

2023-10-10 Hamlet Net - Ham Radio Protocol Tips

Announcements:

- Test Session Info
 - Next VE session is Saturday, October 29th in the Clover Building at the Boulder County Fairgrounds, and starts at 10 am. It is an ARRL VEC session, so there is a \$15 test fee. For more info, and to pre-register, see the Licensing/Testing page on the club web site, <https://w0eno.org/>, under the Education menu.
- LARC will be conducting its annual meeting on October 18th. Elections for the Board of Directors will be held that night, so all LARC members please plan to attend (at least for the voting at the beginning of the meeting, as we have to get a quorum of members present to conduct the elections). If you are unable to attend in person or via Zoom, please submit a proxy to help us meet the quorum requirements.
- RMHAM has started their 2023-2024 Ham Radio University with a presentation titled "All about 3d printing and what it takes to get it all together." The presentation is via Zoom and begins at 8:30am this Saturday, the 14th. To sign up and to view information on other upcoming presentations, see their Web site at: RMHAM.org
- The ARRL is running an online auction from October 13 through 19th, with the previous starting today. For more information, go to ARRL.org
- HamSci is holding their Festivals of Eclipse Ionospheric Science Event on October 14th during the North American solar eclipse. For information on the event and instructions on how to participate, see: HamSci.org/eclipse
- We have some volunteer opportunities available where you can help out LARC:
 - Photographer / videographer - record team activities and upload to web site / YouTube
 - LARC Fest Coordinator -
 - Newsletter Editor - put together the monthly Splatter newsletter
 - Activities Chairperson - member of the Board of Directors
- Our sister club up in Nederland is looking for some help with events they are running. They have a weekly Monday night net with no predetermined agenda, so you can lead it however you want. They are also planning a Field Day site at Golden Gate State Park and are welcoming anyone who wants to participate. Finally, they are looking for operators for the Ned Gravel run on July 8th. They have signup links for all these events, so head over to their web site <https://w0ned.org/> for more information!

- You can start earning your 2024 membership or future renewal by acting as NCS for at least 5 nets this year. You can run either this Tuesday night net or the Thursday night net (or both). We have scripts available for both, so all you need is a good connection into the repeater, and somewhere to keep track of names and call signs as people check in. If you're going to be on the net anyway, why not save some dough at the same time! There are four free memberships available for 2023, so don't wait to get started!
- Chuck has set a goal for the Club of running at least one activity a month. This can be a hands-on construction activity, an operating activity like Field Day, a fox hunt, or a special event station. The goal is to get people together to have fun with amateur radio! We have multiple locations at our disposal, as well as lots of Club equipment, so if you have an idea for something you think others hams would like to do, please let us know, and if you're willing to run it, even better!
- The Club is also looking for presentation topics for 2023. If you have any ideas, or better yet, would like to present, please let Chuck know and we'll get you on the schedule!
- All club activities are open to anyone - members and non-members. If you have questions, ask them on a net or **send email to elmer@w0eno.org**

Presenter: Bryan, AF0W

Topic: Ham Radio Protocol Tips

What to say to end your QSO

- It can sometimes be awkward to end a QSO
- Can be like when you feel you are "stuck" in a face-to-face conversation - neither side really has anything more to say, but neither wants to or knows how to bring things to a close, and does not want to "slight" the other station.
- Remember that legally (per FCC regulations) all you are required to give at the end of your transmission is your call sign
- Hams understand (or should understand!) that there are many things that can cause you to need to terminate a QSO, such as:
 - You are operating mobile from your vehicle and have arrived at your destination
 - You are being called for dinner (or something less exciting)
 - You are operating mobile and traffic has suddenly gotten busy
- Don't worry about offending the other ham

- You don't have to give a reason - simply say something like "Well, it's been great talking to you! K0ITP, I'll say 73 this is AF0W" or "It's been great catching up with you - I'll see you at the meeting next week! 73, this is AF0W"
- Some things you may have heard on the air include:
 - "I'll be clear on your final" - When heard on a repeater, "clear" generally means the operator is done using the frequency or repeater. It may also mean that they will no longer be monitoring the repeater as well.
 - "AF0W K0ITP"
 - If there is not an ongoing conversation on the repeater, this indicates that the second call sign (K0ITP) is calling to see if the first call sign (AF0W) is listening. May also be heard as "AF0W from K0ITP"
 - If there is a QSO in progress, then this would most likely be one station (the second call sign) performing their "every 10 and at the end" station identification. The first call sign is included as a courtesy. Note that this does not satisfy the ID requirement the other station - they just still transmit their own call sign.
 - If you forget the call sign of the operator you are talking to, don't worry - either ask them for their call sign again, or just ID with your own call.
 - Note that in a CW QSO, each transmission generally includes the call signs of both stations (with the sending station last) with the letters "de" in between (which stands for "this is").

Things heard on the air

- "Break" can be a bit confusing, as it may have multiple meanings.
 - Some stations will say "Break" when they are interrupting their long transmission to give the repeater time out timer a chance to reset before it triggers. A better option would be "reset" or "stand by"
 - "Break" or "Break Break Break" is a way to interrupt an ongoing QSO when you have emergency traffic. "Mayday" or "Emergency" are a bit less ambiguous.
 - Do not use "Break" to join into an ongoing QSO - just give your call sign
- "AF0W for ID" or "AF0W for identification purposes" - everyone knows (or should know!) why you are suddenly giving your call sign - no need to drag it out.

- Transmitting your call sign at the end of every single transmission - Unless you are talking for close to ten minutes at a time, this is completely unnecessary. The saying of "every 10 and at the end" means at the end of your QSO, not the end of every single transmission!
- "Over," "over to you," or "back to you" - these aren't necessary - by releasing your PTT, you are indicating that you are done transmitting and that it is the other person's turn.
 - On a repeater, they will hear the courtesy tone after you stop transmitting
- "Test" or "Testing" - This one also has multiple meanings. Sometimes, no reply is desired (such as when checking to see if you can hit a repeater), while other times, the operator is testing a new piece of equipment and looking for a signal report.
 - Not sure if it is correct, but what I do in the first instance is say "AF0W clear" to identify my transmission and indicate that I'm done using the repeater.
 - If you are looking for feedback, then just say so - something like "AF0W testing a new antenna - how am I hitting the repeater?"
- "73s" - This is a huge pet peeve to some people. "73" (or seven-three) means "Best regards," so it is already plural.
- "For a demonstration" - This is used when an amateur is wanting to demonstrate amateur radio to someone else, and is looking for someone to communicate with. Usually, they're just looking for a quick reply, not a long conversation. If at all possible, help them out!
- While "CQ" is used to indicate you're looking for a contact on HF or weak-signal VHF and UHF, it is not used on repeaters.
 - One reason it's used on HF is so you can make your presence known to other hams who are scanning through the band.
 - This is not an issue with repeaters, so the proper way to indicate that you are available on a repeater is just to state your call sign, or state your call sign followed by "listening."
- Earlier, it was mentioned that to join a conversation in progress on a repeater, you just say your call sign during a break in the conversation, but what if you need to contact another ham who is not part of that conversation?

- Again, wait for a pause in the conversation (as indicated by the courtesy tone), and then state "Call please" followed by your call sign
 - One of the stations in the QSO should allow you to make your call (and remember if you are the one in a QSO, be courteous to other stations wanting to make a quick call)
 - If the station you are calling responds, then pass your traffic quickly and return the frequency to the other stations - do not hold a drawn out QSO!
 - If you need to talk to them for a longer period of time, you should ask them if they can wait until after the other QSO is over, or coordinate switching to another repeater or frequency
- Note that many of these procedures involve jumping into an ongoing QSO. When you are the one in a QSO, resist the urge to immediately respond to the other party's transmission.
 - Provide a brief pause before responding in case someone else needs to break in
 - You don't have to wait until the repeater's transmission completely drops - there is usually a "squelch tail" after the courtesy tone where the repeater transmitter is still active
 - Wait a couple of seconds, and then key up and respond
- Many web sites will warn you not to "monopolize the repeater." This may not be an issue in many areas - around here, many repeaters are dead other than during the morning and afternoon commute and any club nets
- Once more than two stations are participating in a conversation, you have what is called a "round table"
 - As the name implies, the conversation continues to rotate through the participating stations in order
 - When one station is done talking, they "turn over" the conversation to the next station in the rotation by stating something like "Go ahead Chuck"
 - It is considered poor practice to just stop talking - this leads to a situation where no one knows who should transmit next, so you either get a period of "dead air" where no one transmits, or multiple people transmit at the same time
 - If you are participating in a round table and don't have anything meaningful to contribute when the conversation comes around to you,

don't try to come up with something, or hem and haw - just hand it off to the next person in the rotation.

- Phonetics
 - When working FM repeaters, many times phonetics are not needed - transmissions can be understood without them.
 - When you do use phonetics, be sure to speak them slowly and distinctly enough that the other side can understand them
 - Even if you "know" phonetics, it takes more time to translate "Sierra" to the letter "S" than just hearing the letter directly.
 - On this and many other nets, we ask that you give your call sign phonetically so that we can make sure to write it down properly for when we call for your turn to talk.
 - In other situations, you might want to stay away from phonetics unless the other station states that they're having trouble understanding you, or asks you to repeat information ("What was that call sign again?")

Summary

- This may all sound difficult, but it's really not that hard. As with many things in amateur radio, listening will help you a lot.
- Most of these are not laws - those are contained in the Part 97 FCC regulations. They are more along the lines of "repeater etiquette"
- If you hear a call you're not familiar with on a repeater, give it a response. It's a great way to meet new people and hear new stories. They may be a new ham, or new to the area, and are looking for a conversation.

Questions:

1. **The question for the week is:** What is the most interesting thing you've heard on a repeater (or on amateur radio in general)?
2. **In my case,** it was a call for help on a repeater. A woman was looking for someone to call 911 and let them know that her husband was driving their son to the hospital. The child had fallen on a stick, and drove it through the bottom of their chin.

There was no cell service at the campsite outside of Estes Park that they were staying at, so the husband and child were being driven by another camper, and he'd left his wife with their truck which had an amateur radio, and told her to call for help.

She was unlicensed and was not at all familiar with the radio, but someone responded to her, got her information and called 911 to relay the request. An ambulance was dispatched on the road the father was taking. After some time, the ham talking to them woman relayed info from the 911 operator stating that ambulance had met up with them and was on its way to the hospital.

It was really neat to see amateur radio being used for something other than routine QSOs and nets!

Backup Questions:

1. What hobbies do you have other than ham radio? Do you (or could you) use ham radio in these hobbies?
2. Share an "a-ha" moment you had with amateur radio?

More Info:

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- If you have ideas for net topics or general meeting topics / presenters, please let us know! Tell us on a net, or send email to k0itp@w0eno.org

Email to elmer@w0eno.org

1. KN6CFI - John -
2. AF0W - Bryan - El Paso -
3. KN4RD - Russ - Firestone -
4. NA0A - John - Boulder -
5. KF0FEC - Will - Boulder -
6. W0PPC - Steve - Lyons -
7. KF0MXH - Art - Longmont -
8. W0DRZ - Chris - Lyons -

End 7:55