



Mercer Island Radio Operators



MIRO Newsletter for April 2024

News and Announcements

From the Chair:

Hello MIRO members and friends!

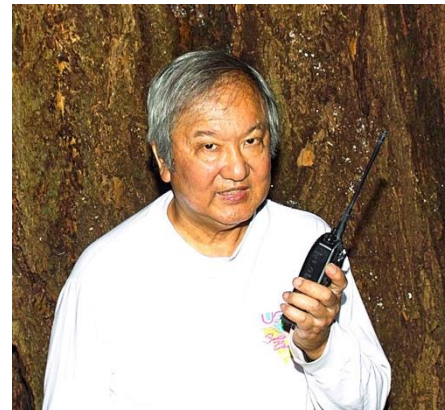
I want to mention two important upcoming events.

First is our Third Thursday General Meeting on April 18th. Our speaker via Zoom will be Dr. Ed Fong (WB6IQN) from the University of California at Santa Cruz.

Dr. Fong is the inventor of the DBJ-1 and DBJ-2 antenna that was featured in the February 2003 and March 2007 QST. His most recent antenna was the TBJ-1 – a tri-band base antenna that was published in March 2017 QST. The DBJ-1 is a highly effective dual band VHF/UHF base station antenna, and the DBJ-2 is the portable roll-up version. The DBJ-2 won the QST Plaque of the Month Award. Both of these antennas are featured in the ARRL VHF antenna Handbook and also in the ARRL Antenna Classic Handbook. There are over 40,000 of these antennas in use today. About half are used by hams and the other half by government and commercial agencies.

Ed will give a history on how these antennas were developed and the theory on how and why they work so well. There is no “black magic” to antennas. He will explain in a non-mathematical manner to convince you for overall performance and simplicity that his approach is one of the most practical.

Ed Fong was first licensed in 1968 as WN6IQN. He later upgraded to Extra Class (when 20 WPM was required) with his present call of WB6IQN. He obtained the BSEE and MSEE degrees from the Univ. of California at Berkeley and his Ph.D. from the Univ. of San Francisco. A Life Senior Member of the IEEE, he has 12 patents and over 40 published papers and books in the area of communications and integrated circuit design. Presently, he is employed by the University of California, Santa Cruz (previously with Berkeley from 1997-2010) as an instructor teaching graduate classes in Antenna Design, RF design, and high-speed interface.



Second, only because it takes place at a later date, is Emergency Preparedness Day. That will be Saturday, June 22nd in a new location: Mercedale Park! There are many ways to help out with this. You can assist with ham radio communications and demonstrations; and there will be HF, VHF, and UHF setups. We need people to pass out emergency preparedness information and answer questions. There is also an opportunity to operate the MIRO radios that are in the north-end Mercer Island Fire Station next to the Post Office. Please contact Pat Hackett or myself if you can be there for any part of that day. Thanks to those of you who have already done that.

March 14, 2024 net follow-up

Mike Post (KJ7FIF – that’s me!) was Net Control, and I am starting to feel a little more comfortable running the Net. If you haven’t done it before, there is a great script to guide you. My first couple of times I pretty much just read that script. I still have it out in front of me as a reference, and we can usually find someone to act as your scribe, so that you don’t have to manage the log while trying to direct the net. If I can do it, you can too.

15 members checked in; no visitors; 4 announcements; and 8 Winlink messages were received. Mark Feuerstein (N7MMO) is signed up for Net Control on April 11.

March 21, 2024 General Meeting follow-up

We had a hybrid meeting with both Zoom and in-person participation. The in-person meeting was at the LDS church at the southwest corner of Island Crest Way and 40th Street on Mercer Island. There was a total of 16 people in attendance (9 people at the Church, and 7 people on Zoom).

Mark Feuerstein (N7MMO) gave us a short presentation on RadioMail. RadioMail is a Winlink application that enables an operator to use a smart phone for lightweight, very portable, Winlink messaging. Android users have long had access to “WoAD”, Winlink on Android, to accomplish the same thing. A copy of Mark’s power point slides is attached.

Following Mark’s presentation we did a brief practice session programming handheld radios with Bob Tykulsker (KM6SO) coaching us. Many thanks to Brian Ross (KC7SDW) who provided a very detailed set of instructions on how to program a Bao Feng radio. I think that even I can do it. If you don’t have a copy of those instructions, please let me know. We have an electronic copy.

February 2024 Activity Report

Pat reports that 25 members, driving 47.2 miles, gave 80.9 hours in support of 3 public service events and 7 meetings, drills, and exercises.

Upcoming MIRO Activities

Emergency Net, Thursday, April 11th, 7:00 PM.

Mark Feuerstein (N7MMO) is scheduled to be Net Control. Please complete an ICS309 log and send it to Bob Tykulsker - rtykulsker@gmail.com, Pat Hackett - pat@pathackett.com, and Mike Post – mpost23@outlook.com after the net. PDF format is best. In the past Woody suggested that the fillable word document from the link below works the best. Most Word programs have the choice of saving as a pdf.

Links to download the ICS309 log form:

word: <https://miro.cmivolunteers.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/ICS-309-Word-document.docx>

pdf: <https://miro.cmivolunteers.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/ICS-Form-309-fillable-1.pdf>

NEW! Immediately following the close out of the Net on the UHF repeater, Bob, KM6SO, invites everybody to join, on the **VHF** repeater, in a discussion about establishing a monthly "digital net". The purpose of the "digital" net would be to gain experience using the many digital modes/programs/apps available, with an emphasis on EmComm uses. To kick things off, Bob would like everybody to download and install Rattlegram, a free SMS-like application available from the [App Store](#) or from [Google Play](#). Rattlegram "acoustically couples" to a radio, no soundcard, TNC or cables needed. Anyone with a VHF radio and a smart phone with Rattlegram can send and receive short text messages even through our repeaters! So, please install Rattlegram and join me after the voice close-out on our VHF repeater!

MIRO General Meeting, Thursday, April 18th, 7:00 PM

The MIRO meeting will be a hybrid meeting by Zoom and in-person at the LDS Church at 4001 Island Crest Way, MI 98040.

This promises to be a very good meeting as we have a guest speaker (by Zoom) from the University of California at Santa Cruz, Dr. Ed Fong. Dr. Fong teaches a class on radio antennas and his students all graduate as Expert Class operators.

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See my introductory article at the beginning of this newsletter!

ZOOM LINK:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8656593928?pwd=TIIERIUybDICT2E1Sm1nVUpaK0JZZz09>

Meeting ID: 865 659 3928 Passcode: MIRO

MIRO Working Meeting, Tuesday, April 30th, 7:00 PM

This is our usual end-of-month planning session. Everyone who wants to help out with upcoming activities and plans for upcoming activities is welcome to join us.

ZOOM LINK (same as General Meeting link):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8656593928?pwd=TIIERIUybDICT2E1Sm1nVUpaK0JZZz09>

Meeting ID: 865 659 3928 Passcode: MIRO

Emergency Preparedness Day, Saturday, June 22nd

We are emphasizing Mercer Island Emergency Preparedness Day this year with Ham Radio Field Day taking a secondary role as we demonstrate our emergency communications capability for Emergency Preparedness Day.

See Page 1 of this newsletter for more information! More details will be available as we get closer to June 22. Save the date, and get involved!!

SUMMER CELEBRATION JULY 13TH MIRO will join the Mercer Island Police Department booth display and provide information about Emergency Preparedness and Ham Radio. This is an excellent opportunity to meet people who are interested in volunteering and emergency preparedness. It is also an entry route for recruiting people for ham classes and licensing.

WINLINK CORNER – Mark Feuerstein N7MMO

Where Resiliency and Proficiency Meet

Welcome to Winlink Corner. If you are interested in becoming an active “Winlinker”, or need Winlink help, let me know - mark.g.feuerstein@comcast.net.

This month’s Winlink summary

The March MIRO Winlink exercise, with eight participants, introduced and refreshed the “I Am Safe” Winlink messaging feature.

Winlink Messages in Your Pocket

Recently I visited my 90-year-old Mom in Wisconsin. While there, I had a chance to try Winlink using my iPhone and handheld radio, things you can carry in your pocket. Using the iPhone app “RadioMail”, which has Winlink gateway mapping capability based on one’s GPS position, I noticed a Packet Winlink gateway three miles from my Mom’s assisted living apartment. Since I had my Kenwood TH-D74A radio with me, I thought I would send a Winlink “I Am Safe” message to my brother and his wife. They live nearby and are very involved with our Mom’s day-to-day activities. Using a Diamond SRH-320A antenna, a modest and flexible little thing that passes TSA scrutiny, I was able to send an “I Am Safe” Winlink message to my brother’s cell phone, demonstrating how any handheld radio and cell phone can supplement, and or substitute for, cellular messaging that we all take for granted. And when I was finished, all the pieces disappeared into my coat pocket (it was cold in Wisconsin).

A very small battery powered Bluetooth modem is required to enable analog and digital handheld radios to connect to iPhones and Android phones. The “Mobilinkd TNC4” is one such, easy to use, device. With a device such as the Mobilinkd TNC4,

your handheld radio and cell phone can connect to any Packet Winlink gateway or APRS station (APRS use requires a separate phone app).

Note: Android users have similar capability using the “WoAD” app (Winlink on Android).

This is a great way to integrate what most of us have in a way that is easily usable on a regular basis, extending availability and building proficiency.

If you are not an active “Winlinker” and would like to learn how Winlink can help you and your neighborhood in the absence of internet service, please let me know. Your fellow Winlinkers can help get you started.

Thanks for reading. Mark, N7MMO

Following page has the Favorite Winlink Gateway Results:

Call	Band	Mode	Submitted by	Submit Count
Telnet	na	na	W7TDO	1
AG7NA-10	2m	Packet	K7CGE	1
KE7ARH-10	2m	Packet	K7CGE	1
KF7ZYF-12	2m	Packet	K7CGE	1
KG7WV-10	2m	Packet	K7CGE	1
W7EFR-10	2m	Packet	K7CGE	1
W7EFR-12	2m	Packet	K7CGE	1
W7EFR-14	2m	Packet	K7CGE	1
AI7HH	20m	VARA	K7CGE	1
AJ7C	20m	VARA	K7CGE	1
K6SDR	20m	VARA	K7CGE	1
KL7ZK	20m	VARA	K7CGE	1
N0DAJ	20m	VARA	KM6SO	1
K6SDR	30m	VARA	KM6SO	1
N7LEW	30m	VARA	K7CGE	1
KF7RSG	40m	VARA	K7CGE	1
KG7AV	40m	VARA	K7CGE	1
N7LEW	40m	VARA	KM6SO;N7MMO;K7CGE	3
N7LOB	40m	VARA	N7MMO	1
VE7RBH	40m	VARA	N7MMO;K7CGE	2
WA7ROY	40m	VARA	K7CGE	1
N7LOB	80m	VARA	KM6SO	1
KM6SO-10	2m	VARA-FM	KM6SO;K7CGE	2
W7MIR-10	2m	VARA-FM	W7VXS;K7CGE	2
K7NWS-10	70cm	VARA-FM	W7VXS;K7CGE	2
KD7WDG	70cm	VARA-FM	N7MMO	1
W7ACS-10	70cm	VARA-FM	W7VXS;K7CGE;W2RDW	3
W7MIR-11	70cm	VARA-FM	N7SSM;K7CGE	2

73,

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Phone: 206-235-7309

Pat Hackett, K7PTH, MIRO Vice-Chair, pat@pathackett.com

Phone: 206-972-2724

Woody Howse, K7EDH, MIRO Chair Emeritus 2023, whowse@me.com

Phone: 206-849-5370

Bob Tykulsker KM6SO, MIRO Chair Emeritus 2022, rtykulsker@gmail.com

Phone: 206-232-8049

MIRO Current Schedule 2024

(All MIRO meetings at 7 PM **SHARP** unless otherwise specified)

2024	
Apr 11	Emergency Net Practice: NCS: Mark Feuerstein N7MMO
Apr 18	MIRO General Meeting: Dr. Ed Fong, Antennas
Apr 30	Last Tuesday Working Meeting
May 9	Emergency Net Practice: NCS: Bob Tykulsker (KM6SO)
May 16	MIRO General Meeting: Conner Webster – Go Bags
May 28	Last Tuesday Working Meeting
Jun 13	Emergency Net Practice: NCS: Toni Okada (W7TDO)
Jun 20	MIRO General Meeting: Pat Hacket, Mike Sedgwick – installing Pat's antenna
Jun 25	Last Tuesday Working Meeting
Jun 29	Fifth Saturday EOC-EOC: tbd
Jul 11	Emergency Net Practice: NCS: tbd
Jul 18	MIRO General Meeting: tbd
Jul 30	Last Tuesday Working Meeting
Aug 8	Emergency Net Practice: NCS: tbd
Aug 15	MIRO General Meeting: tbd
Aug 27	Last Tuesday Working Meeting
Sep 12	Emergency Net Practice: NCS: tbd
Sep 19	MIRO General Meeting: tbd
Sep 30	Last Tuesday Working Meeting
Oct 9	Emergency Net Practice: NCS: tbd
Oct 16	MIRO General Meeting: tbd
Oct 28	Last Tuesday Working Meeting
Nov 14	Emergency Net Practice: NCS: tbd
Nov 21	MIRO General Meeting: tbd
Nov 26	Last Tuesday Working Meeting
Dec 12	Emergency Net Practice: NCS: tbd
Dec 19	MIRO General Meeting: tbd
Dec 31	New Years Eve – no Last Tuesday Working Meeting, Happy New Year!

Other Resources

Training Links

Below are some links for **ongoing**, third-party training and/or testing

- Not training, per se, but online ham testing when you are ready to upgrade your Technician or General License: <https://hamstudy.org/sessions>
- Online CERT training:
<https://i.slcc.edu/emergency-prepare/docs/CERT/online-cert-course.pdf>
- FEMA IS-100C. Introduction to the Incident Command System. A requirement for being badged as a City Volunteer:
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-100.c>
- FEMA IS-700B. Introduction to the National Incident Management System. Another requirement to be badged:
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-700.b>

Regional Radio Nets

What better way is there to improve our radio capability than by participating in available nets easily found in the [Mike & Key Amateur Radio Guide](#). Following are some of available opportunities. I highly recommend that our new hams actively participate.

- Daily: 0900: 146.960: - 103.5: PSRG Nine O'clock net
- Daily: 1200: 146.960: - 103.5: PSRG Nine O'clock net
- Daily: 2100: 146.960: - 103.5: PSRG Nine O'clock net
- SUN: 2000: 147.080: +110.9: King County ARES/RACES Net
- MON: 1900: 146.960: - 103.5: Seattle ACS
- WED: 1930: 146.820: - 103.5: Mike and Key Technical Net
- SAT: 2000: 146.550: SIMPLEX: See how well your signal is heard and who can hear you

RATPAC Videos

Great videos the Radio Amateur Training, Planning and Activities Committee:

- Published Format- <http://tiny.cc/ratpac-list>
- Menu Format- <http://tiny.cc/ratpac-ss>

Winlink Nets

Can't get enough Winlink practice from our monthly nets? Try any or all of the following:

- The "original" <https://winlinkwednesday.net/>. Once a week, send a text message. Once a month, send a Winlink form. Option to check in via HF Winlink Peer-To-Peer.