

BISHOP AMATEUR RADIO CLUB meeting minutes, February 10, 2015.

Meeting called to order by John (AD6NR) at 7:08 PM.

Roll: 25 people, including 3 guests. Long range member Ed (AE4TM, now in Tennessee) managed to stop by en route between Salt Lake City and Las Vegas.

Minutes: Approved as posted on our N6OV website.

Announcements:

BARC President John (AD6NR) pointed out some of the outstanding accomplishments of members of our little radio club, then homed in on an award that he presented to Kurt (W6PH). Kurt's trophy was for the highest total score for combined CW and SSB, 100 Watts of power or less, 2014 ARRL International DX Contest. He also place second in both individual categories. His totals were 3,800 CW contacts in 40 hours, and 5,300 phone contacts in 42 hours. Kurt then took the floor and described some of his methods, including his operating location in Bermuda and how to work the bands to maximize the contact potential. Bermuda is off the coast of North Carolina. A better choice for scoring would be the Caribbean. Some other interesting things he observed was that when working west coast stations on 160m, those stations invariably used vertical antennas with really substantial ground planes. Using a computer logging system is a real help. Bermuda limits transmitter power input to 150W, but that may be increased soon. Contesting has been a really fun and challenging aspect of Amateur Radio for many years, starting with his single tube 9W transmitter.

Treasurer's Report from Terry (K6UN): Dues are coming in. \$1,999.20 is total amount in bank, split between General and Duplexer fund. Dues and donations for the month amounted to \$400, including \$100 from Walt (K6BDI) to help with the power bill for the APRS system, and \$20 from Paul (KK6BAF).

Activities:

BARC monthly breakfast is set for Denny's this Saturday (Feb. 14) at 8am. Then the transmitter hunt is to start at 10am on Red Hill to the west of Bishop. Jon (NW6C) is the fox. There isn't any conflict with the four wheel drive club runs, so we hope to see some of that group there. T-hunting equipment is available to loan to those that need it.

2m nightly net, about 8PM, local 146.76 and 146.94 repeaters (linked).

80m net, about 3947 kHz, Thursday at 7:30PM.

40m net? Phil (K0RVD) wanted to see if we could do this. 80m is tough for those with limited antenna space. How about 7:30PM Monday or Thursday? Monday on 7180 kHz, 7:30PM was chosen for a trial.

SARC and BARC in the park? Maybe April? Kurt will check with the SARC (Sierra Amateur Radio Club).

Wild West Marathon, May 2nd. This is the third longest running run west of the Mississippi. Volunteers can expect a T-shirt or event mug for helping at the aide stations. This event is much easier to cover than the High Sierra Ultra-marathon.

High Sierra Ultra-marathon, might not happen this year. Northern Inyo Hospital has dropped their support, so this race needs a new sponsor.

ARRL Convention, May 1-3, Boomtown, Reno, Nevada.

Mule Days, May 19-24. We could use more Club member participation than last year. Does the BARC want to do it again this year? Looked like a yes. We will probably be able to set up in the same spot as last year. There is a \$75 charge for insurance.

ARRL Field Day, June 26-28. Kurt has already volunteered to host us at his cabin near Lone Pine. Looking at changing class from 3A to 2A and eliminating the digital mode station. Probably no RTTY (radio teletype) either. GOTA (Get On The Air) likely. The digital modes add an interesting aspect to the site, but made it difficult to coordinate transmitter operation, and did not add much to points. We still have quite a while to iron out the details.

June Lake Triathlon, July 11. BARC was asked to help last year, but it was a really short notice, and it just didn't look like we could do it. Can we help them out this year?

Wedding of the Waters, October 24. This event celebrates the opening of the first road to Death Valley, as originally promoted by Father Crowley. Setting up a station at Father Crowley Point would be ideal, but another good location would be the Dow Villa. Keith (W6KRF) would really like to do this one.

GPS practice. Ed (K6END) gave out some coordinates on a recent hike, using his 2m radio. He challenged the repeater listeners to find the location of the coordinates, with a prize to the one who was the first to describe the location. Keith was the winner, using his navigation skills on a paper map. The coordinates were for Funnel Lake.

Meeting **intermission/break** at 8:00. 50/50 raffle ticked sales.
Meeting resumed at 8:10.

Old Business:

A club Amateur Radio Outreach position was discussed at the last meeting, by request of Ed (K6END), who could not be at that meeting. Tonight Ed gave some of his thoughts about the duties of this position. He asked for some time toward the end of the meeting to express some more ideas.

Schats request for use of some of the BARC Silver Peak site resources for a wireless internet communications site. Ramifications of granting this request are still under review by John.

ARRL Orange Section vacant positions. John gave in and volunteered for the Assistant Section Emergency Coordinator Inyo County position. Somehow he managed to be the successful candidate (and no doubt the only one). Thanks John.

VE test session: Dennis (W6IY) reported that there was 6 candidates, 4 for new Tech licenses, one for upgrade to General, and one to Extra. All passed. Bob (W7WOW) obtained the Extra.

New Business:

A new radio site facility to replace the existing Caltrans State facility at the top of Silver Peak is in the planning stages. John was sent a copy of the tentative plans by the Forest Service. John and Jon reviewed the plans and made verbal comments to the Forest Service delegate. An aerial showing the

preliminary site improvements looked pretty good, but the first draft contract plans would be a disaster. We are looking for further information about this project. Construction is expected in 2016.

Inyo County Disaster Services Health Care Program: This is something new for Inyo County. The hope is that this program will provide a better means of listing and organizing volunteers. Applications are being circulated. Paul had some at the meeting. There are categories for volunteers other than just medical.

Ed (K6END) presented some thoughts about the mission of the BARC and a Membership Chair position. Five primary missions for our club are stated. An active, robust, and diverse membership is needed. The Membership Chair position could be assigned the duties of recruiting new members into the club, and bringing more awareness of club functions to the community. Ed seemed like the right person for this effort.

How do we get more new Amateur Radio licensees? Also, many of the recently licensed operators haven't shown any interest in radio clubs. This started a discussion about how to spark interest in radio communications among the youth. Reaching people that already have an interest, and giving them the means to acquire an Amateur Radio license is also important. Convincing the youth that there is more to communications than an internet connection is becoming a challenge. Formal once a week classes have been conducted with success, but many people interested in operating privileges aren't able to attend these. The other extreme is the one day "Ham Cram" courses. In between are the written and online (eg. Ham Exam Online, \$24) self study methods. More discussion on volunteers and their motivation. How do we initiate the curiosity and interest in radio and radio communications?

Ed has sent letters to 65 members of Inyo County Search and Rescue relating the benefits of an Amateur Radio license. Jeff (AA7GK) has the technical background to answer questions about radio communications from interested people, and would be willing to do that in a presentation. It helps to have some leading question or topic to get attention to this subject.

Keeping up interest among the members we already have is a related issue. Anyone up to putting out some newsletter topics? Bob does a great job of putting together the newsletter if he has any input for content. Jon (NW6C) tries to generate minutes that will let out of area members have some idea of what their Club is up to.

Rick (KK6MUD), Paul and Jeff started a discussion on the Round Valley (Round Fire). Rick peeked into the office looking for information and was quickly put to work. Telephones were down. They hadn't received any current information from the Crowley evacuation center. He mentioned that the Amateur Radio system was working fine. His assignment was to drive to the disaster evacuation location at Crowley Lake and get the ones in charge to update Mono County officials on their site's status. When he arrived at the Crowley site, it was bustling and the parking lot was full. They did have communications via fire radio channels, but just didn't think reporting their status on the radio was a high priority. After this bout of marginal communications between emergency shelters, now is the time to put together a real regional plan to call up volunteer radio operators.

Burned sites are still smoldering. Evacuated residents in the communities of Paradise and Swall Meadows have been allowed to return to their properties. Bill's (KK6HTM) brother and nephew lost their homes in Swall Meadows. Mike's (K2JNE) home survived. Rich suggested that BARC make a monetary donation to the fire victims. The position of the Club was that it would be better to make donations on an individual basis. Locally, the Tri-county fairgrounds was opened up as a relief center. Donations of clothing and other home supplies just about overwhelmed the volunteers coordinating that operation. Monetary donations were being deposited in an account at the Alta One Credit Union.

KK6BAF won the 50/50. Meeting adjourned at 9:32PM.

Jon, NW6C., secretary.

