocino County:

Albion	Monday	3:00 PM	147.570 Simplex
Brooktrails	Wednesday	7:15 PM	146.580 Simplex
Gualala *	Tuesday	7:00 PM	147.825 Repeater (-/103.5)
Hopland	Wednesday	7:15 PM	147.510 Simplex
Piercy/S. Humboldt Co.	Monday	7:00 PM	146.790 Repeater (-/103.5)
Point Arena *	Tuesday	7:00 PM	146.610 Repeater (-/88.5)
Potter Valley	Wednesday	7:15 PM	146.415 Simplex
Redwood Valley/Ukiah	Wednesday	6:00 PM	146.490 Simplex
Willits	Wednesday	7:00 PM	146.460 Simplex
Walking Repeaters	Wednesday	8:00 PM	145.555 Simplex (tx 103.5 requested)
* linked nets Countywide	Wednesday	7:00 PM	145.43/145.47/147.39 linked repeaters

NOTES FROM WARS Secretary and the newsletter editor: KI6TIB, Elizabeth, on receiving her GENERAL class license May 16 and written for the next technician class radio operator who might want to go DX'ing.

During the months of February, March, and April, Marcella KI6MJC, Ron KI6PBH Ron's XYL, and myself KI6TIB attended John Breckenridge's WB6FRZ class on the "General" at the Red Cross Center in North Santa Rosa. WB6FRZ is the mentor chair of the Sonoma County Radio amateurs club: sonomacountyradioamateurs.com. The class was a planned 10-week session of 2 ½ hours of lectures, that ended up being a 12-week session. We studied the ARRL General Class License Manual, sixth edition. Liz OKO and Chuck ZIZ lent me their book until I bought my own copy. Both Ron and I had taken the class mentioned in this newsletter for the Technician License at the recommendation of John Lemmer, W6FQX.

As for my own understanding all the information was brand new. I had no experience ever with electricity except for the ability to change a light bulb. And when the class got to chapter four on circuits – John added another class because of the difficulty of understanding all the math. John FRZ was very patient in helping us use our calculators to figure out capacitance and inductance, and the inverse calculations involved. One student took the general test four weeks into the class, got the license, but still attended classes until the end due to the educational experience of the class. Two professional engineers led parts of two classes. After John finished teaching the Generals he continued to teach into the evening with those studying for the Extra. Word in class is that he does this class sequence every spring.

During March and April and the first two weeks of May I estimate I studied an hour to two hours a day, using the internet, a library book on electronics, the ARRL handbook and mostly commonly called on 146.520 to any Elmer who might listen to my question. During this time, I met Lucy on air who was an Extra traveling HWY 101 with her OM and shared how she got her top license only recently. She had been married over 50 years. She studied because she did not like the limitations of the General class license bands and loved to do DX.

On May 16th I choose to skip the antenna workshop in Brooktrails and headed for Petaluma to take the General Class with the Sonoma Mountain Repeater Society www.smrs.us. WB6TMS, Dale Westerterp is the owner of the Sonoma mountain repeater. He organizes a morning cram session followed by an afternoon testing. He has the pool of questions & answers typed out with only the correct answers and instructs the class to read the booklet of questions and right answers like a newspaper, five times between 9AM and the 1:30PM test time. I figured if I couldn't pass the test by understanding the topic I could at least "memorize the answers."

I was the only general student in the class full of technicians, I estimate about 20-25 participants. During the testing time, I was one of two taking the General test, and one came from Vacaville to take the Extra. The test session was very well organized with those who completed going to another room while the tests were graded. A SMRS member gave tips on radios and information to all those waiting for the results and one-by-one tests were graded in order of completion. I passed, with five wrong. Dale WB6TMS congratulated each of us individually.

Thank you to all the radio amateurs who helped me answer my questions and who helped me set up my antenna and radio station so I be on the air and then could be inspired to take on my own elmer'ing role. My elmering started at the test session when the new Tech'ie asked me "what do I do now?" and didn't know what I meant by 2-meter.

Minutes of April meeting of WARS:

The Program was presented by Tim Hanna, WB9NJS, on Sky wave propagation.

John Lemmer W6FQX reported on plans for the May 13th MCOE Tsunami Test. This will be a public safety communications exercise involving the sheriff's department, all police departments, many fire departments, and others. The ham radio community has been requested to participate in several ways. One of the ways is to establish a communications network between the various school district offices and the Mendocino County Office of Education (MCOE) in a manner similar to the exercise conducted in March of 2007

A beginner's antenna class is scheduled for Saturday, May 16, at the Brooktrails fire station. Tim Hanna and Len Gwinn will present lecture and demonstration of various antennas as well as offer hands-on experiences for those present.

May 9, The Human Race, organizers in downtown Ukiah are looking for volunteer HAMS. Tim Hanna, WB9NJS is the contact.

Greg Glavich WA6RQX has a new repeater on the Fish Rock/Point Arena area at 147.270 + 114.8. He has worked hard to make sure there is no interference to other repeaters from neighboring counties. This links south Mendocino county coast to all the other three repeaters in Mendocino County. If an in-lander (101) corridor or coastal resident decides to take the Fish Rock road for the first time – give yourself 2 ½ hours of travel one-way. It's a beautiful spot, and nice to know there's a repeater out in that wilderness to cover emergency communications.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS

The Ukiah Airport Show, June 20: Eddie Alexander is the contact at eddieal@comcast.net for hams who would like to participate. Those of us who have been to the Ukiah Airport Show know that in this small valley of Ukiah we are fortunate to have such an exciting display of airplanes. In approaching the first anniversary of the Lightening Complex fires, we are reminded of the presence of CAL FIRE with the bombers being centered at the Ukiah Base and how the community fought the potential closure of the CAL Fire air base in Ukiah. This is not a event to be missed either as a volunteer ham or a participant. Go and show your support. In past Ukiah air shows local plane rides were offered for sightseeing around the county, a great opportunity to see the lay of the land from the viewpoint of a radio wave.

Elmer Len Gwinn, W6CLK is talking a lot about Sporadic E (E_s). From the ARRL book: "Getting Started with Ham Radio" co. 2006, page 9-9 "Sporadic E propagation is the most spectacular DX producer on the 50-Mhz band [6 meters], where it may occur almost every day during late June, July and early August. Sporadic E is more common in mid-morning and again around sunset during the summer months.... E_s can also occur on the 2 meter band... in most areas. E_s results from small patches of ionization in the ionosphere's E layer. E_s signals are usually strong, but they may fade away without warning. On 6 meters you can make SSB Sporadic E contacts with little more than 50 W to an omnidirectional antenna!"

Also Len Gwinn recommends this event is a must for any HAM:

Seapac 2009 - June 5, 6, 7, 2009. at the Seaside Convention Center in Seaside, Oregon (west of Portland, OR): Website is <http://seapac.org/>

One of the largest Amateur Radio conventions on the Pacific Northwest. Free seminars on Saturday, three free 90 minute seminars on Friday, new equipment dealers and flea market tables. Evening dinner banquet on Saturday with a guest speaker.

FROM John Breckenridge, WB6FRZ, wb6frz@arrl.net, in Sonoma County, the closest location for a thorough lesson in HAM Radio, next county south to Mendocino.

EARN YOUR HAM RADIO TECHNICIAN CLASS LICENSE OVER A WEEKEND!!!!!! – July 18 and 19

Who?

Any and all who want to become licensed amateur radio operators
Any and all who want to understand the material on the Technician Class Exam

What?

A video course with pre-study guide taught by a team of amateur radio operators
This is not a “memorize the correct answers” course; you will learn all the basics.

Who is Offering This Class?

John Breckenridge, WB6FRZ wb6frz@arrl.net (707) 217-1017
With other instructors – Sponsored by the SCRA (**Sonoma County Radio Amateurs**) club
NO obligation to join (of course we won't stop you if you wish to join in the fun with us)!!

When? Where?

Saturday, July 18, 8AM through 5:30 PM and Sunday, July 19, 8AM through 12:30 PM. We break for lunch and you return at 2PM for the FCC exam!

Class is at the Windsor First Baptist Church, 10285 Starr Road, Windsor. This is on the corner of Starr Road and Old Redwood Highway next to Pick-n'-Pull auto parts lot.

Pre-Requisites?

NO prior knowledge, experience or special skills required. Purchase and read the pre-study guide, now available from John Breckenridge.

Why?

Why not? Licensed radio operators use voice, digital modes and other methods to meet other amateur radio operators all over the world. It's fascinating and fun.

Serve the community during public service events and disasters.

Enrich the effectiveness of your COPE or CERT emergency responder abilities.

Costs?

\$15 for the study guide, plus \$15 administrative cost to take the FCC exam

\$0 for the course – we offer this free of charge as a community service!

To Register or More Information.....

Contact: John Breckenridge, WB6FRZ

wb6frz@arrl.net

(707) 217-1017

This same instructor is offering a course in August on building a radio, but using an AM/FM kit. And according to past inside information – he often offers a General and an Extra course in the spring. Keep in contact for future lessons. Having had taken this session as well as the general with WB6FRZ in the past spring, KI6TIB, newsletter secretary, recommends WB6FRZ courses to anybody who wants to learn about radio. But it is a good hour's drive from the center of Mendocino County.

Test Sessions

Below are listed the known test sessions in the next two months within 100 miles of Willits, from <http://www.arrl.org/>.

11-Jul-2009

Sponsor: YUBA SUTTER ARC

Time: 9:00 AM (Walk-ins allowed)

Contact: CLARA M ANSLEY

(530)742-2674

Email: EOAN6VRH@NETEZE.COM

VEC: [ARRL/VEC](#)

Location: CORNERSTONE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

715 KING AVENUE

WALKINS ACCEPTED BET 9-10AM

YUBA CITY, CA 95991

22-Aug-2009

Sponsor: VALLEY OF THE MOON ARC

Time: 9:00 AM (Walk-ins allowed)

Contact: JOEL L NADLER

(707)545-1782

VEC: [ARRL/VEC](#)

Location: SONOMA DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER

MCDUGAL HALL

WILSON STREET AT ARNOLD DRIVE

GLEN ELLEN, CA 95442

12-Sep-2009

Sponsor: YUBA SUTTER ARC

Time: 9:00 AM (Walk-ins allowed)

Contact: CLARA M ANSLEY

(530)742-2674

Email: EOAN6VRH@NETEZE.COM

VEC: [ARRL/VEC](#)

Location: CORNERSTONE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

715 KING AVENUE

WALKINS ACCEPTED BET 9-10AM

YUBA CITY, CA 95991

Future meetings of WARS are at the Brooktrails Fire House:

May 25th – planning meeting for the June Field Day

June 22 – Final meeting before Field Day.

July 27 – Review of Field Day

Buy, Sell, or Trade

Jim Cline, W6JRC, in Ukiah has many radio items, "boat-anchor", (i.e., big and heavy)- 2 Heath Kit transmitters and 1 Receiver, a National Receiver, (NC-138D), 2m antennas, (mobile whips, Cushcraft Ringo and Yagi), panel meters, microphones, 2m and 440 HTs, vertical antenna mounting brackets, 3- magnet mobile mount, analog volt/ammeter, rotator and control for vertical antenna, TV transverter, Heath Kit Q-multiplier. Call Jim at 272-4366, or e-mail at w6jrc@arrl.net, to see any of this, and more, photos are available by e-mail. This will be an on-going sale, no specific date.

Others with items to buy, sell, or trade are invited to post their information in the newsletter by contacting the editor.

CONTRIBUTIONS WANTED

If you have written an article relating on any way to ham radio and are looking for a publisher, please submit it to the editor of this newsletter. Just send it as an email attachment.

If you have run across a published article in another medium that you think should be published here, let the editors know. We may have to obtain permission to publish it but this is generally not a problem for ham radio related publications.