

Sky Valley Amateur Radio Club Minutes
July 19, 2008

Call to Order: 08:06 by Tom K8TOM

Introductions: David KB7GFL, Charles N6IBI, Diane KE6JRP, Wes KE7EEA, Tom K8TOM, Nathan KE7HOJ, Steve KE7HOB, Bob KC7UGK, John Hays K7VE visitor

Secretary/Treasurer Report: \$558.80 as of June 30, 2008. Activity -\$35.48 for the FD sub sandwich and + \$0.14 interest

Repeater Status:

70 cm intermittent

2 m link okay

6 m unknown

APRS unknown

Old Business: FD, David reported we earned 522 points with 11 contacts. Issues were antenna placement, lack of a port-a-potty and poor propagation. Tom suggested next year the club should consider operating from Tye Park in Monroe. Several club members checked the Monroe Monitor newspaper for our FD article... no coverage was noted. Gold Dust Days, at the time of the meeting no one expressed interest in attending. Monroe night out against crime is Tuesday August 5th, 6-8:30 pm at Lake Tye Park.

New business: Bob suggested the club members name and call be listed on the web page; Tom directed this to be done. Wes asked about a club net, Charlie mentioned check-in on the simplex freq first, then switch to the repeater freq. David mentioned 10 meters in the evening would give club members experience using HF sideband. This will be discussed at future meetings.

Good of the Order: Bob lent Tom a DVD about HAM emergency operations featuring the EOC and a SET. DSTAR radio round table is on Wednesday evenings at 20:00 local on 444.5625 +5, no tone according to John Hays. Also, the Radio Club of Tacoma will have a Hamfest on Aug 9th from 9 am to 2 pm at 22001 38th Ave E., Spanaway, WA 98387. \$5 is the admission fee. Check www.w7dk.org for more information.

Adjournment: 08:54 by Tom

The "652 Movement"

Up here in the Skykomish River Valley of Washington State, we have a little group of new hams whose only reason for getting a Technician License is to be able to support emergency communications within the local community. They are not interested in ham radio as a hobby, or in "rag chewing", or in organized nets, but they are interested in being potentially useful in a wide range of emergencies that can occur in the Skykomish County. This can be frequent floods or severe wind storms, or potentially earthquakes, or the much more frequent need for communications regarding highway emergencies on US Highway 2 in Stevens Pass through the Cascade Mountains.

One of the features of the topography here is a canyon nearly fifty miles long that tends to duct VHF signals east-west using various reflective and diffractive surfaces. Accordingly, a fairly low-power two-meter station fixed with a modest antenna can have a fairly good range for coverage to mobile stations on Highway 2. Cell phone coverage for several companies ends at our town of Gold Bar, and is non-existent for about 75 miles to the east of here. Monitoring from my location, hardly a week or two goes by, but what I hear a call from a mobile unit on Highway 2 that needs assistance or information, or that is reporting a highway incident.

Problem is, I'm about the only one up here that monitors "652" (146.52), the designated National Calling and Emergency Frequency (NCEF). The reason: One only has to monitor a little while before someone comes on calling a general CQ, or mobiles out west on I-5 are using the frequency for a moving mobile simplex chat, or fixed stations take up a buddy chat that lasts 30 minutes. When this happens, the volume controls all go down or the monitors just quit monitoring.

So I'm trying to start a "652 Movement". A reminder to some, perhaps new information for others, to make the NCEF more useful. To wit, the following suggestions are put forth:

Monitor. Everyone who is interested in ham radio being truly useful when other means' of communication won't work should monitor 146.52 whenever their family or work schedules will permit.

Call and Move off. Unless the purpose of the call is in fact an emergency, the first thing out of the mouth of the calling station should be the channel to switch to for carrying out the rest of the contact.

Keep channel occupancy short. Practice and use best communications practices to keep the contact short. Even if it is an emergency,

Switch back when the contact is completed.

Prepare. Use the following hints to make this practice work better.

- Plan additional simplex channels in your memory presets. In our group's plan, we load 146.42, 146.46, 146.50, 146.54, and 146.58 a couple of "clicks" up or down on your memory selector. Listen for a clear one before making the call on 652.
- Enlist participation. Note stations that do not observe this practice and send them polite invitations or reminders, perhaps a copy of this memo. On-air reminders of this type are often misconstrued, or may inadvertently turn out sounding rude. So it is better to send a polite email or US Mail for such a communication.
- Get your club(s) to participate this way rather than using some other mutual chat frequency or repeater for initial commuting or casual contacts. This will cause new hams and others to "hear how it's supposed to be done" and follow suit.

Thanks for your valuable time and "ear". Best of 73 for many good uses for ham radio.

'de AA7L