MARC BEACON

Volume 5, Issue 1 The Morongo Basin Amateur Radio Club Newsletter January 2016

President's Message

Fellow ham enthusiasts:

The time has come to write one last President's message before the officers for the next term are put into office. I want to personally thank all of those who participated in the club over the last year. There were lots of great experiences had by all. Watching our group grow and mature in our hobby while enjoying each other's company is one of the greatest reasons to belong and participate in the Morongo Amateur Radio Club. There are lots of members providing countless amounts of service. I watched hams help each other with mobile installs and rooftop antenna work as well as helping program a radio or just providing elmering. It was a great pleasure being able to serve as this year's President and I will cherish the memory. The next group of officers will be a great fit and will prove to be quite able to carry on the fine traditions of our club and of our supported sister club, ARES. Thank you again for allowing me this opportunity.

Repectfully,

Jeffrey Hardy, KJ6BOI

Club Officers

President: Rob Cloutier, KK6JHI
Vice President: Chris Nichols, WB6CDF
Secretary: Judy Cloutier, KK6NWG
Treasurer: Manuel Borges, AE6SG
Newsletter: Rob Cloutier, KK6JHI
Photographer: Sheri Hardy, KJ6JVI
Historian: Jake Hall, W6JOD
Board Members:
Rob Cloutier, KK6JHI
Chris Nichols, WB6CDF
Glenn Miller, N6GIW
Manuel Borges, AE6SG
Beau Sands, KI6OWB
Sheri Hardy, KJ6JVI
Judy Cloutier, KK6NWG

Nets

Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES), Mon @ 1915
Morongo Basin Amateur Radio Club (MARC), Tue @ 1900
Narrow Band Emergency Message System (NBEMS),
145.645 MHz, 2nd & 4th Thursday @ 1900

New Club President

I am honored, humbled, and excited to be your next club president. During the next 12 months, my goal is to get as many new licensed amateur radio operators as possible in the high desert. Please help me to encourage people of all ages to take an interest in our hobby. Think of the reason why you became a HAM radio operator and pass that on to people who may not even know our hobby exists.

In order for me to better know the members of the club, please email me your answers to the following questions:

What frequencies do you communicate on?
What radio do you use as a home station?
How do you stay on the air when the electricity goes out?
What made you become a HAM?
Why do you go to the monthly meetings?
What do you expect from the club?

Thank you in advance for taking the time to answer my questions. I look forward to talking to you on the radio and seeing you at the meetings.

Rob, KK6JHI@ARRL.net

Packet Basics

Packet used to be very popular until smart phones came along. I began using packet as a means to relay National Traffic System messages beginning in the 1980's. However, NTS and packet have mostly disappeared, compared to what it used to be. Recently, some local hams have shown interest in using the packet mode as a fun alternative to internet and voice modes. I'll start this series about packet by describing the setup that I am most used to, and that is packet using a TNC (terminal node controller.) Packet is a digital mode, meaning that communications is accomplished using tones. Morse code is a digital mode using tones, but the "baud rate" is very slow. Packet uses two baud rates. The first is the rate between the computer and the TNC, and

the second is the rate that is sent over the air. There are several programs for computers that can be used for packet, so I won't go into any detail on these programs. For now I will just say that the baud rate set in your program and the baud rate set in your TNC for communications to your computer must match. For example, you can set the rate in your TNC to connect to your computer at 9600 baud, and the same setting must be used in your program, or you will not be able to send commands to the TNC. So there is a cable, usually a serial cable or USB cable with serial adapter that connects your computer to your TNC. Then, you must also have a cable from your TNC to your radio. The TNC always transmits packet tones at 1200 baud, so you do not have to adjust any settings there. The main thing is to make or purchase a custom cable to connect the radio port on your TNC to the Mic and speaker jack of your radio, or to the data port of your radio if it has one. There will be a chart for the pinout of your TNC in the manual, and another chart for the pinout of your radio. You can order cables on-line, or make your own by using a DB9 connector with solder connections. Now we are getting setup for communicating in packet mode. There will be more to follow in the next bulletin. Questions regarding setting up a packet station are welcome. Several club members have been using the mode for a while now.

73 DE Glenn N6GIW

Packet Radio Update

There has been an upgrade to the existing W6BA Packet station at the Paxton Repeater Site. The packet frequency is 144.970 with a Node Name of W6BA. This node hosts a bulletin board mailbox or BBS, a chat system, and Radio Messaging System that is capable of sending internet email, as well as reaching out to other local nodes, both in and out of the area.

Packet is easiest with a Terminal Node Controller (TNC) and a 9 pin serial connector and specific packet software. The Kantronics KPC3+ is a predominate TNC in the packet community, though there are others that are quite fine. This device is controlled by a computer using terminal software. There are several fine software programs, one of which is Ipserial-downloaded at the link below with OutpostPMM.

This packet software will also provide a Graphical User Interface (GUI). This GUI looks similar to an email client (like Outlook Express), and will issue all of the commands to the TNC with a click of a mouse. Outpost Packet Manager is one of the easiest and most capable of packet programs available and can be downloaded at http://outpostpm.org/downloads/opsetup300332.exe. This program will handle the BBS and Email portion of the node. While Ipserial can handle other functions that are available on a TNC.

After the software in installed, set up the TNC to KPC3+. Then set up the BBS to W6BA-1 to connect to the local mailbox or connect to W6BA-10 to connect to Winlink Email system. At this point, the user can create a new message that looks like an email.

Hams who own SignaLinks are also able to engage the packet node as well. However, the process is a little more involved, but is quite do-able.

Users are welcome to maintain a mailbox there, if they choose. There is lots of information online about packet and there are a fair number of packet users in the club. If you like the idea of keyboard – keyboard communication or sending email via radio-then ask at the next meeting or on the net in order to be pointed to the right direction to participate with the packet station.

Jeffrey, KJ6BOI

Installation Dinner

Thursday 21 January 2016 will be the Installation Dinner and $5 gift exchange at the Yucca Mesa Community Center, 3133 Balsa Avenue, Yucca Valley. Those bringing a gift will receive a number that will indicate the order in which the participant can either select a wrapped gift or one that has already been unwrapped. Gifts can only change hands up to 3 times. The dinner is free to club members, and attendees who are not club members will need to fill out a club application and pay the $15 dues if they choose to eat.

Emergency Communicator Course

The Emergency Communicator Course planned for January is being rescheduled for March. The new dates for the Course will be March 2nd, 9th, 16th and 19th. The times and location have not changed.

Chris Nichols, WB6CDF

Upcoming Events

Quartzfest: Jan 17 - 23, quartzfest.org
King of the Hammers: 28 Jan – 7 Feb, http://ultra4racing.com/category/king_of_the_hammers/
Winter Field Day: Jan 30-31, www.winterfieldday.com
Yuma Hamfest: Feb 19-20, www.yumahamfest.org

Club Meeting

Every 3rd Thursday of the month at 7 PM.
St. Christopher of the Desert Catholic Church
61261 Sunburst Dr., Joshua Tree, CA

Editor Point of Contact (POC)
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Submission deadline is 2 days before the 1st of each month

January 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
	ARES Net 7:15pm	MARC Net 7:00 pm				
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	ARES Net 7:15 pm	MARC Net 7:00 pm		**ARES Meeting 7:00 pm** Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Yucca Valley		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	ARES Net 7:15 pm	MARC Net 7:00 pm		NBEMS Net 7:00 pm 145.645 MHz		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	ARES Net 7:15 pm 	MARC Net 7:00 pm		**MARC Meeting 7:00 pm** Dinner and $5 gift exchange Yucca Mesa Community Center		
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30
	ARES Net 7:15 pm	MARC Net 7:00 pm		NBEMS Net 7:00 pm 145.645 MHz		