



Prez Says

The GARS Repeater

March 2024

Salutations from the lair of KF6OBI! – Spring blessings to all. Looks like the Ides of March are upon us. High winds and periods of rain today and long range forecasting says this will be with us on and off for the next week or so. The high south winds wreck havoc with my temporary test antennas and plans to be out and doing various amateur radio work. Just about had the DRT mock up test site finished when the high winds took down the end fed antenna system. So waiting for fairer weather to get this setup finished so we can do the EMI testing of the DRT and the generator.

On Monday the 19th of February the GARS board of directors held a Zoom meeting. This was accomplished using a free Zoom format and therefore we were limited on time. But we were able to do business. The board is looking into this method of meeting and may use this method more often in the future. Thus allowing the Society to have more time and fun at our membership meetings. Can we have a vote of confidence going forward?

The Society has had a donation of a Byonics MicroFox-50 (MF-50). This is a small, frequency agile 2-meter transmitter designed for short range, on-foot hidden transmitter hunts, also called T-hunts, foxhunts, and ARDF. It is very similar to the popular MicroFox-15, but gives a user adjustable RF power output between 0.05 and 50 mW and includes a USB chargeable LiPo battery. It also includes the small Byonics V4 whip antenna, but any VHF antenna with an SMA connector will work.

Using a directional antenna, it can typically be received from about 1-2 miles away, line of sight. It is user programmable to any frequency between 144 MHz and 148 MHz in 5 KHz steps, can be adjusted to many tones, duration's, and duty cycles, and can transmit an amateur radio callsign and battery voltage in Morse code. The MF-50 transmissions consist of a looping user defined tone sequence, followed by a Morse code identification. The transmitter will then be off the air for a moment, and then the entire process begins again.

The society extends an extremely big thanks to Smitty, WB1G, for all his hard work in updating the club's website, <https://www.garshamradio.org/>. Please go see the many changes that have been made over the last few weeks. Please send in your suggestions and ideas for content to add to the GARS email account listed below.

GARS is making plans to venture fourth with POTA, SOTA, and other such events like Foxhunts. Do you want to be part of the process of planning these events? If so, please contact a board member and let them know you want to help in some way.

Planning is underway for the up coming 2024 ARRL summer field day. We are looking at the Squaw Camp area. A field trip is in planning to check out this site area. This day excursion will be made when the weather and conditions permit. So stay tuned in and follow us on the GARS website. **NOTICE – The GARS Monday night net will now start at 8 pm, 2000 hours, starting 4 March 2024.**

Thoughts on ARES, Emcomm, Auxcom and intro to PACE plans... more on these below in this newsletter.

Up and coming events are: – Loomis Hamfest, 16 March 2024 (see flier on the GARS website): the Run-Your-Tail-Off on the 13th of April has been **CANCELED**.

This months membership meeting will be on the second Friday, the 8th of March, at the Lutheran Fellowship Hall, 565 Main Street, Artois CA, at 7:00pm. Late arrivals and guests are always welcome. Also remember that one does not have to be a member of the club to participate in our membership meetings and activities. Be safe in all you do and may you all have many blessings in the days and months ahead!

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How Much Lightning Actually Strikes the United States? For the answer to this question please go to the American Meteorological Society website to download the latest PDF on this topic. Here is the link – <https://journals.ametsoc.org/view/journals/bams/aop/BAMS-D-22-0241.1/BAMS-D-22-0241.1.xml>

A primer for the above article and website is here: <https://phys.org/news/2024-02-lightning-million-yearly-ground-unprecedented.html>

Some random thoughts on ARES, Emcomm, Auxcom...

Are acronyms for Amateur Radio Emergency Communications, Emergency Communications, and Auxiliary Communications. These are just a few of the ones we hear the most about. We rely on these when our main communications system stumble and falter.

When a disaster strikes and at its worst, communications should be at its best. But time again we witness when a disaster, of one form or another, does happen that the best communications infrastructure mankind has built stumbles and fails when needed it is needed most. It is often stated that officials often realize their vulnerability when this happens, but not before.

The recent AT&T failure, which included the first responder network, should be a wake up call for these officials, but will be written off in their minds as a one-time fluke that will not happen when it's needed.

The biggest challenge in most places because of this all-too-prevalent attitude of "We are the professionals and don't want or need CBers, preppers or pretenders, Amateur Radio, etc., besides, our professional equipment won't ever fail" In short, we need to teach these people that they are not immune to earthquake, fire, hurricane, tornado, derecho, etc, etc, etc, etc.!

The Amateur Radio operators largest task is convey and convince those people in charge to take us seriously, and understand what we can bring to the table. The next largest task is to train ourselves to be what they need.

If Amateur Radios backup emergency communication resources aren't tied to an Authority Having Jurisdiction and integrated into the operations plans in advance, the capability of the backup communications resources won't matter since they won't be invited to participate.

Often one hears this; "if you aren't prepared far in advance, don't even try", yes, recognize and appreciate that it's a plea to do the work to mesh with the local and state agencies and NGOs, etc., to be part of their plan. This is not a simple and easy task to accomplish! Do we really think we can convince them that "Newbies" and others, that are not Professionals, can carry out these task-centered skills.

Of course not! We expect there will be varying levels of training and skills within the group. Convincing is rarely a stop in some office to say "You need us!"

These intities should not willing to tell an eager newbie to "stay home, you're not welcome". They may be relegated to lesser tasks, shown how in an "on-the-job-training", but giving them the impression of a cold shoulder will not add to your capable crew. If all they get to do is shadow someone experienced, that's still a far cry from "go home, your in our way".

For example the Winlink System isn't there just so everyone can send emails when their phone/Internet doesn't work. Can't tell you how many parts of Amateur Radio are not newbie intuitive nor most of the software uses by Amateur Radio there are out there; APRS messaging, satellite work especially the SSB/CW birds, POTA, SOTA, the list goes on. This is the point we as Amateur Radio operators should try to defend.

So yes, newbies, making the assumption they studied for a test, passed, and received an amateur license, SHOULD be expected to spend hours of their own time learning a system that is already in place.

There are elmers on all aspects of Amateur Radio, at your local radio Clubs and Societies, and on the Internet, where one can learn the ins and outs of the radio arts. Becoming familiarized with the terminology and physics of the radio arts are first steps in becoming competent operators when the infrastructure falls on its face.

Excluding persons NOT WILLING to familiarize themselves with the operation of a system, especially an Emcomm first system that strives to maintain extremely high levels of efficiency, is no vice.

>>> Do you know if your county, city, or served agency has a PACE plan? Bet most of you do not know what a PACE plan is. For those that don't know here is a description on what the PACE methodology is all about. <<<

PACE (communication methodology) From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Primary, alternate, contingency and emergency (PACE) is a methodology used to build a [communication plan](#).^[1] The method requires the author to determine the different [stakeholders](#) or parties that need to communicate and then determine, if possible, the best four forms of communication between each of those parties. PACE also designates the order in which an element will move through available [communications systems](#) until contact can be established with the desired distant element(s).^[2] Ideally, each method will be completely separate and independent of the other systems of communication. For each method, the receiver must first sense which one the sender is using and then respond.

According to the [United States Army](#), a PACE communication plan "designates the order in which an element will move through available communications systems until contact can be established with the desired distant element."^[2]

A PACE-based communication plan exists for a specific mission or task, not a specific unit, because the plan must consider both intra- and inter-unit sharing of information. An organization may have multiple plans for different situations, activities, and/or partners.

Order and scope

The PACE plan system is expressed as an order of communication precedence list;

- primary,
- alternate,
- contingency, and
- emergency.


The plan designates the order in which a group will move through available communications systems until contact can be established. The plan does not designate such things as the exact radio channel or talk group to be used if you are using a radio, but the order in which you would plan to use the radio and agreed upon method of communications between groups.^[2]

A PACE plan is not a frequency plan (which details frequency allocation and radio spectrum characteristics) or band plan (to avoid interference) or channel plan (which details which channels users listen/talk upon)^[3] or deployment plan (which details the users' radios types and locations).

Development of PACE plans

[Emergency management](#) and communications managers should coordinate the development of PACE plans for the many different functions and departments within your organization to ensure that Incident Command can maintain critical communication links. Departmental PACE plans should be coordinated with emergency management and the communications team. It is critical that individual departments nest their plan within the larger Emergency Plan to ensure that the organization has the resources to execute the plan and reduce unnecessary duplication of assets. Developing comprehensive PACE plans will not ensure perfect communications in a disaster, but may help to clear one more layer in the fog and friction found in every emergency situation.^[2]

References

- John Pike. *"Preparation and Planning of Tactical Communications"*. Globalsecurity.org. Retrieved 2014-05-28.
- Ryan, Michael S. (July–September 2013). *"A Short Note on PACE Plans"*. Infantry. U.S. Army Maneuver Center of Excellence. Retrieved 2014-05-28.  This article incorporates text from this source, which is in the [public domain](#).
- [National Interoperability Field Operations Guide Version 1.4](#) dhs.gov [Archived](#) 2017-07-23 at the [Wayback Machine](#)

GARS Officers: (Board of Directors)

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Radio Officer Phil Zabell, KI6SMN
Emcomm Officer Vacant

Board Meeting, 2nd Friday of each month, meetings starting at 6:30 PM

General Membership Meeting, 2nd Friday of each month, meetings starting at 7:00 PM

GARS Meeting locations: Main site is the Lutheran Fellowship Hall, 565 Main Street, Artois CA, our alternate meeting site is the Willows Seventh-Day Adventist Church, 543 1st Avenue, Willows, CA.

GARS Net: Mondays, 8:00 PM **Primary until further notice**; 145.410 (W6RHC-west) -PL encode/decode 123.0; secondary:147.105 (N6YCK) (+)110.9 PL)

GEARS Club Net: Tuesday, 7:30 PM 146.850 MHz-PL 110.9

Sacramento Valley Traffic Net: Nightly 9:00 PM 146.850 MHz-PL 110.9

ARES Nets:

Butte Mondays 20:00 146.850 MHz-PL 110.9

Yuba Sutter Thursdays 19:00 146.085+MHz PL 127.3

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