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The Newsletter of the Multnomah County Amateur Radio Emergency Services

September 2015

Meetings

Multnomah County ARES
Every 4th Thursday
7:00 P.M.

Portland Fire & Rescue CTR
4800 NE 122nd Avenue, Portland
<http://www.multnomahares.org/>

PARC Meeting
Every 4th Friday
7:30 P.M.

One Liberty Center
650 NE Holladay Street, Portland
<http://www.w7lt.org/>

HARC Meeting
Every 3rd Thursday
Mount Hood Comm. College
Room 1001
<http://www.wb7qiw.org/>

Nets

Multnomah Co. ARES Net
Wednesdays at 7:00 P.M.
146.84 (no Tone)

District 1 ARES Net
Daily at 7:30 P.M.
147.320 (PL Tone 100.0)

Northwest Oregon Traffic
and Training Net
Daily 6:05 P.M.
145.27, 145.43, 145.47, 146.84,
443.150 & 442.275
(All have a PL tone of 107.2)



Disaster Relief Trials 2014

Upcoming Events

October 10 Exercise Scaled Back Marathon and DRT Prevail

Sep. 20: Race for the Cure.

Thanks to all who have volunteered

Sep. 24: ARES General Meeting

Power Supplies, Cables and
Connectors, Anderson Power Poles

Oct. 4: Portland Marathon

https://portlandmarathon.org/volunteer/volunteer_individual.php. Scroll
down to Ham Radio Volunteer.

Oct. 10: Fall SET Quake EX II MCECC team only. See article below

Oct. 17 Disaster Relief Trials Cargo bike challenge. Contact Brian KE7QPV@arrl.net.

It was decided at the leadership meeting that we will minimize our participation in the statewide exercise on Oct. 10. We will only activate and staff the County ECC for this exercise. The team will handle the Winlink traffic from the State ARES/OEM. The ECC team will be contacted by team leader Deb to staff this.

The exercise activities requested by the state ARES leadership involve field deployment, which we have done already fairly extensively this year. We feel it is too much to ask of you to devote three weekends in a row to ARES. It is more important and more valuable to your training and to the



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community that we put our effort into providing communications for the Portland Marathon the week before the exercise and the Disaster Relief Trials the week after.

The Portland Amateur Radio Club coordinates communications for the Marathon and Multnomah ARES coordinates communications for the Disaster Relief Trials. This is where we need to concentrate our efforts and our volunteer hours in October. Both of these events are fun to work and provide very different communications and radio experiences. We will be using interesting technologies for the DRT with APRS, Easy Pal (Photos) and field VHF Winlink.

Please sign up for one or both of these public service events. We need your help!

Membership News By Deb KK7DEB

Welcome to our newest members, Jeff N7TTQ, Ron KE7WJI, James KG7ULF and Sue KG7FYB. We are very excited about our membership growth. Steve W7SRH, our PIO, has been busy getting the word out to the community about MCARES, and will be at the amateur radio public relations table at the Race for the Cure this Sunday.

Trailer Update

We are all very excited about the progress on the trailer project. The air conditioning unit has been purchased and installed in the ceiling.

Interior cabinet building is under way, thanks to Will KG7LPW and his crew. The desk and bench are completed and the electrical and IT cabinets will be started next week. We expect the equipment grant to be funded in the next thirty days. Woohoo!

Training News By Eli W7ELI

The Drill from Home on Sep. 12 went very well. Several participants have said it was a valuable experience and should be repeated. So there's a good chance we'll be doing it again next year. Everyone did very well formatting and sending their NTS messages, going off frequency to exchange messages and dealing with the scratchy signals encountered on simplex. Thank you to all who participated and a special thanks to the simplex frequency monitors who gave valuable feedback and suggestions to the message handlers and to net control (me).

We will be doing a year-end member survey again this year. It will be shorter than last year, just asking for any contact info changes and finding out what we did right and where we can improve. Watch for it probably in November and please take the time to fill it out.

A Well Trained Operator By John Steup KG7JKN

I have been exposed to ham radio since I was a child, but having only gotten my ticket a year and a half ago, I have a lot to learn and my

perspective on using radios in emergency situations is still fairly fresh. As I have been learning, I have come across quite a few good articles about hams coming to the aid of others in times of trouble. Here in the Northwest, we only have to look as far as the March 2014 Oso mudslide in Washington, where hams played a crucial part in making sure that the communications network was solid and that information got where it needed to go. Of course the tragic loss of ARES/RACES members Jerry Martin, W6TQF and Reid Blackburn, KA7AMF (among many others) during the eruptions of Mount Saint Helens back in the spring of 1980 underscores the potential danger hams may face as well as the selflessness that is displayed by many who give their time and expertise to helping others stay connected.

Since I joined ARES a little more than a year ago, I have had some pretty interesting conversations with friends about what we do and why something as seemingly arcane as ham radio would be so important. I have heard plenty of people claim that cell phone and Internet technology makes radios more or less obsolete, especially when you consider how much data is available online. I will readily admit that the availability of early warning apps and incident emergency management software is a great achievement, but when the networks go down, radios are still your best bet.

It's not just the radios though. It takes well-trained operators to make a system work. As ARES members, the mission is to get the message through by whatever means possible and



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whatever medium is employed. It is really the operators who make this such a critically important system. When we volunteer at public events, we are practicing the protocol and discipline that keeps the airwaves (and ultimately the mission) organized, clears out the confusion and perpetuates habits that may save lives when an emergency arrives.

Of course, ARES does not operate in a vacuum. No matter where or under what circumstances we deploy, we find ourselves assisting and integrating with many other organizations. In my case, besides being a member of ARES, I am the ARO (amateur radio operator) for the Beaumont-Wilshire, Alameda NET (Neighborhood Emergency Team). If you are not familiar with this group, the NET program consists of around 2000 currently active volunteers throughout the City of Portland and operates under the auspices of the Portland Bureau of Emergency Management (PBEM). Our main mission is to provide immediate assistance in our neighborhoods in the event of an emergency. We are trained to do search and rescue, first aid and to set up communications as well as prepare for the arrival of professional responders. We also deploy to assist for community events and to help operate warming and cooling shelters during extreme weather events.

As most of my team members are not hams, we depend on FRS radios as our means of radio communications for drills and deployments. For the past year, I have been running a net, prior to our monthly meetings in order to help train members on using their radios and to get them used to talking

over the air. While participation has been fairly active, it is still only a 15 minute net, once a month so I have been seeking out ways to help the team learn some of the important aspects of radio use. Last year, Jeremy Van Keuren from PBEM was kind enough to send out a note from me to team leaders and AROs throughout the city, asking some questions about training and how they are overcoming issues relating to poor reception and such.

The response was encouraging and enlightening. Many teams have taken time to map their areas and determine where the weak links are, and quite a few have instituted strong communication training components into their preparedness regime. I took this information and wrote up a guide for radio use to distribute among my team. It was a great exercise for me and definitely helped my team move forward, but it also opened up some good connections between me and the ARES people who are actively training NETs in radio use (Michael AE7XP, Helen KE7SCS and John K7TY). I have collected the various guides and trainings out there and attended an excellent training given to the Irvington NET by John (K7TY).

This all points to one core point. If you are going to get good at something and commit it to that crucial “muscle memory” that we depend on in stressful times, you need good training and lots of practice. This ties in to our recent training in ICS 213 and NTS radio traffic handling. While I learned the use of both well enough to gain my ARRO certification last year, I find that spending time listening in and copying traffic on the NW Traffic and Training Net (6:05pm every evening on the

WORC repeater system) helps me to keep my skills honed.

Learning how to use our radios to communicate has definitely helped our NET develop as a team and we have dedicated more time to actually getting people on air, practicing calling in and learning how to get the message across clearly and concisely. As our team is spread out quite a bit, we are also planning on taking some time to map out how our locations affect our ability to communicate. This is a work in progress and we will be on the lookout for ways to keep honing our skills so we will be ready and able to respond when the need arises.

More Ways to Stay in Touch

NET net Mondays 8:00 P.M.
147.040 Mhz (Note: This is a time and frequency change)

Email Focus Groups:

NEWHAM@multnomahares.org
For questions from new or prospective members
LEADERSHIP@multnomahares.org
for technical and operational issues
TRAILER@multnomahares.org to offer your services and donations to the trailer project.

**Note: Next month’s feature article will be about one of our served agencies:
The Oregon Food Bank.**