

Oakland County Amateur Radio Public Service Corp (ARPSC)
W8OAK Repeaters – 146.900 MHz/100pl & 444.325 MHz/107.2pl
Weekly 2 meter net 8 pm every Thursday
Hospital Radio Net – 7:30 pm last Thursday of Month
Packet 144.950 MHz/1200 baud, connects made with Oakxxx or
Callsign-# to OAKBBS (W8OAK-3) with nodes at
OAKNOD (N8NM-1 Pontiac – most coverage),
OAKEOC (W8OAK-7 at EOC) or K8DTX-7 (White Lake)
APRS – 144.390 MHz when operational
Web Site: <http://www.arpesc.com>

Meeting Minutes for 3 February 2016

On 3 February 2016 at 7 pm, Jim Richards - AB8JR, Emergency Coordinator (EC) for the Oakland County ARPSC, called the meeting to order in the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The order of business included:

(I). Report from Sara Stoddard, Chief - Oakland County Homeland Security Division:

Skywarn classes for 2016 are now posted on www.oakgov.com/homelandsecurity. Please register on-line at this website address. If not possible, then call 248-858-5300. Skywarn Spotter Training Classes are:

2016, March 2, Wednesday from 7-8:30 pm at Oakland County Homeland Security Division, Executive Office Bldg., 41 W, 2100 Pontiac Lake Road, Waterford 48328.

This class will replace the normal Wednesday ARPSC March meeting.

2016, March 12 Saturday from 10-11.30 am and again 1-2:30 pm, Executive Office Bldg., 41W, 2100 Pontiac Lake road, Waterford 48328

2016, March 16 Wednesday from 7-8:30 pm at Rochester Hills city Hall, 1000 Rochester Hills Dr., Rochester Hills, 48309

2016, March 21 Monday from 7-8:30 pm at Groveland Township Fire Department, Station #1, 14645 Dixie Highway, Holly, 48442

2016, March 30 Wednesday from 7-8:30 pm, Southfield Civic Center Library, 26300 Evergreen Road, Southfield 48037

2016, April 7 Thursday, from 7-8:30 pm, Farmington Hills Costick Activity Center, 28600 Eleven Mile Road, Farmington Hills, 48336

(II). Report from the Emergency Coordinator (EC), Jim Richards - AB8JR:

Repeater Status: Kevin Scheid, Mike Kuzilla, Steve Murphy, and Jim Richards – AB8JR inspected the repeater receive sites for problems. Antennas were found well up on the towers. However, replacement of any antennas now requires environmental

approval from the State. Steve Murphy picked up several DCM 750s for possible use. Jim believes that a fully operational Novi receive site could be busier than the Southfield site. This is because the Novi site is 250 feet topographically higher than the Southfield, but currently seems to be using reduced power. Progress is being made and hopefully more can be reported next month.

DMR Radio meeting will be 13 February 2016 from 10-12 am at the Troy Fire Department Training Center. This is located on John R., slightly south of E. Long Lake Road and past a strip mail. It has been suggested that the first part of meeting to focus on navigating one's way through the MD-380 radio. Jim is looking forward to the meeting and predicts we will be learning from each other.

An orientation for our new ARPSC members is being planned for a future meeting. This would include how our relationship works with Oakland County, roles we play such as volunteers for Woodward Dream Cruise and Brooksie Way Run, and the role of ARES versus RACES as tailored for this county.

Our first siren test for the year 2016 is Saturday, 5 March at 1 pm and will look forward to volunteer help. These siren tests are held on the 1st Saturday of each month, except for April which will be held during Severe Weather Awareness week.

Siren Information for new members: Oakland County has 274 sirens, with possibly two more new ones in the future. These are only activated when there is (1) a Tornado Warning or (2) Severe Thunderstorm and/or damaging winds in excess of 70 miles per hour. The county policy is that they are not activated for anything else. The EOC computer system tells us when sirens are activated or accidentally activated, and whether it's a single siren or all. The National Weather Service alerts the county about tornado warnings and severe weather.

At the end of this month, Jim will travel to Traverse City for the Aux Comm Interoperability Conference sponsored by Michigan State Police. The Auxiliary Communications Course, according to their website listing, "is designed for auxiliary emergency communicators and groups who typically volunteer to provide backup emergency radio communications support to public safety and emergency response professional and their agencies. Typically this would include Amateur Radio and Radio Emergency Associated Communications Teams including Civil Air Patrol, Satern (Salvation Army), the American Red Cross and others. The conference focuses on...interoperability, etiquette, FCC Rules and Regulations, training and planning...." As Jim mentions discussions will be about emergency communication when things go very bad.

(III). Presentation by Mark Shaw – K8ED on the National Traffic System (NTS).

Mark is the Michigan Section Traffic Manager for NTS. About 6 or 7 years ago, he became interested in emergency communications and began listening to the 10:15 pm nightly NTS net on the Spirit of 76 Repeater (146.760). After he began listening, he offered to handle a piece of message traffic. He then started studying up on what this entailed and eventually was able to receive and send traffic in on the net.

ARRL NTS nets began in 1975 and are composed of amateur radio operators gathering on a frequency for sharing information in a formal manner. Radio modes used are CW, phone, digital, and packet. The American Radio Emergency System (ARES) works with the NTS. Any licensed ham can participate. NTS nets handle and relay emergency messages, various traffic, or messages just for fun. These nets are held locally (or metro-wide), sectional (Statewide), and area. Area nets are divided into three sections covering the US with eastern, central and Pacific. There can be a transcontinental group, which is not really a net, but of amateurs assigned to get messages to a distant designation. Types of message traffic are R – routine, T – test, P – priority, E – emergency (spelled out), and W – Health and Welfare.

NTS uses a standard ARRL Radiogram which has four parts: Header (preamble), recipients name with phone number, text message, and signature and call sign of originating person. A sample of this Radiogram and how to use it can be found on the arrl.org website. In general, messages should be limited to a total of 25 words or less.

The radiogram has a number of short-cut abbreviations to simplify messages. One is handling instructions designated as HXA, HXB, through HXG. These instruct on how to deliver; i.e. HXF = Hold delivery until (a specific date) or HXC = report date and time of delivery (TOD) to originating station. A full detailing can be found online.

ARL numbers can be substituted for commonly sent texts. For instance, the routine message “forty six” is for “greetings on your birthday and best wishes for many more to come.” This is written “ARL Forty Six 73” and is a total of a 4 words. “73” stands for best wishes, goodbye, and end of message. Notice that numbers are spelled out as words.

Final destination for most NTS messages is by telephone. It is okay to leave the message on voice mail or an answering machine if one is confident he/she has reached the right person. Emails are considered the last resort. If no success, the service originating station is notified that the station could not connect.

Michigan Section NTS has a number of net operations and can found online at Michigan Section NTS. There are both HF Nets and VHF Nets. One of interest for Oakland County is the Southeastern Michigan Traffic Net (SEMTN) on Monday through Saturday at 22:15 on 146.760 MHz. Operators use a “Record Keeping and Reporting

Log Sheet” (RSHR) to keep track of their messages and also a reporting “Station Activity Report” (SAR). More information can be found at:

ARRL Net Directory at www.arrl.org/arrl-net-directory

Public Service Communication Manual at www.pwcares.org/doc/pscm.pdf

Michigan ARRL Section NTS. Go to Google and enter “Michigan ARRL Section NTS”

Michigan Section ARRL ARES web page at <http://www.ares-mi.org>

Jim Richards – AB8JR added that ham radio has so many different facets to its communications. NTS message traffic uses a formal structure which works very well. Oakland County ARPSC nets use a less structured format.

(IV). Presentation by Pete Gladysz – K8PGJ on the Annual Sno-Drift Rally at Atlanta, Michigan

This was the 50th anniversary of the Sno-Drift Rally which was held at 29-30 January 2016 at Atlanta, Michigan - three hours north of Oakland County. The rally was 289 total miles run in stages on roads described as “nice” to “snowy.” There were 250 volunteers of which 85 were amateur radio operators! They came from many call areas plus Canada and Germany. Amateur radio communications serve to coordinate the race and are a key to its operation. Two repeaters were used although one was generally too far away to really be useful. Two meter simplex communication helped. Randy Love – WF5X brought and set up several digi-repeaters which extended area coverage. Various portable antennas were set up, but far enough apart to not interfere with one-another. Of special mention was Russ Simonson – W8UZZ who had a powerfully equipped communications Jeep that can penetrate poor reception areas.

Nets were directed from a hotel command post, which was backed-up with storage batteries in case of power outage. Command control had to keep charts of cars, issues, event times, event management, volunteer roll calls, work safety issues, contact event Marshalls posted along race courses, etc.

The event came out 100% safe for everyone. Forty three cars started and by Saturday the number were down to 36. Spectators were mostly well behaved, but the locals continued to wander into closed off public road raceways. This was a great exercise for amateurs to practice and develop their communication skills.

(V). Management Team Reports:

(1). Report from Pete Gladysz - K8PGJ, Operations

Pete thanks members who worked him during his Cayman Island Dx contesting. He had over 2900 contacts during the week for 9th overall in the contest while using 100 watts of power.

(2). Report from Ron Miotke – WD8MNX, Technology Systems/Membership:

The Amateur Radio Parity Act (US House HR 301 and Senate S-1685) seems to be progressing. Current details can be found on the arrl.org website. There are two new members to welcome: (1) Dave Boboltz – kd8rdi and (2) John Nicholson – kd8viv.

(VI). Specialty Officer/Coordinator Reports:

(1). Report from Mark Shaw – K8ED, NTS

Mark will be traveling to Lansing to be part of the ARRL Michigan Section Appointees at a meeting discussing State communication emergencies.

(2). Report from Al Clawson – KC8KJF, Hospital Communication Teams per Jim Richards – AB8JR:

McClaran Medical Center in Pontiac is moving the hospital amateur radio to their Clarkson site and will run coax to it so that it can work. Hopefully this can be done by the next hospital net.

Respectfully submitted,
James R. Murphy, N8SML
Secretary, Oakland County, ARPSC, 4 February 2016