

Minutes of the East River Amateur Radio Club meeting held on April 6, 2015 at Ryan's steakhouse in Bluefield, VA. <http://www.erarc.com> local emergency HF freq: 3.860+-5. Backup meeting location at Burger King, Bluefield, Va.

The meeting was opened at 7pm by Harold Hodges N8NCP, ERARC President. There were 16 members and guests in attendance. All were welcomed and asked to state their name and call sign. Johnny Sparks KI4AOF, Ross Bury KD8VLA, Matt Morris KC8LGS and Chris Hatcher KC8AFH were especially recognized.

Hooger Fisher W4OF read the March minutes. The minutes were approved.

Roger Stefancic KC8LGR, ERARC Treasurer, gave his report. He paid a phone bill in the amount of \$23.13, paid \$58.00 for Post Office Box rent, paid \$160 for new '49 repeater insurance and made one deposit of \$50.00. The 'old' '49 repeater insurance was dropped. It was \$190 per year.

Chris Hatcher proceeded to give an informational presentation on the new Digital Mobile Radio hardware, software and systems. He had a <http://www.arcomcontrollers.com/index.php/rc210/rc210-board> DMR RC210 controller/440 repeater on a table that was being connected to the internet via his cell phone 'hot spot'. He and Jay Belt K8CTI each had a DMR handheld radio to demonstrate with. There was a whole lot of information given and here are some of the highlights: 1) a DMR repeater costs around \$1800 and can be switched back to an analog repeater if the need arises 2)

<http://www.connectsystems.com/products/top/radios%20CS700.htm> The 'cheapest' handheld on the market seems to run around \$180 although the more expensive ones from Kenwood, etc. include GPS software and can make their unit an "android" APRS device. 3) DMR started in Europe and there are many repeaters being added to the worldwide DMR systems every day. There are DMR repeaters in every state and it seems that South Carolina ARES has really embraced this new technology and has been included in the SC EMCOMM system, supported via a microwave backbone statewide.

http://scheart.us/irlp_web/main/?page_id=1169 . It seems that Beckley, WV is the only 'DMR Hotspot' in the state. Florida is really adding these units very quickly. Some repeater owners are reportedly dropping their D-STAR systems and going with DMR. The D-STAR systems are easily two to four times more expensive as compared to DMR hardware. The end-user is determining what is working digitally due to the cost differences. 4)

The bandwidth being used is 12.5MHz and since it is digital, two conversations, or "time slots" can be used on the same frequency with a bandwidth of 6.5MHz for each slot. 70cm (440MHz) is by far the most common base frequency being used. 440 is much easier to coordinate with organizations such as SERA (<http://www.sera.org>). There are 2M and even 900MHz systems in use. Chris' Beckley repeater just off of the Mabscott, WV Exit and Jay Belt easily brings it up and converses on it via his handheld while driving inside of his vehicle here in Bluefield with 5 watts. There ARE some RF dead spots and it sounds like those old "computer noises" that we used to hear on dialup internet connections when losing capture on the repeater frequency. These radios are digital AND analog transceivers. Each radio has a unique ID and this ID is transmitted each time the PTT is depressed. You will know to whom you are talking to. 5) With anticipation of the ERARC obtaining a DMR repeater, Jay Belt has already in place the feedline, antenna and has on hand two different 440 frequencies that we can use, pending coordination. See also: www.ncprn.net <http://dmr-marc.net>

Harold introduced Matt Morris to the group. Matt is a former paramedic with OH-9 Ambulance service and has been working in marketing and public relations for 33 years. He is currently the Director of Business Development at Raleigh General Hospital. He hopes to help with marketing the Club to area residents. He asked several questions of us such as "what have you done in the past to get the Club's name out into the public?" He suggested that we may want to get on W V V A's "In Focus" television show that airs each Sunday at 9am and had other suggestions. He said that he would work on this project and come back with suggestions for the Club. We thanked him for his efforts.

There was discussion about the DMR system. Don Anderson WD8OOR made a motion, seconded by Bill Sowers K8WBS to purchase a DMR system for the previously quoted price of around \$1800. A vote was taken, the motion passed. Jay Belt will purchase this system for the Club, take care of other necessities and consult Chris Hatcher as needed.

Don Anderson handed out a 'cheat sheet' for the new 145.49 repeater's controller. It includes instructions for the weather radio, autopatch, 911 calls, ECHOLINK, and DTMF tone tests.

The meeting was over by 0842pm.

Submitted by Hooger Fisher W4OF, ERARC Secretary.

ERARC

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Check out a radio-active site at: <http://www.erarc.com> , The East River Amateur Radio Club. We'll be glad that you did!>

<https://www.facebook.com/w8mop>. and/or:

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