



# *The Mercer County* **RELAY**

*A monthly publication of the Mercer County Amateur Radio Group*



October 2003

## Our First Club Newsletter

### President's Perspective

By Joshua Welsh KB9WGX

It has been a slow, and sometimes difficult, journey for the club over the last few months. Low participation and busy schedules made it hard for the club to function properly.

This is only compounded by the fact that we are short on officers. I have been elected to two offices, President and Trustee, and have been functioning as Temporary Treasurer. My father, Vice President Joe Welsh, has been filling the position of Temporary Secretary. This can be taxing on us, as he works a 12-14 hour shift, and I work part time. I am also finishing school, and participating in 4H. Sometimes it seems as if the entire responsibility of the club rests upon our shoulders.

But things seem to be getting better. More people are attending meetings, and we are receiving a little more interest from our members.

Please make an effort to attend the meetings, and join the online discussion group. We need you take a more active role in the clubs affairs.

Respectfully,  
Your President, Joshua Welsh

### News Of Note

This month's Amateur Radio news, summarized from the ARRL's web site.

**ARRL Emergency Communications Course registration (Oct 10, 2003)** -- Registration opens Monday, October 13, 12:01 AM Eastern Daylight Time...for the Level II Emergency Communications on-line course...Registration remains open through the October 18-19 weekend or until all seats are filled--whichever occurs first...the \$45 registration fee paid upon enrollment will be reimbursed after successful completion of the course...approximately 50 seats are being offered to ARRL members on a first-come, first-served basis...For more information, contact Emergency Communications Course Manager Dan Miller, K3UFG, 860-594-0340.

**Push to Identify Unlicensed 10-Meter Operators Continues (Oct 10, 2003)** -- A concerted effort begun last spring to monitor for and possibly identify unlicensed operators on 10 meters will continue through October. The FCC already has asked the ARRL Amateur Auxiliary/Official Observers for assistance. Now, FCC Special Counsel Riley Hollingsworth is inviting hard information on suspected interlopers from all amateurs.

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**73 Magazine Says "73 and QRT" (Oct 10, 2003)** -- After completing 43 years of publication, 73 Amateur Radio Today magazine is calling it quits. Plans to publish a joint October/November issue fell through this week, and the September 2003 issue was the magazine's last. According to self-proclaimed "El Supremo and Founder" Wayne S. Green II, W2NSD, it was a simple matter of economics.

**ARRL Certification and Continuing Education course registration (Oct 9, 2003)** -- Registration for the ARRL Antenna Modeling (EC-004) course opens Monday, October 13, 12:01 AM EDT (0401 UTC), and remains open through Sunday, October 19. Class begins Tuesday, October 21. Those interested in taking an ARRL Certification and Continuing Education (C-CE) course in the future can sign up to receive advance word via e-mail of registration opportunities. To take advantage, send an e-mail to [prereg@arrl.org](mailto:prereg@arrl.org). On the subject line, indicate the course name or number (eg, EC-00#) and the month you want to start the course. In the message body, provide your name, call sign, and e-mail address. Please do not send inquiries to this mailbox. To learn more, visit the ARRL Certification and Continuing Education Web page (*M CR*) <http://www.remote.arrl.org/cce/> and the C-CE links found there.

**World's Broadcasters Join Anti-BPL Chorus (Oct 9, 2003)** -- A subcommittee of an International Telecommunication Union (ITU)...has joined a growing chorus of concern about the interference potential of...Broadband over Power Line (BPL)...interference produced by systems employing PLT as well as by Industrial, Scientific and Medical (ISM) equipment and short-range devices, would compromise broadcast reception.

**FCC Invites Comments on Additional Morse Code-Related Petitions (Oct 8, 2003)** -- The FCC has sounded the bell to begin Round 2 of

the Morse code debate by inviting public comment on another group of seven Morse-related petitions for rulemaking. The FCC put the petitions on public notice today. Comments will be due by November 7. As they did with the initial seven Morse-related petitions, members of the amateur community may make their opinions known on any or all of these filings using the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS).

**Legendary DXer Danny Weil, ex-VP2VB, SK (Oct 7, 2003)** -- DXer Danny Weil, ex-VP2VB, of YASME fame died October 3. He was 85. The British-born Weil was active under a variety of call signs in the 1950s and early 1960s while sailing one of the three YASME yachts. His adventures inspired a generation of Amateur Radio DXers as he operated from various exotic ports of call. Late last year, Weil suffered a stroke and had been living in an extended-care facility in San Antonio, Texas.

**Scouts Delve into Emergency Training (Oct 7, 2003)** -- Central Florida Boy Scouts get a taste of what emergency search and rescue is like, aided by Amateur Radio.

**Ham Radio to be Part of Constitution/Cassin Young "Turnaround Cruise" (Oct 6, 2003)** -- Amateur Radio special event stations will be a part of the biennial "Turnaround Cruise" Saturday, October 11 in Boston Harbor. Two famous ships--the USS Constitution ("Old Ironsides") and the USS Cassin Young--will traverse Boston Harbor, exchanging cannon salutes with the fort on Castle Island. The ships then will meet with the guided missile destroyer USS Chaffee and head back to the Old Boston Navy Yard Pier. Special event station N1S will operate from onboard the Constitution, WW2DD will be on the air from the Cassin Young, KS4E and KF6MLK will operate from the USS Chaffee and N1B will operate from a kiosk on the pier. Members of the USS Cassin Young and USS Salem radio clubs will staff both the shipboard and shoreside stations.

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**CNCS Emergency Communication Training Grant News: (Oct 6, 2003)** -- With the renewal of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) grant for a second year, seminar training for ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Courses (ARECC) leaders can grow to a deeper and broader scope, said ARRL Emergency Communications Course Manager Dan Miller, K3UFG.

**To read the full stories, or read even more news, visit <http://www.arrl.com>**

## Minutes From The October Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm, with four members in attendance.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and adopted, as was the Treasure' s Report.

Highlights of the President' s Report are as follows:

1. Alternate meeting times are possible. Let Josh know if you have ideas.
2. Attendance very low, please make effort to attend.
3. MCARG registered as a sole proprietorship under Josh.
4. Emergency nets, and the repeater, have been suspended, due to lack of participation. Follow the emergency plan for frequencies to use. Josh will monitor the 147.21 repeater in Galesburg.

### Unfinished Business:

1. Election of Secretary and Treasurer tabled AGAIN!

### New Business:

1. The Bluedorns suggested via email that the club start an online newsletter. The idea was accepted by the members in

attendance. Please turn in any articles or materials to Josh at the meetings, or via email, for addition to the newsletter.

2. It was made known to the club that it is possible to apply for a vanity call sign. The club decided to let it remain as KC9EHE for now. This can always be changed at a later date, if the club so wishes.
3. Ideas or suggestions for field day are welcome.
4. More effort must be put into recruiting new hams. Talk to people you know, and let the club know if you have any ideas.
5. Anyone is welcome to give talks or demonstrations on subjects that interest them. Let Josh know before the meetings, so that he can schedule it after a meeting.
6. A swap list will be announced after each meeting. Hams can list items that the wish to buy, sell, or trade.

We next had an informal discussion on the merits of code vs. no-code for the General licence class and above.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm

After the meeting, Josh demonstrated his portable emergency radio system, named the Shack-In-The-Box. He also gave a talk on APRS.

## Off Frequency

The opinions of the V.P., Joe Welsh KB9WGW

### TO CODE OR NOT TO CODE.

Being an aspiring technician class operator, hoping some day to upgrade, I often think about the code question.

Wether you are aware or not , the FCC., is considering doing way with the code

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qualification for all classes above tech. Is this a good thing? I'm not sure. From a personal standpoint, I would welcome this change. You see, I am having trouble learning the code. I've tried "Code Quick" and the Gordon West tapes, same result. When I went in to take the test it was like listening to a foreign language. It was not like the tapes. It was like gibberish. Well enough on the personal aspect.

Would this change be good for Ham Radio? On one hand, I think it would encourage more people to get into Hamming. But on the other, would Amateur Radio become like Citizen Band Radio? Everyone and their brother talking at the same time, profane language, and all-out chaos.

Well the jury is still out. Hopefully, if the FCC does away with the code requirement, the theory section of the test can be beefed up. Maybe, this would help people respect the airwaves that they are licenced to operate on.

Anyway, the decision, will not be made here. The "powers that be" control that out come. I'll be watching and listening. Keep hamming it up!!!!

Joseph J. Welsh  
KB9WGW

## Attention All Club Members!

### Club Bulletins

The club is in need of a Secretary and Treasurer. While some of you may be intimidated by the thought of holding an office, it is not as hard as you may think. These offices require little, if any, public relations work, and only take between 1/2 hour to 1 hour per month. Please consider running for office, your club needs you!

You are more than welcome to submit columns or articles in this newsletter. Just hand them in at the meetings, or email the to me. Also, any input on this publication would be appreciated.

The club now has a new home page!  
<http://www.qsl.net/kc9ehe/> It has all the updated Ham Radio news, weather info, club info, and links you could ask for. It is still under construction, but is more or less complete. If you have any neat links to add, email me. Also, under the members page, I have listed all the club members. I would like to list everyone's email address and home page, but I can not without your permission. If you do not have a home page, just write up something about yourself, and I'll gladly put it online with the club's page.

The club has a discussion group. Just click on the link on the club's page. I hope you all join it. It has all kinds of cool features, like messages, polls, images, chat, links, and calendar. This lets you take a more active role in the club. The polls are especially valuable, as they allow me to gather info on the club's opinions, preferences, etc. One current poll asks you to decide the best meeting date.

## Monthly Quiz

Submit answers to Joshua Welsh via email.

What is the proper length in feet for an 80 meter half wave dipole?

**All comments, suggestions, and submissions should be sent to Josh at [kb9wgx@qsl.net](mailto:kb9wgx@qsl.net)**

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**News Source: American Radio Relay League's home page <http://www.arrl.com/>**

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