

SEA-PAC 2017 YL Forum

[SLIDE 1] Welcome to the 2017 YL Forum at Sea-Pac

Yes this is the YL Forum the seminar by and about young ladies in ham radio, but for anyone who wants to listen

Every year we highlight what YLs are doing with their ham radio licenses. We have done some YL and YLRL history as well as more general information about activities in which YLs have participated.

[SLIDE 2] This year I want to highlight a couple of projects that the Clark County Amateur Radio Club in Clark County WA supports.

1. The YL Technician Class a beginning ham radio class taught for women by women
2. The EYEWARN program that started a couple of years ago to provide the CRESA, Clark Regional Emergency Agency, with information about damages and injuries during a disaster.

When we talk about YLs on the air frequently we are talking about ladies who get on the air on nets, contesting, participating in a DXpedition, and doing CW, RTTY, Sideband or the other modes that are out there. Today I want to cover two projects in which YLs are involved in in a way that is not just sitting down at the radio. During the YL Technician Class we get the students on the air briefly and EYEWARN runs a weekly exercise net to keep the net control stations and the responding stations in practice. The net frequencies are on 2M. Getting on the air is very important, but sometimes it is good to get involved with other aspects of the hobby. In this case both EYEWARN and the YL Class are an opportunity to further the hobby and help other hams.

The first is what we have come to call the YL Technician Class. The class furthers the hobby by helping to add new YLs and new Technicians to the hobby. The first class was held in March 2012 and came about when I was sitting at the YLRL table during the 2011 Sea-PAC. As you may have noticed not all OMs will make eye contact with the gals sitting at the YLRL club table. But it was Saturday afternoon and things were pretty slow, so one of the Northwestern Division Section

Managers started talking to me. He mentioned that he knew a few ladies who had given successful license classes for women only. It was not a long conversation, but it was useful.

[SLIDE 3] Delvin Bunton N7QMT, who heads up the seminars here at Sea-Pac, and his friend Phil Peterson AC7NB have taught classes sponsored by the Clark County Amateur Radio Club in Vancouver for years. I talked about a ladies only class with Delvin and he agreed there was a market for it. I worked with Margaret Hardwick AE7MB to get it all set up. If you are interested in starting a class contact me, because the details would take too much time to do it today. We worked with Delvin to book a room in the location he and Phil use. It is in an LDS meeting house in the Orchards area in Clark County, and has a blackboard as well as space to project PowerPoint slides. Over the years we have used an American Legion post which wasn't ideal, because it was difficult to get the room set up for our class. We have been at the Local 40 & 8 Voiture for a few years and that has worked out well.

After talking with Delvin and looking at their class format, Margaret and I took inventory of what we thought our class format should be. The mission was clear. It was to present the material in a manner that the audience would find understandable and acceptable. We recognized that most women are not exposed to science and math in a way that facilitates learning it and making use of it. Margaret and I both worked in science oriented professions, so we appreciate technology, but I still am unable to explain any of the license concepts that involve a formula. We recognize that if English and Latin or Spanish or German are your only languages that math and science can be a challenge.

We agreed to use the ARRL Ham Radio License Manual Level 1 Technician. the other class uses it and I appreciate some of the detail as well as the Exam Pool with answers. I am a retired librarian and I appreciate that they refer to the question number in the text and the page in the book is included with the answers. I also recommend other materials and suggest that an additional book may be helpful. The question pool is the same but the explanations differ, and that can be helpful.

The class is 16 hours altogether. Two hours on 2 Thursday and Friday evenings, four hours on two Saturdays with the exam on the last day. The other CCARC class is 4 hours shorter. I have a copy of KB6NU Dan Romanchik's No Nonsense Technician Class Study guide. It is short and concise. It contains all the material available in the Technician exam pool. He teaches a 6.5 hour class with an exam session at the end. Class times may be more related to instructor and facility availability than anything else. The reason we opted for more time is that we wanted the students to have enough time with the material to become familiar with it and ask questions. While we stick to the content on the exam we tell stories and have examples that we hope will help the concepts stick in the students' minds. We encourage the students to have read the material before the class and provide a lesson plan to help them know what will be presented when. Delvin also asks that the students have studied before the class. We agree that any student who has read the manual, attended the classes, and taken online practice exams has a good chance of passing the exam.

My pre-class publicity does not have a wide range, and we usually wind up with between 6 and 15 students. We take time at the beginning to outline the class make sure everyone knows we welcome questions and give a couple of formats for them. Our venue does not have a white board or a blackboard and we don't always remember to bring a white board with an easel. All of the instructors have PowerPoint presentations that we agree is not ideal, but it is a way to display diagrams and formulas. We have 4 instructors and are flexible to accommodate their schedules, because of that the order of the class varies from one time to the next and we're not sure the order matters. We have developed a Family Feud format for the rules and regulations, dividing the class into two teams and alternating between teams with the questions. We do that on the last day before the exam.

I have not been consistent about keeping statistics, but the last class of 4 all passed with scores above 90%. Most of the ladies who take the exam wind up with a license and many of them do it on the first try. With the CCARC VE schedule and two sets of classes, it is easy to find an exam session.

I helped Delvin and Phil with a Ham Radio 101 class, a post-Technician exam one session class to give students information about what their first radio should be. Ladies from 3 of our classes attended. I hear several of our former students on the CCARC 2M repeater YL net on Wednesday evening. Another 2 or 3 of our students regularly help the club provide communications for events like the MS Walk, the Veterans Parade, and Walk and Knock in Vancouver. We encourage them to get into the hobby after they receive their license and many of them do. We also encourage them to join the club and attend meetings. Currently the club will give a year's free membership to the club to anyone who takes a class and passes the exam given at the end of the class.

We always encourage the students to follow up with us and ask questions when they run into something, or are ready to purchase a radio. Several of them have and they always give us good feedback on the class.

The class is an effort to encourage women to join the ranks of amateur radio operators in a way that is not outside of their comfort zone. We have women start the class and not finish, mostly due to conflicts. We are not always the best judges of our time. Many of the students tell us they appreciate that it is a for women-only class and we plan to keep it that way.

[SLIDE 4] This is the class flyer for the next class in October. I have some hard copies if you are interested. I also have hard copies of the last lesson plan if you are interested in it. If anyone has a question about the class, we can talk about that before starting on EYERWARN.

[SLIDE 5] Let's get started with the second part of this session. Discussing the YL Technician class at a YL Forum is a slam dunk as it is taught by women for women. EYEWARN is a tougher concept, but one I have always felt is equally valid. You can take the YL class and get your license, but at some point in your ham radio career you will be faced with the decision to go for something even if it is not YL-only. Many of the past YL Luncheon speakers are very radioactive and participate in many aspects of the hobby. With this in mind I decided to include EYEWARN in this forum.

The slide on the screen is the first slide of NO7DE John Gaynor's presentation from a year or so ago. He gave me his slides and script to use to develop my presentation. Remember through-out my presentation that the EYEWARN mantra is: We report what we see from where we are. That is what EYEWARN was created to do.

[SLIDE 5] EYEWARN started out as a discussion among some of the Clark County Ares Emergency Managers and CRESA, the Clark Regional Emergency Agency, about engaging the unaffiliated ham radio operators to assist CRESA with Situation reports (SitReps) that expand the situational awareness of the damages and injuries in the county during a disaster.

- There are roughly 1,700 hams in Clark County WA.
- Approx 100 are a part of Clark County ARES
- The remaining 1,600 could report injuries and damage from where they are and possibly save lives.
- We report what we see from where we are.

When they asked for a volunteer to lead the EYEWARN network John Gaynor NO7DE agreed to put it together. EYEWARN is as far as we know the first net of its kind and the radio club did have the name copyrighted. The name may be used with permission from the club. It is a weekly net that takes check ins by Clark County WA zip code. The weekly nets are exercise training nets. There is a question for each net having to do with damage from weather, fire, earthquakes, and volcanoes for example. The stations checkin in Zip code order and provide an answer to the exercise question usually YES or NO. In case of a disaster the question would be related to the disaster and designed to give CRESA information about damage to infrastructure such as bridges, power and telephone lines, cell towers, schools, hospitals, etc.

The EYEWARN net consists of a group of net control operators who alternate operating the exercise nets on Wednesday evenings. A smaller group meets on a monthly basis to plan ahead for the net and keep the group going. In addition to John Gaynor, he has an assistant, and there are two net controls who are in charge

of net operations--doing the monthly NCS schedule for the Wednesday nets and planning for the disaster and emergency nets.

In a disaster EYEWARN would likely self-activate to gather information to give CRESA. There is no real overlap between ARES and EYEWARN. The EYEWARN net control station would work with the ARES team located at CRESA to transmit to CRESA the situation report data collected.

In 2016 EYEWARN participated in the local Cascadia Rising exercise. CRESA and EYEWARN both learned quite a lot. The data provided to CRESA by EYEWARN was something new and useful for them. EYEWARN received positive feedback from their part in Cascadia Rising.

John Gaynor worked hard in 2016 to produce a video that is a good summary of the EYEWARN net and what it does. He is talking about a training video for net control operators in 2017. There has been interest by other clubs in developing an EYEWARN program so we will do what we can to support that.

We have not made much progress on plans for 2017 yet, but, the net control station training video has been discussed ever since the original EYEWARN video was released so maybe we can get started on it. As is any other net we are looking for more check-ins and understand the importance of promoting the net locally. It is just finding the best means of communicating our needs.

[SLIDE 6] This slide shows the scheduled weekly EYEWARN exercise net. The 2M & 70 cm repeaters are usually linked, which gives better coverage over most of Clark County and most stations that check in are heard. There is a simplex net once a month. As you can imagine this net is the one has it's challenges and is good training for relay stations. We are always looking for relay stations to cover the areas outside of the area covered by the simplex frequency; maybe it is better to say that the simplex net shows the radio amateurs who check-in as well as net control stations where their stations can either be better tuned or improved.

In the beginning I volunteered to be one of the net control stations. It is something I have done for public service events, and thought it would be fun. As it turns out John has encouraged anyone who is interested to participate and it has

been pretty easy working with the EYEWARN net group. The list of net control operators is maybe a dozen or so, and we need more. Of those dozen two YLs are regularly on the net control schedule and another one works with the management group. As a member of one of the Clark County ARES teams this has been an interesting and valuable experience. I was out of town during Cascadia Rising and missed that experience, but the weekly nets are good practice and a good place for any new ham to get net control practice. The net runs anywhere from 1 to 3 dozen check-ins. The choice of disaster of the week and the questions can make it even more interesting. We have agreed to be more creative in choosing exercise net scenarios. We have a standard list, but are working on finding more topics.

Over all the amateur radio community is a great bunch of people and a pleasure to work with. During the YL class we encourage the students to look at their license as a learning permit and to get out there and learn as much as you can. Last year's YL Luncheon speaker Nancy Rabel Hall KC4IYD helped a couple of friends to get their licenses. After they both passed she suggested they devote a month to a new ham radio mode or experience. RTTY one month, Field Day in June, Packet, CW, PSK, Sideband, contests, anything to get you on the air and learning something new. So far the most I've learned about ham radio is from teaching the YL Class. The next is to give a seminar at SEA-PAC, because you have to know more about the topic than you actually present.

Before I get further distracted are there questions about EYEWARN or the class or anything else?