



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 2008**

PRESIDENT: Tim Hanna, WB9NJS  
SECRETARY: John Lemmer, W6FQX  
TREASURER: Dean Durbin, KE6COB  
WEBMASTER: Danny Richardson, K6MHE  
TRUSTEE OF W6MMM, Tim Hanna, WB9NJS  
NEWSLETTER EDITOR: John Lemmer, W6FQX

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 8:15 AM at the Laurel Street Deli near the Skunk Depot in Fort Bragg. **NOTE THE CHANGE IN THE FORT BRAGG BREAKFAST MEETING LOCATION.**

## **From the prez – June 2008**

Feeling the heat....

On June 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, residents across Mendocino County learned that things can change in a flash. After widespread lightning strikes sparked nearly one hundred wildfires, our county was suddenly facing a serious natural disaster. Within a day the skies were filled with smoke, as well as a good deal of uncertainty. With so many fires burning and a limited number of fire resources available for response, many were wondering what was going to happen to their communities.

Fortunately, what could have been a devastating event for Mendocino County was well managed and held to serious threat, with limited loss of life and property. This was truly a close call, where many of us literally “felt the heat”. With the worst behind us, now it a good time to reflect on the events of the last month and think how to better prepare for the next emergency.

As an amateur radio community, there is much to think about. Although this disaster did not compromise normal lines of communications, the next one may. The broad response to this event raises other questions, as hams that are active in countywide emergency communication were assigned other duties through CERT, Red Cross, or their employer. We will need more people, more training, and more formal organization to respond effectively when the time comes.

The planning also needs to include our personal response to natural disasters or other emergency situations. Does your family have an emergency plan to follow? What do we do after seeing to the immediate safety of ourselves and families? Since there is currently no formal mechanism to activate hams countywide, it will likely be up to us to take the initiative. There is general agreement that in the event of a threatening situation, hams should meet on the countywide linked repeater system (145.43, 145.47, or 147.39 MHz depending on your location) to share information, and if necessary, activate net operations.

Let's take advantage of this close call to better prepare ourselves for the unexpected.

Tim – WB9NJS

## **LAST MEETING**

The last meeting held on June 23 was primarily devoted to discussing the plans for the upcoming Field Day activity over the next weekend, June 28 and 29. This was to be a joint event with the McARCS group at Low Gap Park in Ukiah as it was last year.

Tim, WB9NJS, reported that he had purchased several raffle prizes at Fry's in Sacramento for award at the Field Day event. What surprised some was that Fry's had some ham radio related stuff. Try [www.frys.com](http://www.frys.com) to see. Tim also reported that the former HSC store in Sacramento had gone independent and was now known as HFE. Go to <http://hfelectronics.com> to see what this old, now under new owners, surplus electronics store has to offer. This was a spin off from the HSC group of surplus stores.

John, W6FQX reported that HSC store in Rohnert Park and Santa Clara was having a pre-moving sale during the current week (June 21-28) as listed on their web site currently. It is presently unknown where or when this move is to occur. For those of us that have purchased ham radio accessories or components from this enterprise in the past, it will pay to keep up to date before scheduling a visit. Their web site is [www.halted.com](http://www.halted.com). (Note: the latest report indicates that the Santa Clara store only will be moving, not the one in Rohnert Park)

The discussion then turned to the situation of the extensive wild fires in the county. Due to the recently lightning ignited fires and heavy smoke in the valleys, it was considered that the possibility of canceling the WARS field day event was very high.

Several on-the-air meetings conducted later in the week concluded that not only was the heavy smoke a possible health hazard and uncomfortable as well, but we didn't want to become part of the problem should the Low Gap and Orr Springs fires become larger.

## **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting on July 28 will include an explanation and demonstration of a simple and inexpensive base station or portable antenna that can significantly extend the range of a low powered hand held 2 meter radio. This is, of course, the ever popular J-pole antenna made, in this case, with the now seldom seen TV twin lead.

Several different models of this antenna will be demonstrated including one entirely encased in a PVC pipe suitable for mounting at the base. Naturally all of these radios can only be used while at a fixed location such as at your home or hung from a tree.

Materials will be made available for you to take home and make one (or more) of these antennas for yourself thanks to the donation of a roll of TV twin lead by a WARS member earlier in the year whose name and call sign elude me.

Dimensions and instructions for this type of antenna can be found at:  
[http://www.emcomm.org/antenna/vhf\\_jpole.htm](http://www.emcomm.org/antenna/vhf_jpole.htm).

## TEST SESSIONS

Below are listed the known test sessions in the next few months within 100 miles of Willits:

23-Aug-2008

**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

13-Sep-2008

**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

27-Sep-2008

**Sponsor:** HUMBOLDT ARC

**Time:** 10:00AM (Walk-ins allowed)

**Contact:** IRMA D RUEGG

(707)826-0767

**Email:** [JRUEGG3.1@JUNO.COM](mailto:JRUEGG3.1@JUNO.COM)

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

**Location:** REDWOOD COAST AMATEUR RADIO CONVENTION

FERNDALE FAIRGROUNDS HAMFEST

FERNDALE, CA 95536

01-Nov-2008

**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

## NETS

A number of communities have been holding a weekly local net. Here is what is known at this time:

Albion	Monday	3:00 PM	147.570 Simplex
Brooktrails	Wednesday	7:15 PM	146.580 Simplex
Gualala/Point Arena	Tuesday	7:00 PM	147.825/146.610 Linked
Hopland	Wednesday	7:15 PM	147.510 Simplex
Mendocino/North Coast	Wednesday	7:00 PM	146.520 Simplex
Piercy/S. Humboldt Co.	Monday	7:00 PM	146.790/146.940 Linked
Redwood Valley/Ukiah	Wednesday	6:00 PM	146.490 Simplex
Willits	Wednesday	7:00 PM	146.460 Simplex

All stations within the range of the net control station are invited to check in either as a resident or as a visitor. Net control duties usually rotate among the regular participants. The use of simplex frequencies for local operations is being emphasized in order to reserve the repeater facilities for wider area communications in the event of a major disaster.

To facilitate hearing the desired stations and rejecting other stations out of the area on the same frequency, all stations are requested to transmit a tone of 103.5 Hz in the same manner as would be used to access a repeater. You may set your receiver for tone squelch (also known as CTSSS squelch) at your option.

There is also a county-wide net at 7:30 PM on Wednesdays using the linked facilities of the 147.390 repeater on Laughlin Ridge, the 145.430 repeater on Cahto Peak near Laytonville, and the 145.470 repeater on Sanel Mountain near Hopland. The initial roll call for this net is for the net control operators of the various communities although there is usually an open call following the initial roll call. Net control duties for this net are rotated between the various communities participating.

Following the county wide repeater net, there is often a county wide simplex net checking on which stations can hear and work other stations. At the present time, this net is being conducted on a somewhat non-standard frequency, 145.555 MHz. Also for this simplex net, stations are requested to transmit a tone of 103.5 Hz. You may set your receiver for tone squelch (also known as CTSSS squelch) at your option.

All of these nets are organized under the auspices of the Mendocino County Amateur Radio Communications Service (McARCS), an association of amateur operators interested in preparing for communications in the aftermath of a disaster. The web site for McARCS can be found at <http://mcarcs.org>.

## **2008 CALENDER OF EVENTS**

Here are some of the interesting events in ham radio for the remainder of this year. Check out the web sites listed for more information.

If you know of some more interesting events, please communicate that to the editor of this newsletter.

<u>MONTH/DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>CONTACT or INFO</u>
August 30	W6OMF Hamfest, Vacaville	WA6KLK
September 12-14	SW Div. Convention, Mesa, AZ	<a href="http://www.azhamcom.org">www.azhamcom.org</a>
September 13-15	VHF Contest from Walker Ridge	WB9NJS
September 26-28	SF Section Conv., Ferndale	<a href="http://www.humboldt-arc.org">www.humboldt-arc.org</a>

## **PUBLIC SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS OPPORTUNITIES**

Here are some of the public service communications opportunities in the upcoming months in Sonoma County:

You might want to put these events on your calendar and plan on participating. Please contact Craig Gaevert, K6XLT, at 545-4133 or [cgarch@sonic.net](mailto:cgarch@sonic.net) for more information on the Sonoma County events. The Sonoma County Radio Amateurs (SCRA) club is coordinating the ham radio communications for these events in Sonoma County.

August 23, The YWCA Bicycle Ride

This ride of 10k, 50k or 100k (rider's choice) is a fund raiser for the Sonoma County YWCA. Google "The YWCA Ride" for information or follow through on the [www.ywca.org/sonomacounty](http://www.ywca.org/sonomacounty) link for more information.

September 13-14, Waves to Wine.

Another bicycle ride. This is a two day bike ride from AT&T park in San Francisco to Sonoma County (with an overnight festival) ending up in Sonoma. Two legs, each of 75 miles. This is a fund raiser for MS. Google "Waves to Wine" for more information.

## **BUY, SELL, TRADE, OR GIVE AWAY**

### **FREE TO GOOD HOME**

Swan Mark II HF Linear Amplifier. 100 W PEP input, 1500 W PEP SSB, 1000 W CW Output. Five traditional bands (including 10 m) but will also tune 17 m and 12 m bands. Uses a pair of 3-500Z tubes but is without tubes or plate cap connectors. Tubes available on ebay (used about \$50 each) and from RF Parts Inc. (new about \$160 each). Plate caps cost about \$7 each (need two). Complete with separate HV power supply and original Operation and Maintenance manual. John Lemmer W6FQX, 459-6342 or w6fqx@comcast.net.

This space can be made available for your ham radio related equipment that you wish to transfer ownership to another. Please provide your ad as a Word or compatible format as an attachment to an email to the editor of this newsletter.

## **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 in a Word or compatible format. (I can open nearly all modern word processing programs but may have to edit some of them into a Word format.)

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

## PUBLIC SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS NEWS

From the ARRL Newsletter Dated July 11, 2008

### ==> SACRAMENTO VALLEY AREA HAMS RESPOND WHEN FIRES SWEEP ACROSS NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

With the California fires showing little signs of abating, ARRL Sacramento Valley Section Manager Ron Murdock, W6KJ, says that ARES members in his Section are actively involved in supporting the agencies they serve. According to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), more than 330 fires covering almost 200,000 acres are active in the Sacramento Valley Section. While most fires are at least 50 percent contained, some are less than 30 percent under control.

According to Murdock, too little rainfall over the winter and hot, dry winds contributed to the fires' fast spread. Due to the weather conditions, ARRL Sacramento Valley Section Emergency Coordinator Richard Cloyd, WO6P, put ARES leadership on a standby alert in early June. "On June 11, a fire started that eventually consumed 24,000 acres," said Murdock. This fire, called the Humboldt Fire, burned for almost one week. "At mid-June, our wildlands -- so full of tinder dry fuel -- began to burn. Fire threatened the City of Paradise in Butte County for several days. Paradise doesn't have many evacuation routes, so when people returned to their homes, they had a new appreciation for evacuation plans." According to CAL FIRE Public Information Officer Mary Ann Aldrich, no cause has been determined for this fire which destroyed 74 residences and damaged 20.

The high winds soon dissipated, but then dry thunderstorms -- storms with very little rain but lots of lightning strikes -- made their way to the area. "First we heard of over 400, then 800, then over 1000 wildland fires. People in other mountain communities were advised, and then directed, to evacuate their homes and seek shelters set up by the Red Cross," Murdock said.

With activation requests from both the Paradise Emergency Operations Center and the American Red Cross, Butte County Emergency Coordinator Steve Kaps, N6NPN, opened the ARES net on the Golden Empire ARS W6RHC Repeater. Murdock said that it was opened first as a precautionary measure, but as the shelters opened, help was needed. Paradise residents Chuck Orgovan, KF6YKQ, and Anna Horn, KG6ZOA, manned the shelter at a local school. "The W6RHC repeater did not have good coverage in the shelter area, so we relayed communications between the shelter and Kaps (who was running the Net Control Station) via the Sutter County WD6AXM repeater and we were able to make things work. Placing a better antenna at the shelter seemed to help for a while, but eventually operations shifted entirely to the WD6AXM repeater," Murdock said.

Cloyd relayed information to Murdock that shelters in other parts of the area were being opened: "I told Red Cross in Yuba City. They realized they did not know where and when these other shelters were opening. We then opened KG6WGQ -- the club station at the Three Rivers Chapter of the American Red Cross in Yuba City -- so that we had a better chance of communicating with the multiple outlying shelters. Since the station was to be open when the

ARC response group was operating, we had to work in shifts, so we went to three 5 hour shifts per day for a week. At one point, Ken Miller, KF6JRE, volunteered to take a shift in Yuba City from his home in West Sacramento."

A radio and power supply at KG6WGQ had to be replaced; luckily, Herb Puckett, W6HBU, had an extra one in his go-kit. Paul Johnson, N6XVL, developed a list of volunteers to staff all the shifts for the Red Cross operation. "We were in the process of scheduling relief for Butte County operators on the evening of June 27, when the Red decided to move from Yuba City to Chico to better use the resources they had in place," Murdock said. "At that point, further Net operation by ARES was not needed and so it was suspended for the weekend." On Monday morning June 30, fire suppression efforts were making headway and most of the sheltered population was allowed to return home.

On Sunday, June 29, Yuba/Sutter Emergency Coordinator Art Craigmill, K6ALC, heard a fire call on his scanner. "The location was nearby so he gathered his equipment and went to check on the situation," Murdock said. "On his way there, he saw another fire -- this one at a home construction site -- and notified the incident commander." Craigmill took action to stop the spread of this new fire. "Thankfully, the home had water pressure, and this aided Art in his firefighting efforts until the engine company arrived to put it out."

Throughout the Sacramento Valley Section and beyond, smoke from wild fires dangerously contaminated the air with particulate matter. "The air stank of smoke and things burned. With air quality values as bad as we have seen them in 25 years, many clubs in the section had to cancel their Field Day operations," Murdock said. "First to do so was the Nevada County Amateur Radio Club. Not only did they not get to do Field Day, but their site -- the Nevada County Fairgrounds -- was used as a fire fighting staging area." The Golden Empire Amateur Radio Society in Chico and the Yuba-Sutter Amateur Radio Club also cancelled their respective Field Day operations, due to poor air quality. Murdock said that both clubs had many members who manned ARES shifts during this emergency.

The Oroville Amateur Radio Society had many operators involved in the shelter operation. Bill Cross, K6DYT, volunteered as an animal shelter worker. Virginia Paschke, KI6COL, deployed to Butte County from her home in Sutter County, also helped out at the animal shelter. According to Murdock, Paschke got her Amateur Radio license last year for this very reason: The domestic animal rescue group provides assurance for people who need to evacuate that they can do so without leaving their pets behind. It speeds the evacuation process and keeps people from getting into more dangerous situations.

CAL FIRE's Aldrich said that this fire complex originally had many fires: "We started with 38, but 15 of the fires merged together so now we are down to 11 fires covering 27,600 acres." She said that lightning caused these fires. Two residences have been destroyed so far by fires in this cluster.

Murdock said that many of the clubs that held a Field Day event could see a slight clearing of the thick smoke that plagued more northern locations: "It serves as a reminder that fires remain burning and that we should all remain ready for the next phase of this emergency."

Are we in Mendocino County prepared to step up and respond in a similar manner as the hams in the Sacramento Valley were? Along that line, here is an article from Emcomm Monthly.

## **Do we want a Team Approach to EmComm?**

*"An army is a team. It lives, eats, sleeps, fights as a team. This individuality stuff is a bunch of bull s\*\*\*." - General George Patton Jr.*

Many years ago I saw a cartoon that I have never forgotten. It depicted a hook and ladder truck on its way to a fire. The front of the truck had made a left turn, and the rear of the truck with the tillerman aboard, had broken away and was headed straight down another street. The caption (captain to engineer) read: "That doggone Fred and his @#%&\* short cuts!"

*During an emergency or disaster incident is NOT a good time to start recruiting, training, form a committee, or change standard operating procedures (SOP).*

An army, a division, a company. An engine or truck *company*. A rescue *squad*. An aircraft, ship or NASCAR *crew*. An Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) *unit*. A *concert* band or a *symphony* orchestra. A surgery or trauma *team*. These all have one thing in common. They are all TEAMS!

Mankind learned very early that an organized and coordinated team effort is the quickest and most effective way to accomplish a common goal. What amazes us that in 2006 there are still some within amateur radio promoting the idea that "if and when the 'big one' hits", we'll be able to provide emergency communications by assembling a group of individual operators who have never trained or drilled together (and may not even know each other) to provide emergency communications. Maybe you (also) have heard someone say: "We're all licensed...so we'll know what to do." Dream on....

If amateur radio emcomm ever expects to shed the image of a bunch of undisciplined "good ol' boys" from some radio club, whose idea of training and preparedness is a "once-a-month" breakfast, something will have to change! Period!

From Emcomm Monthly, May 2006

Used with permission <http://emcomm.org>

## NEW VIRUS

Just got this in from a reliable source. It seems there is a virus called the "Senile Virus" that even the most advanced programs of Norton and McAfee (not to mention AVG) cannot take care of it ..... so be warned.

Symptoms of the Senile Virus:

1. Causes you to send the same e-mail twice.
2. Causes you to send blank e-mail.
3. Causes you to send e-mail to the wrong person.
4. Causes you to send e-mail back to the person who sent it to you.
5. Causes you to forget to attach attachments.
6. Causes you to hit "SEND" before you've finished the e-mail.

I don't remember if I sent this one out.....I don't think I did...or did you send it to me??

Now that I'm 'older' (but refuse to grow up), here's what I've discovered:

1. I started out with nothing, and I still have most of it.
2. My wild oats have turned into prunes and All Bran.
3. I finally got my head together; now my body is falling apart.
4. Funny, I don't remember being absent minded...
5. Funny, I don't remember being absent minded...
6. All reports are in; life is now officially unfair.
7. If all is not lost, where is it?
8. It is easier to get older than it is to get wiser.
9. Funny, I don't remember being absent minded...
10. Some days you're the dog; some days you're the hydrant.
11. I wish the buck stopped here; I sure could use a few...
12. Kids in the back seat cause accidents.
13. Accidents in the back seat cause kids.
14. Funny, I don't remember being absent minded...
15. It's hard to make a come back when you haven't been anywhere.
16. The only time the world beats a path to your door is when you're in the bathroom.
17. If God wanted me to touch my toes, he would have put them on my knees.
18. When I'm finally holding all the cards, why does everyone decide to play chess?
19. Funny, I don't remember being absent minded...
20. It's not hard to meet expenses...they're everywhere.
21. The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth.
22. These days, I spend a lot of time thinking about the hereafter... I go somewhere to get something and then wonder what I'm here after.
23. I AM UNABLE TO REMEMBER IF I HAVE MAILED THIS TO YOU OR NOT!
24. Funny, I don't remember being . . . .absent minded...