



MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



MSU ARC Meeting – February 2, 2021 via Zoom

Meeting was called to order by President, Tracy McKinney, W4IRT, at 7:01 p.m.

Roll Call & Question of the Night: There was no roll call or question of the night.

Secretary's Report: Chuck Williams, K4CHW moved to accept the minutes from last meeting; motion was seconded by Bill Call, KJ4W. Motion approved.

Advisor Report: Jana Hackathorn, KN4MWE, did not have anything new to report tonight.

QSL Manager Report: Sue Reimer, NR4R, did not have anything new to report tonight.

Treasurer's Report: Bill Call, KJ4W, reported that he has not written any checks since last meeting. One deposit was made for \$35.00. Current bank balance is \$3322.15. Several members have paid 2021 dues already and he has several checks to deposit. Our current paid membership for 2021 stands at 20. Dues are due by the April meeting.

System's Report: Bill Call, KJ4W, reported that he has wired in the UPS backup on the 440 repeater controller, so the internal clock should keep time now if the power fails. That seems to be working okay but somehow a hum has been introduced. Bill will try to track that down sometime. Bill has not yet made it down to Hamlin to install the amplifier at that site. The 94 repeater has not required any attention, and all 3 repeaters are working okay.

VE Report: Bill Call, KJ4W, reports that no exam sessions were held in January. We have scheduled one for this coming Saturday morning, February 6. Anyone interested needs to send Bill a reservation, because due to social distancing requirements we may have to schedule times. As of December 29, 2020, the FCC approved the increase to a \$35 fee for all new licenses, renewals, vanity call sign requests, and all modifications. The date that this increase goes into effect is unknown.

CERT Report: Bill Call, KJ4W, did not have anything new to report tonight.

Net Manager Report: Chuck Williams, K4CHW, presented the net reports as follows:

- *January 2021 Net Report:*
 - 4 sessions
 - 117 stations
 - 211 minutes
 - 411.45 operator hours.
- *Wellness Net*
 - 4 sessions
 - 84 stations
 - 46 minutes
 - 64.4 operator hours



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Special Events:

- KYPOTA – John Coyle, W4PJC, advised that there is still a need for a few more volunteers for the KYPOTA committee for the 2021 event. If you are interested in being on this committee and helping with the KYPOTA event please email John at jcoyle347@yahoo.com. The current plan is to change the date of the KYPOTA event to August 14, 2021.

Old Business:

- **DMR:** Tracy McKinney, W4IRT, facilitated a discussion regarding some club members' interest in setting up a DMR repeater for this area. There has been lots of talk about DMR and interest since the last club meeting and the DMR committee met on January 11, 2021 via Zoom to discuss the topic and come up with valid *pros* and *cons* of the club pursuing the installation of a DMR repeater for our area. The committee members are: Josh Kerr, WV4O; Stuart Naulty, KN4RGB; Brock Kirk, KO4ASA; Steven Dabbs, KN4IRN; Jana Hackathorn, KN4MWE; Richard Palmer, KM4JZX; Bill Call, KJ4W; Tracy McKinney, W4IRT; and Corbie Gomez, KO4ARX.
 - Stuart Naulty, KN4RGB, presented the **cons** to the club membership as follows:
 - DMR mode relies on internet connection to function.
 - DMR mode is susceptible to multi-path interference.
 - Installing a DMR repeater would involve additional equipment for the club to maintain.
 - The more technical aspect of DMR mode may deter people from becoming involved.
 - Adding another repeater may divide the club members, local HAM community, and attention and cause a loss of interest and involvement with too many repeater options to monitor.
 - People who choose not to use DMR mode may feel excluded from the local HAM community.
 - There is not really a possibility of a mixed mode option with 1 repeater.
 - Analogue mode would take up both time slots on the repeater.
 - A DMR repeater is not truly a substitute for individual hotspots and anyone who is serious with being involved in the DMR mode would probably still need to use a hotspot.
 - The cost of setting up a DMR repeater could be significant.
 - Tom Radja, KO4HCL, mentioned that one *con* for him and possibly others is that not everyone has internet at their home. Tracy McKinney, W4IRT, acknowledged that this is a valid concern. It was also mentioned that those who do not have internet would still be able to use the repeater as long as they were within range and their equipment was sufficient enough to reach it.



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Old Business: DMR (cont.):

- Bill Call, KJ4W, discussed the “Watering Hole” Theory and how having a 3rd repeater for our area could possibly diminish the community connectivity as people will have to choose which repeaters they want to listen to. Most HAMs have a dual band radio and monitor the 94 repeater and the 440 repeater, and generally know they can reach whoever they want to speak with on those two repeaters.
- Randall Winchester, WD4HVA, had questions about the point that a DMR repeater would not substitute a personal hotspot for those truly interested in getting involved with the DMR mode. The limitations of a DMR repeater were reviewed and how a personal hotspot would also be beneficial for anyone who was really interested in the DMR mode.
- Josh Kerr, WV4O, presented the **pros** to the club membership as follows:
 - DMR mode encourages more technological education in the HAM hobby.
 - There is a technological advantage to DMR such as being able to have one repeater that has 2 channels being used simultaneously.
 - The hardware for DMR mode is cheaper than it is for other digital modes.
 - The DMR mode may encourage newly licensed HAMs to get more involved and upgrade to General Class as it allows them to talk with other HAMs locally AND all over the world as opposed to only locally with analogue.
 - DMR allows for more private conversations.
 - DMR has the capability of sending SMS/text message type messages.
 - DMR Talk Groups can be separate and not interfere with one another.
 - This feature may be useful in ARES communications or other emergency situations where teams can use different talk groups amongst themselves and then have a main talk group that they can all report back to.
 - There is a possibility of greater range with DMR mode than with other modes.
 - The quality of reception is very clear with the DMR mode.
- Larry Call, KD6UNL, asked for clarification on whether or not the DMR mode would work if the internet is out. It was explained that if there is an internet outage the DMR mode will not function as it is dependent on an internet connection either through a personal hotspot or at the DMR repeater site.
- Randall Winchester, WD4HVA, asked for information about getting a DMR ID and other DMR equipment. Tracy McKinney, W4IRT, stated he would send an email to the club members with this information and talked about the company that Stuart Naulty, KN4RGB, had recommended for hotspots.



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Old Business: DMR (cont.):

- Bob Aldrich, WD8OWA, mentioned that we do have several fairly new HAMs in our club and he is concerned that we may be leaving people behind with such a complicated topic and mode to learn and begin operating with. Tracy McKinney, W4IRT, stated that we do not want to leave anyone behind and there are several members who have been willing to help others learn about DMR; but also pointed out that those who are interested in learning about this mode will have to put in the effort as it is somewhat complicated.
 - Tim Edmonson, KA4WWS, stated that a DMR repeater compliments hotspots usage and adds to the DMR experience. He mentioned that the DMR repeater should be thought of differently than a regular analogue repeater. It is a completely different mode and allows for HF type contacts without having to have a HF radio or a General Class license. Contacts can be made locally as well as all over the world through DMR, which makes having a local DMR repeater different from our 94 and 440 repeaters. Tim also stated that he believes if club chose to pursue the installation of a DMR repeater, it could be done fairly inexpensively to begin with and then upgraded if the club decides to do so in the future.
 - Jana Hackathorn, KN4MWE, suggested that we table the idea of a DMR repeater installation at this time and allow the membership to learn more about it and possibly begin to explore operating in DMR mode with Tim's repeater or personal hotspots. Josh Kerr, WV4O, agreed with Jana and mentioned that we should have a DMR Elmer Day once we are able to gather in person again.
 - Jana Hackathorn, KN4MWE, motioned to table the discussion of the club installing a DMR repeater until the club membership learns more about it and feels comfortable bringing the topic back up for discussion to pursue installing a repeater. Bill Call, KJ4W, seconded the motion. Motion was voted on and approved.
 - Tracy McKinney, W4IRT, thanked Tim Edmonson, KA4WWS, for bringing up the idea of the club putting up a DMR repeater and for pushing us to explore a new mode. He also thanked Tim for allowing the club membership to use the repeater that he has personally installed at his residence and for helping members with radios and programming to be able to operate in the DMR mode. Tracy thanked the club membership for a good discussion and the DMR committee for their help in researching the topic and presenting information to the club.
- **MSU ARC Scholarship:** A committee was formed at the last meeting to discuss the club sponsoring a scholarship to MSU students. The committee has not yet met but plans to soon. Committee members are as follows: Jana Hackathorn, KN4MWE; Bill Call, KJ4W; Mitchell Moss, KN4KYU; Corbie Gomez, KO4ARX; Steven Dabbs, KN4IRN; Chuck Williams, K4CHW; and Debbie Barton, W8IBT.



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Program: There was no program presentation tonight.

New Business: There was no new business tonight.

Larry Call, KD6UNL, moved to adjourn the meeting and motion was seconded by Tim Edmonson, KA4WWS. Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Attendance: 34 people

Tracy McKinney, W4IRT

Josh Kerr, WV4O

Bill Call, KJ4W

Brenda Call, WA4IJU

Steven Dabbs, KN4IRN

Jana Hackathorn, KN4MWE

Todd Hackathorn, W4GV

Bob Atkinson, K9OIM

Helen Atkinson, no callsign

Tom Radja, KO4HCL

Chuck Williams, K4CHW

Larry Call, KD6UNL

Barbara Call, KM4ZTU

Stuart Naulty, KN4RGB

Corbie Gómez, KO4ARX

Bob Aldrich, WD8OWA

Candy Aldrich, KJ4OZU

Robin Jones, KF4GCD

Bonnie Allen, no callsign

John Coyle, W4PJC

Randall Winchester, WD4HVA

Diana Mishica, KN4IRU

Dale Barrett, WB7D

Valerie Barrett, KG4OCJ

Jeff Robinson, KM4YCU

Joe Wray, WD4GXI

Tim Edmonson, KA4WWS

Charlotte Edmonson, KY4GAL

Dan Reimer, N4ZY

Sue Reimer, NR4R

Matt Freeman, WX4WKY

Grant Cherry, no callsign

Melinda Stallons, WD4INT

Patrick Stallons, KN4FPK

Respectfully submitted,

Corbie Gómez, KO4ARX, Secretary