



WCARS.org
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The Official Publication of
The Western Carolina Amateur Radio Society, Inc

President's Microphone

After checking around some more, I found that the West Asheville Library at 942 Haywood Road in West Asheville has a room for meetings. It has a 75 person capacity and rents for ten dollars. The only problem is parking. They have 18 spaces and suggested that we ask West Asheville Baptist church for permission to use their lot. So, all this means is that we will discuss this at the meeting next week and decide how often we wish to have dinner and/or business meetings. Please attend the meeting and help decide rather than staying at home and complaining later.

Please keep Keith and Doris in your prayers. Their recovery is long and boring.

See you all at Ryan's May 5th.

Scott, W4IYS

HAMFEST

by Randy Harris, K14VLW

All club members, July will soon be upon us and it's time to start thinking about the WCARS Hamfest. It will be Saturday, July 30th at the Haywood County Fairgrounds. We again need lots of volunteers to help out both Friday and Saturday.

Friday is our set-up day starting at 10-AM to help vendors set up, drop electrical cords, set up tables, chairs, and other odd jobs.

Don't forget our traditional Friday night WCARS club dinner for the vendors. We are asking you to bring 2 covered dish items and a hardy appetite.

Saturday, we will need volunteers to man the front gate, concession stand, pole barn, help our attendees, and to clean up after the Hamfest is over.

Please let me know if you are willing to help out, Friday, Saturday or preferably BOTH days, if you can.

This is the only "fund raising activity" the club has for generating the money to keep our club and the repeater running for the year. Your help is needed!!!

You can call me at 298-6685 or e-mail me at <rtsp71@aol.com>.

**Meeting for May....
RYAN'S Steak House
Patton Ave - W. Asheville
7-PM - May 5th**

ARES

by Dick Burns, K8SKX

Spring can be Active for emergency communications. Spring brings flowers, warm temperatures and increased risk of violent weather. The latter is evidenced by the super storm cell that just traveled from Mississippi to North Carolina without dissipating.

Fortunately for our area (not true elsewhere) we did not suffer significant damage. Though it is a much repeated plea...

**Stay alert to the weather,
Keep your batteries charged, and
Your equipment ready.**

Have you tested your equipment, or do you "just think" it will work when needed? When the storm on April 27 was approaching I programmed a weather alert radio to "sound off" when a warning is issued by the NWS. Well guess what? It was silent all night long even though news reports and friends say that warnings were issued for Buncombe County. The outcome could have been much different.

I feel it was sort of like having a smoke detector with a dead battery, good intentions paving a road to possible destruction.

I know it is hard not to get complacent since we seldom have communication emergencies, but try to view it like learning and practicing CPR. You keep reviewing and practicing all the time hoping you never need to use it!

The next scheduled BCARES meeting is tentatively planned for May 19.

73,

Dick, K8SKX, EC BCARES

**See the next page for the article on
PELICAN CASES,
which goes along with the above.**

Minutes of April 7th Meeting

by Carl Smith, N4AA

Meeting called to order at 1950 by President Scott McCabe, W4IYS

Everyone introduced himself or herself, 17 present.

Minutes of March meeting published in Smoketest for April were approved as published.

Treasurer's report by Steve, N4SET accepted as read.

A discussion on the subject of a "trailer" followed with several members giving their comments.

A motion was made by Tommy Queen, K4BNP that the entire subject on the acquisition of a trailer be tabled indefinitely, pending future evaluation on the need for such a "trailer." Second made by Randy, KI4VLW. Approved by unanimous vote of those present.

Discussion followed on the subject of equipment available for "temporary" or "emergency" use.

As there is no current inventory of club owned equipment available, the subject was tabled until such time as an inventory can be made available for further discussion.

Subject of meeting place was discussed. A proposal was made that we have at least one meeting each quarter at a location where a program with visual aids can be presented. Scott will investigate the possibilities and report at the next meeting. The next meeting **WILL** be held at Ryan's on May 5th.

A further discussion will be held at that meeting concerning future meeting locations.

Tommy, K4BNP talked about the Meals on Wheels bike ride scheduled for May 28th. He needs help in "manning" the various check points. More information will be in the next Smoketest.

Randy, KI4VLW, Hamfest Chairman reported that plans are ongoing. Contract for the Haywood County Fairgrounds was received and all is set for June 30. Concession Chair Tonya Campbell asked for input on what items should/should not be available. All plans are on track.

Randy, KI4VLW was the 50/50 winner, continuing the tradition established by he and Linda.

Meeting was adjourned at 2050.

Pelican Case # 1510



PELICAN CASE ? ?

by Carl Smith, N4AA

No, this is not "for the birds" and its not a sequel to the movie either. This came up at the last club meeting and hopefully the following will explain what it is.

Shawn Haynes, KG4YVS mentioned that he had seen an article in QST showing how to use a "PELICAN CASE" to put together a radio "TO GO" kit. I looked up the April 2010 QST, and starting on page 80 is an article by a Canadian showing how he put together a kit.

This was an ambitious project and probably beyond the needs, or the ability, of our members to duplicate. However, it does offer some suggestions that we might make use of.

WHAT IT A PELICAN CASE?

For those with internet access, you can go to the web-site at: <<http://www.pelican-case.com>> and view the entire line of products they offer. These are "hardened suitcase" units, for a wide variety of purposes. You will see on the web site how they are being used by fire Departments, law enforcement, military, etc. for many varied purposes.

Personal note: Dave Anderson, K4SV owns a number of these cases. He uses them to transport his radio equipment, computer, etc. when he travels all over the world on radio DXpeditions. Rarely do the airlines damage these cases as they are virtually indestructible ... even by airline baggage handlers.

Pelican offers a huge variety of sizes from very small (5 inches wide by 3.3 inches deep by 1 inch high) all the way up to one that is 54 inches wide by 16-1/2 inches deep by 7 inches high). These measurements are referenced by looking at the case as it would be open, hinged at the back. (See the photo below). These are not cheap, but when one considers the investment in the equipment being carried inside, they are not that expensive.

For example, the Pelican Case # 1510 called a "Carry-On" is 20 inches wide, 11 inches deep and 7.5 inches high, weighs 13-1/2 pounds and carries a price tag of around \$150.00. It comes in either a Green or Tan color and has a full layer of foam padding. The padding can be cut out to hold your particular pieces of equipment solidly in place when the cover is closed/locked.

I had a chance to see several sizes of these cases in use when I went on the trip to the Bahamas in April of 2009. Both of my friends on that trip had various sizes holding radios, amplifiers, antennas, etc. and had no trouble at all in checking those cases as baggage on the airlines. Of course they are limited by the airline rules on size and particularly as to weight. For our use, I don't think that's a problem.

You could have one (or more) Pelican cases pre-cut for your equipment and be ready to go in a matter of minutes if called upon to deploy to another location.

If enough interest is shown, we could have a demonstration/program at one of our meetings to show the versatility of these cases.

WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN SEEING MORE??

Let Carl, N4AA know and he can arrange it.

SKYWARN/ARES Alerts

By Bill Morine, N2COP

In the later half of April, two deadly storm systems marched across North Carolina as part of a wave of severe weather which swept from the Gulf states and the Plains eastward. For North Carolina, these storms caused extensive property damage, with the April 16-17 storms killing 24 in our state - the deadliest storms since 1984 in terms of loss of life. A comparison between the 1984 and April 16-17, 2011 storms shows that the 2011 had more and powerful tornadoes, yet far fewer lives were lost. SKYWARN has been praised by the National Weather Service (NWS) for being a key contributor in reducing the amount of property damage and lives saved. Many reports from SKYWARN spotters helped NWS with its reporting to commercial media outlets, and got warnings out to the public much faster than in 1984.

Special thanks go to the operators and spotters of the Triad, Central Carolina, Wilmington and Newport NWS SKYWARN teams, as well as the Wakefield, VA NWS Area 7 spotters in northeastern NC. During a period when tornadoes were threatening the Raleigh NWS office, Central Carolina SKYWARN EC Virginia Enzor, NC4VA, and her team were instructed by the meteorologist in charge to abandon SKYWARN's third floor operating position and proceed to shelter in the basement until the threat passed.

NTS DIGITAL – A team of ARRL volunteers has been working to update relaying of NTS traffic through digital modes. NC Section Traffic Manager (STM) Dave Roy, W4DNA, just opened a dedicated digital station running Winlink Classic. Dave joins Bill McClymont, W1REP, of Hillsborough and Rick Parker, W4UEF, of Greenville in hosting dedicated NTS digital stations in NC.

To learn how to send/receive NTS digital email, go to <<http://wx4j.com/ClassicExportImportFwdng66a.htm>> NTS in NC and nationally is looking to expand its digital email system. If you have a radio modem or TNC (HF, VHF or UHF) you're not using, please consider a donation which will help the system to expand. For more details, contact Dave at <w4dna@arrl.net>. Dave's station will be on 7100.4 MHz center frequency 0600 to 1800 Eastern, and 3591.9 MHz center frequency from 1900 to 0600 Eastern. The expanding digital team augments the phone/CW nets which meet daily in NC.

SPECIAL EVENT STATIONS – May 14, 0800-1600 local, W4V, celebrating All American Week at the Airborne and Special Operations Museum (ASOM) in Fayetteville. 14.250 MHz. Sponsored by South Wake ARC.

HAMFESTS –

May 14, Rockingham County Swapfest,
Calvary Baptist Church 7860 NC Hwy 87, Reidsville,
Talk-In 146.85 (PL 103.5);

May 28, DurHAMfest,
Little River Community Complex, 8307 North Roxboro
Rd., Bahama, NC 27503, Talk-In 147.225.

73, Bill Morine, N2COP,

440 MHz Band

This is important and your attention is requested RIGHT NOW !!!

There is a bill in Congress now (H.R. 607) that **COULD** take the 440 band away from us.

And, this could just be the first step in taking other bands.

You are requested to contact your congressional representatives (the HOUSE and SENATE) using the following process: GO TO: <www.kd4pyr.net/hamletter.htm>

Insert your call letters in the box and it will generate a letter for you to send to your representatives. You can print it out and mail it, or FAX it per the instructions on that web site.

This is very serious, whether you use those frequencies or not. As stated above, this could be the tip of the iceberg and we DO NOT want to lose ANY frequencies.

THANK YOU & more

Scott McCabe, W4IYS

Thanks for the fast response for find a TNC for me to use for Packet. I had one within an hour after the notice was sent.

I just found out that Connie Duncan, KF4IJN is on FACEBOOK. She is in a nursing home in Gaithersburg, MD. Please add her as a FRIEND and drop her a note from time to time. Address was in the last Smoketest. Or, contact her by mail at: <kf4ijn@hotmail.com>. She did a lot for WCARS.

I am still looking for a meeting place (see comments on page one). We will find a place to have a Business/Program meeting, but I need your support. We only had 13 at the last meeting and we definitely need more than that to join in the discussion and ultimate decisions.

"WHEEL RIDE FOR FOOD" May 28, 2011

Meals on Wheels is sponsoring their 4th annual "Wheel Ride for Food" on May 28, 2011. This is a three part bike ride, half metric, full century metric and 100+ ride beginning at River Park on Amboy Road through Craggy to Alexander Baptist Church to Marshall, Weaverville to OX Creek at the Blue Ridge Parkway and back into Asheville to River Park.

We have been asked to provide communications for this event, as we have in the past. There will be 4 rest stops/check points (perhaps 5) and we will need operators at each of those check points and will also need at least 3 "SAG" riders.

Tommy Queen, K4BNP is heading up this project and he desperately needs some help. Volunteers are needed. If you can possibly participate in this activity, contact Tommy. His phone number and email address are below.

We have a reputation to protect folks, don't let the community or WCARS down.

PHONE: 828-258-2639 EMAIL: K4BNP@ARRL.NET

SMOKETEST

Official publication of the

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PO Box 1488, Asheville, NC 28802

www.wcars.org

W 4 M O E

Repeater: 146.91 (PL-91.5)
Spivey Mountain, Asheville, NC

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HF/VHF/UHF Net Information

NET NAME	Freq offset / PL	Day	Local time	Notes
6600	145.190 +	Saturday	9-PM	Many check-ins-Wide area coverage
Blue Ridge Traffic	146.610 -	Nightly	9-PM	ARES/Skywarn in bad weather
BRARC	146.640 - 91.5	Sunday	9-PM	
Buncombe Cty Emerg. Mgt.	146.910 - 91.5	Wednesday	9-PM	Directed net, ARES/RACES
Carolinas Net - Early	3.573	Daily	7-PM	CW Traffic
Carolinas Net - Late	3.573	Daily	10-PM	CW - 15-18 WPM Traffic
Carolinas Net - Slow	3.571	Daily	8-PM	Slow CW - 8 to 10 WPM Traffic
Franklin, NC - Winesprings Bald	147.240 + / 151.4	Daily	9-PM	(KU4ES — call will be changed)
Good Morning	146.760 -	M-W-F	9-AM	Informal, Everyone welcome
Haywood County Roundtable	147.390 + 94.8	Monday	8-PM	Informal, Everyone welcome
K4UUQ Morning	7.225	Daily	7-AM	Ragchew
Madison Cty-AmRadComTeam	224.660 100	Tuesday	9-PM	Madison County Emergency Comm
Mount Mitchell 220	224.540	Monday	8-PM	Informal, Everyone welcome
Mount Mitchell Ragchew	442.225 + 107.2	Monday	9-PM	Directed, Everyone welcome
Mount Mitchell Sunrise Net	442.225 + 107.2	Thursday	9-AM	Informal - Everyone welcome
Mount Pisgah 220	224.260	Sunday	9-PM	Informal, Everyone welcome
NC Evening Traffic	3.923	Daily	6:30-PM	SSB
NC Morning Traffic	3.927	Daily	7:45-AM	SSB
Oasis Shrine Radio Corp.	145.190 +	Sunday	9-PM	
SATERN	14.265	Daily	3-PM	Salvation Army Team-Emergency
Tarheel Emergency Net	3.923	Daily	7:30-PM	Directed, NC Emerg. Mgt - Traffic
Volunteer	147.180 + 136.5	Friday	9-PM	Info, News and Swap
WCARS Information	146.910 - 91.5	Monday	9-PM	Informal, Everyone welcome
???	224.600			WB4PLA on Spivey Mtn. ???
W4YK	53.630 - 100	Friday	9-PM	???