



The Spectrum

Issue 4

April 2004

WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Ruth Bigio, KB4LIF

SpringFest at Last!

Ah, the fresh smell of coffee is in the early air. Listening to people bargain as laughter and good humor breaks the silence. The paper money rustling in people's hands as it goes in and out of pockets as they decide, change their minds and then decide again. "Whoa - did you hear about the good deal I got hear?" Or "Man oh man, did I mess up by missing that deal over there - you sure beat me to it!" "That sure is a fine looking radio you have there - what year did you say you got it?" "Well, now - I got mine when I was only 11 years old....."

These are the sights and sounds of a HamFest, my friends. These and a whole lot more. Are you going to be part of it this year? Make up your minds nice and early and be part of an exciting experience. This is the nicest, friendliest HamFest in the area. Everyone who comes out has a great time. Bargains are to be had for everyone - young, old, male and female, ham or non-ham. You all will be surprised to see the vendors we have this year. There is food, food and more food. And what is a HamFest without prizes? We will have hourly drawings for the prizes until there are no more - all gone... must be present to win.

So Everyone come. Everyone Stay. Everyone Wins!

See Ya'll There! - Ruth

ANNOUNCING The Chesapeake Amateur Radio Service SpringFest

Yes folks it's that time of year again. The 2004 Chesapeake Amateur Radio Service's SpringFest located at the Hickory Ruritan Club on S. Battlefield Blvd in Chesapeake.

The weather is starting to warm up and what better way to welcome Spring but to have a hamfest. So mark your calendars for April 24th! General admission tickets are \$6.00 and starts at 9:00 am until 2:00 pm that afternoon. Your ticket also gets you a table for all of your wares.

Good food, lots of good deals from area hams and lots of nice door prizes that will be given away during the event. Check page seven (7) for the list of prizes that will be given out during the day!

The next general meeting of CARS will be a business meeting devoted to preparations of the event so please attend. We need all of your support to make this a successful event!!!

For more information you can check out the clubs web site at <http://www.qsl.net/cars> or contact Leo Kusuda at kg4pwc@arrl.net.

Flea Market and Vendor setup 8:00 am
General Public 9:30 am - 3:00 pm
Admission \$6.00

The NICEST Hamfest in the land where our country was born!

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Upcoming Events

CARS Meeting

WFOS classroom. Monday, April 5, 2004. Topic Springfest planning.

May 3rd, 2004 meeting will be held at Fudruckers in Greenbrier at 7:00 pm. Bring your appetite.

CARS Shack Day

Saturday, April 10th, 2004 10:00 AM until ? Meet at CCST ham shack to build attenuators and hold another fox hunt. Those who built their tape measure antennas need to bring to the meeting.

Tour de Cure

Saturday, April 17, 2004. Location: Hickory High School, Chesapeake VA to Manteo, NC. This is our one big Public Service Event for the year. More details will be published later. Usual hours are from 0700-1400. Also check out the [American Diabetes Association](#) local website.

CARS Springfest

Saturday, April 24, 2004. Location: Hickory Ruritan Club, Chesapeake VA – Tickets are out now.
Sell Sell Sell!!!!

ARRL Field Day

Saturday and Sunday, June 26-27, 2004. Location: Great Bridge Locks Park
Get Ready For Fun Fun Fun!!!

Do you have news for us?

If you have an article you think the membership would enjoy reading, items for sale, or is there something you are having a hard time finding? Let us publish it for you. Please send an email to Newsletter editor c/o W4CAR@yahoo.com and we will get your information in the next edition of the Spectrum. Have a question you would like to have answered? Submit those as well.

From the Editor's Desk

Keith, KG4ZXX

Hard to believe that we are heading into the fourth month of the year. Seems like yesterday it was the new year. Now we are getting ready for daylight savings time (YEAH!) and field day.

We have been having fun building antennas and learning how fox hunting is operated. Ricky Lee went and battled the FCC and didn't have a big enough rock to throw but gave it his all.

The Monitor Merrimac Special Event Station went off without a hitch. I think some folks were hoping for more contacts but it was tough with band conditions and other contests that were going on at the same time. Still, we had folks who stuck in there and got all the contacts that they could. Good job to you that helped.

Ruth, KB4LIF was able to get her antenna above periscope depth and can now hit the 146.82 repeater from home with ease. I am sure that she is having fun, hopefully, working HF with her new setup. We need to get a photo of her updated shack to share with you all.

All in all 2004 seems to be a good year for amateur radio. With the exception of the BPL threat and the possible changes in license classes that have people wondering how things will be in the near future.

Also can't forget the testing sessions being held in Chesapeake. The Portsmouth, Virginia Beach and CARS have done an excellent job of helping bring new blood into the hobby. Just in time for field day! What a great time to get them in front of a radio and contacting a distant station in some far off corner of the world.

However, the few people who always show up to lend a hand can't do it alone. We need all of your support this upcoming year for all the events to be held, especially with Springfest and Tour De Cure. Please let Leo, KG4PWC, know how much you appreciate his time and effort that he puts into all these events.

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Upcoming Exam Schedule

April 3 rd	Hampton Roads Planning District Office (ARRL) 723 Woodlake Drive, Chesapeake. Carl Clements, W4CAC 757-484-0569
April 3 rd	Williamsburg Amateur Radio Club (ARRL) Mike Conte W4NYY 757-566-8015
April 24 th	Gloucester College of Radio Examiners (W5YI) Bill Sale AE4RB 804-694-0690
June 19 th	VA Beach Amateur Radio Club (ARRL) Mark Palsha KI4VB 757-474-4661

Amateur Radio and Morse Code.

There is a wonderful story by Anne Wodening AA0ZR and her experience with Morse Code that captures the essence of Morse Code on the ARRL website,

www.arrl.org/news/features/2004/02/05/1/?nc=1. It is like "Talking with Drums." Listening to CW, there is a rhythm and musicality to the sound. It makes you choose your words and condense your thoughts. It is a method of communication that has allowed people to stay in the hobby into their 90's and to work around disabilities. It is used worldwide and its simplicity makes it the choice of Ham operators who go to remote places. It is very true that of the Hams I have contacted, the ones that stay in the hobby the longest operate CW. The best international DX'ers are very proficient at CW. Over one third of Hams use primarily CW (www.arrl.org/survey.php3?pollnr=176). Many of these individuals learned their skills in World War II and their life stories are fascinating.

Sending and receiving Morse code is a skill that requires only that you practice and practice and practice. You train your mind to recognize the sound as quickly as you can recognize someone saying each letter. Just as it takes most individuals several years to get proficient at playing an instrument and reading sheet music, so it is with communicating with Morse code. At higher speeds, the whole word can be distinguished. For most people, practicing an hour a day for a month, will get you over the first hurdle which is to recognize letters at 5 words per minute (wpm). To be able to communicate using Morse code at 30 wpm will take most people diligent studying or usage over 4 years. Fortunately, based upon ARRL surveys, over 80% of CW users send at less than 20 wpm and 50% send at 15 wpm or less (www.arrl.org/survey.php3?pollnr=136).

Using a straight key, 15-18 wpm is a comfortable speed. To send at higher speeds, most people will use a paddle and keyer.

For very high-speed code, over 30wpm, many operators use a keyboard. When people speak, they are usually uttering words in excess of 120 wpm (remember short-hand?). Even at 5 wpm there is a great sense of accomplishment and as you increase your speed, there are many moments of renewed feelings of accomplishment.

To learn my personal recommendations are as follows:

1. Study in short segments but at least 15 minutes at a time. Try to do a total of one hour a day. You will make progress on 15 minutes a day in the car, but it will be slow.
2. The brain learns the best when you use as much of it as possible. So when you listen to the code, write and say the letter at the same time. You can learn while listening in the car, but spend some time writing.
3. I would use a combination of tapes or CD's, computer programs, <http://www.arrl.org/w1aw/morse.html> and listening to the radio. W1AW can be received on 1.8175, 3.5815, 7.0475, 14.0475, 18.0975, 21.0675, 28.0675 and 147.555 MHz. To see the schedule, go to <http://www.arrl.org/w1aw.html>.
4. A very nice training device is made by MFJ Enterprises. At \$80 it may seem pricey but you can use it when you travel and it will help you get better at the higher speeds. For those interested in greater than 20 wpm, computer software and the MFJ Code Tutor and W1AW are your main learning resources.
5. If you catch yourself playing Solitaire on the computer, why not spend a little time using a Morse code training program instead.
6. Spelling words in Morse code using Dit's and Dah's also works. It is easy to do driving down the highway.
7. DO NOT COUNT! Counting will cause you to have the infamous code barrier of around 7 wpm.
8. AVOID USING SUBSTITUTE SOUNDS or PHONETICS. They may help you pass the 5 wpm but they will have to be unlearned to get to the higher speeds.

When you do get on the air, realize that keying errors and misspelling are common. Also people tend to use abbreviated spellings that like slang are not necessarily

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LOCAL NETS

SKYWARN NET Fridays 1900 hours.	146.820 MHz
CARS 10 Meter Net 2000 hours on Mondays CARS doesn't meet	28.400 MHz
Hampton Roads Public Service Net Mon-Sat 2100 hours	146.970 MHz
VBARC 10 Meter Net 2000 hours on Thursdays VBARC doesn't meet	28.400 MHz
Portsmouth Amateur Radio Emergency Services Net Fridays 1930 hours	146.850 MHz



ARRL NEWS BULLETINS

ARRL LAUNCHES ON-LINE TECHNICIAN CLASS

Thanks to the League's new on-line Technician Class Course for Ham Radio Licensing (EC-010)

<<http://www.arrl.org/cce/Tech.html>>, prospective hams can study for their ticket wherever they can connect to the Internet and on their own schedule. The course is offered through the ARRL Certification and Continuing Education (C-CE) program. Two new classes will open each month, and students may sign up anytime via the ARRL Web site

<<http://www.arrl.org/cce/courses.html#ec010>> or by calling the New Ham Hotline, 800-326-3942. Class sessions begin April 6 and April 20. ARRL On-line Course Development Coordinator Howard Robins, W1HSR, says the new on-line Technician course will include everything needed to successfully pass the examination plus help with getting a foothold in ham radio.

IOWA HAM CLUB DESIGNATED A "DAILY POINT OF LIGHT"

The Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network <<http://www.pointsoflight.org>> has designated The Tri-State Amateur Radio Club (TSARC)

<<http://www.qsl.net/w0cvj/>> of Cresco, Iowa, as the Daily Point of Light for Monday, March 29. The Foundation recognized the ARRL-affiliated club for voluntarily providing communication during emergencies and for supporting Red Cross and The Salvation Army relief efforts. President George W. Bush and former President George H. W. Bush, have endorsed the Daily Points of Light Award, and each will send a congratulatory letter to the club.

EAGLES' JOE WALSH, WB6ACU, ENJOYS FIRST VISIT TO ARRL

Well-known amateur and musician Joe Walsh, WB6ACU, of The Eagles, this week visited ARRL Headquarters for the first time in his 43 years as a ham. Accompanying Walsh to Newington March 5 and 6 was ham radio audio expert and manufacturer Bob Heil, K9EID. Both are ARRL Life Members. Besides touring ARRL, Walsh and Heil spent part of their weekend operating W1AW with ARRL staff members during the ARRL International DX Contest (Phone).

Walsh, who's also performed with The James Gang and enjoyed a solo career, says he got into Amateur Radio in 1960, shortly after moving to New York. Becoming a radio amateur was a pivotal point in his life, he said, and his personal experience was one of

the reasons he's become a donor to the ARRL Amateur Radio Education and Technology Program <<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/tbp/>>. Recalling how the kindness of his Elmer, Jim Walden, then W2IEY and now W6ESJ, had enriched his life back when he was the new kid in town, Walsh said he wanted to somehow pay it back.

A GLIMMER OF HOPE FOR AO-40

A weak "noise" on the AO-40 2.4-GHz beacon frequency has raised hopes that AO-40 may still be alive. AO-40 has been silent since January 27 (UTC), in the wake of a precipitous voltage drop. The satellite's controllers believe that one or more shorted battery cells are at the root of the problem.

The AO-40 command team theorizes that a cell in the main battery pack has shorted, clamping the bus voltage below the point where it can operate the satellite. The spacecraft's auxiliary batteries are believed to be in parallel with the main batteries, and AO-40 Earth stations have been attempting to command the satellite to switch to the auxiliary batteries.

Updates on AO-40 are available on the AMSAT-DL Web site <<http://www.amsat-dl.org/journal/adlj-p3d.htm>>.

HAMVENTION PLANNING, PREPARATIONS GOING FULL TILT

Hamvention <<http://www.hamvention.org>> General Chairman Gary Des Combes, N8EMO, reports all is going smoothly as the 2004 show approaches. Hamvention will take place Friday through Sunday, May 14-16, at Hara Arena in Trotwood, near Dayton, Ohio. The theme for the 53rd Hamvention is "The Year of the Contact."

The annual ARRL Forum gets under way at 8:30 AM on Saturday, May 15. Check the Hamvention Web site <<http://www.hamvention.org>> for additional details.

MAINLANDERS KEEPING EYE ON HAWAII AMATEUR RADIO ANTENNA BILLS

House Bill 2773 would allow Hawaiian amateurs living in condominiums to install antennas on their units under certain guidelines. HB 2774 would permit antenna installations, with conditions, by Hawaiian amateurs living in subdivisions subject to homeowners' association covenants, conditions and restrictions (CC&Rs).

New 10 – 10 QSL Bureau

The new 10-10 QSL Bureau is up and has been running since the kick-off date, 01 January 2004. Activity during the first month has been brisk with 37 stations submitting envelopes and 82 cards received. The 10-10 QSL Bureau is open to all with a 10-10 number paid member or not. Here is an opportunity to exchange cards at a first-class nominal fee, only the cost of a first class postage stamp. The bureau has been authorized for a two-year trial period after which the Board of Directors will review the activity along with comments and recommendations from the Bureau Manager, Bob Peschka, K7QXG. To receive your cards from the 10-10 QSL Bureau, simply send three or four #6 size envelopes pre-stamped one unit of first-class postage. Place your call in bold letters in the upper left-hand corner of the face of the envelope. Send your envelopes to Bob at 592 E Cypress Ave., Dallas, OR 97338-2932.

Here is a great way to exchange cards for the price of one first-class stamp. All those with a 10-10 number, dues paid member or not, send your envelopes to Bob today. The fun of exchanging QSL cards just got back to a price that all can afford. No more stamps to send the card and a SASE to receive a card back. Send your package of bulk cards to Bob who will do the rest and will send you your cards on a regular basis. With two contests coming up here in the next few weeks, use the 10-10 QSL Bureau to send and receive your cards. At the present time, the Bureau is only for U.S. members.

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widely accepted. So don't feel bad if you don't copy everything on the air.

In many ways, I think Morse code is more of an art form. CW is not just a mode, it is a language and literary construct. When it comes to communications in poor band conditions, digital is faster and just as reliable. However, the operator can express himself, both with keying style and choice of words. I am quite confident that this style of communication will continue to be preserved by Ham operators for both its practical nature and enjoyment.

The author runs a beginner slow speed code practice net on the 146.610 repeater (100 Hz tone) at 2045 on Wednesdays and 2015 on Fridays.

73
Leo
KG4PWC

Good Job Ricky Lee!

Sonny Hood K4WYS

Have you ever heard of the phrase "*The left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing!*" or "*You should know what you are talking about before you open your mouth!*", well the folks at the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau of the FCC should take these comments to heart.

The bureaucratic bungling started back when Richard (Ricky) L. Smith of Chesapeake Virginia a newly licensed ham applied for a "Vanity Callsign". Sometime during August 2002, is when Ricky's problems started. Ricky wanted the callsign that his father had used while his dad was at Cape Hallett Station, Antarctica. Ricky knew that the station had been long taken out of service. So he requested the call KC4USH and he got it on August 31st 2002!

Things went fine until someone or something raised a question with the FCC as to why a callsign for Antarctica was in use in the US. After some review the bunch in the Ivory Tower up north found that the Navy had been granted soul use of the callsigns KC4AAA-KC4AAF and KC4USA-KC4USZ, back in 1959. Yes someone goofed!

No wrong should go uncorrected, so the big chief fires off a public notice to straighten things out, now the fire is in the fat! Mr. Smith is told on July 3rd 2003 that his KC4USH is to be canceled and he is to revert to the original callsign that had been assigned when he got his license. That callsign was KG4UKV. Well Ricky filed his protest to the action (as was set forth in the July notice) and waited.

The chief after much delay made her mind up (Mr. Smith you doth protest too much, but no joy) on January 16th, 2004. The station license for Mr. Smith will be modified from KC4USH back to the original call that he held, that being KG4UKV. The public notice of the action was released January 22, 2004.

Now here is where it gets juicy, when Ricky got his new "Vanity" call his old call was granted to a John Oates in North Carolina, on August 15th, 2002. Do the math, his old call was reassigned 15 days before his "KC4USH Vanity Callsign" was assigned!

As of January 16th, 2004 directive, who had the call KG4UKV? Only the government can screw up this well and twice having the same call for two people (2002 & 2004).

Guess who got this mess straighten out? Not the great

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The Battle: 2004 vs 1862

"If you build it, they will come." Sounds like a marketing pitch to a movie studio or a variant on "If I have a tall tower, I will be heard." Well, the Laws of Nature maybe able to be overcome in a baseball game in a "Field of Dreams" but you cannot make geomagnetic flux, solar indices and the weather cooperate all the time. Even worse, in planning to have the Battle of the Monitor and Merrimac special event station held as close to the true dates of March 8 and 9, we collided with another force of nature, the ARRL International DX phone contest! But challenges is what life is all about and I dare say most of us in Amateur Radio got into the hobby because it was challenging.

So Saturday, March 6, 2004 started out with forecasts of possible severe storms. A team of dedicated club members, Bill, WF4R "Tower Wizard", Sonny, K4WYS "Tool Wizard #1", Barry, W3AFH "Tool Wizard #2 (I beg forgiveness for any politically incorrect designations), Reggie, W5SSB "Master Spectrum and Repeater Wizard", Keith, KG4ZXX "Image Master", Ruth, KB4LIF "Grand Wizard" and "Radio Wizards", Paul, K4PRB and Rick, KC4RIC congregated at the base of the mystical Hurricane Isabel baptized tower at THE SHACK. At least there was no evil eye burning down upon us to inflict sunburns upon the already parched body of our fearless tower climber, Bill. Occasionally foreign objects came falling from the headless tower but no one confessed to being struck. The rotatable dipole was successfully mounted and connected with only the rotor being hauled away for further inspection.

The replacement 440 repeater was installed. It looked robust and a vast improvement over the previous model with a beefier set of duplexer/tuning cans, power supply and controller. W5SSB not only installed the repeater, he donated it to the club. A most generous gesture, that left most of us awestruck. The repeater was hooked into the vertical beam antenna for temporary use until the replacement vertical antenna and hard line could be installed. All in all a lot was accomplished prior to the Battle of the Monitor and Merrimac Special Event station kicking off about 20 minutes later than planned and an hour before the rains hit us at full force.

While the Wizards vanished to the radio ethers, the rest of us lesser characters started searching the airwaves for non-contesters. The 146.820 repeater turned out to be a steady source of check-ins and once we got the old Kenwood TS140S warmed up (Kick started) 40 Meters was also productive. Ten meters, however, was as devoid of human activity as the Mines of Moria. Wizard, Rick, KC4RIC from his home tried valiantly to search for activity on 10 meters but the contest "Orcs" ignored us. 15 Meters was a veritable maelstrom of contesters with no room for us special event people no matter how noble our purpose.

Out of the ashes of conflict there were several awakenings. It was glorious to hear Robbie, KI4EIV, Margaret, KI4EIR, and

especially Steve, KI4EIN and Lee, KI4CAV who pulled duty as Special Event Operators. Steve, Robbie and Margaret all received their call signs only days ago. Others that came out were Bob, WA4SQL, Brock, KC8LWV, George, KV4GR and Richard, who has his GROL license and soon to have his Amateur Radio license. 40-meters held up for a few hours but by 2 p.m., it also shut down and then was consumed by the commercial broadcast stations. However, I did manage to make two QSO's on 40-meter CW. About 90 contacts were made, which was over half as much as last year, but just as enjoyable. A few notable contacts were from Ontario, Michigan, and Georgia. Of course, an event of this type wouldn't be complete with the obligatory food, and Ruth was kind enough to make a pizza run.

One of the contacts I made was in Williamsburg, and I mentioned it would be nice to do a combined event with the Peninsula stations. The Mariner's Museum is interested in having a station on the Museum premises. So the journey begins. Till next time 73.

Leo Kusuda
KG4PWC

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chief in the ivory tower, but Ricky Lee! Following the word that his KC4USH call was toast, Ricky went to a "Vanity" callsign service (note - not the FCC) and requested a callsign that he would like to have "KC4RIC". The new call was researched by the service and he was advised that it was available. His application was accepted and his money also. "Glory be, Saints be praised" on February 21st, 2004, Ricky was granted a vanity callsign of "KC4RIC".

In closing, the FCC and it's staff made a mistake. This is understandable, but the attitude and actions of the people in this branch of the government, only yielded an apology. This is not how the citizens of this great country should be treated by their public servants. What about his fee for the first vanity call, does the government profit from its mistakes? I shouldn't use the word profit, because the fee is to cover costs for the vanity callsign program. However, some consideration is due to the guy when he bails out the bunglers by paying for a new callsign that prevented much grief to an unsuspecting ham in North Carolina and more confusion in the ivory tower up north.

The ARRL hardly lifted a finger when asked to assist in this matter, their attitude also needs to improve concerning their members when uncle Frank Charlie Charlie screws up.

So Ricky Lee you did a good thing, all by yourself, you saved a bureaucrat much time and face, now they can go back asleep. **Good Job!**



SKYWARN RECEIVING AND REPORTING HAZARDOUS WEATHER INFORMATION

Spotters, both base (or point) and mobile, should have access to reliable hazardous weather information. Many spotters have access to amateur radio networks. These networks will likely have one or two radio operators stationed at NWS offices for providing radar and other meteorological information to the net. Spotter networks not affiliated with amateur radio groups should consider having one or more members monitor NOAA Weather Radio and other outlets for weather information. Our Chesapeake Amateur Radio Service is affiliated with the NOAA Wakefield NWS station. Monitor the 146.82 in the event of a severe weather crisis and Please check in whether or not you spot an event at the moment. That way the net control operator knows who may be available in a particular area and can ask that individual for specific information. All amateur radio operators should have a weather radio and tune in for their specific area. Spring definitely brings in thunderstorms, flash flooding, and hail, among other weather problems. Those who have a spotter identification number should check in with that number, however, if mobile, should give the location at the time of check in.

It is vital for this area that all amateur radio operator take the Skywarn classes as our area's weather changes considerably every few minutes. And in this marine environment that can be hazardous for many. You can check out the Skywarn website via the NOAA.org or you can do so via the link on our CARS website. Just remember, if you don't like our weather – stick around 5 minutes and it will change. Will you be ready to report it, if it is hazardous to your health and welfare?

SpringFest 2004 Door Prize List

- 2 - Radio Shack HTX10 10-Meter SSB/FM Transceiver
- 2 - Radio Shack Computer Tool Kits
EZ Scroll OptiMouse
- 2 - Automotive Organizer
Getting Started in Electronics
Travel Bag, Audio
- 2 - TechVac battery operated hand vac (for computer keyboard, etc)
- 4 - Pocket Knife/Money Clip
- 2 - Calculator Ruler
- 2 - CD-ROM Wallet
- Flashlight
- Business Card Holder
- Repeater Directory 2002-2003
- 2 - Desk Clip Lamp
- 2 - Desk Lamp
- Map Light
- 4 - Desk Business Card Holder
- 2 Keychain Databank
- 21 - Keychain Screwdriver
- 4 - Clipboard/calculator
- 10 - Portable Book Lights
- 6 - Folding chairs
- 10 - MFJ Mugs

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"Gentlemen...tonight we will begin the Malicious Interference Net with a round of anonymous whistling, followed by free style profanity. Remember...no call signs!"

The Spectrum
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CARS Repeaters (W4CAR)
146.610 MHz
146.820 MHz
444.000 MHz

W4CAR Trustee: Frank Duval – K4PRR

CARS OFFICERS & CHAIRPERSONS

President: Ruth Bigio KB4LIF
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