



# 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

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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. Families of members are invited to the breakfast.

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 the prez – JUNE 2009

### What do you get from this hobby?

In my mind, one of the great things about amateur radio is the amazing diversity of our hobby. It seems that there is something for just about everyone. For many, it may just be chatting with friends on 2 meter FM. For others, it is the thrill of chasing DX on the HF bands. Perhaps it is CW operation that strikes your fancy, or exploring some of the more unique aspects of VHF and UHF propagation. Maybe you like experimenting with new modes, or learning how computers and ham radio can go hand in hand. While the equipment has become much more complex over the decades, many hams still take great pride (and gain tremendous satisfaction) from building something, whether it be a simple antenna, a piece of test gear, or a complex transceiver.

Some are attracted to the educational opportunities, either as a teacher or a student. This may be as low key as participating in an Elmer class with local hams, or as exciting as connecting classrooms to hams aboard the International Space Station. Helping others through ham is a common attraction, as well. Public service events, participating in traffic nets, and emergency communications all provide benefit to others through amateur radio.

Clearly, amateur radio brings many different things to each of us, resulting in different perspectives of the hobby. Very few of us make amateur radio our life's work. For most of us, it is only a part of our lives, with wide ranging degrees of involvement. Keep in mind that the interests and energy that others invest in the hobby will be different than yours.

My advice? Find what it is in amateur radio "floats your boat", and enjoy it. Consider exploring other aspects of the hobby that interest others, as you may find something new. But above all, keep it in perspective. This is a hobby and it should be something that you find enjoyable and rewarding!

Tim – WB9NJS

### 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 on linked repeaters:

Countywide	Wednesday	7:00 PM	145.430 -103.5 nor coast&inland 145.470 – 103.5 sou coast&inland 147.390 + 103.5 central coast&inland 147.270 + 114.8 fish rock/pt arena
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FIELD DAY – The Biggest Ham Radio event of the year, and the Willits Amateur Radio Society members will meet at the Regular meeting this Monday June 22 to discuss and plan Field Day 2009. Field Day will be held at Low Gap Park, June 27 and 28, Saturday 11AM to Sunday 11AM. Bring to the meeting your ideas and what you would like to share during field day. Everything will be discussed and organized, from equipment needs to potluck meals. If you have a new radio and would like to try it out, make sure you let the organizers know! If you have an old antenna and want to test its range, bring it to the meeting.

From John Lemmer's note to all:

“Remember that most of the Field Day activity will be on HF but that anyone (even unlicensed persons) can participate as long as a suitably licensed amateur is present. Come to help set up, operate, share in a potluck dinner, camp overnight, and/or help tear down the stations on Sunday morning. Fun for all and a good operating experience.

Minutes of MAY meeting of WARS:

#### Old Business

Beginning the meeting at 7PM, President Tim reviewed the activities of the month: including

1. May 10<sup>th</sup> Human Race in Ukiah, the 3<sup>rd</sup> year hams participated
2. May 13 MCOE (Mendocino County Office of Education) with 11 Districts and MCOE exercise in disaster drill communications. Steve Turner received funding for antennas but not radios. OES picked the schedule. Discussion of the use of J-pole vs. Dipole. Comments were made about the handheld that burns up the radio and the operator. Tim noted his magmount on top of the fridge at his location. Each office of education is supposed to have a disaster office.
3. May 16 Antenna workshop was discussed. Included was the discussion of how to encourage Technician licensed operators to get on the air. The importance of practice and knowing how to use the radio in an emergency was stressed. The likelihood of not knowing how to use the radio when an emergency exists was the thought of many of the senior hams in the group.
4. Improvement to the 4 linked repeater systems was discussed.

#### New Business

1, A newcomer was at the meeting and the 2 meter net and local simplex net frequencies were provided.

2. June 13/14, the 2<sup>nd</sup> full weekend of June is a VHF Contest.

3. Field Day locations were discussed including the Sherwood Road Airport, Low Gap Park in Ukiah, Pear Tree Plaza in Ukiah, Lake Mendocino Group Staging area near Coyote Dam. Last year's field day in Low Gap Park was cancelled due to the intense danger of fire and smoke inhalation. Two years prior the event was successfully held at Low Gap Park and was decided to be the preferred location for 2009 Field Day. Low Gap Park gives more contacts, more public exposure, and is a place that hams can have fun. The proximity to the Mendocino County Sheriff's department was viewed as a benefit. The drawback is the location is not the best for Radio, but perhaps a time to use NVIS, as President Tim, had recently presented a program on NVIS (near vertical incident sky wave) propagation. George Burton will loan his trailer with a 30 foot mast, and the Low Gap location also has electricity.

4. A group in Laytonville is looking for a presentation on ham radio.

President Tim then invited those present to report on their recent ham radio projects beginning with President Tim in fixing his 3-band Dipole, fixed for 12v DC power supply and good to go on 20, 15, 10. He heard Spain, regrets no 6-meter dipole and is considering a loop. Using parts from an old CB radio & led lights for a Christmas tree he fixed his 220 radio.

John Lemmer reported on his work being the Red Cross communications representative for this area. Last month he scheduled an ARES exercise.

George Burton reported on his TV vs. Radio dilemma and the 10 & 15 meter being resonant in the wiring.

Len Gwinn reported on 6 meters being open into Montana today (5/25/09), qrp. Plans were to present at the NICE Amateur Radio Club Saturday at their 7AM meeting on Clear Lake.

Len also reported his watch of a certain desired weather band (Northeastern Pacific High) between Alaska and Northern California that happens in late July and early August – with the possibility of 2 meter sideband. He will run a CW beacon and get a fan to blow air on the amp. 40 meter was extremely local 2 days again (5/23/09), with a radius of a hundred miles.

#### The Program

George Burton reported on Wilson amplifiers for cell phone use. The problems of cell phone coverage, within one's home, one's property, in Brooktrails and the options for making a more effective communications pathway using cell phones were presented.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45PM. Refreshments were provided between the meeting and the program. Social conversation followed the meeting.

#### CHANGING TIMES

News from Jim Cline W6JRC: HSC Electronic Supply of Santa Rosa, 5681 Redwood Drive, Rohnert Park, a popular Sonoma county electronics company has changed its hours to 10AM to 6PM Monday through Saturday For those hams used to shopping at 8:30 AM as they are traveling somewhere else – don't show up until 10AM. They are not open any more at 8:30AM! The benefit is that they are now open later, until 6PM. And Sat 10AM - 5PM, Sunday Closed

World Radio News, is an expired domain name and was bought out by cq.com: <http://www.cq-amateur-radio.com/>.

"*WorldRadio Online* – is the first major ham radio magazine to be published in an online-only format. Published in print since 1971, *WorldRadio* was purchased by CQ Communications in 2008 and began publication as an online-only magazine as of the February, 2009, issue. *WorldRadio Online* is a general interest ham magazine with a special focus on the human side of amateur radio and on projects and activities accessible to the average ham."

## **PUBLIC SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS**

**The Ukiah Airport Show**, is Saturday June 20: Eddie Alexander is the contact at [eddieal@comcast.net](mailto:eddieal@comcast.net) for hams who would like to be available to help at the air show. 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. 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.

## **Radio Discussions heard on air, in email, on the web**

Len Gwinn WA6KLG reported on the 6/17/09 Wednesday evening county-wide net of Sporadic E (E<sub>s</sub>) radio propagation on 6 meters. (For the new ham, see last month's newsletter for more information regarding Sporadic E). The biggest news WA6KLG spoke of in the second week of June is that 6 Meters CW low power (QRP) has been open in the early evening through to Japan, as well as across the United States.

Len Gwinn also reports that we are at the bottom of the sun spot cycle. A month ago, news was sent around the email lists of hams in Mendocino County regarding the sun spot cycle, from Jim Cline, for inclusion here:

ZCZC AS03

QST de W1AW

Space Bulletin 003 ARLS003

From ARRL Headquarters

Newington, CT May 12, 2009

To all radio amateurs

SB SPACE ARL ARLS003

ARLS003 Scientists Predict Solar Cycle 24 to Peak in 2013

Scientists predict that Solar Cycle 24 will peak in May 2013 with 90 sunspots per day on average. At the annual Space Weather Workshop held in Boulder, Colorado last month, an international panel of experts led by NOAA's Space Weather Prediction Center (SWPC) predicted that Solar Cycle 24 will peak in May 2013 with 90 sunspots per day on average. If the prediction proves true, Solar Cycle 24 will be the weakest cycle since Solar Cycle 16 which peaked with 78 daily sunspots in 1928, and ninth weakest since the 1750s, when numbered cycles began.

The panel predicted that the lowest sunspot number between cycles -- the solar minimum -- occurred in December 2008, marking the end of Solar Cycle 23 and the start of Solar Cycle 24. If December's prediction holds up, at 12 years and seven months Solar Cycle 23 will be the longest since 1823 and the third longest since 1755. Solar cycles span 11 years on average, from minimum to minimum.

An unusually long, deep lull in sunspots led the panel to revise its 2007 prediction that the next cycle of solar storms would start in March 2008 and peak in late 2011 or mid-2012. The persistence of a quiet Sun also led the panel to a consensus that Solar Cycle 24 will be what they called "moderately weak."

Although the peak is still four years away, a new active period of Earth-threatening solar storms will be the weakest since 1928. Despite the prediction, the scientists said that Earth is still vulnerable to a severe solar storm. Solar storms are eruptions of energy and matter that escape from the Sun and may head toward Earth, where even a weak storm can damage satellites and power grids, disrupting communications, the electric power supply and GPS. A single strong blast of "solar wind" can threaten national security, transportation, financial services and other essential functions.

The most common measure of a solar cycle's intensity is the number of sunspots -- Earth-sized blotches on the Sun marking areas of heightened magnetic activity. The more sunspots there are, the more likely it is that solar storms will occur, but a major storm can occur at any time.

"As with hurricanes, whether a cycle is active or weak refers to the number of storms, but everyone needs to remember it only takes one powerful storm to cause huge problems," said NOAA scientist Doug Biesecker, who chaired the panel. "The strongest solar storm on record occurred in 1859 during another below-average cycle." The 1859 storm shorted out telegraph wires, causing fires in North America and Europe and sent readings of Earth's magnetic field soaring, as well as produced northern lights so bright that people read newspapers by their light, he said.

Biesecker cited a recent report by the National Academy of Sciences that found if a storm that severe occurred today, it could cause \$1-2 trillion in damages the first year and require four to 10 years for recovery, compared to the \$80-125 billion of damage that resulted from Hurricane Katrina.

The Space Weather Prediction Center is part of the National Weather Service and is one of the nine National Centers for Environmental Prediction. It is the nation's official source of space weather alerts, watches and warnings. SWPC provides real-time monitoring and forecasting of solar and geophysical events that impact satellites, power grids, communications, navigation and many other technological systems."

END OF ARTICLE QUOTE

In researching the above article for further understanding, this newsletter editor was interested in this site: <http://prop.hfradio.org/>. , receiving permission to post from NW7US. There are many sites but the reason I liked this one because of the skepticism; how can one 'predict' what Old Sol was up to. The author NW7US (Tomas David Hood) states in the following quote: (Italicized at end are my own)

No one can postulate with any credibility just how intense the new cycle will be, because there's no direct correlation between this solar minimum and any regular pattern of past minimums. In 2008 and 2009, the sun was more quiet than any period during the 'Space Age' (again, a very short time of reference in relation to the millions of years of solar history). During the last two years, we've seen low sunspot counts, weak solar wind, low solar irradiance, and a period without a significant solar flare.

What does all of this mean in the real world of amateur communications? With the slow yet sure increase in solar activity during recent months as seen with the emergence of more frequent small sunspots (many of which are new cycle spots) and 'proto-sunspots', there is hope that the sun is waking, at least. Other evidence that the sun is experiencing an increase in solar cycle activity is the 'zonal flows' (enormous currents of plasma on the sun's surface) that are gaining strength and slowly drifting toward the sun's equator. Tiny but significant increases in solar radio emissions are being observed. All these things are precursors of an awakening Solar Cycle 24.

Even this little of an increase in solar activity has brought some welcomed increase in excitement on the amateur radio bands. With continued very low geomagnetic activity, any slight increase in solar activity that strengthens the ionosphere translates to noticeable enhancements to radiowave propagation over many radio paths on the middle to low HF (high-frequency) bands.

The Panel expects another year of very quiet conditions. They expect the cycle to peak in 2013, which means a rapid rise in activity between 2010 and 2013. Whatever the final level of activity, one thing will likely happen: a rapid and chaotic rise in geomagnetic activity, at times at major storm levels, will occur. Enjoy the unique propagation opportunities currently presenting themselves during this quiet phase, because the game will change in the next few years, regardless of whose predictions hold true.

*Prepare now for whatever the sun will do, by honing your radio skills, increasing the efficiency of your antenna system, and participate in the on-the-air opportunities to be a part of the solar cycle story. As the story unfolds, be an active player and record as best you can your activity, what the sun is doing. I keep a log of all the solar data, on a daily basis, and I record my contacts made, antenna and power used, modes, and other observations. This information might reveal new and interesting facts as we journey forward in this new solar cycle.*

From the Radio club to the south:

EARN YOUR HAM RADIO TECHNICIAN CLASS LICENSE OVER A WEEKEND!!!!!! – July 18 and 19 in neighboring Sonoma County. Contact John Breckenridge, WB6FRZ, [wb6frz@arrl.net](mailto:wb6frz@arrl.net), in Sonoma County, about the 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. Sponsored by the SCRA (**Sonoma County Radio Amateurs**) club. 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. NO prior knowledge, experience or special skills required. Purchase and read the pre-study guide, now available from John Breckenridge. **The cost is \$15** for the study guide, plus \$15 administrative cost to take the FCC exam, the instruction is free of charge as a community service!

## Test Sessions

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

6 found within approximately 100 miles of 95490

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](mailto:EOAN6VRH@NETEZE.COM)

**VEC:** [ARRL/VEC](#)

**Location:** CORNERSTONE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

715 KING AVENUE

WALKINS ACCEPTED BET 9-10AM

YUBA CITY, CA 95991

18-Jul-2009

**Sponsor:** SONOMA MOUNTAIN REPEATER SOC.

**Time:** 1:30PM (Walk-ins allowed)

**Contact:** ROBIN L ZINSMASER

(707)762-9414

**Email:** [ROBIN\\_L\\_ZINMASTER@AGILENT.COM](mailto:ROBIN_L_ZINMASTER@AGILENT.COM)

**VEC:** [ARRL/VEC](#)

**Location:** PALM DRIVE HOSPITAL

501 PETALUMA AVE

SEBASTOPOL, CA 95472

23-Jul-2009

**Sponsor:** SONOMA MTN REPEATER SOC

**Time:** 1:30PM (No walk-ins)

**Contact:** DALE WESTERTERP

(707)762-9414

**Email:** [WB6TMS@ARRL.NET](mailto:WB6TMS@ARRL.NET)

**VEC:** [ARRL/VEC](#)

**Location:** AMERICAN RED CROSS  
5297 AERO DRIVE  
PRE-REGISTRATION PREFERRED!  
[HTTP://WWW.SMRS.US/](http://www.smrs.us/)  
SANTA ROSA, CA 95401

08-Aug-2009

**Sponsor:** SONOMA MTN REPEATER SOCIETY  
**Time:** 1:30 PM (Walk-ins allowed)  
**Contact:** DALE WESTERTERP  
(707)762-9414  
**Email:** [WB6TMS@ARRL.NET](mailto:WB6TMS@ARRL.NET)

**VEC:** [ARRL/VEC](#)

**Location:** PETALUMA SR CITIZEN CENTER  
211 NOVAK DRIVE  
[HTTP://SMRS.US](http://smrs.us)  
RESERVATIONS HIGHLY PREFERRED!  
PETALUMA, CA 94952

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](mailto:EOAN6VRH@NETEZE.COM)

**VEC:** [ARRL/VEC](#)

**Location:** CORNERSTONE EVANGELICAL CHURCH  
715 KING AVENUE  
WALKINS ACCEPTED BET 9-10AM  
YUBA CITY, CA 95991

**Buy, Sell, or Trade** – email the newsletter editor to include recent bargains up for sale, trade, or wish list to find.

## 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. If you have run across a published article in another medium that you think should be published here, obtain permission to publish it from the author or publisher and WARS will gladly re-publish the article.