

RRVARC Secretary Report

May 25, 2024

Since he was elected president, Mark has hit the ground running. He does a lot – A LOT – of writing and communication work. In a way he has made my job easier and I want to thank him for that.

In spite of him making my job easier, I still did not manage to get the meeting minutes for the April meeting finished. It will be next week before I get that done so I will ask for a Motion to Postpone the April meeting minutes to the next Club meeting.

We have just learned that there has been an issue of our email host not picking up new members and another where it has not been picking up email changes. Has anyone changed their email address in the last couple of years? Is the address on the sign in sheet accurate? If not please make sure I have your corrected email address before you leave today. As a test, we have been sending a message from Mark every Monday for the last several weeks. Has anyone here not been getting those? You have all heard the saying “You can’t prove a negative.” There is probably at least one member where I can’t say “Are you getting the Club email?” without them scratching their head and saying “I think so.” So, I could use some help with this. We need to make sure that we have accurate records. Two more points on that.

Accurate records – Please go to the website, log in and there is the first full-stop potential issue. Can you get logged in? If not, please reach out to me and I will help you with that. Once logged in please check your profile. Make sure that your contact information is accurate. It isn’t quite as important that someone like Readers Digest has your contact information, but the Club is a service organization. We are upping our technology game with mapping where everyone lives. Your PO Box doesn’t help us to do that. If you use a PO Box but your residence has an address you will share with us, please do. It will help us to visualize where all of the Club members live. Then, in a weather or other event, we can better understand what Club members have perhaps been affected so that we can check on them or who may be able to tell us what they see out the window, from their porch, etc. Which brings me to another point.

For our first several years as members of the Club I did not personally participate in the Monday night nets. They were at 8PM and simply too late for me. Even now at 7PM, I sometimes struggle to get to the radio to do it. But, I now really realize their value. I won’t ask for a show of hands, but I do want to tell the group with the crazy weather alone it is important for local hams, Club members or not, to be certain that they can get into our repeater and communicate with others. The consistent ability to make your radio do what you want it to do can seem very simple, but Murphy’s Law raises it head

at really inconvenient times. In in the lead up to the Solar event I spent an entire net = 30 minutes in this example – unsuccessfully trying to recreate what I routinely do when driving around in Paris – Get my Yaesu FTM-400 into the repeater. I could hear everyone, but I could not get in. A setting had somehow gotten goofed up. The good news was that with text assistance from a friend I was able to figure it out minutes after the net concluded. That was a sobering reminder that it just might not work when you really need it, so some practice is important. If you have not done a Monday net recently, please join us. If you need help making sure that your radio gets into the repeater, please ask any officer and we will either help your ourselves or get you hooked up with someone that will help you. Then, even if you are shy, you can start off by listening. You will hear some people check in like this “W5EBC, Phillip, Honey Grove, No Traffic”. That simple call will elicit a reply from net control that they copied your information and you don’t have to further engage. Leave off the “No Traffic” and when they get to you on the check in list you can tell us anything you want. Just listen to some of the other reports for ideas. I really want to encourage that.

We have recently added some new members and some people have rejoined. As of today we have 57 total members, 55 full voting members. Jerry remembers a time when the Club had over 100 members. We have never had this many since I joined the Club. So, we do have some slow, steady growth. I cannot attribute that to any single thing, but I think hams are feeling the energy and enthusiasm being generated by this group. Here it is a Saturday on Memorial Day weekend and we have a pretty good showing. Mondays routinely have 15-25 people check in on the net. I had to really scrutinize the call sign list because we have Club members that needed to be added and there was not room for anyone else. I did a review and anyone that got a free Club membership and was added in the past; if I knew of them never operating on the repeater we bumped a couple off to make room for new people. We have copies of v12 of that document being passed out now. In the next few days I will get it posted to the website for electronic download.

That is it for now. Any questions?

Motion to accept the Secretary Report?