

MEETING OF THE ST. CROIX VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

April 24, 2022

Pembroke American Legion Hall, Pembroke, ME

The meeting was called to order by President Mike Sanford at 1730 hours.

Present were:

Mike Sanford, KB1GEO, President

Maurry Mills, W1FWS, Secretary

Alan Andraeas, K1ALA, Vice President

Phil Duggan, N1EP

Peter Stackpole, N1MLE

Melodie Greene, KC1RCE

Kevin Stanhope, Pembroke Legion

There was no Treasurer's Report.

The Secretary's Report for the March and prior meetings is on the club website www.stcroixvalleyamateurradioclub.org

The members of the club welcomed Melodie Greene, KC1RCE, a new ham who recently completed Phil's Technician License Class.

It was noted that Roger had confirmed by an email that we have permission to use the Alexander School for both Field Day and the Ham Fest. We may **not** use the kitchen. Field day is the last full weekend in June, the 25th and 26th this year. Operations may begin at 1800 UTC (2:00 PM DST) on Saturday and end at 2059 UTC (4:59 DST) on Sunday. In the past the club has done some set up on Friday afternoon.

Field Day is an international exercise where amateur radio operators (usually clubs) set up stations running from portable power and with temporary antennas to simulate an emergency situation. Participants make as many contacts as possible on different bands and modes.

Participating clubs can also earn extra points by operating in a conspicuous location, publicizing the event, and having a local elected official visit the operation. Clubs can also host a “GOTA”, Get On The Air setup where a licensed ham (control operator) can give young people and other interested members of the public an opportunity to get on the air and make actual contacts during the Field Day Event.

In the past the SCVARC has operated on the 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meter bands on both CW and SSB. Several wire antennas are usually set up using the flag pole and basketball back stop as end points; and several tower sections have been used in the past.

Vice President Alan Andraeas presented copies of correspondence between him and Susan Mingo, President of Washington County Community College, regarding the \$500 scholarship the club sponsors for a student enrolled in STEM degree program. Ms. Mingo thanked the club and will keep us on the award process. If he has not already done so, the club’s treasurer (Rick) will send a check to the College.

The next meeting of the Club will be on Sunday, May 15, 2022; it will feature a “fox hunt” where club members try and locate a hidden transmitter. Exact location to meet will be announced, but it will probably be in the vicinity of the Calais Park. The signal from the hidden transmitter will not be detectable from the starting point so participants will drive around until they detect the signal and the attempt to locate its source with a portable receiver and directional antenna.

Phil mentioned that he and Roger had tracked down some RF interference in a club member’s home. It is hoped that a number of “RF Possees” can be formed in the state to assist ham operators in locating sources of RF interference. Some common sources include plasma TVs, grow lights, solar installations, hydroponic operations, led bulbs, and faulty GFCIs. ARRL may provide equipment and training for these groups in the future.

Phil is the Washington County Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) Coordinator. He had planned on doing a presentation on amateur radio and ARES for members of the Pembroke Legion, who had been invited to our April meeting.

This was in response to interest from the local Legion, and nationally, to have more interaction between amateur radio clubs and Legions that serve local veterans. Alan and Kevin will suggest that the Legion have Phil's presentation as part of a regular Legion meeting in the next few months.

Phil presented a short video that described what amateur radio was and the many different aspects to the hobby, including public service. He described some of different repeaters in the area as well as the new digital modes of communication currently being used.

ARES is a program of the ARRL; free training is available online. ICS 100 is the basic Incident Command System course. ICS is used on all types of response events. There is a ham radio station located at the RCC in Machias, but noise levels can be high given the location and proximity to the county dispatch center.

Washington County ARES members participate in a variety of tests and drills, some international, throughout the year.

RACES is different than ARES, and there are no units established in Maine at this time. It is similar to the Civil Defense program that was in place during the Cold War. If the War Powers Act was ever put in place all hams would be off the air except those who were part of RACES. Phil recommends that when someone volunteers for ARES they also indicate an interest in RACES.

The Pembroke Legion Hall is being set up so it can serve as an emergency shelter. It has a generator for back up power and room for people to stay as well as a kitchen, bathrooms, and shower facilities. Provisions for amateur radio set up would add to its functionality as an emergency shelter for the local area.

The meeting was concluded at 6:57 P.M. by Vice President Alan Andraeas since Mike had to leave early.

Respectfully submitted,
Maury Mills, Secretary

Upcoming Events:

New England QSO Party: May 7 and 8; 2000Z Saturday until 0500Z Sunday (4pm EDT Saturday until 1am EDT Sunday) and 1300Z Sunday until 2400Z Sunday (9am EDT Sunday until 8pm EDT Sunday).

May Meeting St. Croix Valley Amateur Radio Club: May 15 at 5:30 P.M.; in Calais, Exact Location to be determined

Field Day: June 25 and 26, 2022; Location: Alexander School Grounds, Route 9.