

East River Amateur Radio Club
PO Box 1362
Bluefield, WV 24701-1362
Club HQ: 704 Bland St. Room 523
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W8MOP



Minutes of the Bluefield, WV's East River Amateur Radio Club meeting held on January 13, 2025 <http://www.erarc.com> Local emergency HF freq: 3.860+-5. We meet on the first Monday of each month at 7pm at 704 Bland Street, Room 523, Bluefield, WV 24701. Mailing address: P.O. Box 1362, Bluefield, WV 24701 (meeting delayed d/t bad weather)

President David Lester N8VFR, Vice President David Sexton AB8D, Treasurer; Jay Belt K8CTI, Secretary: George "Hooger" Fisher III W4OF, Webmaster, David Lester N8VFR, HamClubOnline liaison and VE team leader Berlon Roberts W8ZBR

The meeting was opened at 704pm by Dave Lester, ERARC President. He welcomed the other 11 in attendance. There were no participants via ZOOM tonight. David welcomed Brad Beavers KQ4WHE, a Tazewell resident who was recently licensed. He owns Beavers Auction House in N. Tazewell, Va. The Group stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance. (Henry Shinn KC3KGY donated the flag, pole and stand.)

Hooger read the **minutes** of the November 9 meeting and they were accepted. The Christmas dinner on December 3 was commented upon.

Treasurer's report: Deposits included \$395.00 from renewals and donations. There were 14 renewals and 5 of which included donations to the Club. No pay outs from our account. The Paypal account saw \$162 in renewals and fee debits of \$8.95. We received a \$200 donation from Catherine Martin from Bluefield. We hope that David Lester's recent letter to the public made a difference there. We are accepting dues for the upcoming year. \$15/amateur, add \$5 for family members. The PayPal link is on our www.HamclubOnline.com link.

Repeater report: Jay Belt deferred comments to Nelson Linkous WZ8E. He mentioned snow damage at Mount Lookout in Grayson county, a recent workday at our storage room on Dec 26 and other topics. The SERA www.sera.org representative is still working on a new digital frequency for the Windmill Gap repeater and coordinating the 147.06 over to Princeton city. Gary Kadar N8GK asked if the feedlines/cabling changeout was still planned for 145.49. Nelson said yes.

Volunteer Examiner: Berlon Roberts W8ZBR ERARC VEC. **The next session will be Saturday, Feb 13, 2024**, at 9am at 704 Bland St. Bluefield, WV, room 523. On November 9, there were 2 that tested 2 passed their Technician exams. There was discussion on moving the testing date from Feb 8 to the 13th. The date had been planned and all involved have been notified

of the change. (The VE team must have a copy of your current license if applicable, a photo ID is a must as well as a copy of a CSCE, if applicable.) Those testing must have a FCC Registration Number and valid email address before testing. The cost is \$15 and we will accept cash and check but NO PLASTIC. The new FCC \$35 federal licensing fee must be paid to the FCC, NOT THE ERARC. <https://www.fcc.gov/wireless/support/universal-licensing-system-uls-resources/getting-fcc-registration-number-frn>) The VE team tests quarterly on the second Saturday in February, May, August and November.)

Matt Morris' KC8LGS emailed report:

SKYWARN/ARES ACTIVITIES FOR DECEMBER, 2024 : A total of 27 participants for Skywarn nets . Six for the ARES net.

In serious need of increased participation on both of these nets

NEW SKYWARN/ARES INFORMATION

1) Communication with the NWS, as well as with other amateur radio operators, will continue to occur using the 145.49 repeater until such time it is determined to be ineffective/inoperative. 2) The 145.25 repeater, with a PL tone of 100hz, will be utilized as the alternative repeater. 3) Should these repeaters prove ineffective/inoperative, HF frequency 28.475 +/- 10 KCs shall be used. This frequency is available for Technicians as well. All members are asked to monitor their radios and listen for traffic relative to this weather event or for any other needs for assistance. The information above was relayed to Phil Hysell at the NWS in Blacksburg, VA office. I received the following response:

From: Glen Sage, N4DN SKYWARN Advisory Committee member, Blacksburg NWS
Phil and Matt, The revision of your emergency communications plan for Mercer County is a great move to strength your SKYWARN response. During SKYWARN Recognition Day, I used the 145.49 repeater to call for stations in southern WV. It was full scale at the Blacksburg NWS office. It is also full scale at my home in Carroll County VA. To have redundancy is vital for emergency communications and to select the second repeater on East River Mountain along with naming a 10 meter (simplex) frequency is a good move. We need to program in the 145.25 -600 PL100 repeater into the VHF rigs memory at the NWS office at Blacksburg. I grew up in Mercer County, WV. I also spent a number of years in Raleigh County and 15 months in Logan County following the Buffalo Creek disaster on February 26, 1972. It is always good to see ARES and SKYWARN there moving in a positive direction. Thanks for your your service. (Matt is revising the Mercer Co. EMCOMM plan with these changes)

Matt: It is very important that we move toward improving participation in SKYWARN and ARES activities. Perhaps we can do some ARES nets on 28.475 and get more participation. As spring is close by, perhaps we can do some mock training scenarios. As always, I would appreciate the Club's interest in both of these initiatives and any suggestions that would make it better is always welcome. Thank You! The Skywarn net is every Monday (except the first Monday of the month) at 7pm on 145.49. The ARES net is on the third Thursday of each month at 730pm on 145.49.

DMR net by David Sexton AB8D: (Net is every Tuesday at 0730pm on the W8MOP 444.45 DMR repeater on the 3154 WV statewide talk group.)

Old Business: Hooger went over "To Do" list he has.

1. Is there a need for new firmware for the 145.49 repeater? Discussion. Nelson said that he has a SCOM[®] 7K controller that he can donate to the Club and take out the older controller. Discussion. Brian Leedy KI4URO made a motion, seconded by John Riddle N8RIG to accept Nelson's offer. Accepted. This swap out will occur when the 147.06, etc. Repeaters are upgraded/moved.
2. Echolink: Jay says that it's gone and there are no plans to continue with this mode.
3. APRS is on the air at David Lester's QTH. It works but there is not much elevation there.
4. WINLINK: had been tried at David Lester's home. We need to load it up and use in our radio room on Bland St.
5. Install the new Yaesu analog/digital radio in our radio room when the roof repair is completed and we can have a workday.

BLAST TECHNICIAN CLASS: Nelson discussed options with the membership. Discussion. We will have the Class on Feb. 28 and March 1, 2025 at the Bluefield ERARC classroom. The Club will provide lunch. The Friday evening session is a review of the program, etc. and Saturday includes instruction, Q&A, review and testing. Nelson made a motion for the Class, seconded by John Riddle. The motion passed. Details to follow.

New business: David had an extended list of 'things he would like to see us do'.

He has contacted the Radio Observatory at Green Bank asking for a speaker for a Club meeting but he's not heard anything yet. Other subjects: Building projects; HamClock build, (<https://www.kd4c.com/build-your-own-ham-clock/>) pi-Star hot spot build, (<https://amateurradionotes.com/index.htm>) how to remote access a PC, Q&A sessions, how to build a code plug, (<https://www.bridgecomsystems.com/pages/how-to-build-a-codeplug>) APRS, (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Automatic_Packet_Reporting_System) Packet, (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Packet_radio) Winlink, (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winlink>) another VNA (<https://www.tek.com/en/documents/primer/what-vector-network-analyzer-and-how-does-it-work>) class with actual usage, POTA (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parks_On_The_Air) presentation, Fox Hunting (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transmitter_hunting) Field Day presentation, etc. 2025 Activities include the above as well as quarterly testing, possible activation of Special Event Station (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_event_station) such as at the Princeton Railroad Museum event we were involved in. The meeting was over around 0840pm.