

The EPARC Key

We're Radio-Active

Volume 2, Number 2

February 1991

EPARC's February Meeting

EPARC was delighted to welcome several new participants, many who have chosen to become members, to its meeting of February 26, 1991. The meeting convened at approximately 8:10 pm and adjourned at 10:00 pm. Members present were Ken Holdridge (AK2U); Manny Alvarez (KB8ITC); Jim Hoffman (KW8I); John Sprouse (N4VJJ); Dale Birmingham (KF8FM); Mac Payne (KB8LRU); Mike Hartman (KB8KKT); Shane Buckland (N8MDC); and Fran Kuecker (KB8IDL). Visitors and prospective members included Bob (WB8OIF) and Pam Ott; Pat Fowler (WV8E); and George Ferenz (KA3OTR). The meeting was chaired by Ken in the absence of our club president, Dave Hartman (KF8FL), who has been reassigned to Andrews AFB for a short-term tour of duty.

Future Meetings

We originally decided that our club meetings would be held on the fourth Tuesday of each month. That worked just fine until we encountered a month with *five* Tuesdays—January. Many people simply forgot to attend. At the January meeting, we therefore proposed that future meetings be held on the *last* Tuesday of the month. This motion was voted on in the February meeting and duly passed.

Field Day Preparations

Ken noted that 4 people attend the mid-February field day technical meeting (*Note: The next technical meeting is April 16*). The merits and drawbacks of three possible sites were discussed: Clearbrook, the Salvation Army Campground, and Sleepy Creek Public Hunting and Fishing Campground. Further discussion about these sites was held at the regular club meeting, and several members agreed that a site inspection was in order before a final selection could be made.

Ken also noted that the following equipment will be available: One each of a Kenwood TS 520 and TS 120, a Yaesu 747, and possibly an Icom 720A; two generators (from Dale and Dave); and, G5RV antennas. One station will be set up for novice use.

Keep in mind that field day is not only fun, a chance to make many contacts, and promote amateur radio, but is also a good test of any club's emergency power capabilities. There's something in field day for everyone.

Key Dates

March 23	VE Exam; preregistration required; 9:00 am
March 26	Club Meeting; 8:00 pm; Jim Steel is scheduled speaker
April 16	Tentative Field Day Technical Meeting; 8:00 pm
April 30	Club Meeting; 8:00 pm
Every Thursday evening	ARES net on 146.500 simplex or 146.730, the Frederick, MD repeater; 8:00 pm

News from the VEC Team

The next VE exam is scheduled for March 23, 1991 at 9:00 am, at the club meeting site. Preregistration is required and may be accomplished by telephoning Fran Kuecker at the numbers listed on the club roster. Those individuals taking the test should bring: Their current FCC license and one photostat of the license; a check for \$5.25; a completed 610 form (610 forms will also be available at the test site); and some form of photo identification.

Pat Fowler, ARRL VE liaison, noted that he has ordered 15 copies of each test and 2 versions of each test, in case someone wishes to retake an element. Notices about the test have been mentioned on several nets and a couple of radio stations.

Pat mentioned that eight people attended the VE team's first test, including one handicapped individual, who passed both of the exams he took.

The novice class will hold its final meeting on March 20, and the participants will take their test at the VE session on March 23. According to Ken, who is teaching the class, most class members will opt to take the new no-code test, which became effective on February 14 and provides those who pass with VHF privileges. Ken reports that the class enrollees have been exceptionally enthusiastic and many are already studying for their general class license. We wish them good luck for the test and welcome them to the amateur ranks and, hopefully, to our club!

Budget Report

Jim, our Treasurer, reports that we have received \$201 in dues and \$158 in donations. Books for the novice class cost

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\$253; \$230.80 of this sum has already been reimbursed to the club. Jim also reports that he has completed and mailed the club's business license and ARRL annual report.

ARES Activities

Fran, Emergency Coordinator for Jefferson County, briefly talked to club members about ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Services) and handed out materials from ARRL about operating procedures in ARES situations.

It seems that currently there is no active ARES organization in either Berkeley or Jefferson county. County Emergency Services directors Steve Allen (Berkeley) and Darrell Penwell (Jefferson) hope we can help change that. They are anxious to work with us and have many activities in which we can participate. They will also help us work toward our goal of putting up a repeater, which could be used for emergency communications, special events communications, and regular amateur communications.

To help us better understand what emergency preparedness involves and how the amateur community can help, Jim Steele, from the West Virginia State Office of Emergency Services, and Steve Allen and Darrell Penwell will be our guest speakers at the club's March meeting. They will discuss West Virginia's emergency services network from the state level down to the local level.

Club members agreed to establish and participate in an ARES net on Thursday evenings at 8:00 pm. Bob Ott, who has a great deal of experience with ARES activities and nets, generously offered to serve as net control, with the objective of eventually rotating this responsibility so that everyone will gain experience in chairing a net. He also plans to hold mini training sessions on the air on message handling, another major component under the aegis of ARES. The net has been meeting on 146.500 simplex, which is an excellent and needed test of everyone's ability to communicate without the use of a repeater. Chuck Hite, W3SOG, control operator of the 146.730 Frederick, Maryland repeater, has also graciously offered us the use of his repeater for our weekly nets. At this point, we will probably alternate between simplex and the repeater, and will announce the location of each net the week before.

Repeater Protocol

Bearing in mind that we will be "visiting" another repeater to hold our net, it is probably a good time to discuss protocol for repeater use. Chuck Hite maintains a list of operating policies for the Frederick machine that would pertain to the use of any repeater, and because we will be using his machine, that list is replicated here. Also, keep in mind that if one *regularly* uses any repeater it would perhaps be appropriate to check with the control operator to see if

donations for the use of the repeater are needed or accepted. Chuck, for example, asks regular users to contribute \$10.00 per person per year. Those who contribute understand that this does not give them special operating privileges or entitle them to dictate machine policy, but simply helps pay the electric bill and maintain the equipment.

Frederick Amateur Repeater Group Operating Policy

1. No repeater can be a "rag chew machine" without some reasonable limits. The obvious purpose of any repeater is to facilitate contacts that are *not otherwise possible*. For this reason, it should be used as a calling frequency with an immediate QSY to a *simplex* frequency, *when possible*.
2. One purpose of a repeater timer (ours allows 3 minutes) is to keep transmissions reasonably brief. Resetting repeatedly in midtransmission defeats this purpose, is unfair, and could delay an *emergency* call-in.
3. The repeater carrier hang-in is long to ensure time for break-in traffic. Tailgating is unnecessary and unfair. The musical tone indicates the timer is reset.
4. Recognize a breaking station and permit him or her to make his or her need or desire known *immediately*. Users of 13/73 are extremely courteous and cooperative in this respect and it is much appreciated.
5. Before joining a QSO in progress, *listen* long enough to learn the topic of conversation and the identity of some of those stations in the QSO. It will make your participation pleasant for everyone—including yourself.
6. Use your call letters to break into a QSO. By strict interpretation of the rules, "break" is an unidentified initial transmission and therefore illegal. Reserve the use of "break" or "break-break" for priority or actual emergency calling.
7. Although a breaker is not at liberty to initiate a nonessential QSO independent of those already on frequency, *traffic* of *any* nature preempts routine conversation in progress and the frequency should be relinquished to the station with traffic.
8. "CQ" is the generally accepted method of initiating a QSO on all amateur bands. "QRZ" means "What station is calling me?", and the statement that you are "monitoring 13/73" is, by strict definition, illegal. It is a one-way transmission.
9. Repeater DX-ing is not illegal but careful consideration should be given to the time of day and length of time two or more repeaters are tied up. Talking to a neighbor through a repeater 50 miles away should be avoided whenever possible.
10. Activity on a repeater is a healthy indication, but monopolization should be avoided. Even though breakers are

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welcomed to your QSO, remember that there may be others waiting to initiate another QSO with someone not already on frequency. They may not wish to join a round table group, for lack of time.

11. Be cordial, helpful, and courteous to transient amateurs. Remember that you represent the entire Frederick Amateur Repeater Group when you are on the air. Friendly treatment, received when you are a guest on other repeaters, leaves a nice impression and pleasant memories.

12. Short rag chews are fine during other than peak activity hours, but it should be kept in mind that if a repeater with only 100 members ran 18 hours a day and allowed no nonmember use, the fairly apportioned transmit time daily for each individual would be about 10.8 minutes. From 500 to 700 amateurs use this repeater each year. It operates 24 hours a day but is active about 17 hours.

13. Flowery identification wastes repeater time. FCC rules require your station call only *once every 10 minutes* during a QSO. The inclusion of the call of the station to whom you are passing it, other stations on frequency, and those recently signed out is unnecessary. Identify one other station and sign your call. That's all that is required. *Try it, you'll like it!*

14. Strict avoidance of profanity or any language that may offend a listener is the rule of courteous people in any social gathering. So it should be on any repeater where many men, women, and children may be within hearing distance of a receiver. Example is still a powerful influence. Be a good example—for your own sake!

Miscellaneous Business

- The club voted to join the **Foundation for Amateur Radio (FAR)**. FAR is an organization composed of some 50 local radio clubs and publishes *Autocall*. There is a one-time club membership fee of \$25.00. Participating clubs receive space in *Autocall* each month in which to publish club activities, notices of VE exams, and notices of classes to be held, etc. FAR also makes scholarships available to members. Fran will be attending the April FAR meeting with Chuck Hite and will report back to EPARC with further details.
- **Manny Alvarez** spent considerable time mulling through the newest call book and extracting the names, call signs, and addresses of all the hams in Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan counties. This will make it possible to send each person an invitation to join in our ARES activities. Darrell Penwell has offered to let us use his mailing facilities to post these letters, as they are related to emergency service.
- Darrell will also let us know when we can arrange to have our **ARES identification**

badges completed.

- Both Steve Allen and Darrell Penwell will be making available to any interested local hams, **rain-measuring equipment**. Reporting procedures will be announced when the equipment is available.
- A **free class** will be offered on April 19 from 6:30 to 9:30 pm at the VA Center in Martinsburg in how to handle **train emergencies/disasters**. If you are interested in attending, contact Fran.

Upgrade Corner

Congratulations to **Mac Payne, KB8LRU**, on his successful completion of both elements of the novice exam and subsequent passing of the technician exam! Good to have you in the group and as a member of the club!

Editorial Information

The Eastern Panhandle Amateur Radio Club, Inc., meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the High's Regional Office in Pikeside, West Virginia (telephone number: 304-263-7185). EPARC was formed with the objective of actively promoting the amateur radio hobby and serving the community. EPARC welcomes all amateur radio operators and supporters of amateur radio to join in its meetings. Annual club dues are \$12.00 per household (\$8.00 per year for associate members). The club's mailing address is EPARC, PO Box 537, Kearneysville, WV 25430). EPARC expresses its gratitude to High's Regional Office for permission to use its headquarters as the club meeting site.

Club Officers

Dave Hartman
Ken Holdridge
Jim Hoffman
Pat Fowler
Fran Kuecker

Dale Birmingham
Darrell Collins

Offices Held

President
Vice President
Treasurer
VE Liaison
Newsletter Coordinator/Club
Historian/Secretary
Special Events Coordinator
Junior Officer