



WCARS.org
March 2008

The Official Publication of
The Western Carolina Amateur Radio Society, Inc

President's Microphone...

FD is the next major club event. Plans should be coordinated now to ensure a successful event. This is a club activity, not just for a few. Local training for ARES members is in the works. Membership renewals are due in January; newsletter subscriptions are suspended after March. Hope to see you at the next club meeting. 73 W4IYS - Scott

February 7th Minutes...

Steve - KF4TVD

Meeting was called to order at 7:30pm.

The pledge to the flag was given.

W4IYS - Scott - The club needs a Hamfest Chair - and food courier for club meetings until KG4RPY returns.

The May 31st bike ride, 100km, with 300-350 riders, need volunteers. Tommy, K4BNP is coordinating.

KI4VIR - David presented the treasurer's report. Motion was made, seconded and carried to maintain a \$1500 checking account balance.

N4NH - Norm - 14 students are enrolled in the current Technician class.

N4IB - Tim Slay presented the evening program - ARRL Activity.

K2JB won the 50/50.

AJ4DF won the door prize.

W4IYS - announced plans for local ARES meeting Feb 22, 7PM, Simpson Auditorium
AB Tech - Executive meeting prior to regular March club meeting.

Motion to adjourn was made, seconded and carried at 8:55 pm.

Traffic Handling Training Net

As reported last month, a 2007 ARRL committee reporting on Amateur Radio's response to Hurricane Katrina noted that too few are skilled at traffic handling. Mark Rappaport, W2EAG is NCS for the traffic handling training course, the "Carolinas Training Net", which began Sunday, February 3rd on 3.861MHz. The net will continue every Sunday until the course is completed in about 12 weeks. The course is a good refresher for experienced operators, and offers those new to traffic handling a thorough introduction. A training manual for the course has been posted at www.ncarrl.org and certificates will be issued to those who complete the course.
KF4TVD - Steve

ARES - Amateur Radio Emergency Services

A meeting for members and those interested was held Feb 22nd, in the Simpson auditorium, AB-Tech. K8SKX - Dick was the moderator for this meeting, held to determine the appropriate next step in reestablishing ARES as a viable communications unit. Area 14 needs educated, formally trained and experienced volunteers with varied communications/equipment capabilities. ARES volunteers must be ready for any exigent circumstances that may arise in this or any service area where served agency or community needs exist. Imminent or existing emergency conditions are NOT the time to prepare.

KF4TVD - Steve

Hamfest Calendar

Mar 8-9 North Carolina Section Convention (Charlotte Hamfest), Mecklenburg Amateur Radio Society, Charlotte Merchandise Mart, 2500 East Independence Blvd.

<http://www.w4bfb.org/hamfest>

Talk-In: 146.940 (-) and 145.290 (-)

Contact: Jeff Blythe, KA4WYC

1122 Pine Knot Court, Clover, SC 29710

Phone: 704-577-3619

Email: hamfest@w4bfb.org

Mar 15 Middle Tennessee ARS, First Methodist Church, 208 West Lauderdale Street, Tullahoma, TN. <http://www.qsl.net/mtars>

Talk-In: 146.700 (-) PL 114.8

Contact: Bill Holt, N0EUU

420 Joe Hickerson Road, Manchester, TN

37355, Phone: 931-728-9015 (after 5pm CST)

Email: N0EUU@hotmail.com

Mar 15 The Ides of March Hamfest, Reelfoot Amateur Radio Club, Obion County Fairgrounds, 1711 East Church Street, Union City, TN. <http://www.reelfootarc.com>

Talk-In: 146.70/10 PL 100.0

Contact: Bob Miles, K9IL

113 Green Acres Drive, Martin, TN 38237-5527

Phone: 731-588-2840

Email: greenacres113@aol.com

Upcoming Events

Mar 2-8 Severe Weather Awareness Week

Mar 8-9 Charlotte Hamfest - www.w4bfb.org

Apr 6 Down East Hamfest, Kinston -

www.downeasthamfest.org

Apr 12 Raleigh Hamfest

www.rars.org/hamfest

Apr 12 State ARES meeting, Raleigh

Apr 19 Catawba Valley Hamfest, Morganton

www.cvhamfest.com

May 10 Rockingham County Hamfest, Reidsville www.rcarc.com

May 24 DurHAMfest, Durham www.dfma.org

May 25-31 Hurricane Preparedness Week

June 14 Winston-Salem Classic Hamfest -

www.w4nc.org

Jun 28-29 ARRL Field Day

From NC ARRL Section News

March Meeting

The next WCARS meeting will be March 6, 2008, 7:30 p.m. in the Simpson Auditorium, Simpson Bldg, at AB Tech. Program: To be announced.

Bike Ride May 31st

The ride will be in three (3) segments (route not finalized): 1. Family ride (with kids), very short, 2. Half century ride, about 50 to 65km, 3. Full century ride, about 100km.

There will be 5 rest stops/check points, starting at the river park on Amboy Rd. and up through Weaverville and down into Alexander. We need about 12 or 15 radio equipped volunteers to work at the checkpoints.

K4BNP - Tommy

VEC... New Licensees

N4NH - Norm submitted to the FCC the following amateur license information from the latest WCARS VEC session, effective February 19th:

K4AVL - Frank Florianz, Asheville, NC, General to Extra

KI4TMD - Paul Isreal, Weaverville, NC, General to Extra

KI4RBK - R.B. Rogers, Asheville, NC, Tech to General

KJ4CAK - Thomas L. Nicholson, Chatham, VA, New Tech

KJ4CAL - Thomas A. Nicholson, Chatham, VA, New Tech

KJ4CAM - Quinton R. Mauney, Mills River, NC, New Tech

KJ4CAN - Clara N. Allen, Asheville, NC, New Tech

WCARS congratulates each licensee for his or her special accomplishment, and welcomes each to the amateur radio community.

KF4TVD - Steve

Smoke Test Editor... Members please send any material of interest for inclusion in the newsletter to KF4TVD@ARRL.NET 73 KF4TVD-Steve

Packet radio - more stuff

Okay, so you want to try packet radio. You probably have a PC and soundcard interface; this seems the most common today. You will need to connect the PC soundcard Mic and Headphone connections to the respective jacks on the interface. The interface will need power, probably 12v +/- . From the interface to the radio you must connect: mic input, mic ground, PTT, and audio out. Many new radios have all of these connections in their mic connections. Others may need a separate connection to the radio speaker - headphones.

So what programs do you need? My station has a radio/TNC/PC setup. Since the TNC does all the "work", I just need a "dumb" terminal program. I use Windows HyperTerminal. For my soundcard interface (radio/interface/PC) I use AGWPE (AGW packet engine) and AGWTerm (AGW terminal) programs. Both are fairly straightforward and easy to install/setup. Unfortunately, I haven't mastered the terminal program yet, but I can make it work. The dropdown menus under Files and Actions provide most of what you need. Properties (Files) lets you set your call, beacon time, etc. while Actions lets you connect, disconnect etc. A couple of great web sites for information and the above programs are: www.sv2awg.com and <http://kc2rlm.info/soundcardpacket/> With my TNC setup and dumb terminal you need to know various commands, etc. to make things work. The TNC has two states: command mode and converse mode. In command mode you tell the TNC what it is to do: connect, disconnect, set parameters etc. While in converse mode it simply "translates" your text into packets for broadcast. My TNC goes into command mode with "ctrl-c" and will respond with "cmd:". Some commands that you'll need in command mode: C - means connect with the station whose call I list, ex: prompt cmd: C K8SKX-1 says connect with K8SKX-1, while cmd: D means disconnect the current connection. To connect via another station (digipeated) you would type at prompt cmd: C K8SKX-1 V W4YK-1 or from

Asheville C K8SKX-1 V K8SKX-3. This tells the TNC to make the connection to K8SKX-1 through the digi on Bearwallow (W4YK-1) or the digi on Spivey (K8SKX-3). Note that the -1 or -3 are unique numbers added to a station to distinguish it from another operated by the same "person".

Once you are on packet you will want to connect to the Hendersonville Packet Bulletin Board (packet alias HVLBBS). Note that this PBBS has been serving this area for almost (packet wise) forever and is maintained by Duke W4DK and QCWA Chapter 76 (Blue Ridge). The most common path to HVLBBS if you can't connect directly is through BRARC (W4YK-1) on Bearwallow, 145.630 MHz. Once there please register as a user.

Here's an example of how Scott - W4IYS would connect to HVLBBS using a dumb terminal program: Cmd: C HVLBBS V BRARC He could also connect first to BRARC and wait for the prompt to type "BBS" and have BRARC "call" the BBS for him. If he was using one of the other common packet terminal programs he would simply type HVLBBS in the "connect" box and BRARC in the "via" box. Right now there are two packet frequencies for general use here: 145.630 for "local use" and 145.010 for backbone or interconnection use. This latter will allow you to connect into Charlotte etc via WA4KNI or BRA. Note that there is a 145.010 node in Mars Hill, K4ZMC-7, that will give you greater access "to the world" of other digipeaters.

In addition to general message handling etc, the DX community maintains a series of DX Cluster packet stations in the area. These are on 144.990 and 147.570 that I know of. This system provides a lot of information for the DXer.

The bottom line is packet is not dead. In term of messages, as W4DK reminded me, packet radio is about like the internet, only the RJ-45 is disconnected. So if you have the equipment or can get it, give packet a try. There's a lot out there. And give me a shout if you have questions, I'll help if I can or try to point you to where you can get your answers...

73 Dick - K8SKX

VEC

Exams were held February 9th at the Mountain Home Volunteer Fire Department, Henderson County. Five new or upgrade licenses were acquired. Congratulations to each for their efforts and accomplishments.

W4IOE - Sid

Mar 8 1700Z-2359Z, San Diego, CA, USS Midway CV-41 Museum Radio Room, NI6IW, Commemorating the Naval Aviator designation established in 1915. 14.325 7.250 14.060 7.040 QSL. USS Midway CV-41 Museum Radio Room, 910 N Harbor Dr, San Diego, CA 92101
kc2gyv@yahoo.com

ARRL Special Events Calendar

Mar 8-9 Florence, SC. Florence Amateur Radio Club, N4B. 50th Anniversary of the "Atomic Bombing" of Mars Bluff, SC. 28.330 14.2990 7.263 3.920. Certificate. FARC/Mars Bluff Certificate. PO Box 5602, Florence, SC 29502-5602. *Other frequencies may be used.*

www.w4ulh.org

A Reminder

Members not current in their dues will be removed from the club newsletter mailing list after this issue.

Editor

THE SMOKE TEST				
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Western Carolina Amateur Radio Society, Inc.				
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American Radio Relay League Affiliate No. 0602				
WCARS meets at 7:30 PM the first Thursday of each month at the Simpson Building at AB Technical Community College.				
Everyone is welcome to attend.				
Membership dues are \$20 per year payable in January.				