

Athens County Amateur Radio Association

Minutes of the meeting of October 18, 2016 -- AMENDED

In Attendance:

John Biddle	W8PG
Josh Cash	KE8EAS
Jim Crouse	KC8OVB
Eric McFadden	WD8RIF
Robert Moore	KC8KSM
Rick Riling	
John Thomas	KC8JWZ

Following the social gathering at 7:00pm the meeting was called to order by President Eric McFadden, WD8RIF.

Silent Keys:

The following member was remembered:

Randy Mace, KB8AYZ

Randy passed away on September 21, 2016. ACARA Treasurer Jim Crouse, KC8OVB, sent a donation to the Humane Society and a condolences card to the family. Randy's obituary can be viewed here: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/athensmessenger/obituary.aspx?n=randall-mace&pid=181591448&fhid=22537>

Program: The program was a short video by Sean Kutzko, KX9X, on his *U.S. Islands Program* operation in Pigeon Key, Florida. Sean made over 140 contacts in four hours using seven pounds of gear.

Corrections/additions of Minutes: In the absence of Secretary Bob Curtis, KD8FRQ, the minutes of the September 20, 2016 meeting were distributed by President Eric McFadden, WD8RIF. Jim Crouse, KC8OVB, made a motion that the minutes be accepted as distributed; the motion was seconded by John Thomas, KC8JWZ. The vote passed without dissent.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Jim Crouse, KC8OVB, distributed the financial report. The club currently has \$1,364.31 in unencumbered funds. Bob Moore, KC8KSM, moved that the report be accepted; the motion was seconded by John Thomas, KC8JWZ. The vote passed without dissent.

Old Business

ACARA 145.15 MHz Repeater

Repeater Trustee Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that he has installed the ADR Interface and that he has the connectors necessary to build the interface-cable between the existing CAT-300DXL repeater-controller and the Yaesu DR1-X System Fusion Repeater. He also reported that the repeater will eventually need an attenuator-pad to drop DR-1X output from 20w to 8w in order to safely drive the 35-watt Vocom amplifier; in the meantime, Eric will drive the repeater barefoot at 20 watts or will drive the Vocom amp with 5 watts, whichever produces more output.

ACARA 442.100 MHz Repeater

UHF Repeater Trustee Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported via email that he is building the Arccom RC210 controller.

Club Construction / Education Spring Project

Project coordinator, Drew McDaniel, W8MHV, was not present at the meeting to discuss the proposed two-band trap-dipole HF antenna project.

Jim Crouse, KC8OVB, would like to know what other projects members would be interested in doing.

Buckeye Trail Marathon – Saturday, October 1, 0900-1500L

<http://www.buckeyetrail.org/run4blue.php>

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported via email that he had six operators for the Buckeye Trail Marathon. Ten runners were registered for the full marathon and seven started the race. There were thirty-one runners registered for the half-marathon. There was no amateur radio communications support for the 5k or 10k Fun Runs.

Jeff reports the organizers were very much impressed and appreciative of the amateur radio support and have requested support the 2017 running on the event which will be on October 7, 2017.

Old Business (cont'd)

VE Exam Session – Monday, October 17, 2016

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported the following via email:

The combined ACARA/SCARF VE session produced one new Technician and two upgrades out of three candidates.

Congrats to the following:

New Technician - Donna J. Bradshaw of Belpre

General upgrade - Timothy J. Birkeland, KC8RYO, of Waterford

Extra upgrade - Lou Flum, KE8EYY, of Albany

Thanks to all the VEs who came out. We gave Josh Cash, KE8EAS, his first test session as a new VE. The other VEs were Scott Green, KD8KZG; Eric McFadden, WD8RIF; Jim Crouse, KC8OVB; and Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ.

The next scheduled VE session will be the SCARF Hamfest on Sunday, January 15, 2017, 10:00 AM at Tri-County Career Center.

ACARA Membership Survey

President Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, distributed the results of the membership survey he had distributed on August 12; the survey generated 25 responses. (A summary of the responses can be found attached to these meeting minutes.)

The survey results were discussed.

It was decided to continue meeting on the third Tuesday of the month. Both Josh Cash, KE8EAS, and John Biddle, W8PG, feel the 7:30pm start-time is too late in the evening. It was decided that the November, 2016 club meeting will start at 7:30pm as usual, and the decision will be made at that meeting whether to start subsequent meetings earlier in the evening.

While discussing club interest in multi-operator contesting, John Biddle, W8PG, volunteered to host such an operation at his house. The Chair asked John to study the contest calendar and come up a possible contest for the club to participate in.

While discussing possible club projects, interest was shown in "station set-up basics". The Chair will try to organize such as a club-meeting program in the near future. Josh Cash, KE8EAS, would like to know more about station grounding, another possible club-meeting program.

While discussing ACARA members' activities within amateur radio, it was suggested that it's probably time for a club-meeting program on DXing.

New Business

Susan G. Komen Athens Race for the Cure – Sunday, October 23, 2016

http://columbus.info-komen.org/site/TR?fr_id=6467&pg=entry

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported via email that he needs one more operator for this event. Bob Moore, KC8KSM, volunteered to fill this role.

The net will be on 146.400 MHz simplex. Watch for emails from N8SUZ.

Bobcat Trail Marathon – Sunday, November 6, 0700-1500L

<https://www.westernreserveracing.com/events/bobcat-trail-marathon/>

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported via email that he thinks all of the positions have been filled. The net will be on 146.400 MHz simplex. Watch for emails from N8SUZ.

ACARA Holiday Dinner

The Chair suggested the date of Tuesday, December 20, 2016, which is the usual third-Tuesday of the month, for the ACARA Holiday Dinner. The members present decided this date is probably too close to Christmas. The members selected Tuesday, December 13, 2016 for the Holiday Dinner.

The members present selected Stephens on Court (<http://www.stephens66.com>) as the venue but some members are concerned about the stairs into the basement. The Chair will try to reserve the main-floor party space on the selected date.

ACARA License Class – January 9 to March 13, 2017; 7-9pm

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported the Technician License Class will start on Monday, January 9, 2017 and will continue each Monday through the VE exam session on March 13, 2017. Jeff has reserved the Red Cross Chapter House for the class and VE exam session.

Athens Marathon – Sunday, April 9, 2017

<http://www.athensmarathon.org/>

The chair reported the date of the 50th anniversary running of the Athens Marathon will be Sunday, April 9, 2017. Expect emails from Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ.

New Business (cont'd)

ACARA Hamfest

The Chair suggested the date April 26, 2017 for the Athens Hamfest. This is the last Sunday in April. Easter falls on April 16, 2017. The members present selected April 26, 2017 as the date of the Athens Hamfest.

The Chair will reserve the Community Center and will register the hamfest with the ARRL.

POST MEETING CORRECTION: April 26, 2017 is actually *not* a Sunday. The ACARA Executive Committee has selected the date April 30, 2017 as the date of the Athens Hamfest.

New Officer Elections

Treasurer Jim Crouse, KC8OVB, reported that eleven ballots were received. There were two write-ins for Miles McFadden, KD8KNC, as Treasurer; two write-ins for Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, as Newsletter Editor; and one write-in for Andy Young, KD8WVX, as Repeater Trustee.

After the ballot count, the following were re-elected into office:

President –	WD8RIF
Vice-President –	W8MHV
Treasurer –	KC8OVB
Secretary –	KD8FRQ
Newsletter Editor –	KD8WVX
Webmaster –	N8SUZ
Packet Node Trustee –	N8SUZ
Repeater Trustee –	WD8RIF

Following a motion by Jim Crouse, KC8OVB, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm by President Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, following the vote.

Minutes respectfully submitted by President Eric McFadden, WD8RIF.

Appendix A – ACARA Survey Results

Q. If the meeting day and time were convenient, would you be inclined to attend the monthly ACARA meetings? (The ACARA currently meets at 7:30pm on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, September through May.)

Yes – 14

No – 6

Maybe – 4

Q. Which days of the week or month are **not** good for your attendance at an evening meeting? (Please answer in the form of "Wednesday" or "The 2nd Monday of the month"; list as many as are necessary.)

Monday – 1

Tuesday – 2

Wednesday – 1

Thursday – 2

Friday 2

Saturday 2

Sunday 2

3rd Monday – 1

1st Tuesday – 1

3rd Tuesday – 1

Q. You indicated you are **not** inclined to attend ACARA meetings even if the dates/times are convenient. Might we ask why you won't attend the ACARA meetings?

I am 80 years old, and really not active in Ham radio. I am willing to support the club with my annual membership fee.

Too busy with other meetings

I might if it were focused on the marathon or something else I'm involved in.

I am not participating in amateur radio anymore. This has nothing to do with the organization. It has to do with being 80 yrs old. I will continue to maintain my membership just to receive the weather bulletins

Q. What changes might the ACARA make to the meetings to make them more enjoyable or worthwhile?

"Assign members to committees and give committee reports rather than debate each project detail at the meetings. Spread the projects among the members rather than one or two member running each project.

Keep meetings to one hour."

Make me 40 years old.

nothing comes to mind

Have not attended so no comment

I've liked the ones I've attended.

at distance participation

Nothing, cause they are well entertaining and informative

Have not attended many meetings so it would not be fair to the club for me to answer this question.

I really enjoy the meetings. Sometimes they run a bit too long.

Shorter business meetings. Having the presentations at the end, like it used to be. Knowing that was coming up was an incentive to make the business meeting go faster.

everything is fine.

limit business to a specific time period

Shorter? Divide up the work? I honestly don't know.

Make me 20 years younger with more enthusiasm.

N/A Fine how they are.

Keep up programming related to Radio and other tech to keep it interesting.

Continue featured speakers on an aspect of ham radio/special operations. Maybe add snacks during social time.

Less needless talking.

The meeting day is fine, but maybe a little earlier? 18:30 or 19:00? (This is actually an answer to "what days are not good for you" – RIF)

Q. What do you feel the ACARA as a club does well?

Any project when a lot of members show up.

Provides emergency communications in catastrophic circumstances.

Organizing for events

Civic activities

Event communication via email.

I think most all of what we do, we do well.

Friendliness among each other is so nice with advice from anyone is welcomed

Offering first time Ham classes/training

I enjoy all the field days. Setting up the site and seeing everything work. This time together is what I like.

Annual hamfest is always well run. Building projects have been fun and educational.

Public service – 2

Everything

field day and other direct involvement activities, new ham classes, 6 meter net, etc

community support

We do public safety events well, meetings

participation as communications for assorted events.

Some contests and activities like Field Day. Good public service.

Eric has tried to arrange activities for club participation.

Q. What would you like to see the ACARA as a club do more of, or do in a better way?

Practice emergency response with Red Cross and county agencies.

I am concerned about EMP. Think a protected reserve system would be wise.

Nothing

Embrace digital modes on the repeater. Specifically Yaesu Fusion, but D-Star and DMR would be nice as well.

My thoughts on a more proactive approach to worst case scenario readiness have already been discussed, and is what our team is working on. It is not for me to change anyone else's perspective on what we should or should not be doing, or that it has any place in the business of Amateur Radio.

To seek out other licensed operators in this area and bring them to the club

Not active enough with the club to answer

I feel the club is doing very well. I just wish more time was available for me to participate and learn.

1. More building projects
2. Some technical sessions about electronic theory, if we can find the right teachers (Drew is probably the most knowledgeable on these kinds of issues.)
3. Get repeaters running better, and maybe interconnected into a wider system, like K8TUT used to do

everything is fine for me.

more build-it projects, example; Home brew SDR

Other members plan programs, assist with meetings, etc..

More construction projects or something along those lines.

helping others extend their license into more advanced class levels.

club multi-op contesting HF/VHF/UHF

Promote a little more participation/competition for some contests that members participate in. Maybe add some club awards in addition to the NC8V 10 M trophy?

Too much senseless talking/blathering during meetings.

Q. Would you like to see more ACARA club building projects?

Yes – 14

No – 6

Q. What sort of ACARA club building projects would you like to see?

Station set up basics. We need to show newbies how to get started.

antennas, hpsdr builds

Don't know yet

Antenna builds, ham shack layout ideas.

I only have a dipole. I would like more antenna projects.

Just a few ideas:

1. 10M SSB&CW transceiver
2. Multiband dipole antenna
3. Simple one band (40M, for instance) yagi antenna

easy stuff to get youngsters interested (i.e. grandkids)

I don't know--I do know you get folks involved, and that's always a positive.

Antennae (beams, etc.).

I would like to see a regular scheduled building project (once or twice per year). Kinda of open to what they might be. Extension of pc/computer technology for use in the hobby might be something.

antennas and receivers

More antenna projects like portable, Yagis or other beam designs. Test equipment, keyers?

Q. Do you participate in amateur radio support of public service events?

Yes – 11

No – 9

Q. Which public service event is your favorite?

Athens Marathon – 6

Marathon events

All of them

Field Day

I participate in any on an episodic basis.

Q. Do you feel the ACARA should support...

... the current number of public service events it supports – 14

... more public service events than it currently supports – 4

... fewer public service events than it currently supports – 2

Q. Which amateur radio activities play a significant role in your ham radio life? (Select as many as apply.)

Contesting - 7

DXing – 2

Ragchewing – 4

County hunting

Field or portable operations – 7

Mobile operations – 5

EMCOMM or public service – 5

Amateur satellites - 1

Moonbounce

Working special event stations – 5

Homebrewing / kit building / repairing / restoring equipment – 8

Experimenting with antennas – 6

Hamfesting – 4

Other:

Digital modes (Yaesu System Fusion, D-Star, DMR, etc...)

Have yet to purchase a radio, I am interested in DX and ragchewing

Q. Do you consider yourself primarily...

... an MF/HF operator – 4

... a VHF/UHF operator – 1

... both an MF/HF operator and a VHF/UHF operator – 7

... neither an MF/HF operator nor a VHF/UHF operator – 8

Q. Do you consider yourself primarily...

... a voice (SSB/AM/FM/Digital-Voice) operator – 12

... a CW operator – 1

... a digital-mode operator – 2

... other

I am currently lost, but searching.

builder, experimenter

Q. Which are the main contests in which you participate?

Ohio State Parks on the Air – 4

Route 66

Field Day – 3

ARRL 10 Meter – 3

Any of the ARRL contests

DX

U.S. Islands

Q. Which contest(s) are you not participating in that you'd like to participate in?

Ohio QSO Party – 2

The ones on the weekends... ;-) Hard to take time away from grandkids.

DX

National Parks on the Air

Various digital mode contests -- PSK, RTTY, FeldHell, etc. I have participated in these, but only on rare occasions.

10 Meter

Q. Optional: additional comments

I'd like to keep our meeting on Tuesdays

Hope my Yes/no answers do not skew your vote.

I would like to get together on what we can do at the hospital. I am about to get elbow deep into our radio setup there, and it would be nice to include the club as part of those plans.

I cant afford a new radio and have no idea what to look for in a used radio. The few operators I have spoken with have varying opinions of equipment and the hobby in general and have not been particularly helpful. But then I am guilty of not asking for help, a flaw I need to work on.

I think it would be nice if ACARA did some joint things with SCARF. In a relatively small county, we have two ham radio clubs. We should not be at odds with each other but work in cooperation with each other. I know that we've had a few folks leave ACARA and join SCARF. There seems to be a feeling that ACARA caters more to the "university crowd" and SCARF is more for the "average joe or jill" ham. I don't think this is a fair characterization, and I would like to see less of this stereotyping and more joint efforts between the two clubs. This might be pie-in-the-sky dreaming, but that's the way I see it.

I'm happy to support my better half!

I would like to see regular building events. I would like to see more recognition of the public service events that the club participates in. I would like to work toward advancing my class to general and beyond and maybe the club could help promote that like they do for technician class. I would be interested in working on something that relates PCs in with the hobby. The club serves the community but you hardly see any local media coverage of what is being done. When I go to hamfests I feel like as a hobby it is one for old men. I know that our club has younger members but overall this is true. I would also like to see the hobby, not necessarily our club, show how hobby/amatuer radio has helped other advances in technology outside of the hobby.