

Ham 33 – Evergreen Ham, Where We Are

Dr. Marc & Rosemary © 220404

1. The communications group has seen a whirlwind of activities since the idea was fostered.
2. Study guides have been developed to assist getting a license as straight-forward as possible.
3. A Volunteer Examiner (VE) group from advanced license Hams does in-house testing.
4. Three classes included all age groups of ladies and gentlemen, non-technical to engineers, active families to retired. Unexpectedly, there is significant participation from outside of Evergreen. Since we do not advertise, that simply means people are sharing.
5. Three test sessions have produced entry level Technician, broad knowledge General, and even Extra class licensees.
6. Ham is not a free-lunch. Effort, commitment, and perseverance are required to study and pass the exam. Notice we did not say technical skill. NONE of us knew the ham information before WE started studying, just like everyone else. It is exactly like the Drivers License, everyone starts at ground zero and memorizes the questions and answers. Congratulations to those who have done the work.
7. **IMPORTANT:** The Technician Question Pool will change in July. We urge you to complete your Technician exam soon. Our VE last test session with the current question pool is May. Some have started and dropped by the wayside, just like the parable of the sower and seeds. We do not keep score or records. You can come and go at will and re-enter the learning process to get your license. You can do it!
8. Amazingly, 11 people are now studying for their General License. These obtained their Technician at Evergreen and are vigorously pursuing advanced knowledge and skills.
9. Many people think Ham is about radios. That was in grandpa's day. Ham has been *amateur* (unpaid) *wireless technology*, since Marconi. Yes, the same wireless that connects everything. Ham = technology at a distance. To hams, infrastructure is optional. Ham = *technology and communications when nothing else works*.
10. A NET on Monday night at 7:00 PM allows connection. For ham to work, you must know how, when, and where to get connected, just like everything else. The NET objective is multi-purposed, including interaction, learning to use equipment, and testing out communications. We all have learned a great deal from these contacts and attempted contacts. Both provide information.
11. If you do not communicate with others, how will you ever communicate? You may have a license to practice but you are not a practicing ham. Somebody wants to 'hear' you.
12. We are using a variety of communications vehicles, with varied technologies so each Ham can see the technology they want to pursue.
13. **Repeaters** allow you to use a small radio, to talk to a more powerful radio, which relays your signal to your intended contact. Repeaters are big and expensive. Lessons learned: Some repeaters work better than others. Some radios work better than others. Some antennas work better than others.
14. **Simplex** is simplest, one radio talking to another. NO infrastructure. Lessons learned: This is the tool which works when nothing else does. For simplex, handi-talkies are not effective outside of rock-throwing distance. Tim Allen was right, 'More power is better.'
15. **AllStar** connects radios via the internet. This has been used for years before Zoom. Since the connection can involve people on either end via radio, you must have a ham license to gain access. Access can include cellphone, or VHF/UHF radio. Any ham, anywhere can get into the system with or without a radio. Lessons learned: No excuses. No radio? No problem!
16. **Others:** The Elmers invite you to join us in experimenting and finding alternate, reliable comms. We are playing with a network between scattered or distributed radios This will involve a few 'Makers' and the Raspberry Pi. For lack of another term, we will call it 'scattered simplex.'
17. Life is good. Enjoy.

