

Program:

Carl Denbow, N8VZ, presented an introduction to the wildly-popular new digital mode FT8.

In his presentation, Carl showed a slideshow by the ARRL's Steve Ford, WB8IMY, which is available for download here:

http://www.ac-ara.org/minutes/2018/Getting_Started_on_FT8.pptx

In his presentation, Carl showed a well-done video on the history of Amateur Radio digital modes and FT8 by KE8OG, which can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zHXScGrsw-A>

Carl distributed a hand-out, "Let's Start FT8: JT65-DX.com", which is available in PDF format here:

Page 1: http://www.ac-ara.org/minutes/2018/Lets_Start_FT8_pg1.pdf

Page 2: http://www.ac-ara.org/minutes/2018/Lets_Start_FT8_pg2.pdf

Page 3: http://www.ac-ara.org/minutes/2018/Lets_Start_FT8_pg3.pdf

Page 4: http://www.ac-ara.org/minutes/2018/Lets_Start_FT8_pg4.pdf

Attendance:

Michael Baxla, KE8ICP

John Biddle, W8PG

Josh Cash, KE8EAS

Carl Denbow, N8VZ (amendment: corrected callsign)

Drew McDaniel, W8MHV

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF

Robert Moore, KC8KSM

Bob Rose, KE8JDA

Robin Rose, KE8JDB

Corrections/Additions to Minutes:

Following the distribution of the September 18, 2018 Minutes, Josh Cash, KE8EAS, identified one correction to be made to the Minutes. Josh made a motion to accept the corrected minutes. The motion was seconded by Carl Denbow, N8VZ. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report:

Acting Treasurer Drew McDaniel, W8MHV, distributed a Treasurer's Report, which showed the club's treasury holds \$4,188.04 in unencumbered funds.

Drew explained that the software the former Treasurer, Jim Crouse, KC8OVB, had been using is DOS-based and that he (Drew) is converting the records to MS-Excel.

Drew has been unable to find information in the records to identify who donated to the Repeater Relocation Fund or what the donation amounts were. He may need to ask the membership for help in reconstructing this information. This information is needed before Drew can make his matching donation to the Repeater Relocation Fund.

Bob Moore, KC8KSM, made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded by Carl Denbow, N8VZ. The motion passed.

Old Business

VHF Repeater

VHF Repeater Trustee Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the 145.15 MHz repeater continues to work fine. He is working to schedule the climber, George Fitz, to move the repeater antenna and feedline from the American Tower tower it's currently on to the 9-1-1 tower at the same site prior to November 12.

Carl Denbow, N8VZ, expressed concern about the level of noise heard on the repeater output frequency of 145.15 MHz as one drives around Athens. Carl added that he has heard similar noise in other cities and even in undeveloped countryside and that these noises are frequency-dependent—the noises aren't heard on other 2-meter frequencies. Carl asked if he might approach the Ohio Area Repeater Council (OARC) to ask if it's even possible for a new repeater frequency pair to be obtained.

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, mentioned that Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, has already been working with the OARC to acquire for the club one of the 2-meter frequency pairs recently held by Bill Creighton, K8TUT (SK), for the club's DMR repeater project and suggested Jeff should be part of additional discussions with OARC in order to avoid confusion.

Drew McDaniel, W8MHV, suggested it might be wise to first do an analysis of the noises heard in the Athens area using a spectrum analyzer to verify that noise-sources don't, in fact, appear all over the 2-meter band and, perhaps, to identify the sources. Drew volunteered to do such an analysis sometime after Thanksgiving if someone were available to help. Carl agreed that such an analysis would be beneficial.

This topic will be tabled until after the analysis is performed.

UHF Repeater

UHF Repeater Trustee Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported via email that there is nothing new to report on the UHF repeater.

VHF DMR Repeater

There was no report on the proposed DMR repeater.

APRS Digipeater

Digipeater Trustee Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported via email that there is nothing new to report on the APRS Digipeater.

Red Cross Antenna Session

(Background: the amateur antennas on the roof of the Red Cross building have been damaged or knocked down during wind events and need to be replaced or repositioned. In addition, we want to install an HF vertical on the roof.)

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported via email that he has scheduled the Red Cross antenna party for 10am on Saturday, October 27, 2018, pending availability of a roofer or a representative. Jeff added that we will not be allowed to have many people on the roof but we will need many hands on the ground to help send stuff up to the roof. Jeff is working to get a cherry-picker truck for this project.

Watch for emails from Jeff as the date approaches.

ACARA Website & Email Changes

There was no report on the ACARA Website.

Buckeye Trail Marathon – Saturday, October 6, 2018

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported via email that four operators participated in the communications support provided to the Buckeye Trail Marathon (<http://www.buckeyetrail.org/run4blue.php>).

Participants:

Bob Curtis, KD8FRQ
Eric McFadden, WD8RIF
Miles McFadden, KD8KNC
Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ (net control)

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, added that operations were to have been on the Logan repeater but instead a 2-meter simplex frequency was used after issues with repeater coverage arose. The use of simplex led to the need for operators to relay information to and from net control.

(This section has been updated to reflect “Buckeye Trail Marathon” instead of “Bobcat Trail Marathon”.)

Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure Athens – Sunday, October 14, 2018

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported via email that seven operators participated in the communications support of the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure Athens.

http://www.info-komen.org/site/TR?fr_id=7391&pg=entry)

Participants:

Carl Denbow, N8VZ
Kirk Groeneveld, KC8JRV
Eric McFadden, WD8RIF
Miles McFadden, KD8KNC
Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ (net control)
Jan Slattery, KD8PUJ
Ty Smathers, KE8GSO

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, added that this year the event ran exclusively on the bike path, starting at Peden Stadium. The 5k walk/run went toward a turn-around near Stimson Avenue. The 1-mile walk went toward a turn-around near O'Bleness Hospital. The club provided communications support for the 5k walk/run only. Operations were on 2-meter simplex and this year APRS tracking of the last 5k walk/run tail-light was added to test a new online mapping scheme developed by Ted Jacobson, W8KVK, and Rob Jacobson, KB9AFT.

VE Testing Session – October 15, 2018

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported on the ACARA / SCARF VE test session held on Monday, October 15. A married couple from Gallia County tested and both earned their Technician Class Licenses. VEs present were Scott Green, KD8KZG; Eric McFadden, WD8RIF; and Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ.

Jackson Hamfest Date Move?

(Background: Carl Denbow, N8VZ, had suggested during the April 29 “5pm 6AM Net” that we should discuss the idea of sending a formal request to Jackson County Amateur Radio Club (<http://www.jacksoncountyar.org/>) asking that they find another date for the Jackson Hamfest.)

Discussion: does Jackson Hamfest occurring the day prior to the Athens Hamfest help or hurt attendance at the Athens Hamfest?

Carl Denbow, N8VZ, explained that he thinks in the beginning having Jackson occur the day prior to Athens helped attendance at both events because it encouraged retailers to attend both events. This year, however, Carl spoke with the proprietor of Debco Electronics, who has been attending both events, and learned that Debco will not be attending Jackson in the future—the Jackson event has gotten too small to be worth the expense and effort. Carl added that the proprietor of Debco said that, other than people from Athens, he hasn’t seen Jackson attendees at the Athens Hamfest, suggesting that attendees generally aren’t attending both events.

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, suggested the club might wait until after Athens Hamfest 2019 to see the results of Debco Electronics not attending Jackson before revisiting this issue.

“Worked All Athens” Special Event

(Background: Carl Denbow, N8VZ, is working to organize a “Worked All Athens” special event wherein participants attempt to make contacts with hams in towns and cities called Athens throughout the U.S. in order to earn certificates.)

Carl Denbow, N8VZ, reported that the ARRL provided him with a list of all clubs associated with a town or city called Athens in the United States. Carl did additional research using QRZ.com to find hams in other towns and cities called Athens. In total, Carl has identified eighteen towns or cities called Athens in the U.S. From the emails Carl has sent, he has received positive responses from hams in five towns or cities called Athens. These hams are in Athens, AL; Athens, GA; Athens, NY; Athens, TN; and Athens, TX.

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, asked Carl over what time period Carl sees this special event taking place. Carl explained he sees this as similar to the annual Route 66 event but happening over a single weekend..

Carl intends to reach out to hams in additional towns or cities called Athens before setting a date for the event.

New Business

New Officer Elections

Drew McDaniel, W8MHV, collected the ballots and counted them. A total of thirteen ballots were received.

	<u>Elected</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>write-in(s)</u>
President	WD8RIF	13	
Vice-President	KE8EAS	13	
Treasurer	W8MHV	13	
Secretary	WD8RIF	11	KD8FRQ KD8WVX
Newsletter Editor	KE8EAS	13	
Webmaster	N8SUZ	10	AK5HT (x2)
Packet Node Trustee / UHF Repeater Trustee	N8SUZ	13	
Repeater Trustee	WD8RIF	13	

The new officers take their positions immediately.

Bobcat Trail Marathon – Saturday, November 10, 2018

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the ACARA will provide communications support to the Bobcat Trail Marathon (<https://www.westernreserveracing.com/events/bobcat-trail-marathon/>) on Saturday, November 10, 2018. Members should contact Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, if they are able to participate.

Eric added that this year Daylight Savings Time ends on November 4, the weekend prior to Bobcat Trail Marathon.

Club Building Project

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, presented two ideas for club building projects the members might consider.

K9JEB PowerPole DC Distribution Block kit (<https://k9jeb.com/>).

These kits are inexpensive at \$9 each when purchased in quantities of three or more. The module provides a 30A fused PowerPole input, five PowerPole outputs, and an LED that glows to indicate a blown fuse. Such a device would be useful in a car, in a Go-Bag, or in the hamshack. K9JEB also offers 2.5A USB modules at \$4.50 each that can be installed in place of one a PowerPole output.

Eric has built one of these kits and found it to be an very easy build.

Eric added that K9JEB offers fancier kits including a power distribution center with a fused PowerPole input, eight individually fused PowerPole outputs, a USB port, and a switched digital voltmeter, all in a project box, for \$52 each.

2m/70cm Folding Copper J-Pole Antenna

The club built these several years ago. Those members who already have one may not want another one but new members or those members who didn't get a j-pole the first time might be interested in building one. Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, is going to investigate the cost and complexity of kting these out and will report back to the club in the future.

Members present expressed interest in both of these projects.

ACARA Technician License Class 2019

Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, reported via email that the next ACARA Technician License Class is set to begin on Monday, January 7, 2019.

ACARA Holiday Dinner

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that the third Tuesday in December falls on December 18 and he asked if this would be a good date for the ACARA Holiday Dinner. The members present agreed that it would be.

Eric asked if the members were satisfied with Lui Lui Restaurant (<http://luiluirestaurant.com/>) in Athens for the dinner venue and the consensus was positive.

Eric will try to reserve Lui Lui for the evening of Tuesday, December 18, 2018, for the ACARA Holiday Dinner. If Lui Lui is unavailable on that date, Eric will try to reserve Stephens on Court in uptown Athens.

ACARA February Potluck

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, asked if Saturday, February 16, 2019 is a good date for the ACARA February Potluck. This date is two days after Valentine's Day and is not the date of an Ohio University Basketball home game. The members present agreed on the date.

Eric will ask Jeff Slattery, N8SUZ, to reserve the Red Cross meeting room for that date.

Eric will ask John McCutcheon, N8XWO, if he will be able to bring a film projector and a short film to share.

Eric will bring one or two episodes of "The Twilight Zone" to share. Carl Denbow, N8VZ, suggested the season one episode, "The Mighty Casey".

Athens Marathon 2019 – Sunday, April 14, 2019

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, reported that 2019 running of the Athens Marathon is to be on Sunday, April 14, 2019.

Athens Hamfest 2019

Eric McFadden, WD8RIF, asked if Sunday, April 28, 2019 is a good date for the 2019 Athens Hamfest. This is the hamfest's traditional "last Sunday in April" date. Easter is Sunday, April 21, in 2019. The members present agreed on Sunday, April 28, 2019 for the Athens Hamfest.

Eric will register the event with the ARRL.

Following a motion by Josh Cash, KE8EAS; a second by Bob Moore, KC8KSM; and a vote, the meeting was adjourned at 9:27 pm.

Respectively submitted by President and Secretary Eric McFadden, WD8RIF.