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Solution Series: Equip Yourself with Grid-Down Communications with John Jacob Schmidt

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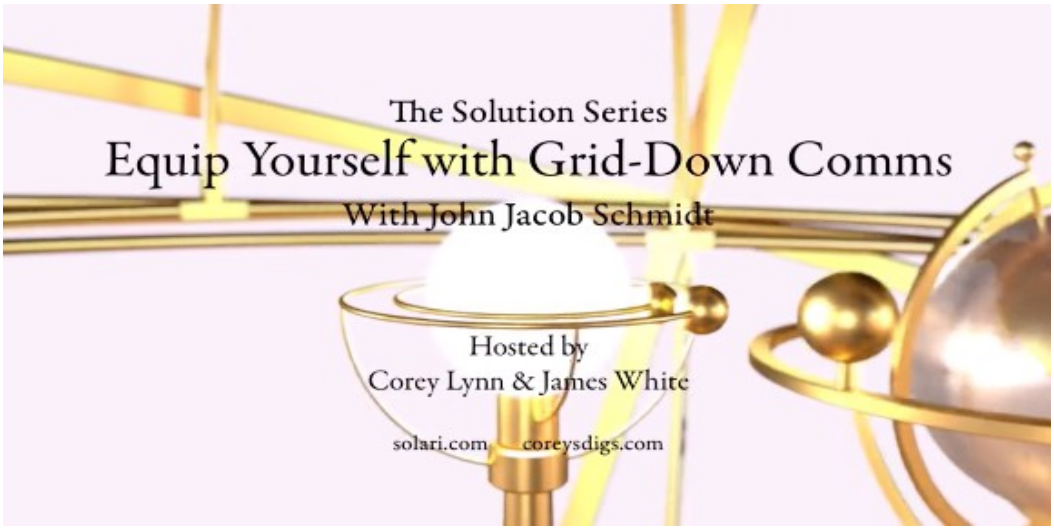

James White: Hi, I'm James White from the *Solution Series*. Thank you for joining us. We are brought to you by *The Solari Report* and CoreysDigs.com. I am joined by the founder and editor at Corey's Digs, Corey Lynn. Corey, thank you so much for being here with me once again on the *Solution Series*.

Corey Lynn: I'm super-excited to be here. This is going to be a fantastic episode, and I have so many questions.

White: It is going to be a fantastic episode. Our guest is very knowledgeable about the topics we will be talking about; communications – radio communications, grid-down communications, mesh networks, and ham radio. But let me give our guest, John Jacob, a proper introduction.

John Jacob Schmidt is the founder and national director of AmRRON, the American Redoubt Radio Operators Network, established in 2011. It is a patriot-oriented network of radio operators that trains for disasters and civil defense emergencies.

John Jacob is also the voice behind the microphone of *Radio Free Redoubt*, the weekly podcast addressing conservative Christian patriot issues. He is joined by his cohost and wife, Lady Liberty, on *The Morning Commute* radio show, which airs at 7am each morning from Spokane, Washington. *The Morning Commute* airs on the American Christian network affiliate, Liberty Broadcasting, on both AM and FM stations.

John Jacob was a communications specialist with the 5th Special Forces Group and 3rd Special Forces Group at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and served in Desert Storm with the 3rd Group.

John Jacob Schmidt, thank you so much for joining us on *The Solution Series*.

John Jacob Schmidt: Always a pleasure to talk to you. Thank you. And it's a pleasure to meet Corey for the first time also. I've watched her work and read her postings and articles. It's a treat.

White: It's a treat for all of us. This should be a great broadcast.

John, let me start off with this if I may: We are going to talk about solutions, but in a wartime situation, what always happens first is one side always tries to take out the communications of the other side, which is almost the first thing they do in a combat scenario. It goes to show you that the communications portion of things is super important. Let's start there as a foundation, and you can build from that.

Schmidt: That is an excellent foundation. AmRRON exists to provide emergency and unconventional communications for disasters and civil defense. We need to prepare for that as citizens to be able to share information with others, be informed ourselves, and be able to help our communities as much as we can to cope with that kind of an event.

White: There are mechanisms that can be put in place to protect your electronic equipment in case of some of those kinds of scenarios you mentioned. The communication capability that you want to maintain and keep in place, you're not necessarily worried about reaching people three or four states away – although I know there is the ability to do that. You probably want to start local around your own neighborhood and set up some sort of a local type of a communication network. Is that accurate?

Schmidt: Yes, and really, you need all of it. Your highest priority is what is going on right in your own neighborhood, and then your community, your surrounding counties, and then your state, your region; you work outward from there. It's all important, but you don't want to neglect one for the other. Some people are into HF, long distance radio, and they neglect the short-range communications so they don't know what is going on in their own communities.

Then there are people who don't care what is going on two states over; they just want their handheld radio, and want to be able to talk to their friend down the street or their family members, and they could care less about what is happening outside of their area.

There is a case to be made for having a total situational awareness. Although AmRRON is made up of many dedicated communication specialists, their sensors are out and they are gathering all of it – from local to national and

continental.

It does need to be a total package, and you don't have to be a communications expert to at least stay informed. Venezuela was a very good example of that several years ago when their country was collapsing. They had fighting going on all over the place. They had criminal elements that were organizing and setting up checkpoints. The people had no power and no food. Their shipments stopped because of checkpoints.

They were running out of food, but the common theme that we see here is that people are just as hungry for information as they are for food, and they have no idea what is going on. They know what is going on in their village, but they don't know why supplies aren't getting in to them yet. They don't know what is going on at the capitol. Do we even have a government? Who is in charge? When is help coming? Is help coming?

It is great to know what is going on in your neighborhood, but you also need to know what is going on outside the area that could be affecting you directly or indirectly.

Just this year, right before Russia went into Ukraine, I don't know if you remember but the government of Kazakhstan collapsed. There was rampant crime, they lost power, they lost internet, cellphones, everything.

There was another headline, and I cut out the clip. Some people were meeting at a bakery to see if there was food, but it turned out to be a meeting point to share information. The headline ran, "The people are just as hungry for bread as they are for information." We see this common theme over and over.

What they didn't know was that the Russian military, to help stabilize the situation when the Kazakhstan government collapsed and these people were completely grid-down, rolled in force into Kazakhstan. So, there were people in villages standing around at the bakery trying to find out what was going on, and they had no idea that a couple of hundred kilometers away was a foreign military convey that was headed in their direction.

White: Corey, do you have anything that you want to add? I was going to ask

him about the BaoFeng. When you are talking about communications, I think I have a couple of BaoFeng radios. They are the starter sets, but they are very popular and I've heard many great things about them. That's not a paid endorsement by any means.

Is that the type of thing that you are talking about; having that communication? I don't know the range on those things, but I do know that you can pick up a lot of local stuff with the BaoFengs.

Schmidt: Yes, those really are designed for very local communications. They are designed specifically with ham radio in mind. The antennas and the electronics and everything in there are tuned for the hand radio range. Even though you can program frequencies outside of the ham radio spectrum so that you can listen to your local fire, your EMS, your police, your local business bands – your towing company and your taxi cab company, the hospital, and the lumber yard – they all have frequencies that you can program into as well. They don't transmit well because of the antennas, but it's a good way to stay informed.

I think that is a great starting point. It's one of the things that I was hoping to get to. People ask, "Where do I start?" The answer is to start locally.

If you and your family need to convoy out of town, you want to stay in communication with each other. You want to be able to stay informed with neighbors around the area. If you have criminal 'dirt bags' prowling neighborhoods because you're grid-down and they are taking advantage of the opportunity, you want to be able to share information with your neighbors for security and to stay informed.

Even if you're not a licensed ham operator, get your local ham radio repeater frequencies programmed in. It's super-easy; start local here.

Because so many people have the BaoFengs and they are so prolific, we will talk about those. But before that, I want to say that if you can, I strongly recommend to take the 'nosebleed' and pay a little more for Japanese-made Yaesu and Icom handheld radios. As much as you can, wean yourself off Chinese-made products.

We are supporting a communist regime any time we buy anything from China, but more importantly, the Chinese see everything as a battlefield – from education to social media to even the products they sell to us. I would not be surprised if they decided to finally throw down Taiwan or the US or whoever at the flip of a switch. You could find your BaoFeng not working, whereas other models that are not Chinese-made are continuing to work.

It's a great thing to get your entire country using your products as a pacifier. If they are a sworn enemy to you, if I were them, I would build in the ability to kill all electronics that I've sold to you.

Lynn: I wanted to interject for a moment and ask you a couple of questions regarding what I've been working with. I think that might be helpful for people.

I recently picked up a couple of the BaoFengs-the F8HP-and I have a tech person helping me with this. We downloaded CHIRP and set up a number of programs on there. There are a few things I'm wondering about. One is: We tested it out as far as local communication on the FRS channel – family-friendly where people can talk to their family members if you don't have a license. We were able to hit about a mile and a half with a little bit of static. It was easy to hear the person. But going beyond that, you start losing them.

My question is: If you have two family members who are within two miles of each other, is it possible to add an antenna to the roof to try to extend that reception a little better? Obviously, I've already expanded with an additional antenna. I have a GMRS antenna on it. So that is one question.

Also, you had mentioned the repeaters and finding the repeaters to expand that. I'm wondering what the easiest way is to locate those repeaters.

Schmidt: That is a whole string of awesome questions that we can consider.

Remember when I said that these are designed for amateur radio? In any radio communication, it's all about the antenna. The little rubber-duck antenna that comes with the BaoFeng is about as close as you can get to not having an antenna. They are very poor, but they are compact and portable.

When you program frequencies into those that are outside of the amateur radio band, your efficiency drops way off. When you press the microphone button on a radio, energy goes down that wire and out the antenna. It is either going to be in the form of a radio signal or heat. The higher the heat you have (which we call 'standing wave ratio' or SWR), when your SWR gets to a certain point, all you are doing is terking (repetitive snap-back jerking movement)and you have very little energy being translated into signal.

There are antennas that are made for FRS bands and the MERS bands that you can get. Shop for those. It will probably cost you $18-$20, but you will see your range increase significantly from that mile and a half. You will get more than that out of a double-pack FRS radio that you buy from Walmart. You will get better range from those radios, which are putting out less power, because the antennas are dead center in the middle of your FRS frequencies.

Lynn: You're talking about an antenna directly on the handheld radio, not an additional antenna on the roof, for example, correct?

Schmidt: That was the next thing that I was going to say. I'm talking about an antenna that screws directly into the radio itself. Get one that is tuned into the bands that you are operating in.

Any time you can get that antenna up and outside and as high as possible, you are going to see very noticeable performance difference and improvement. So, if you have an antenna already for FRS and it's outside, that is a huge improvement over the handheld.

White: Does that help only with the transmission, or will that also help with the reception? Will you also be able to receive signals?

Schmidt: It's for both. An antenna that is resonant, meaning that it is specifically designed for a specific frequency or a range of frequencies, will always receive better if it is resonant or tuned and will transmit better.

You are going to see overall improvement. For reception or transmitting, getting that antenna high in the air as you can and outside of a building is going to be a

'night and day' difference.

Lynn: Even without that, we were able to pick up on some chatter several states away with only the handheld. But as far as transmitting, we were capped at about a mile and a half. That is why I was asking about roof antennas.

Also, you had mentioned Yaesu, which are Japanese radios. Are those analog or digital?

Schmidt: They make both; they make digital and analog.

Lynn: What do you recommend as far as digital? One of the things we've seen is, in some areas, the emergency services and others have switched over to digital, so it's difficult trying to pick them up on analog.

Schmidt: You are talking about some quite advanced effects here. You won't be able to pick up a digital signal on analog. And even with a digital DMR (digital mobile radio), you won't be able to pick those up - the emergency services and the sheriff's department, and fire. They are using what is called Apco-25 or P25, which is encoded digital encoding.

In the concentric layers of communications, you want two-way communication between you and your group. Analog like your BaoFeng is fine. That will get the 'job done'. But to stay informed, I strongly recommend a scanner radio that will pick everything up from your airport, your EMS, etc. Get one that has P25 decoding capabilities.

White: Like a top-of-the-line Bearcat? Is that a good model?

Schmidt: Yes, Uniden specifically. Uniden makes a few different models that will receive analog and digital, and it will decode P25, which more and more of our emergency services are going to. It will decode that. That is for your situational awareness; stay informed of what is going on in your community and around you in your area.

That will give you listening capabilities and situational awareness that you won't get from a handheld ham radio.

Lynn: And you said that those are quite expensive.

Schmidt: For example, I would say that one of the most user-friendly models available is the Uniden Home Patrol. They cost about $450-$550, and will decode P25. But what is 'really slick' about those is that with many scanners, you have to be a 'super-geek' to program, but with this model, you just punch in your zip code for the area that you are in, or the area that you are going to be traveling to or through. If you are traveling, as you go, you can just punch in the new zip code and it automatically brings up all the frequencies in that area – your local hospital, police, fire, airport, the forest service, the department of transportation, etc.

White: They're about $450. You're 'right on'. It does the P25 as well, and weather alerts.

Schmidt: They are 'really slick'. I wish I had one. I don't have a Homepatrol, but I do have a Uniden scanner that decodes in P25. It's rather awesome and 'cool'.

I got one from eBay that someone was selling for about $150 cheaper than buying it new. That's how I 'scored' that one, but that is quite a bit more complex to program. The Homepatrol is 'really slick'.

Lynn: You were starting to say something about some of the emergency services having it encoded so that you are not going to be able to pick them up? Or is that what you are referring to when you talk about the P25?

Schmidt: The P25 is the encoding language; it's Apco-25. It's a digital encoding computer language that can transmit and receive. With a scanner of course, you can't transmit, but you can receive, and they decode P25. So that lets you listen in to a lot of your emergency services.

It doesn't address encryption. Maybe some of your sheriff's departments SWAT teams or some of those other departments use encryption. Usually that is short-lived, though, because it's a 'big pain', and they don't have interoperability with other agencies. It's expensive, and usually the person who gets 'tagged' with

maintaining it, loses interest. Usually, the department will just get rid of it after a while – except for maybe the HRT or SWAT teams; they will keep encryption.

The rest of it is not encrypted; it's just encoded. It's like the signal coming in to your television from the local news stations are encoded with a digital encoding, and your television has the right software in it to decode it.

Lynn: Can you explain to people what FRS is to be able to communicate, what license versus unlicensed is, and what types of licenses people might be able to get if they want to go that route?

Schmidt: We are huge proponents of getting your ham license for several different reasons. What you are talking about is FRS, and there are three: We call it the CH3 Project within AmRRON, and that is how AmRRON got started.

You do not need a license for the FRS (Family Radio Service, and you do not need a license for MERS (Multi-Use Radio Service) or CB (Citizen's Band). Those three are very common, and you don't need a license for them. They vary between VHF, UHF, and CBs are on the edge of HF. Each of those perform differently and behave differently, but generally, you'll find that you can program MERS and FRS frequencies into a BaoFeng, and you can transmit on it, but it won't give you the performance that you are looking for unless you get the proper antenna that is designed for the frequency that you are operating on.

There are ways, and AmRRON started as a preparedness family's mutual assistance group where a couple of people had an FRS and a MERS, and a family over here had a CB and FRS. They all had a little mix of something different, so everybody decided that whatever they had, turn to channel 3 in case they needed to link up with each other and share information. So, it was just a standardized and simplified communications plan. So, whether you have MERS or FRS, or a CB-whatever you have-turn to channel 3. So, people with FRS can talk to each other, people with CBs can talk to each other, and several of them have both, and some have all three.

There is an intrusion alarm/entry alarm system called the Dakota Alert that is somewhat popular; it uses MERS. So, several families have those sensors you

put on your driveway, which sends an alert, "Alert, Zone 1. Alert, Zone 1."

White: My friend has one of those. They are 'pretty cool'.

Schmidt: Those are MERS radios on the MERS frequencies. You can program that in. As a matter of fact, I have a handheld radio that I program FRS and MERS into, and it's interesting. Throughout the day, and every now and then, you can hear, "Alert, Zone 2." So, somebody out there somewhere has this going off. Many people have them, and they can listen to each other's Dakota Alerts.

White: That is exactly what it is supposed to do. I've been at someone's house, and I heard, "Alert in Zone 2," and the radio picked it up, and someone had to check in to make sure that they were friend, not foe. It's rather 'cool'. They have a 25-acre plot, and have those on the perimeter. So, they are immediately alerted if someone breaks their property line and comes across the line.

Lynn: That is 'cool'.

Schmidt: That is a 'cool set-up', but anybody with a scanner or anybody with a radio that programs those MERS frequencies can hear that, too. So just be aware of that.

Lynn: As far as the licensing goes, on the small handhelds, I read somewhere that you can get a license for GMRS if you want to only talk on the small handhelds where there isn't a test involved. Then the family can all use it as well.

What you are suggesting is the full license. Your network is quite 'cool'. We need to get more into your network and how that works. I think that is important for preparedness.

Schmidt: What you are talking about is GMRS. If people want to get started on that, it is growing rapidly, and it is a great way for a community to all stay connected. Even if you are in a mountainous area like Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, or Washington, which are super-mountainous. We see more and more of those people get their GMRS licenses because it's only about $35 for

ten years. It covers your entire family, and it uses GMRS, which is basically the same thing as FRS. They share frequencies.

With those, you can get a repeater to put on top of somebody's house. If somebody has a high point on a mountain, you can put it there. Then you can communicate. VHF and UHF, which are the MERS and FRS, and two-meter 70-centimeter ham, are all VHF and UHF, which are line of sight. If you have a mountain between you, you must have a repeater in order to be able to talk to each other or have a physical person standing there relaying your traffic back and forth.

Lynn: Are the repeaters expensive?

Schmidt: Yes, they are; they are about $600 to $1,000.

If you want to learn more, you can go to http://myGMRS.com. They have forms there. They have all the information on how to get your GMRS license and how to locate repeaters in your area. The repeaters now are really 'taking off'.

They sell repeaters and transceivers there (two-way radios), and they have all the information and postings and forms and everything else to help you get up and running on that.

Lynn: Do you think this might be a good introduction for people before they move into a full license and expand out further?

Schmidt: That is a full license; the GMRS is a full license. Then there is the amateur radio license, which is a separate license.

GMRS is a wonderful thing, and everybody who is a ham operator who also gets into GMRS have all said that the range is extremely limited compared to ham radio, and I can attest to that. They are limited on the maximum power output. Plus, you are dealing with a UHF frequency. They are great close-up, but they don't have the range or the punch that VHF radios have.

When you get into ham radio, a very popular band is what is called the two-

meter band, which is the VHF. You get much more range, you can have a 100-watt transmitter, and they are usually supported by your local amateur radio clubs, so they maintain repeaters. There are some great people to help in your local communities for that.

When you get into amateur radio, it opens you up much more than only voice. They are very big proponents of digital modes. I don't mean DMR (digital mobile radio); I mean faxing and texting over the air. You can literally send each other email over the air. You can send text and files without any outside infrastructure. If the internet goes down, you can still do the same thing; it's just slower than the internet.

Lynn: In that case, if you are just listening but you're not talking or transmitting, and you wanted to send a text or email, do you have to be licensed for that? Is it all 'kit-and-caboodle'?

Schmidt: Yes, you do; you have to be licensed as a technician. That allows you to operate UHF/VHF, and you can operate on the HF bands, but only with Morse code CW. Then you can upgrade to general, and that gives you the ability to operate on the HF bands. That is where we can share information and pass files, situation reports, emails, and things like that several states away. It's a nationwide network, so many of our operators can communicate locally, but they can also take a situation report to a greater region.

If you have a train derailment with a chemical spill and green gaseous clouds moving northeast, you can get on the air and tell people in the next county or even the neighboring state the situation that is occurring where you are. Of if someone is trapped on the other side of the mountains in Washington or Oregon and we have a massive earthquake, with HF, you can put out a situation report to the next state over or multiple states away and say, "We have injured people here. This person needs to be life-flighted out of here." You can't do that with VHF/UHF; you are very limited.

Of course, in that type of an earthquake scenario, your repeaters most likely will not be working either.

Lynn: Can those with only the handheld ham radios at least be able to hear

those transmissions if they have repeaters going out across states into local networks?

Schmidt: VHV and UHF, like BaoFengs, you cannot listen to HF communications. For that, you need a shortwave radio.

Usually when I teach communication, there are concentric circles of communications. They start local – being able to talk to your group and your family – and then be able to receive everything around you, from the airport to the fire/EMF, the paramedics, your road maintenance, and everything around you. You can listen to all of that to stay informed.

The next layer in that, even if you don't get licensed to be able to transmit, is to at least get the ability to receive HF communications. There are several ways to do that. Even if you have a linked repeater system on your small handhelds there, you can hit that repeater and talk to somebody the next state over because they are relying on a series of three, four, five, or six linked repeaters. So, you have people who are hundreds of miles away who can talk to each other on their handhelds because they are using those, but you must be licensed to be able to take advantage of that.

Let's say that a major Cascadia Subduction Zone (CSZ) has a massive earthquake off the coast of Oregon and Washington; the type of earthquake that breaks things. Cyber-attacks break things. Wildfires that we've had that go over the tops of mountains have literally melted all the towers. So, the state patrol, EMS, hand radio, the local broadcasting station, and everything went down. We deployed there, and even their landline went down because it used their above-ground telephone poles and power poles, and the fire took all of that out. So, they had no land line and no way to communicate outside of a town in this valley until we showed up.

We were able to email their loved ones outside the area and send texts to their phones using hand radio.

We sent a lot of welfare traffic out because rumors were, "This town was burnt to the ground, and all that town was evacuated. That town is gone," and it wasn't.

People had loved ones in other states, and they didn't know if their loved ones were alive or made it out of there. They didn't even know that it wasn't true that the town didn't burn to the ground.

We were able to send emails and texts to their cellphones and their email services over a ham radio to let them know that their loved ones were okay.

There are so many advantages to being licensed. We see this trend where many people will buy a ham radio, and then they will stick it away in an ammo can or something, and are waiting until the rules don't matter anymore before they use it. They are thinking, "If it's the end of the world, what is the FEC going to do? Then I'm going to get my stuff out."

All experienced ham operators will tell you that if you don't practice with your gear, you will not communicate when it really matters. It's an ongoing journey of practicing with your gear, troubleshooting it, learning it, and becoming intimate with it. You can't do that if you're not licensed. Other operators on the air won't talk to you if you're not licensed.

White: Paul Stramer sent me to a website that is so easy. It's the standard ham radio website that everybody goes to. It has all the information about it. He said it's not that hard to take the test, and it doesn't cost very much. I've bookmarked it, but I don't have it at my 'fingertips'. It's not 'rocket science' to get your ham license. You don't have to have a Harvard degree. You can do a little studying and pass it, right?

Schmidt: Right. People's main concerns are, "I don't want to be on the government's list." Well, you are already on the government's list. If you have a driver's license, you are on the government's list. The license doesn't only belong to 'preppers or patriots'; it's like restoring antique cars; you will find liberals, conservatives, young, and old getting into that. It's not like they are going to come after you because licenses are only for conservatives.

White: It doesn't 'out' you as a Patriot if you want to get your ham license. That is what you are saying, right?

Schmidt: I'm at the point where it's not illegal yet to be a Patriot. Our survival as a nation is going to be depending on Patriots being patriots and not lurking in the shadows.

White: 'Amen' to that.

Schmidt: If an individual wants to be 'gray man' and unplug so nobody knows who he is, that's fine; that's your thing. But we have found far more benefit from Patriots who have met each other, become friends, who regularly work together on the air and pass information and training and real-world emergencies. We have led to welfare traffic and passing information that other people couldn't in real-world emergencies; we have led to the rescue of people during floods. We've helped facilitate emergency traffic during hurricanes, floods, wildfires, and all of that because people are licensed, they are practicing with their gear, and they are proficient.

Here is the other thing that is important: I like pointing out that in 2017, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Vancouver, and Northern California did a gigantic scenario-based training exercise called Cascadia Rising. It was based on a massive 9.0+ earthquake. That's where buildings go airborne. It's a massive earthquake that they are expecting, so they based it on this.

It was supposed to be an interoperability, an interagency thing with the National Guard, your local county emergency services, the state, Federal resources, and even Canadian and American resources that were trying to respond to this massive disaster that they were expecting.

At the end of it, they did their assessment. I am friends with the legislator who went to Camp Murray in Olympia where this was headquartered. I talked to the person in charge of the military department, which is like the Department of Homeland Security for Washington State. He said, as a legislator, he got the briefing on the results of this training exercise, and they identified their number one weak point was communications; that was their failure point.

They did well at setting up mobile field hospitals. They did well with plans to load up cargo and bottled water and all of this. They had plenty of room for improvement in every area, but communications were their abysmal failure.

You must look at why: Before this, in the two years leading up to this, they had purchased for these counties these incredible communication mobile vehicles with everything a ham operator would ever dream of having, from mobile Wi-Fi to HF radio, VHF radio, P25 encoded items to talk to all of the agencies around them, and that was their number one failure point. They had a $250,000 mobile communications rig in every county and at the state level.

The reason they failed is that, first, these people are state employees, it's not their gear, and they don't care about it. They play with it once every few months when they have to do maintenance on it. They are not intimately familiar with their equipment. So, they have people who were not qualified to operate almost all the equipment in their vans. They had no training or qualifications.

Secondly, for those who did have qualifications, when their gear didn't work, they didn't know how to troubleshoot it. So, their mindset is, "If something doesn't work, you fill out a trouble ticket, and you turn it in, and then you get issued a new one." But that doesn't work in a grid-down emergency disaster situation.

When you are licensed and own your equipment, you are training with it, you are becoming familiar with it, and you learn how to use it. Why am I not transmitting? Right now, when you have help available to you, you can get on the Z-net and say, "Hey, I'm trying to transmit and it's not transmitting," and you have a group of other people saying, "Did you try this? Did you try that?" and they are walking you through it, and you learn something. A month later, during the next practice net, you run into something else, and then you learn how to fix it.

Two years later, you are experienced, and when you run into things, you are back on the air in seconds. It's nothing; it's the flip of a switch or a micro-adjustment.

White: You are so right about that. I can certainly directly relate that to radio when I first started, and had this new mixing board. I had so many problems. But now when something comes up, I've already faced it. I know this; I broadcast every day. Now when something comes up in the radio world, I'm

familiar with it, I know I've covered it when it has happened before, and I can easily overcome it. If you are watching, you probably don't even know that anything even happened because I was able to take care of it.

That didn't happen overnight, and that is because I do this every day. I know the equipment; I work with it; I broadcast with it. It's totally brilliant what you said.

Schmidt: It's so true; have to own it.

Lynn: I've been looking around in your site, and I think it's 'really cool' the way you have it structured. In addition to providing all kinds of awesome information for people, you have these scheduled nets that you do. You have a place where people can join. I believe you have thousands of people on this network, and then you have all the frequencies and channels that people can connect to in their state.

Can you explain to people a little about that network that you have?

Schmidt: Absolutely. We train regularly. We have national and regional nets on the first and third Wednesday and Thursday of the month. In between there, almost every night of the week, there is a net going on somewhere on HF and local VHF/UHF. They're not everywhere, but it continues to expand.

If you go to the website and click on 'Scheduled Nets', and go to the dropdown, it's a little confusing at first. We have national nets and regional nets and local nets. You might 'scratch your head' trying to figure it out. Take some time and be patient, and learn how to navigate around.

Most people starting off have their BaoFeng, and they ask, "What do I do? A friend helped me program it. What do I do?"

You mentioned CHIRP. It's free, and everybody should download CHIRP. CHIRP is a programming software for programming just about every radio, and they are adding more all the time. Buy the programming cable; spend the extra $10-20 to get the programming cable for it, and then download CHIRP so that you can program your own radio.

You will probably find a local net. You'll look around, and may or may not find a net in your area. People are now starting nets where one doesn't exist. It depends on the charisma and leadership of the individual or individuals who start a local AmRRON net in their area.

We have a free membership, but where you really grow and learn about communications and where you have an abundance of support at your fingertips is AmRRON Corps. That is $40 a year, and it is worth every penny if communication is important to you. 'Anything and everything' you want to learn about is in our forum – from solar-powered to DMR (digital mobile radio) to everything including encryption. It has everything you might be interested in.

People will join, and then they turn on their radio and say, "Hello." Then they get frustrated because, "Nobody ever answers, and I've been calling out for a year."

You have to see if there's a net in your area. We are trying to clean that up, too. There are new nets that are running that we don't have on our list. There are nets where somebody moved because their job changed, and they don't do the net anymore. We are trying to get that cleaned up so that we can remove nets off that list that aren't being run anymore. It's an ongoing process 'chasing the ball'.

If you don't have a net in your area, start one. The most success that we have found are people who will put on a free emergency communications presentation just to talk about how to tune in. "Here is a scanner radio. Here is a BaoFeng. This is the importance of emergency communications," or something like that, and get a group of people together who agree to meet at a certain time on a certain frequency on a certain day – maybe once a week or maybe every other week – to practice with their gear.

People who meet regularly are the ones we see the most success from. They will have 15-20 check-ins on their nets every time they have a net because they are also building camaraderie and rapport with each other. They may meet once a month and buy coffee and donuts and meet at a VFW Hall or someplace that is inexpensive or free. One time they might help everybody get their radios

programmed. The next meeting, maybe they have an antenna-building party and somebody puts out a purchase list, "Buy some copper pipe and buy this. Here is your shopping list."

"You are going to learn how to solder if you don't know how, and those of us who do know how will help you. We will all build a J-pole antenna."

Then we'll have a barbeque together in the summer and do things together while learning radio from each other, and then doing the nets. Those have the biggest success for local nets.

The biggest thing is people who also incorporate it into preparedness networks. In more and more communities you will find preparedness networks where they are meeting once a month. Maybe this month they are doing something first-aid related like how to put on a tourniquet. Next week, it's canning or how to cook in Dutch ovens. At the next meeting, we might do radio communications, and we will talk about our local net and how you can check in. The next week we'll do this and this…

So, when it's something that is incorporated in a bigger package, you usually get better attendance and interest than just an AmRRON meeting once a month. Although, some of those get 20-50 people meeting once a month. It's just strictly about communications and radio, and they try to do something different each time.

White: You bring up a great point. I've been to many of the Patriot meetings here at Kalispell, Montana. There are plenty of patriots here, and I've been to many of their Patriot meetings, and you know something? I think of all the meetings – and I've been to dozens and dozens of them – and hardly anybody every talk about emergency communications; it is almost never brought up.

Many other topics are brought up, but not communications so much. Why is that? Are we so used to communications because we have phones and cellphones and it's such a natural part of our life that we don't think about it? Is it a cognitive dissonance where we don't think we are ever going to be without it?

Do you have any thoughts on that?

Schmidt: I have plenty of thoughts on that. That is an excellent point.

We do; we have a 'pacifier' that we are all using right now, our cellphones. It works, and it always works until it doesn't. Our internet and all these things work until they don't. You could say that almost with anything else. It's not as 'cool and sexy' as saying, "Today we are going to cover field stripping an AR-15," or, "We are going to zero in on weapons," or, "We are going teach you how to do a tourniquet." That's 'cool', but communications scares people off.

Here's the thing: Just like with your prepper group, not everybody has to get their EMT license, but everybody should know how to put on a tourniquet. Every group strives to have a licensed EMT in their group, so not everybody in your group has to be a general class HF-capable ham radio operator with all the digital equipment. All that you need is one or two of those people as a primary and a backup. They are your lifeline for information outside of your community for calling for help or for getting information to keep everybody else informed. So, not everybody has to be a licensed general class ham, but everybody should know how to properly make a radio call on their handheld.

You find some people who have an interest in it because not everybody is interested in it; not everybody is interested in becoming an EMT. You find the one or two people in your group who are drawn to that, and you support them, even if you have to collect funds to pay for their course. You do the same thing with your ham radio team. Get one or two people, and get behind them, and get that capability. Then everybody else in the group has a scanner and a handheld radio, maybe a shortwave receiver, and you're good.

Lynn: That's smart, and then everyone can chip in to get the repeater for one or two of the main people who are doing that. That brings the cost down.

Schmidt: Absolutely.

Lynn: You have an event coming up, and it looks like this interview will be published after the event, but is the event in September going to be archived, or

is that a live practice?

Schmidt: It is only over the radio. Basically, we do practice nets all year long. So, this is where we look to have the test. This isn't someone saying, "I just got my BaoFeng, and now I'm going to participate in T-REx, which is the Teotwawki Readiness Exercise, coming up in 2022." It's an annual event, which I believe is the 11th year. We didn't do it in 2020 because of COVID and the whole world going entirely 'stupid'. It was a mess, so we skipped it in 2020. Otherwise, it is a scenario-based exercise. We try to make it realistic. This year it is going to be a cyber-attack scenario with things happening across the country.

We have preloaded traffic that has a control number, and the inject stations have instructions with what time to inject this piece of traffic into the scenario to enhance the scenario. So, it enhances the timeline. You might have a train derailment or a chemical spill, or you may have a prison break. There are different things going on for these people to report at a certain point.

Some of it is localized, like traffic. For example, if your bridge goes out on your highway five miles up the road and they have a detour in Montana, that doesn't relate to the people in Florida. But there could be things that do relate to you, whether you are in a different state or not. It could be trends that you start to see. It could be that information from other areas are very valuable to you, even if you are 1,000 or 1,200 miles away. As this information starts to get injected over this timeline over this three-day exercise, you start to get little pieces of the puzzle, and you start to put it together to see trends and the size and scope of an event.

If your power goes out and your cellphone goes out and you have no internet, how do you know if it's only Kalispell or if it's all of Montana or the whole Pacific Northwest or the entire North American continent? How would you know if there was a nuclear explosion in New York City and Washington DC and Chicago at the same time when you went completely grid-down and you have no clue? You think, "Oh, it's a power outage."

Information from outside your area: The more you can gather, the more situational awareness you can have about the size and scope of an event and things that might impact you. That village in Kazakhstan might want to know

that there is a Russian convey of 1,200 military combat and troop convoys 200 kilometers away and headed their way. I would want to know that.

That is what this scenario-based training exercise, T-REx 2022, is about. It is September 9, 10, and 11. You will be able to traffic that.

If this interview airs after that event, there will be after-action reports and they will be able to see a large amount of the traffic on the T-REx page that is leading up to the event. Once it kicks off at noon Pacific on Friday, we are grid-down. There are no more updates and nothing happening on the internet or the webpage. It's like we all just vanished. The only way you can get information and share information is over radio.

It's designed to point out the gaps in people's communications.

Lynn: One of the takeaways of all of this is that if the cellphones and internet goes down, the radio is where you want to go. I realize that some people are looking into satellite phones. That may be great to stay in communication with people, but they are so expensive, and it's not the same thing as being able to get a wealth of information from multiple people that you would through a radio. Is that accurate?

Schmidt: That is 'dead-on' accurate. You are right back to square one when you decide to get a satellite telephone. It's great in a wildfire; it's great for a hurricane, but when you have to depend on somebody else's infrastructure, especially when we have adversaries that have developed and perfected weapons designed specifically to take out satellites, satellites are a major component of our command of control for our government. It's naturally going to be a target that you can expect to lose service with. Cellphones, internet, and cable could all be taken out. They have plans for cutting the physical fiber optic cables on the ocean floors; they have weapons designed specifically to do that, and they have weapons specifically designed to take out satellites.

For navigation, communication, and all of that, in any disaster, if you have internet, use it. Use the best, most efficient method that you have, but be prepared to use communications that require no supporting infrastructure. Then AT&T or your satellite company can't cut you off, they can't censor you, and if

they are taken out, you can send an email to another person in another state and have the net relay that to somebody in Florida with no outside supporting infrastructure. We don't need anybody; we have our own power, our own communications, and that's what you want to strive to get to.

White: I can't believe how fast the time went; we are near the end of the broadcast. Before we go, could you let people know what they should do that are listening to or reading this? What can they do immediately? Without spending thousands and thousands of dollars, what can people get under $500 or $1,000? What equipment would you recommend that they get immediately to get going on this process?

I'm sure you're going to recommend getting a ham radio license. That aside, what would you suggest for people who are new and just starting out?

Schmidt: Just starting off, get a couple of handheld radios so that you can communicate with your local group. Then get a scanner radio. It doesn't even have to be a P25. There is plenty that you can listen to to stay informed. I've picked up scanner radio receivers from garage sales for $5 or $20 that work great. Have the ability to know what is going on in your area.

Secondly, get a shortwave radio receiver with single sideband capabilities. Even if you don't know how to use it yet, get it; get it in your inventory, and then begin learning how to use it.

The data we give you, you do not have to be licensed to receive ham radio communications, including the digital information that we send out. Situation reports, status reports, and all of that you can get with the free-to-download software; it's free.

If you go to our website, AmRRON.com, and you type in 'digital', there is an abundance of tutorials and postings with links to the software and step-by-step guides on how to set it up. So, you can at least stay informed. Even if you're not going to get HF capable, and you're not going to get licensed but you do want to stay informed, then do that. You can easily do all of that for under $500.

Lynn: Just so people who are listening instead of watching or reading this,

AmRRON is with two R's. It's AmRRON.com.

White: I've hit the page plenty of times during the interview.

We are going into a little 'overdrive' because there is a topic that is important that we must cover, and that is mesh networks. In a grid-down situation, everybody relies on the internet right now. How do we continue to communicate via internet, and is that even possible if there is a grid-down situation? Is that done via mesh networks?

I know we talked previously about ham radios and about how that is an option. You can go to an area that has everything down, and you can get communications with a ham radio, but how about mesh networks? How does that work, and is that something that has to be set up ahead of time? Should we start working on it now?

Schmidt: Yes. All this should have been started ten years ago. It's all a journey.

What we have right now in our hands is technology that made it dummy-proof, easy to use, and turnkey. The other type of communication, which is 'unconventional communication', as we call them, requires practice, training, and there is a learning curve. If you want to communicate badly enough, you have got to work for it, just like ham radio. You need to become familiar with it, you need to practice with it, and you need to grow with it.

If you are going to get a ham license, it takes preparation just like the mesh networks that you are talking about. There are several different ways to do this. This is a whole other world that we are talking about. I'll talk about some of the easier ways to get into that, which are as turnkey as possible so that people can get into it.

The reason we've stressed for the last decade to practice now and get your gear now and get it operational now is that one day this may not even be available. We are running into that. Some of the things that I'll talk about have waiting lists now. With supply chain disruptions and everything else, the 'SHTF' is not coming; it's here. So, get what you can while you can. It's getting more difficult,

but start immediately. If you have the financial resources, get into it.

Somebody in every group is more tech-savvy than the others. That is the person to start 'digging in' and learning how you want to communicate as a group.

As far as mesh networks go, it is important that everybody understands that this is very limited in its reach. There are some communities like an island community in Puget Sound in the Seattle area that has no internet. What they've done is created a mesh network, and they use broadband to connect several miles away. They set up a mesh network so that everybody who has internet can now connect using a mesh system. It's an intranet like their own internet, but it's set up with a couple of nodes that act as gateways to reach out to the regular internet so they can use email and surf the internet just like anyone else. But it took some work to get to that point.

There are several ways to do it, but it will require some research by the person who is the most tech-savvy in your group to make that happen. This is probably going to require the most amount of research, and it's called Ubiquity. They are Wi-Fi routers and nodes that you set up so that you can create your own internet among all your neighbors, for example. You can go several miles if you have elevation where somebody can set these different Ubiquity nodes; Ubiquity is the brand name.

Much of it is the same type of hardware that you might use in your home for regular internet, but these can be configured so that you can set up a mesh network and communicate. It's high-speed. It's like having the internet, but only you can share this information with each other. You set up a central server and share files and pictures and things like that.

Lynn: That is like an internet where you are all interacting among each other, but you are not connected to the outside world internet, correct?

Schmidt: Absolutely, you can connect. It's like the island that I mentioned in Puget Sound. One of those nodes has a broadband connection across the sound several miles away to make an internet connection. So, all the people in this community can have their own little internet. So, if the internet went down, they could still send text messages and emails and images to each other within their

community. If the internet is up, they can route through that server to the node that connects them to the outside world internet. So, it can work both ways, depending on how you configure that.

There are a couple of alternatives for mesh networking, and they vary in price. I'll name a few of them. One is probably more involved than the others because you have to set it up. It's good for texting and texting only, but it's also about the most affordable way that you can set up a mesh network. That way you can send text messages back and forth to everybody in your group. These will go several miles line of sight if you don't have anything obstructing your signal. That is called Meshtastic. You can look that up on the internet. There is a website dedicated to it.

Lynn: When you say 'texting' are you saying that a person's cellphone can then connect into this, and you are sending the text through your phone, or are you talking about an app on the computer?

Schmidt: There is an app that you can download so you can use your cellphone to text to each other. It connects to this Meshtastic device, your node, and you have an antenna outside. You can use it omnidirectional or a directional antenna if you have an individual you want to communicate with.

This information is on http://Meshtastic.org. They have plenty of support, many articles, and a lot of guides on how to set it up and use that. These units are $40 to $50 apiece, so they are affordable. You can set those up in a mesh network. All the other users become nodes that you can hop across and communicate with.

The other thing that is satisfying about this – and I think it will be very important in the future – is that it also incorporates AES-256 encryption. So, unlike a ham radio or any other type of radio where you are talking over the air or even sending digital info over the air, anybody else with a receiver capturing that can capture your communications. There could be a time in the future when you want what you are saying or what you are coordinating with other people in your group to be private. That encryption feature makes it nice.

There is some set-up involved with it. It takes a bit of time, but multiple groups

across AmRRON have set up their own Meshtastic networks, and they have anywhere from five to 30 people set up in their mesh networks across valleys from each other 5-10 miles away so they can all communicate and coordinate with each other using the app on their phone.

Lynn: So, it's primarily for local groups, right? It's not like I could get one set up and James could get one set up and we could communicate long distance through this. It has to be local, correct?

Schmidt: Yes, it is very local. If you wanted to set up a mesh network that covers 100 miles, you will have to have multiple nodes/users set up between you and your farthest point that you can reach, and you have to be able to reach each other line of sight. That is the reason we put so much emphasis on amateur radio. Oftentimes, we will get somebody during a communications training workshop, who will pull out their BaoFeng and say, "I live in Utah. How can I talk to my brother in Wisconsin with this?"

You can't. That requires HF communications. For unconventional communications, you will need a shortwave transceiver or HF (high frequency) transceiver to talk 100-1,000 or more miles. It is very limited; all of these are very limited.

White: That mesh network you are talking about reminds me of the days of Napster when everybody was almost a server, and everybody got their files from everybody else's servers. It was almost like a closed network for everybody, and their node was open for everybody else to get their music from. That is what that reminds me of. Of course, the Napster was internet-related, and this is more radio communication-related, so that is why it is so limited in its scope. Is that accurate?

Schmidt: What enables you to share music files with somebody in Germany is fiber optic cables connecting you. If you don't have that, then you are going over your Wi-Fi as a radio transceiver. Bluetooth is a radio transceiver; your cellphone is a radio transceiver.

Without running fiber optic cables to everybody in your network, which isn't practical, you are going wirelessly; you are going over the air.

But to answer your question, yes, when you set these kinds of mesh networks up, you can set up servers for sharing files and information with each other. You can go so far as to set up email services and texting services and things like that with the mesh networks like I described with Ubiquity.

Right now, Meshtastic is only text. There are some innovative people working on adding other capabilities to that like voice for calling and sharing video and things like that, but the last time I research that, it's not quite up to that point yet.

The other two that I wanted to mention are turnkey-ready to go-but they are getting harder to get. There are longer waiting lists for these. The first one is Beartooth. Beartooth is a mesh network, and it is also encrypted. They have radios that communicate with each other. You connect with your cellphone through Bluetooth, and you can communicate with other people in your group many miles away – up to seven miles away.

The other one that I have is called GoTenna. It looks almost like a fat USB type of dongle, but it's designed for you to wear on your gear or hang on your backpack. It interacts with your phone. It is a radio booster that can go five to seven miles line of sight. These will also mesh with each other. So, if you have a group of people in a downtown area, and for everybody who is using these, they all become part of the mesh network.

You can also set up a group within your own group so that you can communicate only with these separate people even if there are 100 people in the area using a GoTenna. The app that you download to your cellphone talks through your GoTenna, and it acts as a repeater, and then it meshes your whole group together. That is also AES-256 encrypted. So those are quite nice.

Lynn: Is that specific to cell rather than radios? In other words, that is not going to boost your BaoFeng, for example, right?

Schmidt: I can't recall exactly what type of radio band it uses. I would have to look that up. But I do know that these can communicate up to five or six miles from each other. So, from your cellphone you pair it using Bluetooth with the

GoTenna, and then your GoTenna is what gives you the range.

Our handheld radios have apps that don't require cellular service. FireChat used to be one that was quite popular, but it only has a range of a couple of hundred feet. It's good if you want to stay in touch with your family and you are all at the fairgrounds and don't have cellular coverage there. These are excellent for people working in the back country where there is no cellphone service available for them. You can send texts to each other, and you can send your location to each other. It basically gives your GPS location, so if somebody is injured, you can send your location and they can walk right to you.

White: I'm looking at GoTenna online right now. It looks like one of those little markers you use to write on your whiteboard. It looks quite small at $199.

Schmidt: Yes, it looks like one of those fat Scripto magic markers.

White: We don't get any money from this; this is an unpaid sponsorship, but if it works, it works.

Schmidt: You can also set these up as a 'repeater', for lack of a better term. Let's say that you have a hill between you and another group. You could hang this up in a tree, and they charge from a USB charging cable, just like your cellphone does. They will last for hours, up to days, depending on how much you are using them. Of course, the more it's transmitting, the faster it goes through battery power. Ours have lasted several days on a single charge.

You can hang one of those on a tree, toss it on a rooftop, and then you can communicate with other people in your group. It extends your range beyond obstacles like hills and things, and it becomes part of your mesh network.

White: It's 'really cool'. You can buy one of those small battery packs, too. Technically, if you set it up properly, you can have the battery pack recharging that thing all the time.

Schmidt: Right, and then you could have it running for weeks. I have one that is about the size of a cellphone, and you can charge a cellphone from it 20 times. So as little as these GoTennas use, you could have a relay node or

repeater GoTenna set up someplace, and it would run for weeks and weeks, depending on the size of the battery pack that you have it connected to. So, they are 'slick'. They are also easy to set up. There isn't anything technical for the user to set up.

The one that is similar to it is Beartooth, and they are adding voice to that so that you can make voice calls to each other. It is also AES-256 encryption. It's probably one of the more expensive ones on the market, but there is something for everybody out there; different people have different budgets.

If I didn't have to worry about the cost, I would look into Beartooth, but they are expensive. They also create that mesh network with encryption.

White: We are going way overtime here. Why don't you tell us about your book and how people can find out more about what you have happening? We need to train people on how to use radio communications, how to set up mesh networks, and how to do these relays like we were just talking about. If you get one or two people in a group who learn it, they can teach everyone else about it.

So, tell us about the book that you have out and your new one.

Schmidt: I'd be happy to talk about that, but going back to the mesh networks, remember that we are not very happy with YouTube because of cancel culture they have been doing, but for technical information, YouTube is your friend. You can learn anything and everything. It goes deep into any subject you want to, including setting up mesh networks. It's free information right at your fingertips, so there is no reason not to learn it. If you have an interest, it's out there.

Regarding the book, it's called *The Partisan Operator Journals*. I released Volume 1 last year. I'm working on Volume 2 right now. It's a dystopian novel covering a couple of veterans. One of them is a ham operator; he was a former Marine Force recon radio operator. So, I introduced these characters one year after a major event called Zero Day; the story starts at Zero Day plus one year. It's at the point where the United States has experienced a total collapse. There is a provisional government command structure that is trying to get established.

The story starts with the ham operator on a reconnaissance mission, and a foreign military begins showing up on US soil to help stabilize the situation and bring aid, but it has a much more nefarious purpose.

He ends up combining military tactics with ham radio equipment, and it's basically a fictional story about how somebody could use radios, and how they could use them with security in mind. Of course, the whole thing is an adventure. It's all fictional, but it's also realistic as far as what they could be used in a real-world situation. There is nothing in there that is not possible.

I'm hoping that Patriots who are radio operators get ideas on how they can start thinking unconventionally about how to use radio equipment and how it might be used in a post-collapse type of environment.

It's written towards the experienced radio operator who has never really thought about operating this way in that type of an environment. The second book goes back to covering people from all different ranges – people who have had no communications training whatsoever or very minimal training, all the way to people who have more advanced communications skills and experience.

At some point, in the upcoming books and with these characters, they will use mesh networks to communicate. So, it's a 'how to' book wrapped in a fictional novel. I've gotten a lot of positive feedback on it.

White: You took the words right out of my mouth. That is almost exactly what I was going to say: It's a 'how to' manual wrapped around a fiction. If that's what it takes for people to learn it – to hear an exciting novel and adventure – then that's what it takes.

Lynn: I would completely read that. So, you have one book already out and another one on the way. Where can people get them?

Schmidt: They are available on Amazon.com. It's called *Partisan Operator Journals*. We were selling and shipping them, but it got to be too much because I was self-published. It got to be too expensive for us to handle all the shipping and everything with everything else we have going on. So, we let Amazon handle it. That was also the best way that we were able to keep the costs down

to the readers.

We are excited about that. I've had so much feedback from people who are ham operators or people who got excited about it because they realized what they could do and all the possibilities of it. They learned communications, and got their ham radio license. I've had experienced ham operators write to me, saying, "Man, I never really thought about implementing this or that. I've tried it, and it works, and it's cool."

It's been a 'pretty cool' adventure.

White: That's fantastic . We are coming to the end here. Let people know where they can find out more about you. I know http://RadioFreeRedoubt.com is one place, and then http://AmRRON.com is another. You probably want to send people there as well.

Let people know when they can hear your radio broadcasts. I think you said you have a broadcast every morning at Tom Read's network. What a great guy Tom is in Spokane. I love Tom; I broadcasted with him for a long time.

Tell us a little about where we can find you, where we can find your radio broadcasts and websites, and that type of thing.

Schmidt: The Radio Free Redoubt podcast is a weekly podcast produced every Sunday. It's kind of our flagship; that is where we got started. But my wife, Lady Liberty, and I do a morning show at 7am Pacific time every morning. It's a 30-minute show. We talk about current events from a Christian perspective. It's Liberty Broadcasting, which is an American Christian network affiliate.

She was involved in property rights and a patriot to the 'core' for years, and then she started doing the Liberty State Radio. Now we joined forces.

It talks about the truth in the news and the scripture. We cover the 'Word of the Day' every day and how that applies to us. She also has two books out.

White: Tell us about them.

Schmidt: The first one was serious research called, *The Perils of Sustainable Development*, and it's a 'mind-blowing' thing of connecting dots.

White: That is 'right up Corey's alley'. That' is her song. You are singing her tune right there.

Schmidt: I don't know how many radio interviews and articles and things she's done over the years. It's 'crazy'! Then she wrote *444* last year, which is the formula for restoring America and identifying the problems.

Basically, *The Perils of Sustainable Development* was a warning of what would be coming if it's not stopped, and *444* was, "Now that we are here, this is how we deal with it."

It's awesome being able to do the radio show together every day, and, of course, AmRRON is a full-time job in and of itself. That website is http://AmRRON.com. AmRRON is the American Redoubt Radio Operators Network. It's a nationwide network. We have thousands of radio operator members who have joined across the country and Canada and Puerto Rico and elsewhere.

There is plenty going on, and we are trying to prepare people for the challenges that we have right in our 'faces'.

Communication is so critical, and it's overlooked. We are doing our part to try to fill that gap.

Lynn: We appreciate it.

White: Yes, what a great interview! What great information! People don't even hardly think about it, and it's so important. They think of food and water and shelter, which are important, but as you said, what if your power grid goes down? How do you know it's not a massive power grid across the country? You don't know if it's local. You don't know what is going on if you can't communicate; it's all just a 'shot in the dark'.

Do me a favor if you can: Tell the great Tom Read that I said, "Hello." He probably has the smoothest radio voice I've ever heard in my life. What a fantastic guy he is!

Schmidt: Will do.

White: Corey, is there anything you want to say to John?

Lynn: I appreciate you for coming on and sharing a wealth of information for everyone. We are going to have to put some of the information you've shared into links so that people can find some of this.

White: I was bringing some of that information up while we were talking about it. It looks like there is some 'pretty cool stuff' there. I went to all those sites, and it's great. We will do that; we will put those links in there.

John, is there anything that you want to say before we let you go?

Schmidt: I appreciate the opportunity, and I thank you for all the work that you are doing as well. Every day, just keep doing something. You can't let your 'foot off the gas' now – not in the times that we are in.

White: Good advice! John Jacob Schmidt, we appreciate you being here today. That is going to wrap it up for us here on this edition of the *Solution Series* brought to you by *Solari.com* and CoreysDiggs.com.

For our guest, John Jacob Schmidt, and my cohost, Corey Lynn, this is James White for the *Solution Series* saying goodbye for now.

MODIFICATION

Transcripts are not always verbatim. Modifications are sometimes made to improve clarity, usefulness and readability, while staying true to the original intent.

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