



CENTRALIA AMATEUR RADIO EMERGENCY SERVICE TEAM

August 2019

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

National Night Out Against Crime



John, AD6KT, and James, AE7TF, make it easy for all the kids to talk on a radio.

Like many other communities around the country, Centralia celebrates National Night Out Against Crime (NNO) on the second Tuesday of August each year. CPD's Community Oriented Policing team held Centralia's first NNO in 1996 supporting several local neighborhoods who wished to make a clear statement that crime in our community had not gone unnoticed and would not go unchallenged. Since those first days, the celebrations have grown and today, it is much easier to celebrate in Centralia's downtown George Washington Park.

With free hotdogs, ice cold water, music, displays and a wonderful warm summer's evening, the crowds were heavy. Centralia ARES joined the static display of emergency vehicles with a prime spot next to the dunk tank. Fire Chief Mike Kytta, KG7GQT, even trusted us with keeping the dunk tank full of water with the fire hose!

Kids passed through our ARES communications van getting the opportunity to talk on the radio with team member Andrew, KI7ZFA, stationed in the park. John, KI7YEF, spent the entire evening creating balloon art for a huge line of kids. Other ARES team members monitored the SWAT vehicles and made sure everyone stayed safe.



John, KI7YEF, creating balloon art for a zillion kids at NNO.

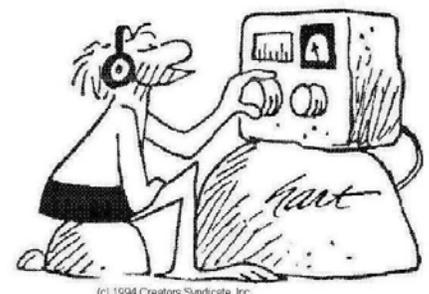
Summer events keep our Amateur Radio Emergency Service team members busy but we enjoy interacting with the community. Still, as August winds down to September, we remain busy with plenty of training and exercises. Fall is just around the corner and there is plenty to do.

Amateur Radio High Frequency Training

Between wildfire season and flood season, Centralia ARES has taken some training time and dedicated it to High Frequency operations. A considerable portion of our team are interested in HF operations but just need a little help getting started. HF radios, along with VHF, UHF, law and fire and even CB's make up the total communications package in our communications vans. Each van carries an Icom IC-7300, antenna tuner, and Tarheel antenna system. We carry backup HF wire antennas on board as well.

During our August 6th training night we had a PowerPoint presentation discussing propagation, the sun, the ionosphere and solar cycles 24 and 25. At the August 20th training night we displayed and discussed a wide variety of basic High Frequency equipment centered around what each piece of equipment is used for and their costs on today's market. Additionally, we saved some time to practice erecting our communications van's backup long wire antennas which included some basic orientation on the IC-7300 HF radio.

At our next meeting, we'll practice erecting the van's wire NVIS antenna. We'll also take a look at modular antennas such as the Buddipole. Finally, we will spend some time talking about on air practices during HF events, contests and disasters. We hope to be on the air September 21st for the Washington State Salmon Run QSO Party.



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Back Up Batteries For The CARES Repeater



We've upgraded the battery backup system on our CARES repeater this month. With the help of All Battery Sales and Service in Everett, the team was able to purchase two DataSafe HX 505 Absorbed Glass Mat Value Regulated Lead Acid (AGMVRLA) batteries. These batteries are specifically designed for UPS telecommunications use. The only problem is their weight. At 110 pounds each, Lyle, Bill and Paul were tasked with getting them to the repeater. They seem to walk a little more bent over but they will be fine... I think. Anyway, thanks, guys for your hard work.



Sponsored by the Western Washington DX Club, the Washington State Salmon Run is a great contest for beginners. Those hams around the country working the contest are looking for contact with our county. They are looking for YOU!

Saturday, September 21st, starting at 9:00am, Centralia ARES will take this opportunity to show team members how much fun HF contesting can be. Event location is still to be determined but set this day aside on your calendar. We'll cover HF contesting basics at our September 16th training session. Give contesting a try and join us for the fun!

Sprucing Up The Vans For National Night Out Against Crime



Summer finally arrived in beautiful, historic Centralia for our August 5th training night, so in addition to our PowerPoint presentation on High Frequency, we enjoyed an hour outside to wash, vacuum and shine both of our communications vans in preparation for National Night Out.

Hams are not used to this kind of strenuous work and we were a little sloppy with the water and soap so most everyone was soaking wet by the time we completed the job. As a reward, we made root beer floats and patted ourselves on the back for a job well done!

Thanks to everyone for your help. The vans look fantastic!



Coming In September



September is a transition month. We're still practicing our wildfire training exercises but as mentioned earlier, we will spend some time on High Frequency (HF) communications. Getting to know our IC-7300 HF radios and their various antenna systems takes time and the bands are in poor shape at the bottom of the solar cycle.

This month, we'll get 'hands on' practice with the HF radios, erect and test several different antenna systems. We will learn more about using the various HF radio bands and talk about special events, contesting and using our equipment during a disaster. Join us if you can. It's going to be a fun month.