



# CENTRALIA AMATEUR RADIO EMERGENCY SERVICE TEAM

DECEMBER, 2018

*Amateur Radio is a hobby... Amateur Radio Emergency Service is a commitment!*



## 2018 Christmas Lighted Tractor Parade



Who would want to stand outside on a dark, cold December evening just to watch a few tractors decorated with Christmas lights drive by? Apparently everyone! This year, those lighted tractors, trucks, floats, fire engines and bands amounted to 90+ parade entries and it was a Christmas party in downtown Centralia as crowds filled every available space.

Behind the scenes, Centralia Police Department and Riverside Fire Authority along with Centralia ARES volunteers kept the parade moving and bystanders safe.



It is a fun event for our ARES team . We begin early in the afternoon placing the CPD communications van and the ARES Comm II near the parade start location. Comm III was placed at the turn around point . When all 90+ entries had worked their way through downtown Centralia, it was time to return the communications vans to their storage areas and let the tired and cold volunteers go home. This is an amazing Christmas event. Thanks to all that helped.



Chief Carl Nielsen

## Repeater 101 Ham Lab Presentation



Scott Dakers, W7SGD

Many prospective new hams, when told they will have to study for and pass an FCC exam to become amateur radio operators, become very concerned. Some haven't had to study or take a test since High School. But, really, the test is the easy part due to excellent test preparation classes given locally. The hard part comes when the new ham realized there is a lot more to learn about the hobby than test preparation questions. Where does the new ham go to learn all there is to know about amateur radio?

At this month's Ham Lab, Scott Dakers, Centralia ARES team member and Radio Room Manager for the Washington State EOC, gave a presentation called "Repeater 101". This class was designed to explain the basics. With a great PowerPoint presentation, Scott discussed propagation, line of sight communications and the value of a repeater when using a low power hand held amateur radio. Scott also brought two of his own mobile repeaters as a show and tell display, taking both repeaters apart so everyone could see where the magic occurs inside.

The ARES team has been seeking ideas for future "101" classes asking the simple question: "What is it you don't understand about amateur radio?" We will see where that takes us in the new year.



**Antenna Party At Riverside Fire Authority**

On a chilly but sunny Tuesday this month, several ARES team members joined Riverside Fire Authority personnel for an antenna party at station #2, RFA’s headquarters. It was time to replace the old VHF 2 meter amateur radio antenna that served for over ten years with a brand new dual band antenna. While this antenna was only about 15 feet off the ground, working to remove it while on a slippery metal roof was considered dangerous. The solution? It’s a fire department... use a fire department ladder truck! As with any antenna project the job was worse than we expected and took several hours but it’s up and working fine.

While there, RFA Chief Mike Kytta took time to reprogram our fire radios in Comm II, Comm III and Comm IV with their new repeater frequency. Our thanks to all the RFA personnel who made this antenna party safe and fun.



**New ARES Volunteer Examiners**

Paul Barwick, KE7PCB and John Campeau, AD6KT join the ranks of our ARES team Volunteer Examiners this month. Both Paul and John hold an Extra Class amateur radio license and received their Volunteer Examiner certification papers in the last two weeks. Congratulations to both of them and we look forward to working with them in future test sessions.

**EOC to EOC Communications Exercise**

Saturday, December 29th, brings an unusual “all hazards” training exercise for our ARES team. Based on “*a significant incident that has impacted normal communications*”, we will try to save and protect our little part of the world via amateur radio.

These exercises are fun and let us take an honest look at our preparedness and training. This one is a little different from some of the others but we look forward to it. Mistakes or not, we always learn from these types of training exercises.