

The Open Squelch

The Quarterly Journal of the Van Wert Amateur Radio Club, Inc

Club purchases new radio, maybe a first!

At a meeting in August, Barb High, N8GFK, proposed the club purchase a simple HF transceiver. The Icom IC-746 Pro that we inherited and is in use as the primary station, has so many knobs and buttons, along with many menu functions, that it can be a bit complicated to operate. She felt a simple radio would be more apt to be operated by more of the membership. She set a maximum price limit of \$1000.

The Technical Committee, composed of Tom Laus, KH6ILT, Steve Kouts, WA8WKF and Mike Long, K8PBE were assigned the task of finding a radio meeting the requirements.



Yaesu FT-450AT with Astron SS-30

Research was completed and reported at an October meeting. The committee, noting that there is no *simple* radio, suggested one that was about as simple as they get and appeared to give the most for the money, the Yaesu FT-450AT. We could include a new power supply and the new equipment cost would be under the \$1000 limit.

The purchase was approved and the club now has what might be the first *new* HF rig in its 56 year history. And, this one even includes 6 meters.

It is believed the HF radios the club has, and has had prior to this, have been purchased used, donated, or received from estates.

The photo shows the new equipment, along with an antenna switch, mounted on a tilt shelf which was designed and built by Steve Kouts, WA8WKF.

-----by Mike Long, K8PBE



Community Emergency Response Team What is CERT?

CERT is a training program that prepares you to help yourself, your family, and your neighbors in the event of a disaster. During an incident, emergency service personnel may not be able to reach everyone right away. By getting trained in CERT, you will have the skills to help emergency responders save lives and protect property.

Volunteers trained in CERT also offer a potential workforce for performing duties such as shelter support, crowd control, and evacuation. The role of a CERT volunteer is to help others until trained emergency personnel arrive.

CERT training takes about 20 hours to complete and provides critical skills in emergency preparedness and response.

- Participants learn how to:
- Identify and anticipate hazards
- Reduce fire hazards in the home and workplace
- Extinguish small fires
- Assist emergency responders
- Conduct light search and

rescue

- Set up medical treatment areas
- Apply basic medical techniques
- Help reduce survivor stress

Van Wert Emergency Management is working on a local program. Details will be announced at a later date.

To find out more about CERT, visit www.citizen corps.gov.



MARS What is it?

MARS stands for the "Military Affiliate Radio System." It is a United States Department of Defense sponsored program consisting of Amateur Radio operators who provide military communications support in time of need. The MARS program is broken down into separate Army, Navy/Marine, and Air Force branches. Amateurs who participate in the program are issued call signs with 3-letter prefixes (example: AAA8AC) for

their MARS operation. To join MARS team you must:

- Be 17 years of age or older. Signature of parent or legal guardian required in under 18)
- Be a United States citizen or resident alien.
- Posses a valid Amateur Radio license issued by the Federal Communications Commission.

- Possess a station capable of operating on MARS HF and/or VHF frequencies. These frequencies are outside the amateur bands.
- Agree to accept strict monthly requirements for on-air participation.

Material for this article from QST, Official Journal of Amateur Radio, September 2007 issue.

*Great thoughts
reduce to practice
become great acts.*

William Hazlitt

EMA & Amateur Radio Club Share Booth At Van Wert County Fair

The Van Wert Amateur Radio Club and the local Emergency Management Agency share a booth in the commercial building, for the purpose of keeping people informed on our activities and what we provide in the way of public service.

Both organization have literature to hand out to the public on disaster preparedness and weather spotting.

One item provided by the radio club is a tri-fold pamphlet that provides emergency frequencies for your scanner, emergency telephone numbers, and what you need to listen for in the way of weather alerts.

Information is also provided about the radio club, when it was founded and what the club does in the way of public service.

The radio club also assists the

Fairboard with the annual Band Show.



NEWS & Notes

It seems the New Year will soon be upon us, ready or not. Election time is here and we have had enough of that already, at least here at VWARC we don't have many out campaigning, it goes the other way. We have had many who are willing to serve year after year and we thank them for their dedication. However if you are asked or have a desire to hold an office or serve on a committee please step forward, I bet a place will open up. Mike K8PBE is nominating committee Chairperson talk with him before the Annual Meeting.

Speaking of New Year's and on the eve there of is Straight Key Night. Now you don't want to miss this, it's a rag chew party. The speed is way down from the CW contest speed so no complaints there, just give it a try. This ARRL event runs for 24 hours, get the New Year started right. GL

The ARRL did win the court case against the FCC on BPL (Broadband over Power Lines) that found the FCC was not scientific or honest. However BPL will still be with us, hopefully better technically and regulated but don't turn your back! The ARRL won't, and that's why they need your membership and support. There is also another World Radio Conference coming soon and we always need a strong unified front to hold our Ham Bands. The League will be there but it all takes money. JOIN and support the ARRL.

When I was a boy I was told that anybody could become president; I'm beginning to believe it! Clarence Darrow

What can we and should we do with the Open Squelch in the new year. This is the first issue since last year, I hope it was missed, a few have said so. Some folks want to see it just on the web site, it's cheaper and quick, but we have to feed it and we have not. Some of us like the printed page, even if we just glance and throw. Mike has done a good job of getting the paper edition on the web but we have failed to update or add to the material. Also we don't have a list of who would like to receive it by each mode. So let us start a new list, paper or web. Send it to Cork W8DHG by Radiogram, in person (put it on paper I don't have a pencil), snail mail at 4144 Dull-Robinson Rd, Convoy, OH 45832 or on the web at president@w8fy.org Next we need more material for either mode, I don't think the QS is a good mode for late breaking news unless it is on the web and then there are a lot of web sites that provide that service. ARRL etc.. You can find some listed at w8fy.org. We need more personal and local stuff in the Open Squelch. Also for those who want paper, do we just send to members, plus clubs and specials. How about sending to the Hamfest list, or the area, we could break the list into fourths and hit non members once a year and be sure we push the Hamfest year around. So we need articles, stories, personal, technical, operating activities, pictures, and perhaps not radio. Get it to Jack, WD8MLV; Mike, K8PBE; or Cork, W8DHG and we will decide if and when we can use it. THANKS

Reference the above; I would like to see the club put survey's in the OS or web. Five or ten questions on different topics, to see what we think. Cork



EMA News & Information

Information for the Emergency and Public Service
Volunteer—Van Wert County, Ohio

Van Wert County Office of
Homeland Security &
Emergency Management Agency

By: Stephen Kouts, WA8WKF
Radio Officer

RACES - Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service ARES - Amateur Radio Emergency Service What is the difference?

RACES is an organization of amateur radio operators who help provide radio communications needed by Federal, State, and local governments in time of emergency. RACES is governed by Subpart F of the Federal Communications Commission Rules and Regulations.

RACES may be called upon by the legally appointed Director of Homeland Security and Emergency Management or his authorized representative for a particular area in accordance with an approved communications plan.

ARES is a function of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), the national association for Amateur Radio. The structure starts with the Section Manager, Section Emergency Coordinator, District Emergency Coordinator, Emergency Coordinators, and assistant Emergency Coordinator. At the local level is the Emergency Coordinator and his or hers assistant.

Although RACES and ARES are separate entities, the ARRL advocates dual membership whenever possible. The RACES regulations make it simple and possible for an ARES group whose members are all enrolled in and certified by RACES to operate in an

emergency with great flexibility. Using the same operators and the same frequencies, an ARES group also enrolled as RACES can switch hats from ARES to RACES and RACES to ARES to meet the requirements of the situation as it develops. For example during a "non-declared emergency," ARES can operate under ARES, but when an emergency or disaster is officially declared by government official, the operator can become RACES with no change in personnel or frequencies.

More information can be obtained by contacting you local Emergency Coordinator (ARES) or County Emergency Management Agency Radio Officer.

All must hold a valid Amateur Radio license.



SKYWARN

SKYWARN is a tornado preparedness program sponsored by the National Weather Service (NWS). In areas where tornados have been known to occur, NWS recruits volunteers, trains them in proper tornado and severe weather spotting procedures, and accepts the volunteers' reports during tornado or severe thunderstorm watches and warnings. By utilizing the SKYWARN volunteers, the NWS has eyes and ears throughout the affected area.

This is an excellent use of Amateur Radio and the use of the local RACES / ARES group

Van Wert County EMA sponsors weather spotting schools each year, taught by employees of the National Weather Service. The classes are open to the public and you are encourage to attend if you have an interest in weather spotting or would just like to be better informed.

VWARC 2008

Well it's that time again, end of the year that is, and I hate to look at all the things that did not get done. Still some time left but not much likelihood, there's always another year, thank goodness. By the way, have a wonderful Thanksgiving, we have many reasons to be thankful, regardless of the state of the economy.

It seems as we look back at the year we have a lot of the same ole same ole from last year, and we do and should. You all did a good job and we have the opportunity and in some case another invitation to do it again, that's a compliment, enjoy it! I hope I can do this year's recap and not mention any names for credit because these are Club activities, it's not easy because many of you did a lot of work and planning. THANKS

Perhaps one of the under rated things we do is the spotter training and the mind set to get ready for the storm season each spring. The Spring Banquet was great with good food and program, it won't be long till that time, anyone got a program in mind. We did get some programs in for the meetings but sure could use more. It does not need to be connected to Ham Radio and it does not need to be an hour long, information and education are great, but enthusiasm is even better.

The Peony Festival Parade is a great chance to work with the Van Wert PD and they do appreciate the help and we all appreciate the help of Hams from out of town and the food after the parade. It was nice to have a good excuse to run the Special Event Station from the Club because the US 127 and US 30 yard sales were on the same day, will be in 2009 also.

CQ FIELD DAY! We even got an early start on that with a repair party on the old tower, lots of help, new cable, and we have a spot to put it in over winter. Perhaps it won't get a chance to blow over. Now we need to work on the travel trailer, Omy! It was a great FD, a little weather to lay the dust, flexible band conditions and help from some visiting firemen (Hams) sure was a help. Perhaps we will get back a couple of missing operators that are always a big help for 2009. Anyhow we were 3rd in the USA in the 4F class and with 1724 contacts and 5,478 points and that's a really good shoe! My I'm showing my age, some of you remember him don't you? The food was Grrraatte!

4th of July, great turn out for the Bike Tour, got all our bases covered at the check points and on the road. The crew got downtown and had the parade covered in grand style and the pizza was just fine. The special event ops had a great pile up at W8FY.

We acquired a free standing tower for the taking and had a good crew for that project as well a for moving an antenna for one of the members. There is an antenna project underway at the Club for changes and additions for the wire antennas and we have a new Radio, a Yaesu FT-450 two good operating positions, no waiting come on down.

The Hamfest was a success and weather was fine with a good crowd even as the price of gas got on the run. Nice to see all the regulars there as well as some of the same old junque on the Club wagon. We will be using part of the big building next year, be sure to invite your friends, Hamfest 2009 July 19, bthere.

The Fair was fine, saw lots of people and got to show Ham Radio to the crowd. The Fair Board treats us like we belong and we got a thank you at the Band Show.

The Club Picnic, what a great party. I hope you were there and if not be sure to get to the next one. Good food, good fellowship and the weather was as ordered. Thanks Cork



W8FY

Van Wert Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

1220 Lincoln Highway, P.O. Box 602

Van Wert, Ohio 45891-0602

Organized 1952	Constitution Adopted 1954	ARRL Affiliation 1954
Incorporated Non-Profit Corporation 1963	I.R.S. 501 (c) (3) Organization	

W8FY ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY!

Mark your calendars now, Saturday, December 20th, 2008, the radio club's Christmas party! Festivities begin at 6:00 PM. The club furnishes the ham and buns, please bring a dish to share for potluck. Always fun, always full of surprises, come to the W8FY Christmas Party!

The Corner Market

Wanted ASAP. A good used MFJ-941E HF antenna tuner or equivalent. Must be ready to go on the air. Must have SWR meter. \$50 - \$100 range. Seller must be willing to work out 2 - 4 payment schedule. Please contact Ron, KA8NSG, at ka8nsg.ohio@yahoo.com or 419-519-0178.

For Sale or Trade. A 42 ft. tower, an 11 element, 2 meter beam, a rotor / controller. \$200.00, OBO. Will trade for a good 25 watt, CW/SSB 10 meter mobile transceiver. Tower and such are in storage. Purchaser will have to pick up. Contact Ron, KA8NSG for details / info. ka8nsg.ohio@yahoo.com or 419-519-0178

www.w8fy.org

Amateur Radio - A National Resource