



Pearl River County Amateur Radio Club

Promoting Amateur Radio and Public Safety in South Mississippi
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Local Hams Respond To Threat Of Gustav

PICAYUNE - Urged on by memories of the most destructive natural disaster ever to impact the United States, several Pearl River County hams responded to the threat of Hurricane Gustav and manned local Emergency Operations Centers to provide communications assistance to local officials.

While Gustav was dwarfed by 2005's monster storm Katrina, the threat was as real. David Moore (N5ELI) and Woody Poolson (KD6PJW) manned the Poplarville EOC, while Tim Livengood (KC5EAK) and Larry Wagoner (N5WLW) manned the Picayune EOC.

The stations maintained contact with the National Weather Service, local shelters, and local authorities as they provided communications assistance.

As amateur radio operators across the area moved from an emergency response stance to clean-up, evaluation and repair, the need for some changes to operations and equipment became clear, as well as the vastly improved response as compared to Hurricane Katrina.

At Poplarville, county seat of Pearl River County, Emergency Operations Center Communications Officer David Moore said, "We have some stuff to do, but it's not bad." He noted a defective antenna that was discovered during operations for Gustav, as well as a few operational details that need to be worked out before future events.

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Where Do We Go From Here?

An Editorial By Larry Wagoner

PICAYUNE, Ms. – Hurricane Gustav is now a bad memory for most of us, and the cleanup is well underway. Those whose jobs call on them to consider public safety – as well as those who take public safety as a calling of sorts – are now trying to sort out the lessons of the first major post-Katrina/Rita storm to hit the United States.

While public officials try to sort out questions about traffic flow, electrical distribution systems and flood protection, amateur radio operators are reviewing their performance in Gustav to try to figure out how to do it better next time. A few of those lessons are the same they have always been.

Problem: We need more people. One sad reality of the response to storms like Gustav is that the same few people are always the responders. Just as in most ham radio clubs there is a core of a few people who do almost all of the planning, work and activities, in emergency response there are a few who always respond, are always available to man the microphones and to be there when the need arises.

Answer: This storm gives us the perfect opportunity to recruit new hams. When an event like Gustav happens, there is always a burst of fresh interest in being a part of a solution. Just as after Hurricane Katrina there was a large jump in the number of new hams becoming licensed, Gustav can give us the same chance to recruit, train, and get licensed “fresh blood”. Not only new people behind the microphones, but new ideas and maybe even some new solutions.

Problem: We need more equipment. Yes – we all need new and better gear. It is standard procedure for clubs and organizations to put the older cast-off equipment in the place where it is going to be used the least – like the Emergency Operations Center. The gear is then generally put on a shelf, forgotten, attracting dust and spiders until that day ...

Answer: This may be the perfect time to get the public, organizations and businesses

Hurricane ...

Continued from Page 1

More serious damage was reported in coastal areas of the state, as well as in neighboring Louisiana, where widespread power outages were reported.

In Stone County, Emergency Coordinator Tim Purvis noted that one mobile home was destroyed in the storm. “All in all, it went real well,” he said. Like the other officials in the area, he said the storm was a learning exercise for the amateur radio community. “We need to get our repeater to a higher location, and we need to get more people with emergency yagis.”

He said in some cases, hams in outlying areas of the county had a hard time making it into the repeater during the storm. “These are people who may have lost or taken down their antennas,” he said, “and they were trying to operate on a mag mount on top of a refrigerator from twenty miles away.”

involved in raising money to get some new gear. Yes – we all hate raising money. It feels so ... dirty. But – how about sending out letters to your area businesses asking them to either donate money towards buying some specific item – a repeater, a new HF rig or whatever, or even give them the information necessary to buy that piece of equipment and give it to the club, ARES group, EOC or whatever group handles your emergency communications. You may find they are quite willing to buy something to help – especially if you can give them a mention in your newsletter, on the mic at a hamfest or whatever.

Problem: The _____ (insert your favorite pet peeve) organization doesn't want to work with us during the emergency event. They don't even know we exist!

Answer: The biggest problem is communication. The big public service agencies want to handle things themselves. They have specific methods, training, turfs and frankly, agendas. Ham radio doesn't have a dog in that fight. We are offering a SERVICE. We are there SPECIFICALLY for that time when they cannot handle the needs. It is much easier for everyone involved when they know exactly what we are offering and how we work. During Gustav, a state emergency response worker, who prior to the storm knew nothing about ham radio, got a chance to see ham radio at work and was so impressed that she decided she wants to get licensed and take part herself. That, my friends, is communication. And by the way – if they can handle the event without us – then it makes sense to be relieved. They call us when it is really bad.

Problem: We need more training. Our people, while well-intentioned, sometimes forget how to handle emergency communications. We get lost in small-talk (our favorite) or petty fights over nonsense, or (gasp) we just aren't very good at operating a radio under adverse conditions.

Answer: The old saw: "Practice Makes Perfect". Or more accurately, "Practice Makes Good At It". We need to find opportunities for our people to practice those skills that make them so very valuable. Police have firing ranges, and firefighters have smoke mazes. Why do we not have regular practice? Our nets are supposed to be practice for handling communication, but how many really are? When only one person ever calls the net, no one else gets practice. When the net is purely a check-in, then no traffic gets passed. We as hams have some extraordinary skills and abilities – but we need to keep them sharp – and show them off.

Problem: People don't know what we do. They think we are glorified CB'ers, or worse, CB'ers with our noses in the air. We are old-fashioned, pipe-smoking dreamers who got left behind when the world of electronics went to transistors.

Answer: Practice telling people about this hobby of ours. Show off what we do – not only the rag-chewing, but also emergency communications, contesting, digital, code, fox-hunting, field days, ham-fests, slow- and fast-scan TV, public events, etc. We all know there are many activities involved with amateur radio – but we often do a poor job of telling others about it. If nothing else, be able to show people the following website: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=varHL752Odk>

Above all – be proud to be a ham – and tell the world about it. This is an exciting hobby and an exciting time to be part of amateur radio.

PRCARC Has an 'Eatin' Meetin'

POPLARVILLE - Members of the Pearl River County Amateur Radio Club had a change of pace this month, as the regular monthly meeting was held a week late due to Hurricane Gustav and in a local restaurant for an 'Eatin' Meetin'.

Twelve members showed up for the lively meeting which covered diverse topics including the response to Hurricane Gustav, radio equipment, repeaters, as well as other recent developments.

Two new hams in the area, as well as a guest from the Gulf Coast and an inactive area ham were in attendance.

Dan Beavers and Ron Smith - both of whom passed their license examinations this past Saturday, were at the meeting, as was inactive area ham Ray Monju (W5FMO) and coast visitor Rafe Gratz (KE5GBO). Beavers and Smith recently joined the PRCARC.

Other regulars at the meeting included Roger Aubert (KE5ELS), Jack Beith (K5WNU), Jim and Shirley Searcy (WA5WRE) and (KA5BLD), Bobby Graves (AD5WA), David Moore (N5ELI), Larry Wagoner (N5WLW) and Tim Helgerson (KB7PGT).



From left, Jack Beith (K5WNU), Roger Aubert (KE5ELS) and Shirley Searcy (KA5BLD) listen to a point during the 'Eatin' Meetin'. **Photo by Larry Wagoner**

Seven Earn New Licenses After Class

PICAYUNE - Another perfect score as the Pearl River County Amateur Radio Club sponsored a Technician-level amateur radio class and VE testing Saturday, August 30. The class was held the previous two Saturdays, with testing at the Picayune Fire Station Number 1.

Seven people tested - and all seven earned licenses. Two of those testing earned General class licensure. Earning Technician licenses were: Nathan Pittman, Daniel Puckett, Sr., Ronald Smith, Ryan Ziegler, and Vincent Lavertu.

See Class - next page



Larry Wagoner teaches technician class.

Class...

Continued from previous page

Earning General class licenses were: Daniel Beavers - who took both the technician and general license tests Saturday, and William Stoltz, Jr., who earned the General through the provision in Part 97 that permits those who held a Technician license with code prior to 1986 to advance to the General simply by taking the technician theory test.

Larry Wagoner (N5WLW) was the instructor for the class.

The VE testing team was Wagoner, David Moore (N5ELI), Tim Purvis (N5UDK) and Bobby Graves (AD5WA).

Wagoner said he wanted to thank the students in the class for working hard to earn their licenses, as well as the Picayune Fire Department for permitting the use of the training room at Fire Station Number 1 for the class.

We welcome all seven who took tests to the hobby and look forward to hearing them on the air!

Net Assignments

Remember our net is held at 7:30 p.m. each Thursday on the 145.210 repeater (offset negative - tone 136.5)

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| September 11 | Jim Searcy |
| September 18 | Roger Aubert |
| September 25 | Larry Wagoner |
| Backup Net Control | Bobby Graves |

Repeater Roundup

| Location | Frequency | Offset | Tone |
|----------------|---------------|--------|-------|
| Poplarville | 145.210 | - | 136.5 |
| Millard | 145.150 | - | 136.5 |
| Hillsdale | 145.410 | - | 136.5 |
| McHenry | 147.165 | + | 136.5 |
| McHenry | 147.375 | + | 136.5 |
| Wiggins | 145.270 | - | 136.5 |
| Kiln | 145.330 | - | open |
| Stennis | 147.210 | + | 136.5 |
| Bay St. Louis | 29.640 | - | 136.6 |
| Bay St. Louis | 53.650 | - | 136.5 |
| Biloxi | 146.730 | - | 136.5 |
| Keesler AFB | 146.790 | - | open |
| Hattiesburg | 146.775 | - | 136.5 |
| Hattiesburg | 147.315 | + | 136.5 |
| Hattiesburg | 145.370 | - | 136.5 |
| Hattiesburg | 145.190 | - | 136.5 |
| Hattiesburg | 442.725 | + | open |
| Hattiesburg | 444.775 | + | 136.5 |
| Hattiesburg | 443.700 | + | 136.5 |
| Collins | 146.985 | - | 136.5 |
| McComb | 146.940 | - | 103.5 |
| McComb | 444.875 | + | 100.0 |
| Pine, La. | 145.430 | - | 107.2 |
| Slidell, La. | 147.270 | + | 114.8 |
| Slidell, La. | 444.425 | + | 114.8 |
| Slidell, La. | 443.950 | + | 114.8 |
| N.O., La. | 146.860 | - | 114.8 |
| Covington, La. | 146.715 | - | open |
| Hammond, La. | 147.000 | - | open |
| Hammond, La. | 145.130 | - | 107.2 |
| Hammond, La. | 145.010 | HMU | Digi |
| Hammond, La. | 444.250 | + | 107.2 |
| Hammond, La. | 53.090/52.090 | | open |

Sell Those Tickets!

POPLARVILLE - Remember to keep selling those raffle tickets!

QST Archive Now Available Online

NEWINGTON, Con. - QST magazine archive. This new benefit - a service of the ARRL Technical Information Service (TIS) - provides PDF copies of all QST articles from December 1915 through December 2004, enabling members to view and print their favorite article, project and more.

For many years, the TIS has provided members with assistance researching ARRL periodicals and publications, as well as providing members and non-members with article reprints for a small fee. Access to the new online digital QST archive is free for ARRL members

"Having access to every issue of QST through 2004 is absolutely incredible!" said ARRL Lab Manager Ed Hare, W1RFI. "The best of the best of QST from every era is now at the fingertips of every ARRL member with a keyboard and an Internet connection. Members can research articles on any subject that interests them, or just browse the past issues. This will be a popular membership benefit that will be of special value to new and long-time hams alike. This valuable content will help radio amateurs who use QST as a technical resource - for projects, equipment 'hints and kinks' - and for other research contributing to the advancement of the radio art. We know many hams will simply enjoy perusing these pages of history, too."

The ARRL Periodicals Archive and Search lists every article for QST from 1915 to the present, QEX from 1981 to the present, Ham Radio from 1968 to 1990 and NCJ from 1973 to the present (please note that beginning in 1998, each issue of QEX covers two months). Only ARRL members will be able to download and print copies of the QST articles.

QST magazine is the official journal of ARRL, the national association for Amateur Radio. An interest in Amateur Radio is the only essential qualification of membership. ARRL membership is \$39 per year in the US.

Upcoming South Mississippi Hamfests

October 18, 2008: Mississippi Section of ARRL's ARRL Day in the Park.

Davis Bayou Campground, 3500 Park Road, Ocean Springs.

Talk-In: 146.73 Mhz. (no tone). Additional information: Malcolm Keown, W5XX at 64 Lake Circle Dr. Vicksburg, MS 39180 Phone: 601-636-0827 Email w5xx@arrl.org.

November 14-15, 2008: Jackson County ARA Fall Hamfest 2008.

St. Martin Community Center on Lemoyne Boulevard in Ocean Springs.

Talk-In: 145.110 Mhz, with a negative offset. Additional information: Wendell A. McCollom, WM5W, 14017 Suburban Dr. Vancleave, MS 39565-9180. Phone: 228-875-4720. Email wm5w@bellsouth.net

December 6, 2008: Pearl River County Amateur Radio Club Hamfest.

Pearl River County Fairgrounds, Highway 26, Poplarville, Ms.

Talk-In: 145.210 Mhz. negative offset tone of 136.5. Additional information: Jim Searcy (WA5WRE) 601-795-6583. Email world@dishmail.net