



APRIL 2007

The Official Publication of

The Western Carolina Amateur Radio Society, Inc

www.WCARS.org

President's Microphone...Scott W4IYS

The repeater is up and working, but still has needs some adjustments. Please let me know if your problems / complaints / comments, especially if you were able to work it before but can't now. Thanks again to all those who've worked so hard to get it going again.

See you at the meeting ...73 Scott W4IYS

WCARS March Meeting

The next WCARS meeting will be April 5, 2007, 7:30pm in the Simpson Auditorium, Simpson Bldg, at ABTech. Program: Carl N4AA – Beginning DXing and Contesting.

Spring is here...And so is lightning!

It's time to remind everyone about the threat of lightning and static charge buildup that can damage our radio systems. (By reminding YOU - I remind MYSELF!). Develop a habit of disconnecting your antenna system every time you shut down your station, this way you won't have one of those "oh darn I forgot to disconnect" while away from the house when a storm blows up. If you don't have a quick disconnect system, take time to create one or purchase one. I have my parallel feedlines attached with wing-nuts so I can disconnect them quickly and drop them into a glass jar so they are isolated from ground. When reattaching them I must remember NOT to touch the bare wire until AFTER touching them to ground. A lot of static can build up on 535 feet of wire in the sky!

...Dick K8SKX

March minutes...Karen KG4OUP

- Meeting called to order at 7:35pm.
- Salute to the American flag was done.
- There were introduction made and included 3 guests.
- March 24 and April 2 – Skywarn classes to be held at EOC.
- Karl K4PCY gave the treasurer's report.
- Norman N4NH reported on frequency changes and upgrade to be made. Classes begin 3-6-07.
- Dean K2JB Hamfest is nearing – Dean asked for volunteers to help prepare list from tickets for calling and inviting guests.
- Scott W4IYS announced that Dick K8SKX will be dropping as Smoketest Editor. Looking for someone to take over.
- Scott W4IYS also mentioned the need for a 220 rig and TNC's. Bill N4OOC gave a report on the repeater.
- Ken KE4VMB and Elwood KN4ST goavce a slide slide show on the repeater workdays January 13th and February 24th.
- Ken KE4VMB and Karen KG4OUP gave the program on Introduction to HSMM or High Speed MultiMedia. To find out more go to WWW.N5OOM.ORG or WWW.NTMS.ORG.
- Dick K8SKX reported next month's program. Presenter: Carl N4AA Beginning DXing and Contesting.
- The door prize winner; Karen KG4OUP.
- 50/50 winner: Norman N4NH.
- Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.

New Smoketest Editor

Starting in May, Steve KF4TVD has volunteered to edit Smoketest. I hope all those good folks who sent me material for Smoketest will continue to help by sending it to Steve KF4TVD@ARRL.NET

What is the Best...(fill in the blank)?

At a recent ham class I was asked "what is the best antenna for 2 meters." This is not an uncommon question and isn't just asked about antennas. I've heard it asked about coax, feedlines in general, HTs, radio etc.

Before this can be answered, you, the user, must first answer some other questions. Let's consider the 2m antenna: 1) What are you going to use it for local repeaters, distant repeaters, SSB, DX, or? 2) Do you have esthetic issues or other restrictions on where it's mounted? 3) How near/far from the shack will it be located? 4) How much output power will you run or ERP do you need? 5) Is cost a consideration? 6) Can you homebrew it or will you buy it?

If you only want to hit the local repeater that you can actually see, you don't need much of an antenna. But if you want to reach more distant repeaters, you may need a vertically mounted beam and rotor up in the clear. For SSB the beam needs to be mounted horizontally. Case in point: I am about 18 miles from W4MOE, can almost "see" the repeater, have a small 4 element beam, horizontally mounted at 25 feet, 20 watts output and have about 50 feet of RG-8x coax...and I have a hard time "making" the repeater. Why? Probably the biggest reason is I have a -30db lose due to cross polarization...I had planned to use the beam for SSB, hence the horizontal mounting. Bottom line – there is no "best" 2m antenna for me. The take home message: Experiment with various antennas until you find what works for you...but expect that just one won't do everything you want.

...Dick K8SKX

Short Circuits...

Anybody need a Smith Chart or some graph paper? Check out <http://www.pdfpad.com> to print out Smith Charts, graph paper and even staff paper. Another Web page:

(<http://www.sss-mag.com/pdf/smithchart.pdf>) has a nice Smith Chart too. (Thanks, Tom KF4YYD and Chris N7ZWY) (from ARRL Contester's Rate Sheet, February 7, 2007)

How about Battery power for your base station?

I recently heard a discussion (KE4VXC/AI4HY) about using a large battery or bank of batteries to power an HF station. I did this for many years without problem using a large truck battery and small charger that I cycled on/off with a timer. The 'on cycle' was based on how much I normally used my station. A word of caution: charging wet cell batteries can give off highly flammable gas, so it should be well ventilated, preferably to the outside.

I found this in the Feb 07 EMCOMM MONTHLY: "I run my entire home station 24-7 through a UPS (Uninterrupted Power Supply) that I picked up for \$5.00 at the local ham auction. I replaced the tired 7 AH (amp hour) battery with a 100 AH battery that had been rotated out from a large commercial building's UPS system. I did it all with Anderson PowerPoles®, of course. I run the 12V equipment direct off the battery. It's been working great for almost two years. I've never run out of power. Works great!" -- Dave Wallace, KA6GJN, Turlock, CA. From EMCOMM MONTHLY Volume 3 No 9, D. W. Thorne, editor, k6soj@wrrl.org (FYI-this is a good site to get information and ideas about emergency communications – K8SKX)

Wonder where the 80m CW nets went?

Check out this web site to find out: <http://4rnc4.homestead.com/80mCWNETMATRIX.html> It lists the time and frequency many of the NTS and independent code nets, plus net manager and other useful information. And be sure to scroll about half way down and click on the link that says "Who says CW isn't music to your ears? Click on the Key and find out!" then click on play...enjoy.



"What about that! His brain still uses the old vacuum tubes."

THE SMOKE TEST
The Official Publication of the
Western Carolina Amateur Radio Society, Inc.
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W4MOE/146.910 - /pl 91.5 Spivey Mtn/AVL

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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/yr payable in January.

Weekly Nets of local interest

Net	Freq(mHz) offset / PL	Day	Time	NOTES
WCARS Information Net	146.910 - / 91.5	Monday	21:00	Informal, Everyone Welcome
Oasis Shrine Radio Corp. Net.	145.190 -	Sunday	21:00	
BRARC Net	146.640 - / 91.5	Sunday	20:00	
Good Morning Net	146.760 -	M-W-F	9:00	Informal, Everyone Welcome
Madison Cty Am.Rad.Com.Tm	224.660 - / 100	Tuesday	21:00	Madison Cty Emerg Comm Net
Buncombe Cty Emerg Mgt Net	146.910 - / 91.5	Wednesday	21:00	Directed Net, ARES / RACES
Volunteer Net	147.180 + / 136.5	Friday	21:00	Info, News and Swap Net
6600 Net	145.190 -	Saturday	21:00	Many Check-Ins - Wide Coverage
Blue Ridge Traffic Net	146.610 -	Nightly	21:00	May be ARES / SKYWARN in bad WX
Mount Pisgah 220 Net	224.260 -	Sunday	21:00	Informal, Everyone Welcome
Mount Mitchell 220 Net	224.540 -	Monday	20:00	Informal, Everyone Welcome
SATERN Net	14.265	Daily	10:00	Salvation Army Team Emerg. Radio net
K4UUQ Morning Net	7.225	Daily	7:00	Rag chew
NC Morning Net	3.927	Daily	7:45	SSB Traffic Net
NC Evening Net	3.923	Daily	18:30	SSB Traffic Net
Carolinas Net (early)	3.573	Daily	19:00	CW (20-22 wpm) Traffic Net
Tarheel Emergency Net	3.923	Nightly	19:30	Directed Net, NC Emerg Mgt / traffic
Carolinas Slow Net	3.571	Nightly	20:00	Slow CW (8-10 wpm) Traffic Net
Carolinas Net (late)	3.573	Nightly	22:00	CW (15-18 wpm) Traffic Net

Please send additions-corrections-deletions to the editor

For Sale: Dual Band HT (144/440MHz), Standard
C508A Wbander. Excellent Condx, book, box case.
Asking \$110 or OBO. Proceeds to support ARES
Red Cross station needs (cables etc). Dick
K8SKX@ARRL.NET or 828-628-3153.

**WCARS
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