

Amateur Radio Club

Having been an Amateur radio licensee since the late 1950's I have seen many technologic advances in Amateur Radio. Currently, most new Radios in use by amateur radio operators is entirely driven by computer micro processor logic. They are called SRD radios – Software Defined Radio. Software allows almost instant transformation of reception to insure solid communications.

Even our voice is digitized and managed in current radios in order to provide more intelligence by removing atmospheric interference.



Today there are many forms of digital radio in use. Virtually every country uses such schemes to facilitate communication in strictest privacy. Radios employ many forms of communications not common years ago.

Yet one of the oldest forms of radio communication is the mainstay of how communities such as ours can communicate during emergencies. Called FRS radio -- Family Radio Service -- has expanded to those who need no license, little training and simple techniques to communicate. As Judie pointed out last month, all you do is charge the batteries, select a channel press the PTT button to communicate. We adhere to protocol standards in order to communicate effectively; after all we cannot see who is at the other end of our transmission.

A staunch backbone to the FRS communicator is the liaison to our Licensed Amateur Radio Operators. While FRS can provide local

communication, our amateur radios can extend our reach for distant contacts. We can contact personnel at the San Geronio Hospital, the FEMA supported R.A.C.E.S* and ham radio supported A.R.E.S* volunteers as well as the local emergency facilities. With battery powered devices we are not tied to the electrical grid nor the Cellular phone network to provide support.

We practice communications weekly on radio nets. A net is akin to a telephone conference call, but disallow everyone talking at once. Protocols are established to allow one communicator, called net control, to assign who is next to talk, or next to acknowledge someone with a message, announcement, or respond to a request. Thus, this is a good opportunity to see if we are prepared and all our radios are in good working order. We follow the FRS net with a Amateur Radio Net on a frequency that most ham radio emergency responders utilize.

Most of the 4 seasons Amateur Radio Licensed members regularly attend meetings with emergency communications personnel locally. This has included the local police and hospital personnel. Most important, in an actual emergency, we do report on types of injuries – but – no names. Thus we adhere to the U.S. HIPPA rules regarding disclosure of individuals identity and health information. We communicate and relay messages to those individuals well suited to deal with the emergency.

Many of our Amateur Radio Operators attend local radio club meetings and many major club's activities. We also are active in the local radio nets, including the San Bernardino search and rescue net.

Our website is w6fsb.com, our meetings are on the last Friday of the month at 10AM -- in the lodge card room. See you there!

*R.A.C.E.S -- Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service

*A.R.E.S – Amateur Radio Emergency Service

Dick Van Bree, W6RVB, President