ARES Meeting Agenda - 06/15/22

- Welcome

- Bunker Gate Code Changed

- 2022 IL State ARES Spring SET

- Emergency Expo

- Made a Presentation to Jason Marks Regarding Winlink

- Emergency Communications Readiness

- ARES Net Reminders

Welcome to any Guests

- Thanks for joining us tonight – everyone please sign-in

- ARES - Amateur Radio Emergency Service

- For those new to ARES, we do 3 major things:
    - Severe Weather – Storm Spotting
    - Communications Support for Community Events
    - Emergency Communications for Served Agencies

- Major Tools that we utilize:
    - Ham Radios, typically VHF and/or HF gear
    - Winlink Express software for over-the-air email messages
    - Internet Email and text messaging for inter-team communications

- Training – much more to ARES than holding a mic and talking

Bunker Gate Code

- Code was changed about one month ago

- Some material was dumped on a burn pile

- Suspect former grounds crew personnel

- So gate code was changed

- New code will be provided when needed

2022 IL State ARES Spring SET

- New Date – June 25th – 10 to Noon on Field Day

- Starting on 40 meters – around 7.227 MHz +/-

- Get into the Net, ask for a message – Voice NTS

- Reply or take action as directed – use RF only

- No Telnet permitted

- During FD, send a message to our Section Manager, Thom W9RY (after FD starts)

- Don't use the RadioGram form for field day!

Emergency Expo

- We plan to participate again this year

- Tuesday, July 12, 2022 – 4-7 pm

- Shoppes at Grand Prairie – between Dick's and the former Berger's (Route 91 side of complex)

- Emergency Responder – Touch-a-Truck Event

- Informational Booths on Safety-Related Topics

- Come hang out and talk to the public

Presentation to Jason Marks

- Had a Zoom session with Jason on 5/25

- He is our contact with Peoria County / EMA

- Reviewed "What is Winlink - for Emergency Managers"

- This attempts to justify our stations at Bunker

- He is onboard with our activities there

Emergency Communications Readiness

Readiness

- Many ham radio operators want to use our skills and equipment to help in times of need
  - But who do we contact?
  - What band/frequency/mode should we use?
  - At what time(s) do we call?
- One can quickly see there is more to "helping" than simply picking up a microphone and talking
- We need to be ready in advance before disaster strikes

ARES is a Public Service

- Using our equipment to get messages through

- Helping the public

- Operators volunteering to give back

- ARES definition from ARRL

    - The Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES) consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment, with their local ARES leadership, for communications duty in the public service when disaster strikes.

ARES equals Communications

- Sometimes, routine communications
- Sometimes, emergency communications

Routine Communications

- Providing Communications to or for local organizations

- Example – PAWS Fun Run

- Such is a bit like a field exercise for ARES

- Occasionally we help a bit more than comms
  - Traffic Control
  - Setup & Teardown
  - etc

Severe Weather/Storm Spotting

- Falls in-between Routine & Emergency Communications

- Spotting does require some training

- Comms are a bit like a Net with plenty of traffic to be passed (weather observations)

- Infrequently morphs into emergency comms

Emergency Communications

- Disasters are when "Readiness" becomes highly important

- When everything is not ready, our ability to perform communications may not be timely or may not be successful

- There are multiple aspects of Readiness
  - Equipment & Infrastructure
  - People & Training

- All of these aspects need regular attention

Equipment & Infrastructure

- Equipment – The Communications Gear that we rely upon, which can be mobile, including radios, antennas, power sources, computers, and various accessories that <u>typically belong to individuals</u>. Examples include home stations, mobile units, go-kits

- Infrastructure – The Communications Gear we rely upon which are typically in fixed locations, including repeaters, antennas, power sources, etc, that <u>typically belong to or were donated to organizations</u>. Examples include the 075 repeater, communications trailers, Winlink Gateway at the Bunker, VHF & HF stations at the Bunker.

Infrastructure

- We need to review our infrastructure gear to insure it is ready to use at a moments notice

- Also need to periodically exercise this gear

- VHF Station at Bunker

  – Need Power Supply repair or replacement

  – Will use for Voice and Data (Winlink)

- HF Station at Bunker

  – Need Antenna work & Data Interface

  – Need a Computer /Monitor for Data

  – Will use for Voice and Data (Winlink)

People & Training

- People – The licensed operators who are ready and willing to provide communications. Examples include ARES Members, AUXCOMM operators, some EMA team members, etc.

- Training – An absolutely critical part of being ready to provide communications. Examples include various FEMA IS courses, ARRL EC-001, SKYWARN training, grassroots Winlink training, etc.

Training Levels

- ARRL/ARES typically has had 2 Levels
  - Level 1
    - Qualifies operator to participate in Weather Spotting only
  - Level 2
    - Complete as many items as possible to be considered to help with Emergency Communications

Training Documentation

- I am abandoning use of Standardized Task Book

- Simplifying to a single page form

- Homework Assignment

  - Complete the single page form

  - I will mail a blank form to those who ask for it

  - Scan it or take a picture and send to me

  - I will tabulate and store in a master spreadsheet

- Results will show where to focus team training

"Comms reliant on the Internet are Vulnerable"

- Per Mr. William Craig Fugate, former FEMA director under President Obama (2009 - 2017) and prior Emergency Management Director for the State of Florida (2001 – 2009)

  – During disaster, commercial comms systems overload

  – Commercial satphones tie back somewhere to an IP system

  – AT&T's FirstNet is IP based and is not well hardened

  – All comms systems, regardless of how well they are hardened, have multiple points of failure

  – #1 mission needs to be making sure the local EOC can talk to the state EOC

Needed Improvements

- Show that we can reach each other
  - We are generally good on VHF Voice and Data (V&D)
  - Plan to launch an VHF Winlink Peer-to-Peer Exercise
- Show that we can reach Springfield – V&D
  - Exercise periodically – Home & Bunker Stations
  - Winlink gateways on both VHF and HF Winlink – NC9IL
    - VHF Packet in Springfield has been down recently
    - HF station is on Vara, currently is working

Infrastructure Improvements

- Get the VHF station running on Packet Winlink
    - Power Supply issue, swap radios, update software
    - Will have an Kenwood D710 radio
    - Use for the VHF Winkink P2P Exercise

- Get the HF station running on ARDOP & VARA
    - Antenna repairs, computer and interface (Signalink)
    - See if 80 meter NVIS dipole or end fed will fit between towers, and how to route the feedline
    - Yaesu FT-950 is in place

Focus Going Forward

- Advancing team training – particularly Level 2

- Improve Infrastructure and exercise periodically

- Coordination with other area emergency communicators

ARES Net Reminders

- Illinois State ARES HF Net

  - 1st and 3rd Sundays of month at 4:30 PM CST

  - 3.905 MHz LSB (alternate 7.230 MHz LSB) & Echolink 824404

  - Informal 60M & 40M check in - (7230 KHz) at 4:10 PM

  - 60M check at 4:20 pm (5403.5 kHz Channel 5, if busy then 1, 2, 3, 4)

- Illinois Digital Net every Wednesday 8:00 PM on Illinois Link

  - WIRES X 21565

  - Brandmeister DMR 31171

  - TGIF DMR 31171, DMR+ Reflector 4636

  - NXDN 3117

  - P25 31171

  - YSF Reflector Illinois Link 83132

  - D-Star XLX 334G, DCS 334G, XRF 334G, and XLX 312G

  - Allstar Link 42810

END

- www.peoriacountyares.org

- ilares.org

- www.arrl.org/ares