

Mecklenburg County ARES®

History of ARES and NTS

The history of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service begins in 1935 with a note in the Sept. 1935 issue of QST magazine, which is published by the ARRL, asking hams interested in signing up for emergency communications to write to League HQ in Newington CT. Initial instructions were for members to contact their local civic officials and offer their services. The goal was to have at least one ARRL Emergency Corps member in each community. The first local emergency coordinators were appointed in 1937. Following WWII the position of Section Emergency Coordinator was established as an official appointment to be made by the Section Communications Manager, (now SM). In 1951 the AEC became the Amateur Radio Emergency Corps. In 1963 the AREC was made the emergency division of the Amateur Radio Public Service Corps. In 1978 the AREC was changed to ARES.

The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) sponsored the Amateur Radio Public Service Corps (ARPSC), as a voluntary organization of licensed amateur radio operators. It was in answer to a Federal Communications Commission mandate in Part 97 under Basics and Purpose, to enhance, "the value of the amateur service as a voluntary noncommercial communications service, particularly with respect to providing emergency communications." The Communications Department of the ARRL in Newington, CT guides today all activities of ARES and the NTS.

In 1949 the ARRL organized the National Traffic System, which is the largest amateur message relay system in the world and is, used by amateur radio operators as a 365-day a year public service. The NTS is a system of traffic or message handling nets, which meet daily across the US. In this system a message can be introduced at any point within the system and be delivered at any other point intact. This system covers all of the US, its territories and possessions and all of Canada. This takes quite a bit of organization and training to accomplish. To assure that a message is not lost or changed in transit the NTS has over the years established a format for message transmission within the NTS.¹

¹ Source: Kentucky Amateur Radio Web Site – www.kyham.net

Today most counties in the US have an ARES organization and at least regional access to the NTS. Here in Mecklenburg County we have a regular ARES Net every Wednesday night at 7:30 PM and the surrounding counties have similar nets either called weekly or monthly. The principle VHF NTS net in this region is the Central North Carolina Traffic Net at 9:30 PM daily on the 146.820 Wilkesboro repeater. Regional HF Traffic nets include the Tar Heel Emergency Net, Nightly 7:30 p.m. on 3.923 Mhz and the North Carolina Morning Net, 7:45 a.m. Daily on 3.927 Mhz.

This year the Amateur Radio Emergency Service is 79 years old and the National Traffic System is 65 years old. Both of these organizations are just as relevant today as they were when they were created. Amateur Radio is still the most reliable method of communication ever devised and will remain so well into the foreseeable future.

When All Else Fails – Amateur Radio!

Note:

National Hurricane Preparedness Week: May 25-31.

<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/prepare/>



The image is a promotional banner for ARRL Field Day 2014. It features a dark blue background with a yellow border. On the left, there is a logo consisting of a yellow antenna with a diamond-shaped call sign 'ARRL' inside. Below the logo, the text 'ARRLFD14' is written in large white letters, followed by 'HAM RADIO' in yellow and 'On the Air from Anywhere!' in white. To the right of the logo, the text 'ARRL Field Day' is written in large white letters, followed by 'June 28-29, 2014' in yellow. Below this, the text 'Amateur Radio's most popular on-air operating event!' is written in white. At the bottom right, there is a line of text: 'Show your support for ARRL Field Day with official merchandise. Shirts, hats, pins, patches and mugs available now!'.

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