

Wavelengths

June 2020

Xenia Weather Amateur Radio Net

147.1650+ (123.0) (Analog Only)

443.1000+ (123.0) (Analog + System Fusion)

Meetings: Temporarily on the 147.165 repeater at 7:30 pm second Monday of each month due to COVID-19 pandemic.



President's Message

Missing everyone and live meetings. Hope everyone is weathering the pandemic well and hope to hear you on our radio meeting nets - same time even if not same place.

Elizabeth KE8FMJ

Calendar of Events

All events are currently cancelled or postponed. For a list of postponed and cancelled events, please refer to March's newsletter, which specifies which events are cancelled and which are postponed.

Club Contacts

- President, Elizabeth Klinc, KE8FMJ
President@xwarn.net
- Vice President, Bob Baker, N8ADO
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- Secretary, Danielle Edgington, KE8JNU
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July Meeting Minutes

Once again, our meeting was through the XWARN repeater. It was short since the frequency needed to be cleared for the weather net due to storms. We are keeping Janese KD8DGB in our thoughts and prayers. She broke her hip and had to have surgery. I hope that everyone is safe and well, and I cannot wait to get back to seeing everyone. Since schools, daycares, and other facilities are beginning to reopen, perhaps we will be able to soon. It will be wonderful to see everyone.

Mode of the Month

Single sideband, or SSB, is a mode that is commonly used on HF. Simply, you speak into the microphone and wait for the other person to reply. But here's the science behind it: SSB is a type of amplitude modulation in which the carrier and one sideband are suppressed. All of the information to be transmitted, such as voice, is entirely contained inside one sideband. This accomplishes two points. It reduces the needed spectrum to one half of that of a typical AM signal, which saves spectrum space for other uses. It also eliminates wasteful carrier power and allows more power to be put into the sideband. This results in more reliable communications. SSB is lots of fun for contests, such as the popular 13 Colonies contest on the 4th of July week. Many people also use this mode for weekly nets or just to chat. Whether you are using it just to rag chew or to contest, single sideband is lots of fun!



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ARRL Field Day 2020

Submitted by Bob Baker N8ADO

Field Day is an emergency preparedness exercise where hams throughout the US and Canada demonstrate their ability to establish stations and operate them independent of existing infrastructure. This year was a particular challenge due to restrictions on social contact. This year, the rules were amended to permit contact credit for contacts between class D stations ("home" using commercial power). While the reason for the change is understandable, Field Day is supposed to be a preparedness exercise for FIELD operations. However, it did allow many operators at home to receive credit for all of their contacts and the additional QRM did force practice at breaking through the noise.

As Field Day Chair, I felt strongly that we should not miss the opportunity to test our equipment and our ability to respond to the challenge by setting up a field operation. We were told that we had the only field operation in Greene County. It was an opportunity to teach inexperienced hams how to set up stations quickly and to operate them effectively. It was also an ideal setting to demonstrate to served agencies and non-ham visitors what we are capable of accomplishing. And, hopefully, we could do this with reasonable safety. We did cancel the usual picnic supper in the interest of reducing social contact.

As we expected a relatively small turnout, the stations used simple wire antennas that considerably reduced assembly time compared to the beam antennas that we usually operate. We also test deployed a pair of extendable fiberglass masts as part of the antenna support system that proved to be ideal for that. We used the DARA Communications Truck as an operating location (40 m) and used the generator to also power the XWARN trailer which provided an operating location for the 20 m station. I brought my camper to provide a third sheltered location (80 m, 15 & 40 digital) and we powered it using a small gasoline generator. We had an awning set up with an information booth and, while the weather cooperated, set up a couple of operating radios (6 m and 15 digital) under the awning.

XWARN and DARA joined forces as in the past few years. Most of those present were members of both XWARN and DARA, but there were a few who are just members of DARA, and there were a couple hams not affiliated with any club. We had several non-ham youth that we put in front of a rig and showed them how to make a contact. Several other non-hams came to see what we were up to, including the Beaver Creek Mayor and Vice Mayor. We also had a visit from the Greene County Sheriff; of course, he is a member of both XWARN and DARA. And... my wife dropped by and brought us pizza!

So, how did we do? Our claimed score is about 10% higher than last year. (Not bad for a scaled-back operation). We claimed many of the bonus points (100% emergency power, media publicity, public location, public info table, W1AW FD message, site visit by elected official, site visit by served agency, educational activity, youth participation, social media. Plus we operated one station using a battery that was recharged by solar.

We had a few problems. The first contact was with a Maine station and was made easily using the Flex radio. Shortly after, an operator reported no luck making contacts. The symptom was no modulation and it was suspected that the mic had failed. We switched to the Icom 7000 which performed adequately. After the event was over and after several hours of investigation, it was determined that the Flex configuration had gotten changed such that the wrong audio input was selected. Perhaps a radio with outstanding capabilities but a complex interface may not be the best choice when a communications emergency is under way and traffic needs to be passed immediately. The truck's generator is producing power too high in

frequency. This caused an issue with the UPS equipment, but a work-around was found. An adjustment will be needed at the next service.

The clean-up crew is worthy of special recognition. Clean up is a necessary function and is the most critical of all jobs related to Field Day. In the order that they appear in the visitors log, thanks to: Elizabeth KE8FMJ, Chester K8NYC, Sam N8VES, Janese KD8DGB, Rick KD8DGA, Bob N8ADO, Jim KF8J, Jim N3FID, Gene KX8GCS.



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Club Call: W8XRN

XWARN

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«FNAME» «LNAME» - «CALL»
«ADDRESS»
«CITY» , «STATE» «ZIP»

Wavelengths

Wavelengths is published monthly by the Xenia Weather Amateur Radio Net. Our meetings are currently held on the 2nd Monday of each month at **7:30 pm** at the Greene Memorial Hospital Auditorium. You can find additional information about our organization at www.xwarn.net. We welcome new and experienced Amateur operators and those interest in becoming an Amateur operator to attend our meetings.

