

# Feedline



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The Voice of The Cary Amateur Radio Club N4NC

September/October 2003

## CARC FEEDLINE

**Editor --** Keith Zeringue, W4KAZ  
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The deadline for submission to the Cary Amateur Radio Club FEEDLINE newsletter is the second Thursday of the month. Information should be forwarded by e-mail to the editor at w4kaz@arrl.net.

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### CARC Officers for 2004

**President** Clare Owens, N2RJB  
**Vice Pres.** --open--  
**Secretary** Keith Zeringue, W4KAZ  
**Treasurer** Herb Lacey, W3HL

### 2003 Volunteers

**N4NC Trustee** : Will Harper, K4IWW  
**Swapfest Czar:** Alf Johnson, KQ4FP  
**Field Day Czar:** --open--  
**Listserv admin:** Will Harper, K4IWW  
**Website admin:** Susan Jones, WA4AKB

### CARC Contact Information

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## Pheedline Phun Phacts

Kaz, W4KAZ

Inside this issue.... you guessed it, more meaningless blather about various picayune factoids of moderate or meager interest to radio tech-heads. Internet links provided, no extra charge!

So far...as of 10-27-2003.....

**3,744** Users are registered in the system  
**4,886** Certificates are active  
**12,155** User files have been processed

New CARC members? Hardly....But the ARRL's online logbook seems to be attracting a good deal of interest. The interesting statistic is that this small group of users has already generated more than 18 MILLION QSO records.

I got these statistics from the LOTW itself, at the bottom of the "User's Home page". It will be interesting to see those numbers grow. More on LoTW on page 5....**NOTE:** An update, V1.10 was posted on 10/21/2003.

Well, I guess solar flares are easier to handle than hurricanes, especially if we are safe inside the planets magnetosphere. Might be a bad time for a return trip to the moon though.

Recent solar activity did not ruin this past weekends CQWW DX SSB contest as some might have expected. In fact, 10 meters was open had contesters spread out from 28.3 up to nearly 29.0 Mc at some points over the weekend.

Pressing my full compliment of antenna compromises to the limit(and the DX's hearing!), It was interesting to chase the DX, while they were out in force. Lacking a 6 meter antenna, I don't know if that band opened. Anyone?

Another one bytes the ether.....

## **Coming Cary ARC Events**

**Cary Band Day – Saturday Nov 1<sup>st</sup>.**  
**Cary Holiday Dinner--TBA**

## **Other Upcoming Events**

Contest season—ARRL CW Sweeps, Nov 1-2 and SSB Sweeps  
Contest season—ARRL SSB Sweeps, Nov  
ARRL Frequency measuring test-- November 20 at 0245 UTC (that's November 19 at 9:45 PM EST).

## **Upcoming Hamfests**

JARS Fest Benson Sunday, Nov 16<sup>th</sup>, 2003

## **Cary ARC Minutes-August 28<sup>th</sup> 2003 Meeting**

W4KAZ, Kaz—Scribe

The August meeting of the Cary Amateur Radio Club was held on Thursday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, at the usual meeting place in the basement of the White Plains Methodist Church.

Congratulations to Larry were extended for his work in arranging and planning parking during the Swapfest.

### **Reports:**

**Secretary Report-** Keith, W4KAZ briefly reviewed July minutes.

**Treasurer report-** deferred until old business.

### **Old Business**

#### **Swapfest**

Herb, W3HL gave a detailed review of the financial arrangements from the 2003 Swapfest. Following that discussion, Swapfest issues in general were discussed.

### **New Business**

Lee, N2AJF, proposed that a donation from the club be made to the ARRL Spectrum Defense Fund, in view of their work supporting the amateur community with regards to the band allocations and the Broadband over Power Lines lobby. There ere no objections and a donation to the fund in the amount of \$50.00 was authorized.

### **Announcements**

Clare, N2RJB, read the thank you card received from one of the Swapfest prize winners.  
Herb, W3HL, discussed the Cary Band Day event set for Saturday, Nov 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **Cary ARC Minutes-September 25<sup>th</sup> 2003 Meeting**

W4KAZ, Kaz—Scribe

The September meeting of the Cary Amateur Radio Club was held on Thursday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, at the usual meeting place in the basement of the White Plains Methodist Church.

### **Reports:**

**Secretary Report-** Keith, W4KAZ briefly reviewed August minutes.

**Treasurer report-** Herb, W3HL gave the treasurers report.

### **Old Business**

ARRL Spectrum donation- Herb, W3HL reported that the donation had not been mailed but would be shortly.

### **New Business**

Election of new Club officers was discussed briefly, to widespread enthusiasm among the general membership. Alf volunteered to participate on the nominating committee.

Band Day- Saturday 11/1/2003 will be the annual band day event. Hams wit a 2 meter HT and 2 hours of time are invited to help out. Due to the very low turnout of hams in 2002, there was discussion of seeking assistance from other groups in order to cover the event.

### **Announcements**

Herb, W3HL, announced that the construction of the parking deck at the downtown community center was completed. Shady Swapfest tailgating!

Herb, W3HL, noted that there were only 4 people who turned out to the state EOC during the hurricane Isabel activation. These 4 people were needed for 4 days. The EOC desired a portable station be set up, but no one stepped forward to fill the need. Although there was no communications outage in the local area, the State EOC is required to operate to handle traffic from the affected areas(downeast).

### **Program**

The program for the evening was a discussion of receiver design and a brief overview of the types of receivers used since the early days of ham radio, and where the future designs might lead.

## **Cary ARC Minutes-October 23<sup>th</sup> 2003 Meeting**

W4KAZ, Kaz—Scribe

The October meeting of the Cary Amateur Radio Club was held on Thursday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, at the usual meeting place in the basement of the White Plains Methodist Church.

### **Reports:**

**Secretary Report-** Keith, W4KAZ briefly reviewed September minutes.

**Treasurer report-** Herb, W3HL gave the treasurers report.

### **Old Business**

ARRL Spectrum donation- Herb, W3HL reported that the donation has been sent, and that had been the only expense since the prior meeting.

### **New Business**

Election of new Club officers was the primary business discussed., to widespread gleeful enthusiasm among the general membership. Alf reported that as no one else had volunteered to assist with nominations, he expected that nomination be taken from the floor. After a period of studied silence, pregnant pauses, and assorted navel gazing, the previous years officers agreed to fulfill another year of office for 2004.

2004 officers:

President- Clare Owens,

Vice Pres.- --vacant—

Treasurer- Herb Lacy, W3HL

Secretary – Keith Zeringue, W4KAZ

Band Day- Saturday 11/1/2003 will be the annual band day event. Hams with a 2 meter HT and 2 hours of time are invited to help out.

Holiday Dinner- It was generally agreed that the holiday dinner be held on the Thursday following Thanksgiving, if the potential locations for the dinner are available.

### **Announcements**

#### **Program**

The evening's program was given by Herb, W3HL, and was a discussion on the best tips and techniques for acquiring skill with the Morse code.

## ARRL Frequency Measuring Tests

W4KAZ, Kaz

Think you have a problem? Can't zero beat with WWV? Just wanna do it for giggles? Well, the good old fashioned ARRL frequency test is back. The test will replace the normal code practice for that time on November 20 at 0245 UTC (that's November 19 at 9:45 PM EST). Dig out those boat anchors, and check them out.

You can even use your trusty modern YaeTecComWood.....might find out its not so trusty after all!

<http://www.remote.arrl.org/news/stories/2003/09/14/1/?nc=1>

## Anderson Powerpole Fun Facts

W4KAZ, Kaz

Its not all that difficult to do, but if you were looking for hints on using Anderson Powerpoles, West Mountain Radio has a good write up on their web site. Lots of pictures too, saving thousands of words in expository prose.....The second link is to a web page by the Shuamburg ARC, and has links to a lot of other written examples(with pictures).

The powerpoles sure are handy little devils, after you figure out the "easy way" to assemble them. (Hints-don't use too much solder, get solder on the contact surfaces, or if crimping, don't deform the shape of the contacts too much when crimped, or they won't properly fit into the housings!)

See:

<http://www.westmountainradio.com/supporttr.htm>

<http://pages.ripco.net/~ormos/sarc-ema-andersonpowerpole.html>

## Maunder Minimum

W4KAZ, Kaz

Well, I sure do like being on to something. I've long had a gut feeling that this was the case, I'm glad that somebody else thought to look at the correlations.

It appears that data gathered by Nasa scientists interested in building solar output prediction models also indicates that historically, the changes in the climate correlate nicely to the solar output, rather than being related to cow flatulence, SUV's, halitosis, and/or politically hysterical hot air. Well.....duh-uh. Maybe somebody should let the political hysterics with bad breath at the New Yawk Times in on the data.

I wonder what the HF propagation would have been like during the "Maunder Minimum", when there was an extended period of low sunspot activity? Low-bands anyone? Receive loops and pre-amps for 80 and 160 meters?

Oh, the woes of living in orbit of a 4 percent variable star!

<http://www.eso.org/gen-fac/libraries/lisa3/beckmanj.html>

[http://www.giss.nasa.gov/gpol/docs/2001/2001\\_ShindellSchmidtM1.pdf](http://www.giss.nasa.gov/gpol/docs/2001/2001_ShindellSchmidtM1.pdf)

[http://www.co2science.org/edit/v5\\_edit/v5n8edit.htm](http://www.co2science.org/edit/v5_edit/v5n8edit.htm)

## Beacon stuff

W4KAZ, Kaz

The following link is to a Radcom article by British ham Gwyn Williams, G4FKH on their project to improve propagation predictions. The article was published last year, but I have not yet located any info on the completion of their project. Basically, they collected beacon monitoring data from around the country, and plan to use the data to improve the accuracy of their predictive software.

For information on the international beacon project see,  
<http://www.ncdxf.org/beacons.html>

and for the article and a list of the sponsored beacons, se:  
<http://www.ncdxf.org/beacon/Copyright%20RSGB.pdf>  
<http://www.ncdxf.org/beacon/beaconSchedule.html>

## Spacecam?

W4KAZ, Kaz

Well, David Letterman broke new ground years ago with “monkeycam”, a tiny camera fit to a helmet worn by a monkey, set loose in his studio. The internet proliferated camera coverage in unusual, unique and sometimes unwise locations.

Now, the idea reaches for the stars. ARISS volunteers have put together an SSTV “Spacecam1”, and have been preparing it for shipment to the international Space station, possibly by next year.

<http://www.msnbc.com/news/962313.asp?0dm=B11MT>

## Hurricane Isabel Photos

W4KAZ, Kaz

Just the ticket for those who feel that hurricane warnings are “overblown”.

This link was sent via the club e-mail reflector by Bert, WA4TLI, and they show the type of damage possible on a barrier island taking the brunt of a storm. Having lived through several of these inland along the gulf coast, I often wonder why folks fail to take these things seriously. I guess complacency is an easy thing to acquire after a decade or two on the lee side of the storm.

Seems to me the news media would do a better public service by publishing similar photos in the days before a storms arrival, so folks used to the sedate weather from farther inland know what to expect. Judging by the tide marks on some of the buildings in the photos, the storm surge appeared to be only about 5 feet deep. During hurricane Camille in 1969, the storm surge was 20 feet deep, and the Mississippi gulf coast was mostly swept clean of mankinds puny efforts.

In stronger storms, this type of damage also tends to extend farther inland—another often forgotten lesson. In the words sung by Kenny Rogers....”know when to hold ‘em, know when to fold ‘em, know when to walk away....know when to run”.

<http://www.hatterasonmymind.com/Isabel.html>

## Logbook Of The World

W4KAZ, Kaz

The ARRL has gone “live” with its Logbook Of the World project. The software to use LoTW is available free of charge from the ARRL web site. The website has a set of document explaining LoTW, and instructions for getting yourself set up.

This project is likely to appeal most clearly to hams who are already using the computer to log their QSO data, as the easiest to use interface is a file export format common to the most popular logging programs. They are able to accept log data in either the “ADIF” or “cabrillo” log file formats. There is an option that allows the user to key items into his log, but I honestly was not impressed with the format of the user interface and form provided for that function.

I've also got to let you know that just getting set up to use LoTW is a bit of an arcane and convoluted undertaking....There are several steps that require you to use passwords, and you will need to keep track of which password is used on which occasion. After you finally get logged on to the website and your account at ARRL, you can then manage the password for the site.

It's a great idea, and it certainly going to appeal to the leading edge of computer loggers. Contesters are the natural first group of most likely users for LoTW, because they are already the largest group of hams that already have a set of computer logs in the correct format.

At this point, if someone wished to transcribe a paper log into LoTW, I'd recommend creating a plain text file in cabrillo format using any text editor or word processor. That would allow for uploading a group of log entries, rather than use the web based mouse driven form for a mass data entry operation. But that's just my 2-cents worth.

Hey, if you can figure out the steps needed to establish your log, the transcription should be easy!

For info on LoTW and Cabrillo file formats, see:

<http://www.remote.arrl.org/lotw/>

<http://www2.arrl.org/contests/forms/cabrillo.pdf>

<http://www.kkn.net/~trey/cabrillo/>

## High speed transfers

W4KAZ, Kaz

Science keeps pushing the frontiers. Perhaps the BPL folks will be made obsolete before they are able to bring their interference generators to fruition. This report indicates Cal Tech and CERN have completed a high speed data transfer that boasts a rate of 5.44 Giga-bits per second—that's 20,000 times as fast as the typical home broadband connection in use by consumers today.

In practical terms....”Scientists at the CERN particle physics laboratory in Switzerland sent the equivalent of a full-length DVD movie in about seven seconds.””

To paraphrase yet another song....”Momma, don't let yer babies grow up to be programmers....”, because the world grows smaller daily.

[http://www.cbc.ca/stories/2003/10/17/net\\_speed031017](http://www.cbc.ca/stories/2003/10/17/net_speed031017)

\*\*quote from Canadian Broadcast Corp news article...