

**BUTLER COUNTY VHF ASSOCIATION (BCVHFA)**  
**Meeting Minutes for August 7, 2019**

**Members Present:** Bob N8TVU, Greg AB8RG, Jim K8FL, Paul KC8ZFL, Tim KA8DZU, and Jason KD8BNR

The meeting was opened at 7:10 pm by the BCVHFA Treasurer with the Pledge of Allegiance. Introductions were not required.

**Evening Program:** There was no program for the meeting.

The reading of the June minutes was suspended because they are posted on the web site and there was no meeting held in July. A motion was made by Jason KD8BNR to accept the minutes, as posted on the web site, and was seconded by Tim KA8DZU. The motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report** - Bob N8TVU gave the Treasurer's report. There have been no purchases and no income since the June meeting. A motion was made by Tim KA8DZU to accept the report, as read, and was seconded by Greg AB8RG. The motion passed.

**Technical Committee Report** - Bob N8TVU gave the Technical Committee report. All the repeaters are working correctly. 147.3300 should have the AllStar interface connected soon, it has been "on line" testing the integrity of the internet connection for almost 60 days with no down time.

Once connected, this will allow 147.3300 to interconnect to other local area repeaters for the Butler-Warren Weather Net and may include additional repeaters, as needed, to provide hand held coverage in both Butler and Warren Counties for reporting severe weather conditions.

Once completed, the system can be used for Emergency Communications and Public Service Events that cross between multiple counties. Other AllStar repeaters may be linked with the 147.3300 machine to expand coverage locally or even to another city e.g. Columbus, Cleveland, Toledo, or SE Ohio's linked UHF system for statewide coverage.

**ARECC:** Extensive computer software and hardware updating was completed by Jason KD8BNR and Greg AB8RG in preparation for Field Day.

The computers are now all Windows 10 configured with the latest updates. Video cards have been replaced that are designed to work with Windows 10 and allow up to four monitors each to be connected to that computer. OPS-1 & 2 utilize three monitors at each position.

OPS-3A and OPS-3B utilize four monitors for each computer and OPS-4A & 4B utilizes two monitors for each computer. This may change due to new plans developed during the

upgrade. The monitors were converted from VGA cabling to DVI cabling for improved display resolution.

A dedicated file server was built and installed between OPS-1 & OPS-2. The server is used to backup data stored on the other six computers and as a dedicated file server needed for shared programs between operator position, for example, the Field Day logging program.

Jason & Greg have been working with the schools IT department to get WIFI opened up to us throughout the parts of the building we normally use, access to our new file server and to the AllStar computer. Job well done!

We have a seventh Windows 10 computer available for a camper or parking lot station for Field Day or other Special Events Stations. It can be linked into the ARECC via a pair of Ubiquiti WIFI panels. This computer has dual monitor capability, RS-232 for rig control, and rotor control.

**OTHER ARECC UPGRADES:** A commercial grade Motorola style footswitch was installed at OPS-1 which proved itself extremely useful during Field Day activities. Having both hands free to type made it so much easier to log contacts and work the pileups we had several times during the event. There is a second commercial grade Motorola style footswitch we are constructing for OPS-2.

We are looking into being able to use a standard boom microphone headset in combination with the foot switch to work between the HF radio, 144-220 and 440 radios. It will be operator switchable/selectable to make operating easier and hands free.

While performing the upgrades it was discovered that operating information would be useful when shared between OPS positions and onto potential future overhead monitors or TV's for viewing by everyone in the room. Jason KD8BNR, having extensive experience in the computer trades, recommended that the issue be solved in an inexpensive way -- use RASPBERRY PI's on each overhead monitor and direct video to them over the ARECC IP LAN. Any computer in the ARECC would be able to display screens from other computers. The system would allow an OPS position operator to grab and post a screen being viewed to other OPS screens as well as overhead monitors in the room. "Screen Posting" allows projecting, for example, agency driven WEBEOC, weather maps, google earth maps, live traffic, weather net application screens, and webcams to overhead or desktop monitors, as needed.

**Siren Testing** - Non club affiliated Butler County amateur radio operators from around the county are assisting the Butler County 911 Center to observe over 50 Severe Weather Sirens countywide reporting both working and non-working units.

**OLD BUSINESS** - There was no old business to discuss at the meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS** - Discussions were held on the following topics:

**Topic 1**- During Field Day we discovered an issue with the main rotor controller from OPS-1. It would work for a while then stop working. Repair people told Greg AB8RG that the problem is most likely a bad coil in the motor itself and needs to be rebuilt.

The discussion leaned heavily toward purchasing a replacement "Tail Twister" either new or rebuilt that a climber could remove the damaged one, replace it with the new(er) one during one climb.

The rotor on the tower now could be sent out to be rebuilt and placed in the cabinet as a spare should the new(er) one be damaged in the future, we would have a replacement on hand.

Prices will be looked into and presented at the September meeting.

**Topic 2** - Ohio State Parks On The Air will be held Saturday September 7th at the Holly Shelter at Ceasars Creek State Park, Orgonia from approximately 0900-1600 hrs. The shelter is near the Caesar Creek Visitor Center off of N. Clarksville Rd., which is a southern turn from SR73; just east of Waynesville. The shelter has power and improved rest rooms. Contact Jason KD8BNR if you plan on attending! shatto.1@wc8ema.org

A motion was made by Jason KD8BNR and seconded by Paul KC8ZFL to close the meeting. The motion passed.

Treasurer  
Bob N8TVU