

Cherokee ARES 8 Jan2024- Training

Saturday, January 6, 2024 4:50 AM

For Tonight's training, we are going to discuss a few objectives for 2024... These items will be covered in more detail in our upcoming NETS and Club meetings. But wanted to start 2024 with some additional discussion points.

#1- Your Shack Setup, no matter how small or how large, you must be happy and able to operate effectively.. You need to have immediate access to:

- A. Your Operations Binder
- B. Writing instruments (Pen/Paper)
- C. Ability to see and change Radio Frequency as needed.
- D. Access to Real-Time Winlink Emails
- E. DRATS- DRATS is an essential tool to Cherokee ARES and used to communicate real-time when we have internet capability for Cherokee County and NWGA using the NWGA Ratflector.
- F. Access to APRS (Via YAAC or APRSIS32). Both allow you to run over the internet if you cannot do so simultaneously over RF. Both of these Tools allow direct communication from you to another station. Example 7 January 2024, I noticed KO4IFY online via APRS and we were able to have a direct QSO. This is a great tool to have in your toolkit for real-time digital communications.
- G. You need ability to operate should you lose power, Are you able to run on emergency or battery power with adequate lighting in your shack?
- H. Do you have ability to power your laptop/monitor via extended Battery or Generator Power?

Why do I bring this up today?

I was not happy with my layout of my Hamshack as my work has taken over part of my home-office. So I am currently restructuring my shack, adding home-brew shelving to better organize my equipment, keep my work-surface free to write/type and keep my equipment easily accessible, visible, and easy to maintain/remove when I need to deploy. In the event of a power outage, I need to be able to continue communicating

2024 Comment

#2- As we move in to 2024, we are going to experiment with another mode at various times during our Cherokee NET using VARAC. I am going to discuss VARAC on Tuesday Nights NWGA NET as I am NET Control, as a primer of what we are going to do in the upcoming exercises.

During our February Club meeting, I am going to perform an Overview of various Digital Tools we need to be proficient in, including VARAC. I will cover how they can help/aid our ability to communicate real-time and how the tools can be deployed/utilized. We will cover how we can leverage these tools in parallel with a Voice NET, as long as we exercise proper radio-procedures and command and control of the NET is maintained So what does this mean to you today?

If you have the ability to perform RF Capability today for example Winlink, FT8, or any other digital mode, then you have the minimum requirements to learn, install, and configure VARAC that works in conjunction with VARAFM. My ask is that you download, install, configure, read the online documents and watch various Youtube videos and start getting familiar with the tool. Experiment, Experiment, Experiment!!!! I will add some links to our website this week for you.

I will be laying out specific instructions and processes that we will use with our Preamble/NET Scripts, we will use when incorporating Digital Modes like VARAC with our Voice-NET/REPEATER so that we do not abuse the system, cause interference, etc. We will be able to communicate via Voice and via the same Repeater for limited Digital traffic. Outside of controlled NETS we will experiment on other Simplex Frequencies as to not tie up the repeater.

Questions or Comments from what I mentioned, please call NET Control.