

## **Bishop Amateur Radio Club Meeting Minutes** for meeting on November 11, 2014.

Meeting **called to order** by President John (AD6NR) at 7 pm.

**Announcement:** John gave thanks to all the US veterans in appreciation of this Veteran's Day, with particular emphasis on our vets who served in the Vietnam conflict.

**Self introductions:** 13 members and one non-member present.

**Treasurer's report,** Terry (K6UN): About the same as last month. Notes left at home.

**Minutes:** Approved as published and posted on the BARC web site. These were done by Terry, as Jon (NW6C) missed the last meeting.

### **Events:**

1. BARC breakfast this Saturday at McDonald's, 8 am.
2. T-hunt, 10 am following breakfast, starting at the top of Red Hill, west of Bishop.
3. 80 meter net on 3950 KHz, weekly, 8 am Sunday mornings, with early check ins at 7:30.
4. Weekly Thursday night net, 9 pm, 3947 KHz.
5. ARRL Sweepstakes contest, SSB, November 15-17, 2100 Saturday to 0259 UTC Monday.  
Exchange of contact (QSO) information with as many US and Canadian stations as possible in the allowed time on 10, 15, 20, 40, 80, and 160 meter bands. This is a great opportunity to earn a "worked all states" certificate.

### **Reports and added items:**

1. T-hunt (Jon): Mike (KJ6WXM) was a very clever fox. He drove clockwise through the Buttermilks around the Tungsten Hills until he was looking down from a ridge looking down on Round Valley. There he set up the transmitter with a beam pointed at the prison at the South end of Round Valley. All of the hunters proceeded counter clockwise around the Tungsten hills following a gradually increasing signal, assuming it was tucked into a canyon somewhere in Round Valley. From the east side of the hills, it looked like the signal was coming from the prison. When the main beam was intersected on the north side of the hills, it was getting near noon and the road was turning into a marginal 4x4 trail. Mike then gave us a hint that the transmitter was accessible via numerous 2wd routes off of Route 168. After a loop back around the Tungsten hills and through the Buttermilks, Mike was spotted at the top of a knob on the ridge looking down on the valleys. A charge to the viewpoint was a very challenging run for a two wheel drive, only to determine that Mike was using that location only as a view point. The transmitter was not there. Adrian's (N6ZA) rig headed back down the trail, followed the main road past a major bolder in a saddle, where the transmitter could be seen. Jon and David (KI6CPA) followed. Jon showed the least mileage, although potentially disqualified for taking a non-4x2 shortcut. This was really obvious when he got his vehicle stuck trying to cross a wash, and the front wheel drive would not engage. Adrian came to the rescue with the help of his mighty FJ and a tow strap. This was a fine outing, on a great day, and most of the participants were treated to views of routes they had never seen. Adrian had actually been by the sight, but on his bicycle, not in a car.
2. CQ WW DX contest: Terry was only able to work 7 hours of the 24. Many interruptions from emergency call outs. He still exceeded his points from last year. John (AD6NR) worked two new counties. Band conditions were really good.
3. ARRL Field Day: Results have been published and our SIARA/BARC team did really good. We were 17<sup>th</sup> in the nation in class 3A, with 6778 points. We were also first in our Section

(Orange) and the Southwest Division, 2<sup>nd</sup> in California. (San Joaquin Valley was number one). A special thanks is due Kurt who provided the venue and earned us many of the contact points. Lots of effort was involved in documentation, particularly in the “bonus points” categories, then properly submitting the results to the League.

4. Volunteer Exams: Phil (KORVD) reported good results. David ungraded to General. Two others earned Technician licenses. The fourth candidate missed just missed his Tech credential, mainly due to way obsolete study material. With some suggestions on how to obtain fresh study material and access to practice test, he vowed to be ready for the next VE session. Phil has volunteered to help Dennis (W6IY) with the tests, and is concentrating on getting current study material to prospective licensees. John proposed to offer new licensees free BARC membership for the rest of the year, and the following year if the test was November or later. This was made a motion and passed unanimously.
5. Mammoth Hospital radio station installation: Jim (K6JNX) reported that the station was just about completed. Some more antenna work was needed. Volunteer operators are welcome, but they must first register as volunteers. This entails filling out some forms and amounts to being a volunteer employee. The volunteer is then screened for things from security to tuberculosis. After approval, the operator and the hospital are covered by insurance. There was a discussion as to pros and cons of having a “club” call for the Hospital.
6. November Health Services Drill: Paul (KK6BAF) reported that the planned drill was scrapped because of the Ebola crisis. It will now be a tabletop training exercise, so no emergency communications will be involved. Kaiser Hospital nurses (14,000) are planning a strike tomorrow in protest of the lack of training they have received regarding the handling of contagious diseases like Ebola.
7. New Link: John reported that a link is now operational between Silver Peak and Tonopah. The first attempt failed, apparently due to the Motorola mini UHF connector not quite connecting. That type of connector seems to be a major source of radio malfunctions. The link still needs some adjustments, and the VHF antenna is marginal. A better antenna has been made available. It is a half duplex, cross band link. 449.46 MHz is used on this end. The Tonopah repeater sees its 146.04/.64 MHz pair. That end has IRLP (internet linking) capability. John had some diagrams of the system at the meeting. This link is a major step in emergency communications with Nevada. John is coordinating our effort with Glenn (KB7REO) the Section Emergency Coordinator in Nevada.
8. Solar Power proposal: David was wondering about adding solar electric panels to aide in charging the batteries in our Silver Peak facility. Are overall average is about 175 Watts continuous. Paul advised that the rule of thumb for solar energy production in our area is “panel rating for 5 hours” each day. The general conclusion was that Silver would be a difficult location for solar panels, and adding solar charging to the batteries would not accomplish much. Per BARC vote several years ago, the batteries are reserved for the .94 repeater only, and should be capable of keeping the repeater going for a power outage of over a week. A low voltage cut out is used to protect the batteries, and redundant voltage regulated and current limited power supplies are used to maintain them. Panel location, theft, and vandalism can also be problems at this site. Jeff's input, after viewing both the Silver and Mazourka sites, was that Mazourka would be the best use of a solar upgrade. Its panels are aging, the wiring is a bird nest, the batteries are over 5 years old, and the charge controllers are incredibly RF noisy. Mazourka also has the most used coverage area. John will get together with Kurt (Mazourka site coordinator) to see what we can do there. It will no doubt be next spring before any work is done.
9. John took a straw poll of members present: In that the Silver Peak site is now in fairly good shape, the consensus was that we should focus our efforts and resources on improving the

Mazourka Peak site in the next several years. Although this is not a BARC site (Kurt is the owner), it is very important to overall communications capability for the Owens Valley, BARC members benefit from its operation, and should contribute to its operation. John will call for a meeting of the BARC Board of Directors (of which Kurt is one of them) and club officers to discuss how BARC can support the Mozourka Peak site.

10. Outreach Program? Ed (K6END) thought BARC could use an outreach program – to reach out to people that might be interested in Amateur Radio and see that they are made aware of how to join it. Keith has been the closest thing to our “welcome to the Owens Valley” greeter. Ed said that other clubs and organizations he belongs to have a person to take on those duties. Seems like a good idea.
11. Potluck dinner for December? put on floor by John. Members said yes. Phil suggested that we combine our dinner with the Eastern Sierra 4x4 group. The two clubs have many members in common and could use the same venue – probably the Highlands Mobile Home Park senior clubhouse conference room. Members approved of this item also. John or Phil volunteered to approach the 4x4 club regarding this proposal.
12. Election of officers: John for president, Adrian for Vice President, Terry for treasurer, and Jon for secretary. No further nominations were made. All were elected without opposition. Installment of new officers is officially at the December meeting. The existing Board of Directors will decide what to do to fill the expired term – the three BARC Directors serve three year staggered terms.
13. Data bursts from Bishop PD patrol cars? Everett had one of the local police cars behind him when he left Kmart at night. He was listening to a strong local radio station when a much stronger digital packet type of signal wiped out the station he was listening too, apparently from the police car. Jeff's guess was that it would be an information/location beacon on the car. Database searches were normally done using cellular phone type transmissions. Jeff then volunteered to demonstrate a P25 type radio at one of our future meetings.
14. Items for sale: Adrian has an Astron linear power supply for sale, adjustable voltage and current, at least 50 Amp rating, \$300. He also has a KX1 transceiver offered for \$350.
15. Field trip to Silver Peak is being planned for tomorrow. Mainly antenna work. Some tweaking on the new link.

**50/50 drawing** was won by Paul, who then donated his winnings to the BARC repeater fund.

**Meeting adjourned** at 9 pm.

Jon Patzer, NW6C, BARC Inc. secretary.

Postscript 1: The 4x4 club on Wednesdays meeting agreed to join with BARC for their December meeting. As with our radio club, they also have a traditional potluck dinner, but also add a voluntary gift exchange. There was already speculation as to what the gifts would look like – between radio equipment and 4x4 gizmos. As I recall, they generally limit the gifts to about \$25.

Postscript 2: The Silver Peak work party accomplished their goals. The new link was fine tuned and many antennas were relocated and secured.