



Madison County Amateur Radio Club



December 2016

The next meeting will be at 7 PM on Monday, December 5th at the **NEW** Madison County EOC

President's Message

Welcome to the December edition of the Madison County Amateur Radio Club newsletter. Where did the year go? It seems January just came passed. As a club, we've had a busy year, with another one in store. First off, I'd like to say a big Thank You to all of this years officers. Everyone has had a lot to do, having a big meeting back in May, Field Day, Parks on the Air, and so on. We've still got lots to do in the new building. The Antenna committee will soon be put to good use, getting ready to get coax bought, and run, a beam installed on the top of the tower, other antennas etc. So, if one of them would happen to call and need help, please jump in and volunteer, if you can.

Our next meeting is scheduled for December 5, at 7 pm, at the Delaware street building. We will be electing the new officers for 2017. Our Christmas party is scheduled for December 10th, 6 pm, at Perkins Restaurant, in the back room, like last year. Spouses, yl's xyl's are all invited. Plan on coming. The food is good, and we always have a good time.

Our club's net on Wednesday night is doing pretty well. Plan to check in, or, listen at 8 pm every Wednesday night. If you are so inclined, plan on checking in to the rag chew on 28.465 after the net on 2 meters. Every Thursday at 9 am, is the gathering at the EOC, with donuts. Then, every Saturday morning at 9 am, don't forget to come to the clubs breakfast at 9 am, at Eva's on Broadway. The conversation runs the gamut, mostly about radio, buy, sometimes we stray just a little bit. The coffee is good, and hot, and those that come, seem to have an enjoyable time.

I'll wrap this up. I hope everyone has an enjoyable Christmas season, and a happy and profitable New Year.

Take care, and "73".
Mike, KC9DJU

Events

Every Wednesday	MCARC 2M Net 20:00 - 145.390 pl 151.4 Followed by an informal ragchew on 28.465
Every Thursday	Donut Meeting 09:00 at the EOC
Every Saturday	Breakfast at Eva's 09:00 at 832 Broadway St, Anderson
December 2nd - 4th	160 Meter CW
Monday, December 5th	MCARC Meeting 19:00 at the New Madison County EOC
Tuesday, December 6th	EMA Communications Meeting 19:00 at the EOC
Saturday, December 10th	MCARC Christmas Party 18:00 at Perkins 5033 S Scatterfield Road, Anderson
December 10th - 11th	10 Meter
December 18th	Rookie Roundup CW

MCARC – Minutes of Regular Meeting

Monday, November 7, 2016

Location: EOC, 200 N. Delaware Street, Anderson, IN

7:00 Mike-KC9DJU called the meeting to order. Introductions were made with George-AC8GT introducing his friend, Mark. Also, first timers, Stephanie Freeman-KC9WBO and husband, Steve. The Freemans became members tonight.

Minutes: Motion to accept minutes of the October 3, 2016 meeting by Dave-KB9NTG / Dale-KV9W - passed.

Treasurer, Jeff-K9DYR:

Beginning balance	\$2, 789.16
Dues	\$ 20.00
Ending balance	\$ 2,809.16

Motion to accept: George-AC8GT / Dick-WA9STB, passed.

Officer Reports:

Trustee, George-AC8GT: Repeater has an issue – low output power. Doug-N9DR and Jeff-D9DYR will look into it.

Newsletter, George-AC8GT: Newsletter went out ok.

Tech Committee, Doug-N9DR: No report.

VP: Net is going well with 10-18 check ins each week. Points have been tabulated for the year and the recipient of the club jacket for 2016 is Mike-KC9LWK. Congratulations, Mike. You worked hard for this.

Old Business:

1. Dick-WA9STB donated his Ameritron 811H amplifier to the club (details last month). Mike-KC9DJU will pick it up from Dick’s house.
2. Our holiday celebration is scheduled for December 10th at 6:00 at Perkins on Scatterfield Road. Guests are welcome.
3. Nominations: Nominations for MCARC club officers for the 2017 year are open. Dick-WA9STB removed his name from the VP nomination. Mike-K9MI agreed to run for this position. The current nominations are:
 - a. President Mike Cook KC9DJU
 - b. V-President Mike Brown K9MI
 - c. Sec/Treas Jeff Dyer K9DYR
 - d. Activities Dale Bales KV9W
 - e. Trustee Alan Weber KC9JWO
 - f. Tech Chair Doug Rose N9DR
 - g. Newsletter Mike Hoggatt KD9CDO
 - i. Committee Dennis Owen N9OWN
 - ii. Committee Terry Zivney N4TZ

Program: Dale-KV9W provided an excellent program on his use of solar technology to run his shack. The power system he has constructed allows his shack to operate off the grid. Dale has done much research and has employed a variety of components and technologies to make this a stable platform for acquiring and storing energy for his shack.

8:15 Adjourned. Dick-WA9STB / George-AC8GT made motion to adjourn – passed

NEXT MEETING: December 5, 2016 at the EOC on Delaware Street, Anderson

Respectfully submitted, Jeff-K9DYR

Is there a market for a \$400 “prepper” radio?

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

A couple of days ago, a reader wrote:

"I would like to know if it would be feasible to build a radio with the following features:

- SSB operation (only SSB is required, CW would be an additional benefit)
- 20 – 50W of power
- Portable-friendly (lightweight, capable of operating at lower voltages from small portable batteries)
- Low receiver current drain
- Coverage of 40m and 80m bands. Very limited coverage is acceptable. Even channelized coverage of a few select frequencies would be acceptable.
- S-meter

"It strikes me that there is a large market for ham radio products for “preppers,” and there has been a lot of interest in the Baofeng line of radios from that market. I think there would be a LOT of interest in a radio that could go far beyond line-of-sight and contact friends or family hundreds of miles away. Preppers would have little interest in contacts more than a state or two away, and no interest at all in novel operating modes. I wonder if a radio that trims away excess features (all-mode operation, wide frequency coverage, high power output, sophisticated audio filtering) could be produced for a lot less cost than currently available HF rigs. If so, and it was paired with a decent NVIS dipole and some General-class study materials and sold as a package deal, it could be a huge hit – Something you could tuck in a bug-out-bag, set up in the field, and use to make contacts in a reasonably local area, or set up in your backyard at home and use minimal power to operate.

"Is there a reason why I don't see radios like this on the market, some kind of technological limitation that would make this sort of thing impractical? If something like this was built, what kind of cost and performance would you expect? I'm certainly not expecting any kind of detailed analysis, but even just a speculation about if such a project could be feasible would be appreciated."

I replied:

"I think one of the reasons you don't see radios with the feature set you describe is that more full-featured radios are already pretty inexpensive. The Yaesu FT-450D, for example, costs less than \$800 and offers 100W output. The FT-817ND, which is designed for portable operation, costs less than \$700. Is that too much for preppers?"

"While it might seem like you could sell a radio with fewer features for less, I think that you hit the law of diminishing returns. At some point, removing features, doesn't reduce the cost all that much. For example, removing the CW capabilities from a transceiver capable of SSB operation really doesn't save that much because in a way CW operation is really just a subset of SSB operation. You'll save the cost of a key jack, but how much is that? Maybe a buck or two. Having said that, it could be that the big amateur radio manufacturers are overlooking an opportunity here."

We swapped a couple more e-mails about this. He noted, "Most preppers would probably rather buy a high-end AR-15 or several months worth of storage food for \$800 than a radio." I suggested, "If there was a catastrophic event, and you really needed to communicate, wouldn't it seem silly to have not spent the extra \$400 on a really decent radio?"

What do you think? Is my analysis a little too simplistic perhaps? Are amateur radio manufacturers ignoring a potential market?

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Dan, KB6NU, is the author of the "No Nonsense" amateur radio license study guides, and blogs about amateur radio at KB6NU.Com. You can contact him by e-mailing cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

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Meetings are at the Madison County EOC
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