

AJARC

Meeting Agenda November 12, 2024

Location: Old Oak Tap Room, 665 Erwin Hwy, Tusculum, Tn 37745

Present: 32 Members, 2 Guests, Meeting led by Bryan Smith (AA4BS).

Next meeting: Tuesday, December 3, 2024 18:30 pm Trinity Methodist Church, 524 Tusculum Blvd, Greeneville, TN 37745

Meeting

1. **Meeting called to order 7pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, and a prayer.**
2. **Roll call of attendees/call signs**
3. **Secretary/Treasurer report**

Checking balance: November 12, 2024 \$7,697.98.

Membership: 58 members currently. Please check on your membership on the AJARC.org web site. Donations or renewal of memberships can be done through PayPal or by check.

4. **Old business:**

Nominating Committee: Larry AG4OB, Eddie KO4EVE, and Kyle AE4DF

- 2025 Officer Slate for AJARC Election presented by Larry AG4OB: Slate presented was Bryan Smith AA4BS, President; Joe Bowman N4JAB, VP; Elijah Collins White W4ECW, Secretary/Treasurer. Larry asked if anyone wanted to be added from the floor, though no one did. Bryan said if someone wants to make a motion, could vote on it tonight instead of waiting until next month. Bryan asked again if there were any others? With the flood didn't have slate presented last month when traditionally would have. Larry Whiteside, KM4NVH, made motion to accept Nominating Committee recommendations. Ralph, K4MIJ made second. Motion passed without any opposition. Larry Whiteside, KM4NVH then made a motion to hold the election. Bob, KM4EBZ, made second, with amendment that make the vote by acclamation all at once. The motion passed without opposition.

Tower /Repeater update: Bryan AA4BS

- Tower update: a lot happened in Greene Co. in the last month. We lost power to the mountain. Bryan shared that the TACA site was on generator eight days straight until the State group could get there; it was a bit of a mess. Our battery was depleted quickly. Bryan and Kevin W4KAV put a call out, and the TN Net helped facilitate the effort; we had a donation of less than 1 year old 170 amh Sealed Lead Acid batteries donated to W4KAV's 145.410 on the mountain, MTERS 443.850 repeaters, batteries for AJARC, and for Bryan's tower site. We got two batteries for each of those repeaters. They were delivered from Memphis by a number of Hams in 3 days from the flood, and got them up to us and a wonderful thing. We greatly appreciate all of the help from those who helped this to happen.

Dennis N4DWH and Bryan went to the tower site Sunday, Nov 10th. There was sleet and 60 mph winds, and hauled 125 lb batteries to top of the tower. While there, pulled the repeater controller out, and took our XBR8400; we're running 2M only at moment. 6M and UHF are disconnected. That way we can take the controller and program with the new VHF and UHF repeaters, so that

we'll have those in good operating condition when we take them up. Hope to have that done in the coming weeks. Dennis spoke to noticing a slight leak in the roof while there.

Bryan got the new to us VHF 100w continuous duty Motorola, and 100w continuous duty UHF Motorola repeaters. Enlisted Kevin W4KEV, who knows these units well, to change out the resistors and modify to work in the amateur band. Dropped off to him today in Knoxville. Same units MTERS is running. We got Motorola MTR2000, nice heavy duty repeaters that hopefully will run for a while. We got a new to us Motorola MICOR continuous duty for the 6M repeater. Bob and Bryan are going to go through it and get it ready to go, and have it up there as well. We're upgrading all three repeaters to max our ERP on 2M and 6M, and 60w out of the transmitter, big improvement on UHF. Plus these have a much better receive sensitivity. We think that a lot of our noise has been coming through the old receivers. Making a lot of progress on that. Three batteries in place now; charging on the 2M only, so we have a lot of life on battery. Bob KM4EBZ asked if we should look into solar chargers for the site? Bryan replied that yes, and Kevin are working on that; looking for solar chargers that will not transmit much noise, and cause problems for the repeater. Matt asked about setting it up to drop to lower power if goes to solar, and Bryan replied yes, it's set up that way.

- Maintenance Event update: Number of people went up. Good day. Put a bunch of shingles in, and cleaned up around the tower. Did a little painting on the gate. Fixed the gate. There was a lot of stuff that happened that day. Thanks to everybody that helped with that. Cleaned a lot of tree limbs and stuff along the route to the towers.
- Question from the floor asking after update from the National Forest Service on our lease renewal. Bryan shared that there's no update. He did however send the Inventory form both in September and again in November. Dennis mentioned that all of the requirements on painting items has been met; we painted ours green, and now we're fully in compliance with the Forest Service.

Education Committee Update: Steve Bible, N7HPR

- Getting ready for 2025 season. Nov 2nd National Weather Service in Morristown had their Open House. It was delayed because of the flood. Attendees estimated at close to 1,000 people throughout the day. Thanks to the Lakeway Amateur Radio Club; they gave us a table, and set up an Education table where Steve, Larry, Ian and John manned the table. There was a tremendous amount of interest in learning amateur radio. TVA was there, a bus of Hams came up from Cleveland – they want to partner and do a bunch of the things that we've been doing as well.
- Other things working on is with Walter State Community College. Scheduled for the Talented and Gifted again this coming year. The class is renamed from Radio Technology to Hamtastic, the same name that used for the Summer Camps. This is active. People can go online and start signing up their middle school age children for these, ages 11-14. If interested in a package, has on hand, and you can hand them out. On Saturdays, the last three Saturdays of January and the first Saturday in February, from 9a – 1:30p. Last year had six in the class; this year, kind of expecting this year going to get a bit of a blip because of the hurricane. There are a lot of people now interested in getting their amateur radio license. The other program, coming from the work on the Summer Camps, there were a lot requests for an adult class. Steve shared that we've put together an Adult class here in Greeneville, at the Greeneville campus. It's going to start January 14th, and run for six Tuesdays, from 6-8 pm. Anyone from 16 years of age and higher are eligible to sign up for that class. It's live, and can sign up for it right now. It's designed to be compressed, lecture and demonstration, though not a lot of hands on. At the end of it, we'll get Rodney there to give the exam at the sixth lesson. Steve will send Allie a link for that for AJARC website.
- John Ellenburg, AI4ZQ: thanks to Steve's work, Walter State/Nicole has really gotten the Ham Radio bug. At the Morristown campus, they have started a youth class that leads only to the Tech

license. We'll be starting that January 27th, and it will go two nights a week for the next five weeks, ending on February 28th. The class and books are free for kids 17 and younger. We'll have a test the very last night. Expecting great things. If you have a kid that wants to go, have them get in touch with us. If don't want to go there, get in touch with WSC/Nicole, Director of Workforce Training (Steve has her card) and let them know that you need a class up here. Not a stem based class, like Steve has been running. Steve will send link for this too. Steve shared our grant, and Walter State grant writer has written and received from ARRL Fndn grants to give every child that takes the class the red Technician license book. They've received a grant from ARDC to install an amateur radio station in each of the Walter State Campuses. Steve and John will be working with them to select equipment and getting that installed. If want something at any of the other campuses, a lot going on with Walter State and let them know if you have a group to hold a class.

- Wednesday night's, still have free classes, 6-9 pm, Maker's Space – tutoring, office, etc. Thanks to Larry, and Ian have five regulars, and people are passing their exams. We've been doing that for several years for Technician and General. Matt Drummonds K4MBD spoke to thinking about recently a lot of younger people getting their tickets, and that there are a lot of ways for them to get active. He spoke to how the Lunch Bunch had been particularly meaningful to him when he got back to ham radio, to get on the radio regularly. The Lunch Bunch is a group of Knoxville, and they do the net every week day. If anybody knows teenagers or anybody that has gotten their ticket recently that would be potentially able to set up a net, maybe once weekly, Matt thinks that would be a good influence to get young people regularly involved. Just throwing that thought out there.

Other Old Business

- Wal-Mart Distribution Center \$500 grant donation – Larry Whiteside KN4MVH: since last meeting, received \$500 donation from Wal-Mart Distribution Center. Bought 2 sets of books, \$500, from ARRL; one set will go to the Greeneville library, and the other set will go to the Makers' Space. We'll keep one more of the books for the General training material at the Makers' Space – we think that will be more useful. Asset tags are on all of them. Can check them out and look at them. Going to organize a presentation at the library for a little press moment.
- CPR Training follow up – Bryan AA4BS: Same position as last meeting. Probably first of year, look at doing something more on this. There's been a lot happening.

5. New Business & Roundtable:

- Skywarn update – Larry Whiteside KN4MVH: Skywarn has decided to do their training once a month now, the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Larry is the Greene County Skywarn coordinator. At this point, they'd like us to do a subnet. Larry had been holding off on asking the club to do a subnet on our repeaters until we get the repeaters organized. This would be one night a month. Will wait until the new year at this point. They've gone away from using GMRS because of the issues with that. They are still using the Carter County repeater.
- Boy Scouts – John Brown KD4KFL: Justin Wilhite, from Sleep Solutions, his son Charlie who came to some meetings and got his ticket, they're involved with the area Boy Scouts. They're having an area Camperee 2nd week in April. What they're additionally wanting to do is have some ham radio operators come out, set up a couple stations, and do a demo for the kids, and get them familiar/acclimated. Quick chat with Steve, we're going to make some suggestions to them to maybe start getting some of their scouts involved in ham radio now, so that by the time the Camperee comes around, we'll have some scouts with their own tickets. The kid net would be a great idea. Steve could use some additional help at Makers' Space too. And, also if we get the Scouts involved, it would be really great to have more participation from the club down there.

Bryan said he's going to charge John for mutual effort with the Boy Scouts for the HamFest, like at Dalton HamFest where Boy Scouts handles the parking and asks for donations. A win-win for both groups.

- Christmas Party – Trinity Methodist Church, our next meeting, December 3rd. We have the space again, though different room, Parlor area off the sanctuary and enter in the middle of the building. Happy to have us again. We have access to the kitchen again. Starting at 6:30 pm. Ralph spoke to the Dirty Santa, and stepping back. Larry will handle the Dirty Santa; bring a gift if you'd like, and we'll exchange. Potluck dinner; bring a dish. Have paper products from Field Day, and plenty of bottled water. Larry, spoke, on the gift, you don't have to go buy something – can wrap up something from your shack that you haven't used. Doesn't have to cost a lot of money. It's a fun game.
- Hurricane Helene and recent weather impacts, and amateur radio. A life changing event for a lot of people. So much devastation. This was an incredible event, not just here, though also in areas around. Ham radio played an important part in this. GMRS and Ham radio made a huge roll especially in Western N Carolina and NE TN due to this event. Lindsay is working on compiling stories for a presentation first of the year. If you've got some good sources, stories of how ham radio helped people get through this, talk to him. Mt. Mitchell repeater, if you got to listen to that, was incredible. Just on the government side, the Viking Mt. repeater, right next to our tower, at one point when Bryan was at EOC in Greene Co., remember seeing 58 talk groups on that one tower. There were that many agencies and groups on that one tower. Bryan was stationed in Cocke Co. a couple of days, and we had nothing, no communications at all, no radio traffic, and were lucking to work simplex on government side. Bryan hauled a couple of people out in the bed of a tractor, there were railroad beds washed out and the tressles were gone, saw people's houses floating down the road in front of us, saw a cow 40 ft in the tree, and in Greene Co. tomatoes bushes 60 ft in the trees following the whole river valley for as far as you could see, it's incredible, the destruction. Be thinking about what amateur radio can do. We had a lot of people calling offering help. We could not get to the tower site, and had to let them know this, other than landing a helicopter landing on the top of the mountain. The state had to rebuild the road to get up there. When Dennis and Bryan went up there, there were trees everywhere. We try to plan, and we can only do so much. As a club, we need to set up a policy for our club members to use repeaters here in the valley. Bob's got a repeater here on commercial power and battery back up. We have some ham repeaters here in the valley that we could use. We need to pick a Simplex frequency. When something happens, we would go to Simplex instead of being on 52 with everybody, one that we've used a lot 147.555, whatever it is, we set that as a plan. Bryan recommends that we start doing a monthly Simplex net to be prepared. When these sites went down, we had nothing. Bryan had only mountain top repeater with Commercial power; it was out for a bit, though came back, and it was used to pass Welfare Checks. It was used for what it is there for. It's not got battery back ups as well. We need to do that as a club, and have that moving forward. There were so many people that the \$20 Baefeng saved their life. It makes you think. During time at EOC, was able to talk with Heather, our EOC Director. We're working on revamping the amateur side with EOC, and Emergency management. She wants that built back up. It's been neglected since COVID, and we want to get that built. More information coming on that. Matt brought up the ARES card, flash card for wallet with calling frequencies, eg. National calling frequency 2M 146.520. Ian pulled out and showed his frequency card for here, with 147.510 documented in 2008. Bryan said that this is something that we need updated, and posted on the website, etc. Larry asked about the EOC equipment in our storage; Bryan spoke with Heather's assistant about it today. Heather expressed that she wished she had the amateur aspect working during the event.
- Kinser Park, lower damaged, though upper not, and we'll still be able to hold Field Day there again.

- Winter Field Day discussion, brought up by Larry Whiteside KN4MVH. Bryan said he spoke with Fire Chief, and perhaps from EOC, would be a good think to do. Bryan will see if he can make that happen.
- Bob, N4FV; re: communications, said that everyone gets tunnel vision when something like this happens. Likely everyone in meeting would go to the 39 repeater. And, in this case, it was broken. This comes back to what Ian was saying. What other frequencies would you go to? Eg. you've got your Baeufeng and your out somewhere and you can't get into a repeater, how far is your Baeufeng going to talk? If you're over here in the mountains, a lot of places repeaters don't work. You're going to have to use HF. Some of the alternatives should look at. The Technicians only have HF 10m permissions. Has anyone here ever played with single side band mobile, to see how far you can talk mobile to mobile? Might be surprised how far you can go, and it will bend, unlike VHF/UHF. That needs to be one of the alternatives that you do look at when you at other frequencies to use. We experienced it where everyone of the repeaters on the mountain was down. Some messages came through on CB radios. It's simple enough to throw together an antenna to make that work. With that, having an exam is the Niswonger, so if want to take exam, or know someone who does, have them email Bob, n4fv@yahoo.com starting at 6:30.
- Bryan added on to what Bob was saying, speaking to those with Technician license, recommending that they work on their General, to take some of the classes that Steve is offering, and get General so that know what to do and how to operate when something happens.

Meeting adjourned: Larry White motioned, and meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.