2025-08-12 Hamlet Net - Preparing for the Afterlife

Announcements:

- Test Session Info

    - Next VE session is Saturday, August 23rd in the Clover Building at the Boulder County Fairgrounds, and starts at 10 am. It is an ARRL session, so there is a $15 fee to test. For more info, and to pre-register, see the Licensing/Testing page on the club web site, https://w0eno.org/, under the Education menu.

- Radio News

    - There are a few contests running this weekend:

        - North American QSO Party SSB - This contest has a max power limit of 100 watts, so those of us without huge antennas and amplifiers may have improved chances of making QSOs! https://www.ncjweb.com/NAQP-Rules.pdf

        - ARRL Rookie Roundup RTTY - This contest also has a 100 watt max power limit. The Rookie Roundup is a contest aimed at Amateurs licensed for three years or less. This six-hour event is held three times per year (April for SSB, August for RTTY, and December for CW). Rookies can contact anybody, while "Old Timers" make contact with only Rookies. https://www.arrl.org/rookie-roundup

        - ARRL EME Contest - This contest runs on 2.3 GHz and up. https://www.arrl.org/eme-contest

- Club Activities

    - The August LARC Event will be a POTA activation on August 23 after the test session. If you can participate, get in touch with Chuck to discuss and help plan the location.

    - Breakfast Saturday at 7:30 - 8:00 am at the Hidden Cafe.

    - LARC Members can now check out Club equipment via the Club web page at: https://w0eno.org/ - click on the 'LARC Equipment Check Out Form" link on the "LARC Equipment" menu item at the top of the web page once you log in.

- Upcoming General Meeting Topics

    - August 20th - Violetta Latham (KN2P) - ARRL Section Youth Coordinator for Colorado will talk about an upcoming DXpedition to the Manihiki Atoll in the North

Cook Islands. Please plan to attend in person if you can, or at least via Zoom so we can show her a good turnout!

- ○ Sept 17th - Fred Nichols (AF4BY) - Demonstrating setup of the club's Spiderweb Antenna. The meeting will include an outdoor picnic with food provided.

- Upcoming Club Volunteer Opportunities:
  - ○ HAMCON Colorado 2025 for Rocky Mountain Division is October 23-26, 2025 in Grand Junction. For more information and to register, see their web site at: hamconcolorado.com They are also looking for presenters.

  - ○ August 16th - Longmont Try-a-Tri Triathlon (https://longmontcolorado.gov/recreation-services/community-events/triathlon-weekend/). This is a super sprint distance triathlon. These are the distances: 200 yard swim, 5 mile bike ride, 1.2 mile run. HTs should be fine. Contact Steve Robbiano if you can help out.

- RMHAM is running the summer swapfest at the Adams County Fairgrounds on Sunday August 24th from 9am to 1pm. Admission is just $6, so plan on dropping by! Tables are also available for $13 in advance, and $20 at the door. For more info see: https://www.rmham.org/the-swapfest/

- If you are interested in find out more about the Amateur Radio Emergency Services (or ARES) in the local area, check out the Boulder County ARES web site at https://bouldercountyares.org/

  They have a VHF net on Monday nights at 8:00pm, as well as a DMR net on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Mondays at 8:30pm.

- If you are an ARRL member, remember that you have digital access to four magazines - QST, On the Air, QEX, and National Contest Journal.

- We have a new net on the LARC repeaters. It's run by Timothy Moss, KFØLAR, on the 22nd of every month at 6pm. The 22nd was chosen to highlight the average of 22 vets who commit suicide each day. While the purpose of the net is to connect veterans, non-vets are welcome to participate as most all of us have friends or family who are or have served.

- The ARRL Colorado Section Net occurs on the second Monday of the month from 7 to 8pm. The net is run by Amanda Alden, K1DDN, our Colorado ARRL section manager, and is open to hams and non-hams alike. This net is a place where Colorado hams can ask questions of ARRL leadership and request help, guidance, club support, and technical support. This net meets on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 pm Mountain time. The net is on the Colorado Connection, Rocky Mountain Ham Radio

DMR Talk Group 700, The Fun Machine, WE0FUN, and the NCARC Buckhorn Repeater 447.700 – with 100 Hz tone.

- We have some volunteer opportunities available where you can help out LARC:

  - Photographer / videographer - record team activities and upload to web site / YouTube

  - Newsletter Editor - put together the monthly Splatter newsletter

  - Event Coordinator

- Time's up for this year, but you can earn your 2026 membership or future renewal by acting as NCS for at least 5 nets next 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!

- 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 2025. If you have any ideas, or better yet, would like to present, please let Chuck know and we'll get you on the schedule! We would like to get some presentations from club members on stuff they've been doing, projects they're working on, or just things that interest them.

- 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: Preparing for the Afterlife
- If you happen to be Egyptian royalty, then when you die, you'd likely be entombed with various everyday objects for use in the afterlife.

  - Your spouse or children would most likely toss in all your ham radio gear, as well as all your boxes of cables, AC wall adapters, and other miscellaneous "stuff."

- For the rest of us, regardless of your religious beliefs, something will have to be done with all your ham treasures.

- In most cases, this responsibility will fall to non-ham members of your family, and unless you really dislike them, you'll want to make this as easy on them as possible

- One thing to keep in mind is that there are a couple of diametrically-opposed goals that may come into play

  - The first is to get as much money as possible for everything - perhaps to pay off medical bills or burial or other expenses

  - The second is just to get rid of everything as quick as possible - perhaps to get the house ready to sell, for example

- This effort may also benefit you while you're still alive - say when you decide you need to downsize or move into an assisted-living facility

- The reason I'm presenting this issue is a few years ago, my wife and I attended the estate sale of a recently-deceased ham (also referred to as a "silent key")

  - This was conducted in his home and ham shack - the sale included everything in the house, not just the ham radio equipment

  - Most items had tape or stickers on them with the item's price

  - Other hams had volunteered to inventory and test most of the major amateur gear

- This is no small task - Chuck, K0ITP, has organized a few of these activities for local hams who have passed away. I've participated in a few of them, and have seen first-hand some of the issues they involve.

What can you do?

- So what can you do to help your next-of-kin with handling your amateur radio estate?

- When I helped Chuck out with one estate, the first thing we did was go through all the radio equipment and make a list

  - I started doing this with my own equipment back when I first became a ham, and I can state that it's a lot easier for you to make the list as you acquire equipment rather than you (or someone else) going through your stuff after you pass away

  - Unfortunately, I've also succumbed to laziness - when I checked my inventory list while preparing this presentation, I found that the last entry was back in 2020

- Anyway, I used Google Sheets to make and store the spreadsheet, so I had access to it wherever I had Internet access - sometimes, it can be helpful to pull up information if

someone asks you a question about your equipment during a club meeting or event, for example

- The columns of information in my spreadsheet are:

  - Manufacturer, Model Number, Description, Cost, Category, Serial #, Seller (including name, callsign and address), shipping (or other) additional costs, date of purchase, condition (new or used), and a comment field

  - The reason I have a column for shipping or additional charges is because I've purchased a lot of equipment off eBay, and wanted to keep track of the actual cost of the item itself as well as the total cost of the transaction

    - For example, I've purchased multiple Kenwood TM-D710A mobile radios

      - One was purchased for $450 from a Craigslist ad

      - Another was purchased from eBay also for $450, but that included a $17 shipping fee, so the radio itself was a bit cheaper that the local one

  - The values I use in the category field are things like "radio," "antenna," "tools," etc. The idea was that I could use this to see how much I've invested in the various areas, as well as make it easier to filter the list by different item types.

- One thing about amateur radio equipment is that many radios and other devices have optional equipment such as cables or filters that may add value to the item

  - I use the comments column to record this information

    - For example, the eBay D710 was an even better deal than the local one as it included an external GPS module and an internal voice module

  - Items like the internal voice module (or filters, an built-in antenna tuner, or a CTCSS board for an older radio) are not obvious from the outside of the radio, but may affect the price greatly

    - For example, a new VGS-1 voice module recently sold on eBay for $180 - a radio with one of these modules installed can command a premium price over one without

    - For older radios, most of these items are no longer available on the retail market, and sites like eBay can be hit or miss for these items

    - Another possibility is to remove the item and sell it separately. Obviously, this requires more time, expertise, and effort than selling as a set

- The comments field is also useful for keeping track of information on the seller. Some examples from my spreadsheet include:

    - "Smelled like smoke - not mentioned in ad"

    - "Listing said included cable, but not in pictures, and not in box. Seller didn't do anything to compensate."

    - Since I logged the seller info, I know not to purchase from them again.

- Including the cost is also helpful for whoever is selling your estate, but I've also seen web sites that recommend searching eBay periodically for matching sold items and keeping track of those prices, in case items go up (or down) in value over time

    - Many of the items at the estate this weekend were pretty old (suppose they could be called "vintage")

    - I picked up a number of items simply because I thought they were interesting, or may be useful when teaching radio classes, but they are probably not things most amateurs would ever use, such as a capacitance substitution box

    - Most of these items were "priced to go" for just a few dollars

- One other thing I noticed (and have run into) is that some items were missing parts - there were a couple of TNC (terminal node controllers) that are used for packet radio that were missing their power adapters

    - In my own shack, I've got a bunch of chargers for different HTs as well as accessories like additional batteries and speaker microphones for different radios

    - The chargers were a hassle, as it was not always obvious which one went to which radio, so I used a label maker to label them with the radio model they charged

    - Going a step further, labeling all the detachable parts for various pieces of equipment will help whoever has to go through and organize all your stuff for sale will help immensely

        - I also labeled the wall wart power supplies for the chargers, both so that I'd know what I was unplugging from the power strip end, as well as to make sure i could easily reassociate them with the chargers if I ever pulled out everything to reorganize my shack

        - In one of the estates we handled, there were a few power supplies that were not obviously attached to or stored with the equipment they were used with

- - ■ The ham in question was a big Yaesu guy, so the manufacturer on the power supplies didn't really help

    - ■ The power supplies were identified with a model number, but it was the model number of the supply, not the radio it was for, necessitating some research on the Internet to find the match

- Don't forget any manuals, programming cables and software, and anything else that may be stored away from your radio

- Another thing that would be good to include in your documentation is any information on issues with the equipment. While all the radio equipment at the SK sale was listed as "tested," it's very likely that they did not exercise all the features of the gear

    - In my own case, the first radio I purchased had an issue with one of the HF bands it supported. There is a filter board inside the radio that uses relays to switch capacitors and inductors in and out of the signal path for different bands.

      The person I purchased the radio from told me about this up front, and even had the replacement parts, but said he was unable to do any soldering anymore.

    - Had he passed away and I had been dealing with his spouse or children, I'm sure this would not have been mentioned. Even a well-meaning ham could have tested the radio and pronounced it working - it's likely they would not take the time to go through all the bands.

    - I've also got an ICOM 706 that I purchased off of eBay advertised as "fully working." Everything was fine on it until I later tried to attach an external antenna tuner. The tuner is powered and controlled via a four-prong jack on the back of the radio, but I found that the 12v pin was not supplying any power, rendering the tuner inoperative.

      I've not been successful at troubleshooting the root cause, but I was able to construct a power cable for running the tuner, so it is usable.

- One thing that would be useful to add to my spreadsheet would be links to online user and service manuals for each item

- I saw a YouTube video that showed an interesting solution for tracking information on your devices.

    - The person making the video used QR codes for tracking equipment information

    - QR codes are "quick response" codes that are a type of two-dimensional barcode

- - They were invented in Japan for labeling automotive parts, but have expanded to many other purposes

  - The codes contain information - typically some sort of locator or identifier

  - Some uses for these codes are to store web site addresses or URLs, WiFi credentials, and contact information

  - The codes used in the video were for web site URLs

  - Some devices had a code for the user guide for the device - you would simply scan the QR code with your cell phone and be directed to the appropriate web site

  - The user also created documents containing more info on the device in question, including manual links, notes, and images (one example was storing the SWR plot for an antenna so that if there were any suspected issues with the antenna later on, they could be compared to the initial graph)

  - He then converted these documents to PDF files, added them to his personal web site, and then attached QR codes to the devices pointing to these documents

  - You can also link to publicly-accessible documents on a service such as DropBox or Google Docs

  - I've included a few links to sites you can use to create QR codes, as well as the video I saw

- This presentation is getting a bit long, so I'm going to cut it off here, but may bring up more on a future net.

- Chuck Poch did a presentation in January of 2024 on the same topic at a monthly club meeting. You can watch the recording of this meeting on Youtube (for the link, go to the club web site at [w0eno.org](w0eno.org) and click on the "Presentations" link under the "Club History" menu item. https://youtu.be/AeXm5nQMYys

Questions:
- **The question for the week is:** Do you have an inventory of your equipment, or a plan on what to do with it when you pass away?

- **In my case,** I've just got a fairly-out-of-date spreadsheet and some equipment labeled. I've certainly got some more work I need to do. I do have the benefit of having an licensed amateur for a spouse, but there's no guarantee that I'll go first, and in any case, I want to save her or our kids as much hassle as I could.

More Info:

- A Different Kind of Amateur Code: QR:
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZ2D6CjGbQs

- The QR Code Generator: https://www.the-qrcode-generator.com/

- QR Code Monkey: https://www.qrcode-monkey.com/

- Wikipedia - QR Codes: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/QR_code

Email to elmer@w0eno.org

- 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. KØDBL - Don Lee - Mead
2. KFØUSF - David - Longmont
3. KFØOKA - Ben - Pinewood Springs
4. AFØW - Bryan - Longmont
5. WØMYK - Mike - Longmont
6. KØNFP - Thomas - Broomfield
7. AFØXS - John - Thornton

End: 7:50pm