

# Amateur Radio Club

## BECOMING A HAM

I became interested in Ham Radio after I took a CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) class in June 2012. Cert members were encouraged to use walkie-talkies but I wanted to talk to the world. I needed to become a licensed ham radio operator to do this.

It takes a little money and a lot of study to become a ham. In November I contacted the local radio club about becoming a ham. I was directed to the American Amateur Relay League (ARRL). I was told to obtain a technician level study guide. I read it from cover to cover. Then I took all ten practice tests I passed them all with 75-88% scores. I took the exam in January and I failed it. I saw a lot of unfamiliar material and I missed passing by 1 question. A passing score is 70% or you can miss 9 questions. I passed my second time and became a ham.

Taking the ham radio test is a little like getting your first drivers license. You don't need to know how to build a car to drive one. In radio you don't need to know how to build a radio to become a ham.

In July, six months after obtaining my first license, I took an upgrade exam to obtain the General license. Prior to 2007 there was a Morse Code requirement and many people found this intimidating. I would have become a ham either way: it just would have taken me a little longer.

My approach to taking my second exam was different. I felt a little disappointed with ARRL's manuals after my first exam. I decided to do something different so I obtained a list of all of the questions for the General Exam from MFJ. I got a 50 page manual with all of the 350 possible questions and their answers. I was to review the questions and their correct answers. The idea was that when you saw them on the test that you would immediately know the correct answer. I passed the exam the first time.

I will probably incorporate both ways when I study for my Amateur Extra Exam. I will use review materials from Gordon West and from MFJ. I will review the MFJ material three times, and will take the review tests from Mr. West until I am getting 90%.

Getting your ham license is work, but it opens up a whole new world of opportunity for you. I have marshaled bicycle races, participated in a R.A.C.E.S exercise at the local hospital and gotten

deeply involved with EPP in my community. The best thing is all of the great people that I have met.

Our website is [W6FSB.com](http://W6FSB.com), and Club meetings are on the last Friday of the month in the Lodge ballroom @ 10AM

Mike Mendoza, KK6BUW, Secretary