1 March 2023

**FIARC Meeting Minutes – 25 February 2023**

**Attendees:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| N7NW – Hal Goodell | KI7CQM – Jim Braden | KJ7RVR – Jane Tollett |
| KJ7JCB – Paul Thorpe | KK7JEE – Keith Barnes | K7CRZ – Jeff Ferguson |
| AC7QN – Chuck Kemmer | KI7ZTW – Steve Soares | KB7PKC – Glenn Hansen |
| K1GCF – Gail Ferguson | KG7OGO – Doug Nelson | KK7IYD – Steven Spann |
| K7ND – Jim Christianson | | |

The February 25 meeting combined the regular Club meeting from 10-11a, and afterwards additional training on Winlink by **Jeff Ferguson**.  Thank you to **Gail Ferguson** for providing the delicious cookies for the meeting and the training.

**1.  Minutes from the January 28th meeting were unanimously approved.**

**2.  Updates from Hal Goodell, President**
- Good to see the increased number of Winlink check-ins when Hal ran the Net last Sunday.
- Remember we can use Winlink Express to send in the Winlink check-ins to ARES District 5.  The contact person is now Armin Keen – N7JAJ, same address of winlink@piercecountyares.net.
- Jeff will be setting up a digital station employing the ARES go kit for the Fox Island Fair, PEP-C and the Pierce County fair offering community members a hands-on experience sending welfare messages, as well as answering general questions people may have about EMCOMM.
- Sunspot activity is continuing, lots of good F2 going on 10, 12 and 15 meters.  6 meters is on the edge, but Hal has had some afternoon openings to Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay.
- The Mike & Key Swap Meet will be March 11 from 9a-3p at the Washington State Fairgrounds in Puyallup.  Enter through the gold gate, look for the pavilion Exhibition hall.  Still need volunteers.

**3.  Updates from Jim Braden, Vice-President**
- There is still lots of work to do organizing the Radio room, Jim has some projects going.  We may be looking for someone with carpentry skills to help with shelves.
- FICRA is overhauling its website, FoxIslandFICRA.org, will be asking people questions about what they want to be able to find.  We are hearing people want to be able to use it on mobile devices.

**4.  Update from Jane Tollett, Secretary**
- There will be a "FIARC Procedures" notebook in the radio room.  It will contain the Net Preamble/Script writeups, Winlink information, and other procedures that might be helpful.
- Welcome new members:  Kirsi Vivolin-KK7KJT, and Keith Barnes-KK7JEE

**5.  Doug Nelson**
- Before Covid we had started a roster of Hams who wanted to be involved in emergency communication. The purpose was to have people driving around with the Emergency Patrol doing checks and reporting in on 2 meters.
- Ham Emergency Volunteers are listed on the FIARC roster **(Attachment A)**. Please contact Jane to verify/sign up/delete your status on the Roster as an Emergency contact.  Doug would like to have some volunteers on a regular basis, maybe as often as 1/month, drive around to check reception on the island.  He will try to set up an exercise to test 2-meter reception on 146.54 MHz in

April.  It will be a great opportunity to interface with Block Coordinators who are Hams, and also good training for any new Hams.

### 6.  Fox Hunt – Chuck Kemmer

- Chuck will build a Yagi antenna kit for the next meeting.  This will help us all visualize what it looks like.  It's part of what is needed to participate in a Fox Hunt.
- Here is a tentative schedule of getting ready so that we can escort non-Hams around at a Fox Hunt during the Fair, as pretty much no one at the meeting had ever participated in a hunt except Chuck.
  - *March* – Chuck will bring the model; decide what kind of kits he should make up.
  - *April* – Workshop to build our Yagi Antennas after the meeting.
  - *May* – Workshop after the meeting to practice using the Antennas with the receivers.
  - *June* – Field Day, no meeting
  - *July* – Have a practice hunt after the meeting.
  - *August* – The Fair

### 7.  Other Future Events

- ARRL Field Day - Usually held at Fort Flagler, sponsored by Mike & Key Radio Club.  Activities such as 24-hour marathon check-ins, HF GOTA radio, and other activities.  Tacoma Radio Club hosted their Field Day last year at the Western State Hospital in Fort Steilacoom, also a good set of activities.
- Glenn Hansen asked if we should run a Field Day here at Fox Island.  The idea was well-met but would need to steer clear of the Longest Day celebration that weekend at the NCC.
- Saturday March 11 is the Mike & Key Swap Meet  https://mikeandkey.org

### 9.  Winlink Class – 11a-12p – Jeff Ferguson

- The purpose of the class was to learn how to use Winlink message templates.  We also reviewed the procedure for the Net Operators to collect the Winlink check-ins during the Sunday Nets.
- For reference, please see the following attachments:
  a. **Attachment B** – Fox Island Weekly Winlink Check-in Procedure
  b. **Attachment C** – Winlink Check-in Template
- We practiced sending Winlink check-ins not only to WA7FI, but also to District 5 ARES.  Individuals can send them directly to ARES District 5 and have an additional check-in.  That address is: winlink@piercecountyares.net

### 10.  Next meeting
Saturday 25 March 2023, 10-11am.  Social time 930-10a.


Respectfully Submitted,

*Jane*

EJ Tollett  KJ7RVR


**Attachments**

# Fox Island Weekly Winlink Net Check-in Procedure

The Sunday evening Net Operator will collect the Winlink Check-ins each week.  As the Net Operator should normally be at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at the Nichols Center, this is easiest.  The number will be reported during the Net, and Jane Tollett (or designate) will send it to District 5 ARES.

**FIARC Members Weekly Check-in Procedures:**
1.  Check-ins need to be received by WA7FI by 630pm (1830 PST) each Sunday.
2.  To check-in, send a message to WA7FI through Winlink Express.  In the subject line please note that this is a check-in.  If possible, use the Winlink Check In.txt template on Winlink.  Instructions for using the template are on the Winlink Template document.

**FIARC Net Operator Winlink Check-in Reporting to District 5 ARES**
1.  The Net Control Operator will be the designated Winlink reporter and will make sure each week that the total number of Winlink check-ins is reported to District 5 ARES Winlink (currently Armin R Keen N7JAJ) at winlink@piercecountyares.net on Sunday night.  The ARES deadline is 12noon Tuesday.

2.   In the EOC, the HP laptop computers are on the left side of the desk.  Choose a computer:

| 1st and 5th weeks of the month use FIEP1 | 2nd week use FIEP2, |
|---|---|
| 3rd week use FIEP3, | 4th week use FIEP4. |

3.  Winlink is loaded on all computers, and each computer has at least two Winlink addresses.  However, once you have downloaded messages on one computer, you cannot download them again on another computer.

| FIEP1 – WA7FI only | FIEP2 – WA7FI, WA7FI1 |
|---|---|
| FIEP3 – WA7FI, WA7FI2 | FIEP4 – WA7FI, WA7FI3 |

4.  Please plug in and charge the computer and make sure any needed updates are installed.

5.  **BEFORE clicking** on "**Open Session"** and running the communication session **PLEASE MAKE SURE** in the upper left-hand corner the call sign is set to **WA7FI**.

6. Run a communication session protocol to receive any messages that have been sent to WA7FI since 630pm the previous Sunday.  Get a count. Review each message and reply "Received".  Announce the Winlink count at the end of the Net along with the regular vocal Net check-ins.

7.  Send the Winlink Net Check-in count to District 5 ARES at winlink@piercecountyares.net.  You can do this either from the FIEP1 computer (Outlook) or from your personal email address.  Please label the subject line with "Fox Island FIARC Winlink check-in".

8.  Once the Net is complete  and before leaving, shut down the computer(s), unplug the charge cord(s), and put the computer(s) away.  Please contact any of the following if you notice an issue with the computer.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Hal Goodell – N7NW | n7nw.hal@comcast.net | 253/208-6156 |
| Jim Braden – KI7CQM | jandcbraden@aol.com | 253/459-5588 |
| Jane Tollett – KJ7RVR | e.jane.tollett@gmail.com | 970/531-1866 |
| Jeff Ferguson – K7CRZ | cruiser55n@gmail.com | 360/207-5594 |

## Winlink Check In Template:  Instructions

**1.** Open Winlink Express, and open a new message (Message Menu/New Message or click **New Message** button in button bar)

**2.** Click on **Select Template**, 2<sup>nd</sup> from the left.

**3.** You will see a dialogue box with
    +Standard Templates
      Global Templates
      (Possibly -your call sign- Templates)

**4.** Click on the **+Standard Templates** and you will see a long list of categories, each preceded by a +

**5.**  Click on **+General Forms**, scroll down to **Winlink Check In.txt**, and double click to open the template. The form will open in your default browser.

**6.**  Fill in the form.  Some fields will already be filled in.
- *"Set Up" button*:  Enter group affiliation (e.g. Fox Island EMCOMM Team)
- *Date/Time*:  Autofilled
- *Status*:  Choose Exercise, Net or REAL EVENT (use NET if doing a check-in)
- *Band*:  Choose N/A, VHF, 220, UHF, HF (N/A when employing Telnet protocol/WiFi)
- *Mode*:  Choose Telnet, Packet, or Vara FM (Telnet with WiFi connection)
- *Send To*:  Fill with call signs or regular email addresses, separated by semicolons
- *Call signs of initial on-site operators*:  Enter your call sign
- *Station Contact Name*:  Enter your name
- *Station Call Sign*:  Your call sign for home station, WA7FI when operating Fox Island EOC computer
- *Location*:  If EOC "Fox Island EOC", otherwise use your address or general location
- *Lat/Lon*:  If you are using your copy of Winlink, this will be filled in
- *MGRS Coordinates*:  If you are using your copy of Winlink, this will be filled in
- *Grid*:  If you are using your copy of Winlink, this will be filled in
- *Comments*:  Enter additional info/traffic

**7.**  Left click "**Save Check In Data**" button and store .txt file on your computer to load future Winlink Check In forms with data you just entered.  Note, you will need to update the date/time field each time you load a new Winlink Check In form.

**8.** To complete the form, click **Submit** at the bottom.  If you have omitted any key fields Winlink Express will tell you.  Correct subject line in pop up window:
       Example:  *W7ABC-001 [R] Winlink Net Check In* (-001 incident/mission #, [R, P, E] priority)
 click "**OK**".  Click "**OK**" again and close browser window.

**9.** Go back to Winlink Express and you will note your previously blank message is now all nicely filled in. Click on **Post to Outbox** and you are set.  At this point all you need to do is either collect more messages or select the appropriate communication session protocol from drop down menu then click on **Open Session**.  A communication session window will open.  Click "**Start**" to connect and pass traffic.  Check your inbox for messages received.

**10.**  If you decide also to check-in directly to District 5, please add the following information in the Comments box:  a)Name and call sign, b) Infrastructure (Wifi, TelNet, etc), c) Equipment(laptop, HT, etc)