

Athens Country Amateur Radio Association

Minutes of the meeting of January 19, 2010 -- amended

In Attendance: Gary Carter KD8MSR
 Jim Crouse KC8OVB
 Bob Curtis KD8FRQ
 Carl Denbow N8VZ
 Evan Dickinson K8ELD
 John McCutcheon N8XWO
 Drew McDaniel W8MHV
 Eric McFadden WD8RIF

Following the 7:00pm social gathering, the meeting was called to order at approximately 7:40 pm by President Drew McDaniel, W8MHV.

The minutes of the November, 2009 meeting were accepted as distributed.

The Treasurer's Report was accepted as presented by Jim Crouse, KC8OVB. Jim reminded the members that dues for 2010 are due.

Old Business

Hamfest -- Sunday, April 25

Drew McDaniel, W8MHV, reported that the ARRL has approved sanctioning of the hamfest. He has also reserved the use of the Recreation Center.

Drew reported that there has been no call for proposals for the Tourism Grant and, thus, he has not filed an application. He reminded the membership that last year the ACARA didn't receive a grant, either.

Drew plans to take hamfest flyers to the Mansfield (Feb. 14) and Jackson, OH (Apr. 10) hamfests. Evan Dickinson will take flyers to the Charleston, WV hamfest (Mar. 20).

Jim Crouse, KC8OVB, asked how much the club should spend on printing and mailing hamfest postcards given the loss of tourism money. Drew estimated that the club spent just under \$1000 on printing, postage, and the use of the Rec Center last year; he will find the real numbers and present them at the February meeting.

In response to a question about reducing the number of colors on the postcard, Drew responded that the cost savings in going from full-color to fewer colors is minimal.

Drew asked if we've been mailing the postcards using bulk rate. Jim Crouse replied that in the past bulk rate hasn't been cost effective. Drew will investigate to see if this has changed.

Amateur Radio Licensing Class

John McCutcheon, N8XWO, reported that after two sessions there is one student participating. Drew reports that there's at least one more student planning to attend later sessions.

The exam session will be on March 15, at 6pm at the Athens High School. The exam session is open to anyone interested in testing and exams for all classes of license will be given.

Repeater

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that he has winterized the repeater and has installed the heater.

Eric reported that one night recently the repeater didn't respond to his signal and he suspected that the circuit breaker had triggered as had happened once before but the next morning, before his planned visit to the site, the repeater was functioning again.

Drew McDaniel noted that the repeater has been running quite well for several months.

February Potluck -- 5:30pm Saturday, February 20, at Red Cross

Jim Crouse reported that he has reserved the use of the Red Cross Chapterhouse although he is still awaiting confirmation.

John McCutcheon stated that he will be showing the classic movie, "My Little Chickadee" at the potluck.

New Business

Athens Marathon -- Sunday, April 11

Eric McFadden asked when the Marathon Committee meets so that he could attend to discuss with the committee members the services the ACARA provides. In particular, he would like to know how valuable they find the bicycle-mobile APRS function provided by . Jim Crouse stated that he doesn't know when the Committee meets. Eric will contact Committee member Tom Wolf.

Jim Crouse reminded the members that last year the Marathon Committee presented the ACARA with a donation which the ACARA decided to apply toward increasing Marathon support effectiveness. John McCutcheon suggested that a portion of this money be spent on a new battery for the golf-cart station. Jim Crouse suggested the purchase of orange vests. Eric McFadden suggested the club acquire a second portable APRS station. Drew asked the members to consider these ideas and come up with others and prepare to discuss them next month.

Eric McFadden asked if it is appropriate to ask the Marathon

Committee to include the ACARA on the back of the volunteer t-shirts. All members present agreed that this a reasonable request since the club is providing valuable services to the event. Eric asked whether the club should design a logo for this (and other) purposes. There was some discussion about possible logo designs including a variation of the old RKO logo suggested by John McCutcheon. Eric was given permission to discuss these with a graphics professional whom the club will pay for design of a logo. Carl Denbow, N8VZ, suggested Eric speak with Marie Graham, an employee of the Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Field Day 2010 -- June 26-27

Eric McFadden asked if the club should consider fielding two class 1-A stations this year, a competitive HF-only station running CW and SSB, and a VHF/UHF-only for-fun station. Eric feels having the two stations might encourage Technician licensees to participate and will provide good exposure to all participants to VHF/UHF equipment and propagation. There was some discussion of just fielding a class 2-A effort to take advantage of the free VHF/UHF and "Get on the Air" (GOTA) stations but Eric argued that the club can't provide enough operators to field a competitive class 2-A effort.

Eric will examine the rules to see if fielding two operations is allowed.

Eric asked if the Athens County Fairgrounds is still the preferred location. The members agreed that it is.

Great Ohio Bicycle Adventure (GOBA) -- June 16-26

Eric McFadden reported that GOBA will be in Athens at the Recreation Center on June 23-25. The ACARA's Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, is GOBA Communications Director and will be contacting the ACARA for support of this event as the date draws near. John McCutcheon has already volunteered to work the event and will have his camper and station set up at the Rec Center.

Learn more about GOBA here: <http://www.goba.com/>.

Learn more about GOBA communications requirements here: <http://www.gobahams.org/>.

Programs

Carl Denbow discussed his efforts to use a relatively new weak-signal digital mode, JT65, which provides robust communications when signal levels are below the noise floor. He distributed a handout with a screen-shot of a QSO in progress and descriptions of three programs that can be used for JT65. This hand-out will be available on the ACARA Meeting Minutes archives page:
http://home.frognet.net/~mcfadden/wd8rif/acara_minutes.htm

Drew McDaniel showed and demonstrated his newly renovated Heathkit HW-8 QRP transceiver. His final update to the rig was replacement of the original audio output board that was intended to drive high-impedance headphones with a high-power home-brewed board that drives an 8-ohm external speaker to room-filling volume.

Eric McFadden played a short video about amateur radio's involvement in NASA's Atmospheric Neutral Density Experiment 2 (ANDE-2).

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9pm by President Derw McDaniel.

Respectfully submitted, Eric McFadden, Secretary.