Kittitas County Ham News
August 2021

Lots of news this month. The July meeting was very productive. We started by discussing the proposed Constitution and ByLaws. After answering questions we voted to accept both documents. Because of that vote we are now the Kittitas County Amateur Radio Communications Service.

After that, we moved on to the subject of officers.   We elected Linda Waters KJ7JVB to be President, the Vice President/President Elect is Steve Busick N7DXP, and the Secretary/Treasurer will be Gloria Sharp WA7GYD.   A new elected position is the Chief Technology Officer, we elected Steve SzombathyW7UDI to fill that position.

Our new constitution specifies three standing committees – they are a Technology Advisory committee which will be chaired by the Chief Technology Officer; an Emergency Preparedness committee which will be chaired by the county RACES officer (currently Steve Douglas W7JAA); and an Activities and Membership Committee whose chairman is appointed by the president and will be Mike Schantz KJ7ISM.

Another item we agreed to was Dues. We decided that there will be no dues due until January 2022, and the amount then will be $20 per member. According to our new Constitution, half of the dues money collected will go to the Technology Fund and the other half will go to the General Fund.

Related note - we decided that the money in the "old" repeater association account would be transferred to the Technology Fund. The other existing money (from the old clubs) would be transferred to the General Fund.

Thanks to Bob Smith AI7CS – "the new club website is up and running. You can find it at   https://www.qsl.net/kcarcs/ ."   Bob says "the site is not yet complete, but we are getting content going.   There are initial listings for web-based resources, ARES, VE Testing, and club information, but we can always use more. If you have specific areas of the hobby that you would like to see added to the site, or if you're the head of a committee and want something updated on the site, please send comments, suggestions, and links to Bob Smith, AI7CS@arrl.net . If you are holding any regularly scheduled net – please send the time and frequency, and any information on the net so I can get it listed.   Also, if you participate in a ham radio event, send pictures and information, including the date, time, and location. Thanks."

I just received an email from W7JAA Steve Douglas our ARES EC. It is both important and interesting, so I am going to put the information right here and let a bunch of the

more routine stuff wait for later.

Steve says - This Saturday (the 31st) is a "5th Saturday" and there will be a Statewide Emergency Exercise for radio communications. Each county is asked to participate and we are the folks Kittitas County's DEM will look to for a response. So far, I have five people who have said they will participate but we need more. The exercise runs from 9 AM to 12 noon, and there are four locations in the exercise to bring on line. One location should be the EOC. The other locations should be some of our regular emergency stations. Stations are always setup with two operators each, so we could use at least eight participants. It won't be a problem if more than eight people volunteer.   In his email, Steve says "Everything is changing in the emergency communications world and the County Dept. of Emergency Management needs to SEE not just be told that we are up to the task of meeting the needs they might have.   All emergency training is for what might happen so we need to learn and practice. Thanks to everyone who has responded. If this was a real event we would need twenty-four people not eight to staff four locations in the first 24 hours. Lots of room for lots of folks."

Steve also says – This is the first of a series of practice events being planned. They are set for the four fifth Saturday's of the year, the next one being this coming October 30th. Please mark your calendars.

We also have an email from Mike Schantz KJ7ISM , chairman of the Activities and Membership committee.   He says the committee is currently working on ideas to retain current members and to recruit new members into KCARCS.   Their ideas will be shared at the next meeting. One idea is to use photos from ham events on the website, if you have some good ham pictures please bring them to the meeting. They are also looking into what it takes to get an article in the newspaper. Please bring any ideas you have to the next meeting.

I have not received any information about the 100 mile races so I do not know their current status. I did look at both websites and they both seem to be on track for their scheduled dates. That would be August 28 and 29 for the Cascade Crest and September 11 and 12 for the Teanaway Country race. Last I heard – both races were still in need of more volunteers. I believe Randy is the contact person for both races you can reach him at the following address - k7rht@TRGLLC.us

Steve Douglas W7JAA says that First Aid/ CPR classes will be available at a reduced fee this fall. Contact Steve for information.   dougsr@reagan.com

Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday August 7, 8am at the Palace Cafe. Please send me a quick email or phone call if you plan to attend. Again, the reason is that it helps the restaurant to be ready and to seat us in a correctly sized room. Thank you.

I saved this for last because it's important, I wanted people to read it, and I wanted room to include all of it. So here it is.

ARES – RACES UPDATE July 2021   submitted by Steve Douglas W7JAA

I have been told there are changes-a-comin' and Randy and I have been reporting on them as they became apparent. I am starting to see some of what that might mean for the future of ARES and RACES in the whole state. In the recent past, local training has been done on the basis of what seemed to be useful to our members. A kind of directed shotgun approach because we didn't quite know what to train for, either locally or statewide. Now the state is reported to be looking at establishing training minimums for ARES members who wish to become RACES registered. The ARRL two years ago published a training task book for ARES members in an effort to create national training minimums and advancement opportunities for them.

Local interested operators would begin as ARES members who function as support personnel in many areas during local emergencies as well as supporting events like the upcoming marathon races. Members registered for RACES operation would work in those same areas plus be able to work in the local EOC and take on specialized duties, deploy to assist neighboring counties, or even travel to other states during emergencies, if they wish. Deployment would require additional training. To become a RACES operator will require certain training minimums be achieved and participation levels be maintained.

I have begun a conversation with Darren Higashiyama, the Sheriff's Dept. of Emergency Management Director, looking at roles radio amateurs might logically be able to fulfill but have not been utilized for in the past. He is willing to consider suggestions for those. The scope of our involvement potentials will direct much of the development of our training goals. The achievement of being utilized will depend on our demonstration of dedication. The desire is that everyone have a function and a place to plug in. This new direction hopefully allows for new members to learn and grow as operators then move up in responsibility if they choose to.

With all of that in mind, I am working on creating a two step registration process. First as an ARES member then, as the individual wishes and grows in training and participation, request to be registered as a RACES member. There will be training requirements and participation minimums created with responsibilities growing with advancement. A new badge will be created for ARES members and both ARES and RACES member badges will have a three year expiration date on them. Renewal will be based on continued training and involvement. The current list of members and RACES registered operators will be reviewed and possibly revised as needed.