



*Dixie Amateur Radio Club, INC.*

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## February 2012 Newsletter

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# Radio hobbyists prepare to help during county disasters

By Kevin Jenkins

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ST. GEORGE — As Utahns prepare for a statewide earthquake drill in April, a group of volunteer radio enthusiasts is working with Washington County emergency services officials to ensure electronic communication will still be available should a disaster interrupt local communities' infrastructures.

The Washington County Amateur Radio Emergency Services board met Saturday in the county's emergency operations center to discuss the preparedness of its members, as well as plans for upcoming events in which the group's members will participate.

"This is actually training for situations we might have in an emergency. We make sure our equipment is operating," WCARES technical manager Bob Vosper said as members discussed the group's role in a 100-mile foot race in the Zion Canyon corridor that will take place May 11 and 12, the week after the Ironman triathlon



Marc Harmer, left, Tom Smith, center and Harold Wells discusses plans for volunteer radio enthusiasts to provide communication assistance later this month at the Rhino Rally desert motorbike race in St. George, during Saturday's meeting of the Washington County Amateur Radio Emergency Services board. BY KEVIN JENKINS / THE SPECTRUM & DAILY NEWS

in St. George.

While WCARES concentrates on the county's emergency communications needs, most of its members have dual membership in the Dixie Amateur Radio Club, which responds to events such as the Ironman race and St.

George Marathon, as well as this month's Rhino Rally desert motorcycle race and next month's Blue Angels air show.

Ray Porter, who coordinates the WCARES emergency network, said the radio operators will be stationed along the

course of the Zion 100 and its companion 50-mile race during the two-day, overnight competition to ensure that runners make it from one point to the next and to provide any other communication needs.

"The biggest problem we have is ... (we need) lots of operators, and hopefully (we'll have) dry weather," Porter said.

WCARES Assistant Emergency Coordinator Norman Smith said the radio operators have already done a mock setup along the Zion 100 course to test their ability to communicate with one another on a variety of frequencies and troubleshoot any problems.

"We don't want to wait until the day of the event," he said.

Although the activities provide radio club members a fun outlet for their hobby, the WCARES organization is committed to focusing on more serious situations that can't be planned for with a calendar.

Smith talked about how he has prepared and tested "go kits" for quick response to

emergencies. Smith's lecture dealt more with antenna setup and power for electronics than food and clothing.

The radio operators expect to test their emergency capacity during the Great Utah Shake Out drill April 17, when the state's residents will be invited to drop to the ground at 10:15 a.m., take cover under a sturdy piece of furniture and hold on until the earthquake drill ends.

WCARES has been working with county Emergency Services Director Pete Kuhlmann to determine how it can best function in harmony with county officials, Smith said.

"(Kuhlmann) said he'd like to review our standard operating procedure, and then he would be better prepared to give us the support we need from a county standpoint," Smith said. "Someone has to be in charge who sees the whole picture. ... It's gotten quite complex, and that's why it was important to have someone like Pete Kuhlmann to tell us where to go."

## **New Upgrades and Licenses**

courtesy of [dixieham.org](http://dixieham.org)

Name	Callsign	City	License Achieved
Hans Ralph Kuhni	<u>KF7TRP</u>	Park City, Utah	Technician
Craig Fackrell	<u>KF7TRO</u>	Cedar City, Utah	Technician

### DIXIE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

#### JANUARY BLASTOFF

Harold Wells

On January 28, 2012, Dixie Amateur Radio Club held its January Blast-off, which was a breakfast planned for as many as wanted to come and pay their measly \$2.00 per person. I think we ended up with 30-35 people enjoying the morning.

The original plan was to call those that were coming, on the radio and give them instructions on how to get to the "secret" location where we were holding the breakfast. Due to some unexpected technical problems, we had to change some of the radio call in surprises that we had planned (we will use them at a later date). Thanks to Lynn Bateman for stepping in and helping with the radio call in.

The breakfast was held at the Sandstone Elementary just behind Desert Industries. The call in was scheduled to start at 8:30 A.M., but we were a little delayed. I think everyone who came, enjoyed the breakfast and the socializing with other hams.

The menu for the breakfast was: Pancakes, scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, fresh fruit, orange juice, apple juice and milk. I am pretty sure that we all ate as much as we wanted. We did not have many leftovers.

I want to thank all those who helped in any way in preparing, clean up, etc. If I try and name each of them, I will leave someone out, so I won't try. It is wonderful working and socializing with a great bunch of people.

If for some reason you missed it, come to the next one.