

McARCS Minutes – April 11th, 2022, 18:00

Present – Lea KJ6OUY, Steve KJ6EIF, Jim W6JRC, Gordon KJ6IAB, Mike KC6MGM, Dan KN6QCZ, Garrett James, Rick KK6PZA, Tim WB9NJS, Allen KN6QCY, Wendy KN6QDB, Ken KG6TXU, Lisa

Welcome and introductions – Steve KJ6EIF

Minutes from previous meeting

No changes from draft minutes proposed.

Treasurer's report – Tim WB9NJS

No changes from last month - \$826.12

Status of McARCS website – Nick KI6RIT

No changes from last month.

Tsunami Drill after-action – Mike KC6MGM

- The tsunami sirens sounded.
- Everything went well except for some equipment problems on Navarro Ridge.
- In consultation with Mike KM6OTE and ABARC, it was decided that in the future, Gualala and Manchester will report to Pt Arena who will relay to Caspar.
- In the north, Pudding Creek to 10 mile will report to the Senior Center which will relay to Caspar.

School Emergency Communications Test after-action – Steve KJ6EIF

- There were 5 goals for the test:
 - Get the support of the school sites for conducting these drills.
 - 6 districts last time, 10 this time.
 - Familiarize volunteers with the equipment and its limitations.
 - Use of tactical callsigns and frequency changes during the test.
 - Documenting situation reports locally and reporting upwards.
 - Local reports were very limited.
 - Inter-district calls using repeaters went well.
 - Providing feedback to help improve future emergency communications training.
- County called roll twice.
- Willits wasn't able to participate.
- Leggett and Round Valley did not participate so repeater coverage to those communities is unknown.
- Lots of work done on the equipment at each school prior to the event. ABARC put in a lot of effort in their area.
- Complications
 - Only common simplex frequency among the radios was Walking Repeaters.
 - Reporting to a neighboring school district.
 - 145.130 repeater does not reach the south coast.
- Future goals

- Identifying simplex paths.
- Have all districts try to reach the 145.130 repeater
- The radios are on the list to get replaced. They're repurposed public safety radios that weren't able to be converted to narrowband use. They are quite complicated to program and use DOS software to do so.

Other McARCS news and discussion

- Feedback on expanded countywide net control rotation
 - Net control volunteers on most of the non-community nets already participate in countywide net control duties under their community spot in the rotation.
 - Steve is open to dropping the non-community nets from the rotation and encouraging as much diversity as possible for each community's net control slot.
 - *Post-meeting countywide net*: An announcement was made that the rotation for countywide net control would revert back to just the communities.
- Mendocino 50K ultra marathon
 - Mike has sent info to volunteers.
- Possible hybrid (in-person and Zoom) meetings
 - Meetings via Zoom have been a huge boon for monthly meeting participation.
 - A ham has requested that we consider a hybrid meeting where some of us meet at the sheriff's training center in Ukiah (where we met pre-COVID), as well as on Zoom.
 - Steve is concerned that those that are on-site will monopolize the meeting and those that are participating via Zoom will not have as much of a voice.
 - Tim does see the value in having an on-site presence again so that MCSO staff don't forget us and that we confirm that we can still access the site, cursory check of our equipment, etc.
 - On-site presence will likely be minimal due to the cost of fuel – those that live in Ukiah will likely be the only ones present.
 - **McARCS members present decided to table this item.**
- Annual Military-Amateur Cross band Exercise – May 14th – Sean K6SCM
 - Military transmits on military-only frequencies while hams listen to those, and vice versa
 - Per Mike, it's part of a FEMA Region 9 and 10 test to see if hams can communicate with military stations in the case of an emergency.
- License test – May 14th @ 9:30 AM
 - Ken KG6TXU and Caleb KK6UEV have worked out a date and location – Redwood Academy in Ukiah.
 - The FCC will be implementing a \$35 application fee starting next week. VE's do **not** collect the fee, applicants have to arrange payment with the FCC directly.
 - *Post-meeting correction*: For applicants under the age of 18, the ARRL's Youth Licensing Grant Program will pay the application fee and reduce the test fee to \$5.
- WARS updates
 - President role has been handed off to Rick KK6PZA.
 - Membership dues are starting back up again - \$15 for individuals, \$22.50 for families. Send to PO Box 73, Willits, 95490.

- More events will be planned for this year.
- Monthly Ukiah meetup
 - Has become a WARS event with some benefits – food budget, liability insurance.
 - It will now alternate between Ukiah and Willits, next one will be in Willits at the Recreation Grove Park.

Future activities

- June VHF contest
 - Tim is planning on participating in the event under the WARS banner – to get the club callsign on the air again, participating in a fun event, and as a tribute to Richard WD6HDY.
 - Somewhere in central county would be ideal, still looking for locations.
- Field Day – last full weekend in June
 - Rick KK6PZA is looking at holding Field Day at Todd Grove Park in Ukiah.
 - Pros: Good public visibility, good amount of shade from large redwood tree, nearby table, BBQ equipment.
 - Cons: Restrooms are a bit of a walk, potential for ambient noise from other park visitors.
 - John W6FQX has reached out to the county museum in Willits to see about the possibility of holding Field Day there.
 - Pros: Multiple trees for shade and stringing up antennas, large classroom to get out of the heat and put food/equipment in, nearby restrooms.
 - Cons: Lower public visibility – signage out front of the museum is needed to direct the public.
- Lighthouse Day – August
 - Remnants of the LORAN station at Pt. Cabrillo are very nice as an antenna counterpoise... 😊
 - One county ham has contacts in the local lighthouse organization.
 - Contact Steve KJ6EIF if you're interested in participating.
- Shakeout – October
 - In early planning phases.
 - Mike is interested in a joint ham/OES/HHSA exercise.
 - Steve is worried that it may be difficult to recruit enough volunteers for a large joint exercise.
 - Tim would definitely like to involve OES in the exercise.

Meeting adjourned at 19:17

The next meeting will be on May 9th @ 18:00