



# The Sentinel



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## Turn up the radio

### Grant helps out Amateur Radio Club



Sentinel Photos/TRAVIS MORSE

**NEW EQUIPMENT** — Amateur Radio Club of Mt. Vernon Treasurer Wallace Strow tries out some of the club's newly purchased equipment on Thursday. The emergency communication equipment was funded through a grant. Strow also serves as the Amateur Radio Emergency Services assistant emergency coordinator. AT LEFT, The Amateur Radio Club of Mt. Vernon recently received a grant for \$9,216 to help purchase emergency equipment. Pictured is some of the equipment.



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**MOUNT VERNON** — The Amateur Radio Club of Mt. Vernon (ARCOM) has received a grant for \$9,216 to help purchase emergency equipment for the club.

More specifically, the club is using the funds to assemble “emergency go-kits” that will give operators quick and easy access to communications equipment that could be deployed during emergencies in our community. The new equipment can also be used to train new amateur radio operators, said ARCOM Club Secretary Keith Hertenstein.

“We were able to put together (six) emergency go-kits for the radio club,” Hertenstein said. “If we have a disaster and one of our (emergency) agencies needs communications, whether it be at a shelter or a staging area, they can call upon us to provide communications.”

**COMMUNICATIONS GEAR** — Amateur Radio Club of Mt. Vernon President Steve Warner tries out one of the new handheld radios purchased by the club.



Sentinel Photo/TRAVIS MORSE

During such a disaster, amateur radio operators could access equipment and use it at certain assigned areas. For example, if an operator had to be stationed at a hospital, they could get a go-kit, take it to the hospital, and set up a communications station there, Hertenstein said. The kit includes a power supply, antenna and the radio itself.

According to ARCOM President Steve Warner, the local club applied for the grant in June of 2024, and was notified of the grant award in late November. The grant comes from the American Radio Relay

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# Radio:

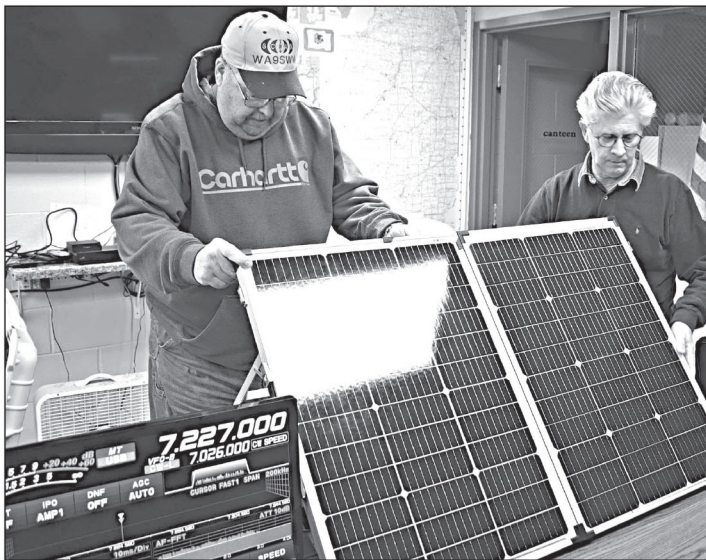
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League (ARRL) Foundation in Newington, Connecticut.

The funding is helping support ARCOM's overall effort to purchase communication equipment, attract and train new and currently licensed amateur radio operators, provide outreach to youth interested in STEM programs, and to assist the Jefferson County Emergency Management Agency and Jefferson County Sheriff's Office in coordinating amateur radio emergency communications.

"We're looking forward to using this new equipment in training and attracting new HAM radio operators, and also in support of emergency communications in the county," said Warner, who is also the Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) emergency coordinator.

According to an ARCOM news release, the grant funds were received in late December. The club used the funding to buy two high frequency (HF) radio transceivers, four VHF/UHF mobile transceivers and five VHF/UHF handheld radios. This equipment will be fitted into waterproof hard cases or "go-kits," which can be



Sentinel Photo/TRAVIS MORSE

**SOLAR CHARGING PANEL — Amateur Radio Club of Mt. Vernon President Steve Warner, LEFT, and ARCOM Treasurer Wallace Strow hold up one of the solar charging panels used to power some newly purchased equipment. A grant from the American Radio Relay League Foundation funded the purchase.**

hand-carried to any incident location.

"Powering the equipment are lithium batteries and solar charging panels allowing days of extended operating time, 'off-grid' when necessary," the release states. "Compact emergency antennas are included in each corresponding radio's backpack."

Training ARCOM Club members in the deployment and use of the new radio equipment will start immediately. Also, the equipment will be fully utilized at the annual ARRL Field Day emergency exercise held on the fourth full weekend in

June, as well as during the Jefferson County Historical Village Fall Festival.

"The public is invited to these events to see the new equipment in action and learn more about amateur radio in our community," the release states. "Simulated emergency tests play a vital role for our community and are conducted yearly."

The Amateur Radio Club of Mt. Vernon meets at 7 p.m. every third Tuesday of the month in the banquet room of Mount Vernon Outland Airport. All are welcome to attend. For more information, visit the club's Facebook page.