



The Spectrum

Issue 0406

April 2006

From The President

As I write this month's article we are preparing for this year's Spring Fest which will be held at the Portsmouth Moose Lodge on George Washington Highway Sunday, April 2nd, 2006. This is going to be interesting to see how Sunday works for ham fest.

This event is our major source of funding for club projects and we will need everyone's help. If you are able to help in any way please come out and help. We will need you.

The VA QSO party was operated from the QRM room. We only had a few operators but we racked up 4196 points for the event. Hopefully, more folks will want to participate next year.

Don't forget to set your clocks ahead before going to bed on 4/1/06.

73's
Keith
KG4ZXX



FCC to Reduce Vanity Call Fee

The FCC wants to reduce the Fiscal Year 2006 regulatory fee to obtain an Amateur Radio vanity call sign to \$20.10 for the 10-year license term.

The current vanity fee is \$21.90.

The Commission proposed the new fee in a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM), "Assessment and Collection of Regulatory Fees for Fiscal Year 2006," in MD Docket 06-68, released March 27.

If ordered as proposed, the new vanity fee would become effective in August or September. The FCC is obligated to collect nearly \$289 million in regulatory fees during FY 2006 to fund its operations.

Reply comments are due Friday, April 21. The FCC has projected collecting \$171,188 in vanity call sign fee receipts from 8500 applications in FY 2006.

The vanity call sign fee has assumed somewhat greater significance this year as the renewal window is about to open for the first Amateur Radio licenses assigned vanity call signs in 1996.

Applicants who wish to keep their post-1995 vanity call signs must pay the vanity call sign regulatory fee in effect at the time the renewal application reaches the FCC. Amateur Radio licensees holding vanity call signs granted prior to 1996 do not have to pay a regulatory fee when renewing. This is because Congress did not begin requiring the FCC to annually recover its regulatory costs until 1993.

Links of Interest

[Virginia Beach Amateur Radio Club](#)

[Portsmouth Amateur Radio Club](#)

[Tour de Cure: Tour de Cure Homepage](#)

[Portable Electric Generator Safety Tips](#)

[Home - KG4ZXX.COM - IRLP and much more!](#)

[AA9PW Morse Code Practice](#)

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Upcoming Events

Springfest

2nd of April

Moose Lodge, 1400 N Geo Washington Hwy
[Map of 1400 George Washington Hwy N Chesapeake](#)

CARS Monthly Meeting

April 3rd, 2006, 7 pm
116 Reservation Road

[Map of 116 Reservation Rd Chesapeake, VA](#)

VBARC

April 6th 7pm
St Andrews Methodist Church
Princess Anne Rd & Tucson Ave

[Map of 717 Tucson Rd Virginia Beach, VA](#)

ARES/Public Service meeting

Wednesday April 19, 7:00 pm at the QRM room

Tour De Cure – April 22nd

0700-1400. Meet at Hickory High
School

[Tour de Cure: Tour de Cure Homepage](#)



LOCAL NETS



SKYWARN NET Fridays 1900 hours.	146.820 MHz
CARS 2M Net Sundays 2030 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 "RagChew" Net Monday & Wednesday 1930 hours	146.850 MHz
Southeastern Virginia Traffic Net Sun, Tues, Thurs @ 2000 hours	146.850 MHz
Portsmouth Amateur Radio Emergency Services Net Fridays 2000 hours	146.850 MHz
Tidewater Radio Association WT4RA net Thursday 1930 hours (code drill follows net)	147.195 MHz
RASON Sunday thru Friday 1930 hours	145.330 or 442.95 MHz Repeaters linked PL: 131.8 for both

The Battle of the Monitor and Merrimac 2006

Life is stranger than fiction. If you had told me that I would be operating a special event station at the Mariner's Museum commemorating the first battle of the Ironclads otherwise known as the battle of the Monitor and Merrimac from a Tiki Bar, I would have thought you were NUTS! But there I was Saturday, March 11, 2006. In the back courtyard between the Master Boat Builder's shop and the Small Craft Building is a large Tiki Bar suitable to seat the crew of any pirate ship seeking rum. You would run into us as you walked out the back entrance!

I have been organizing this special event station for several years. The first two times in 2003 and 2004, W4CAR operated out of the old shack at the Chesapeake Center for Science and Technology. The Peninsula Amateur Radio Club had operated a special event station October 19, 2002 (<http://www.qsl.net/w4mt>). Our first attempt with 2 radios yielded some 150 contacts. In 2005, due to scheduling problems, we held it at the QRM Room. So finally in 2006, W4CAR went live at the Mariner's Museum (<http://www.mariner.org>). I had also learned in the past not to schedule this event on the 1st weekend in March, even if it was the Museum's designated special event weekend. The 1st weekend in March is always the ARRL Worldwide SSB DX contest, and fighting the QRM made it too much of a battle and less of a commemoration!

Except for 2004, the weather during the events had been quite pleasant and this year, the weather was exceptionally nice. Good thing! Operating at an off site is like operating an emergency field station or a mini-Field Day. I had reconnoitered the place about one month earlier and contacted the staff. The staffs were very helpful and one of the facilities workers was a Ham!

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Turns out several of the staff are Hams! But like every new venue, specifics were a little unclear. There were several open areas in the almost 600-acre museum grounds. I had seen the Tiki bar and had hoped to operate next to it. But I was pleasantly surprised that I could operate in it. No there were no beverages of the South sea variety and we were not going to be generating electricity with alcohol-based fuel. But it did insure a covered relatively protected place and access to electricity. I reassured the facilities people that I would not be climbing on any towers and create an insurance nightmare nor would I block the flow of traffic or create unnecessary safety hazards. They were very accommodating and said they would not charge any admission (\$8 per adult) for use and would allow us to drive to the back.

Preparing for a field station at an unknown site is always a challenge. Even if it is only for 6 hours, you still have to be prepared for everything. Not until the week before did I get confirmation that we could use the courtyard in the back with the "Tiki Bar". At least I did not have to worry about a generator. However, in spite of taking digital pictures of the area the month before, I was not sure of the antenna setup. So I brought a 30 ft telescoping mast, a 16 ft telescoping pool cleaning pole (they are the lightest aluminum collapsible poles you can easily find), 20 ft of TV mast sections, 24 foot telescoping painter's pole, my box of rope, hose clamps, tools, and 500 ft of coax. I didn't want to cause a trip hazard so I had RG8X.



Rigs brought were a Yaesu FT 897D with built in power supply, a Yaesu FT897D on battery power, an Icom 2100 VHF mobile, and a car mounted Icom 706 MKIIG and Kenwood V7a. There were several HT's on hand. Antennas included a Diamond X200 dual band vertical, a HS 1500 screwdriver antenna and a 40-meter Radio Works Carolina Windom. We also had an 80-meter Carolina Windom available.

I arrived on site a little before 8 am. John KI4MYZ, Bob KI4MNC and Bill WF4R were already on the 146.790 repeater. However, I underestimated the difficulty in describing how to navigate to the backside of the museum. Next year I will need to draw a very detailed map with pictures! Eventually everyone found his or her way back to the Tiki Bar. The Head of Facilities greeted us and requested that we set up the antenna in the maintenance area parking lot. However, we were immediately confronted with a 50 ft boat on chocks that was off limit to us since it was a private boat.



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We could not string anything over it. We got our 40 ft mast up and were then told it was OK even though it was in the Museum Director's parking spot!

One end of the 40-meter windom was at the top of the mast; the other end was about 20 ft in a tree. We found that light nylon twine does not travel as well as monofilament fishing line when using a slingshot. Quick clamps kept the coax elevated off the walkways. A battery operated LDG Z100 auto-tuner was used with the windom. The second HF rig was fed into the High Sierra screwdriver antenna. Tuning the screwdriver required switching to the mobile ICOM 706 and using its built in graphing function. An MFJ antenna analyzer was also on site for troubleshooting. The Icom 2100 fed the Diamond X200, which was mounted on a 15-foot mast tied to the fence. We managed to get operational a little after 1000, our advertised start time.

We could not have asked for a nicer day! The temperature was in the mid 60's. It was a bit breezy but the sky was completely clear. Initial contact was with a group of scouts camping overnight on the Battleship New Jersey in Camden, NJ. They shared their experience sleeping in the racks in the Chief's quarters. I was impressed at how articulate they were. By 12 o'clock, we had a true pile up going on. Bob KI4MNC and John KI4MYZ, both relatively new technicians were hanging in there in the thick of it. Paul, KI4IRL also took turns. They were both amazed and in awe at the number of calls. Charley, WB4PVT a veteran mentioned going split. Operating split means our station sent on the designated fixed frequency and we received up or down a few KHz to keep our signal from being buried. But they decided to keep slugging it out. By 3 pm, the band condition was going south and we decided to play around with contacts on Bob's newly acquired battery powered FT897D feeding my mobile antenna. Low and behold, he made a contact with the Oklahoma QSO party at 5 watts! Estimated ERP was probably closer to 1 watt. That was the high point of the day.

Final tally was 105 contacts. The top 5 states were Virginia – 21, Ohio – 14, New Jersey – 10, Pennsylvania – 10 and New York – 8. Furthest contacts were Canada – 3, Arizona – 1 and Florida – 1. Twenty-one states were contacted plus Canada. Participants included Bob AC5ST, Paul KI4IRL, Don KB4NKP, Bob KI4MNC, Ruth KB4LIF, Charlie WB4PVT, Keith KG4ZXX, Bill WF4R, and John KI4MYZ. Cindy AI4OO stopped by.

It was a great day! Both Bob and John said that they learned a lot and are hooked on HF! I sent the museum a brief report. Hopefully we can do this again next year.

73
Leo



Many homeowners are investing in small output portable generators for recreational and other uses and are now adapting them for use as temporary home power. This versatility is one of the many advantages of portable generators however, everyone should consider how to safely apply the power from the portable generator in a residential situation. See this great article from Virginia Power: [Portable Electric Generator Safety Tips](#)



The Adventures of Smithfield Ham

Part III

This week we find Smithfield Ham in the Pig Pen loading up his Good Year Blimp preparing for an Expedition across the state operating QRP. The Blimp is 500 feet long and requires external power just to propel it. Power to propel the Blimp is provided by the specially designed Full Wave Length Smoke Sausage Link Patties that trail 1000 feet in back of the Blimp, cutting the lines of force thus producing electrical energy to not only propel the Blimp but to operate the Porkers QRP Station.

The top center of the Blimp has a telescoping 100 foot mast in the middle and two 75 foot masts positioned vertically at each end. These masts hold Smithfield Hams 160 meter Vertical Antenna and Zepp Antenna. Now, I know that you are wondering, how the Master Ham gets QRM power through these antennas, you would think that 500 milli-watts would just dissipate into nothing. But you have to realize, that in the mind of Smithfield Ham, the Mega Watter, QRP is no less than ONE Kilowatt.

Smithfield Ham has plotted his journey. He will follow the state border perimeter fairly closely navigating with his GPS system, then he will travel the ARRL Grid Squares to assure he worked each county and independent city. The entire journey will only take 3 days and he plans to work 30,000 QSOs. To facilitate logging the Master Ham has designed his own computer and computer logging program. He calls the computer Granny Smithfield Ham, after his beloved Granny, and the program is called *Hog Heaven* after his favorite desert, fried ICE CREAM over Chocolate Pie.

So the loading process is just about over and all of the rigs and antennas have been checked out. All that is left to load is the food and checking the propulsion generators and navigation system. All systems are go!!!!

On this flight Smithfield Ham has asked Keith, KG4ZXX, and Frank, K4PRR, to come along and help with the operations.

All aboard as they taxi out of the Pig Pen and down to the take off and landing pad. SQUEAL SQUEAL Smithfield Ham announces of the exclusive Ham Hock PA system, we will be cursing at 35,000 feet and will be traveling at 35 miles per hour. We will not stop making QSOs until we land back here at the Pig Pen Landing PAD. Please fasten your seat belts and prepare for TAKE OFF.

The Blimp slowly rises and starts its forward motion with the nose at about a 22 degree angle. At about 5,000 feet Smithfield Ham announces that the generators are functioning at about 85% efficiency and let the QSOs begin. Keith on 160 meters snags his first contact KI4MNC and gives him a 599 and Frank snags his first contact N5RAG and gives him a 599. The guys are making 1,000s of QSOs and all is well.

Smithfield Ham announces that he is going to raise the propulsion generating system to 100%. **BANG BOOP OPPS BANG**. The power goes off and smoke fills the generating room as the Special Sausage Patty wire cooks in the Flux Barrier. SQUEAL SQUEAL, you can hear Smithfield Ham, "It is dark in here, does anyone have a match??????"

The Blimp safely lands on Lake Drummond where the fish and turtles quickly eat the now over done Smoke Sausage Pattie wire. Falling quite short of their Travel and QSO goals all wade ashore, yep you guessed it for a BBQ Dinner.

73 GOD Bless

"R" WA4BUE

CARS CLUB MEETING MINUTES 3/6/06

(Not yet approved by membership)

Dinner Meeting held at the Silver Diner

Many attended

Many ate

TORNADOES CAN STRIKE ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

RICHMOND, Va. – When it comes to hurricanes, we've all become used to the idea of "hurricane season," when we know we need to be prepared. But, when it comes to tornadoes, there's no such thing as a "tornado season." Tornadoes can strike anywhere, anytime and you need to be ready. Of the 24 tornadoes the National Weather Service confirmed in 2005, four occurred in January; the others occurred in May, July and August. Each tornado was rated an F0 or F1 on the Fujita scale, with winds of up to 112 mph. None were associated with tropical storm activity that usually causes most of Virginia's tornadoes.

"Tornadoes can happen anytime, anywhere, with little or no warning," says Michael Cline, Virginia Department of Emergency Management state coordinator. "It doesn't take a hurricane to produce these deadly storms."

Environmental clues that may indicate an approaching tornado include a dark, often greenish sky, large hail and a loud roar similar to a freight train. The general rule for tornado safety is "go low and stay low," meaning go to the lowest level of the structure away from windows and crouch in a low position with your head covered.

"Anytime there is severe thunderstorm activity, a tornado is possible," says Wakefield Warning Coordination Meteorologist Bill Sammler. "Everyone needs to be prepared for tornadoes and listen to a NOAA Weather Radio for tornado watches and warnings."



The VDEM Web site, www.vaemergency.com, offers public service announcement scripts and audio files, historical tornado data and vital information about how to prepare for a tornado, such as:

- What to do during a tornado
- How to protect your property in advance
- Preparedness tips for people with disabilities

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The Virginia Department of Emergency Management and the National Weather Service offer the following tornado safety tips. Knowing these simple safety rules could save your life.

- Know the difference between a watch and a warning:
 - A tornado **WATCH** means weather conditions are favorable for the development of severe thunderstorms and tornadoes. If a tornado **WATCH** is broadcast, stay tuned for further information and possible **WARNINGS**. Be prepared to take cover if necessary.
 - A tornado **WARNING** means a tornado has actually been sighted. **WARNINGS** are issued for individual counties and include the tornado's location, direction and speed. If you are in or near its path, seek shelter immediately. Don't attempt to look for the tornado. Many Virginia tornadoes are obscured by rain and may not be visible at all or until it is too late to take cover.
- Know the names of the counties, cities and towns near you. It will be easier to track the tornado's direction if you are familiar with the geography of your area.
- Focus on finding appropriate shelter for your location and protecting yourself while there.
 - **Homes:** Go to your basement. If you don't have a basement, move to a small, windowless interior room such as a closet, bathroom or interior hall on the lowest level of the house. Avoid windows and protect your body from flying debris with a heavy blanket or sleeping bag. Do not spend time opening windows to equalize pressure; it is ineffective in reducing tornado damage.
 - **Mobile homes:** Leave immediately and seek shelter inside a nearby sturdy building or lie down flat in a ditch or depression away from your home and cover your head with your arms. Mobile homes are extremely unsafe during tornadoes.
 - **Open buildings (shopping malls, gymnasiums or civic centers):** Try to get into the restroom or hallway. In larger buildings, these areas are usually made of concrete block and will offer more protection. If there is no time to go anywhere else, try to get up against something that will support or deflect falling debris; cover your head with your arms.
 - **Outdoors:** Try to find shelter immediately in the nearest sturdy building. If no buildings are close, lie down flat in a ditch or depression and cover your head with your arms.
 - **Automobiles:** Get out of your vehicle and try to find shelter inside a sturdy building. If no buildings are close, lie down flat in a ditch or depression and cover your head with your arms. **DO NOT** take shelter under a highway overpass or bridge - debris is often swept under them and can cause serious injury or death.

Detailed preparedness information for thunderstorms, floods, hurricanes, hazardous materials emergencies, terrorism and other events are available online as well as links to the National Weather Service and other organizations where you can get the latest weather updates for Virginia.



The Spectrum

Monthly newsletter of the Chesapeake
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CARS : Repeaters

146.610 MHz (PL 100.0)
146.820 MHz
444.000 MHz

W4CAR Trustee: Bill Runyon WF4R

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