



The Amplifier

Tar River Amateur Radio Club

May 2007

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WEB SITE: www.tarriverarc.org

Next Meeting

The May meeting of the Tar River Amateur Radio Club will be held Monday, May 7, at BODDIE NOELL ENTERPRISES, located at 1021 Noell Lane in Rocky Mount. The meeting will start at 7:00 p.m. Please enter the building through the main entrance. Parking is available in front of the building or in the parking lot. The May program will be Field Day planning.

2007 VE Exam Schedule

Bill, N2BT

The Tar River Amateur Radio Club, Rocky Mount, NC, will hold ARRL/VEC Amateur Radio Exams in 2007 as follows.

June 2	August 4
October 6	December 1

Exams will start at 9 a.m. and will be held at:

The Braswell Memorial Library
727 N. Grace Street (corner of Grace and
Peachtree Streets)
Rocky Mount, NC 27804

Please bring the following items when attending a testing session.

- Photo identification (drivers license)
- Social Security Number
- Original amateur radio license
- Copy of amateur radio license
- Original certificate(s) of successful completion
- Copy of certificate(s) of successful completion
- Test fee of \$14 payable to ARRL/VEC (checks preferred)

For further information visit our club website at www.TarRiverARC.org or contact

Bill Thomas N2BT
VE Team Coordinator
Rocky Mount, NC
(252)-442-6131

Email: N2BT@arrl.net

THIS NEWSLETTER MAY BE REPUBLISHED OR REPRODUCED BY CLUB MEMBERS IN WHOLE OR IN PART IN ANY FORM WITHOUT ADDITIONAL PERMISSION.

President's Corner

Robin, WA4WPD

Warm weather is finally here. Longer days. Field Day.

Yep. That's the agenda for the next two meetings. Come one and all. Let your thoughts be known. Field Day planning is the agenda for the next two months.

Some news for those with vanity call signs. Seems like a new fee schedule is being proposed. Get ready. Something is really wrong. We now have proof that our government is out of step with every one else. For some reason the FCC proposes to REDUCE the fee. That's right. It will be cheaper. Around forty percent. Gee, I don't know. Cheaper gov'ment? Sum'in must be up. Please don't tell 'em they are out of step with everyone else. OK?

PRB-1 bills have been introduced in the North Carolina legislature. They are Bill 5404 in the senate and Bill H1340 in the house. Please take the time to contact your NC elected officials and ask them for support.

Last months meeting was different. There were lots of scouts. Some DOT employees and some Edgecombe county employees there. I think it went OK. What about ya'll? All comments are welcome.

See y'all at the meeting.

Upcoming Hamfests

April 27-28 – SVHFS Conference, Atlanta
May 12 – Reidsville, NC
May 18-20 – Dayton Hamvention
May 26 – Durham, NC
May 27 – West Friendship, MD
June 3 – Manassas, VA
June 9 – Winston Salem, NC
July 21 – Cary, NC
July 28 - Waynesville, NC
Aug. 4 – Vinton, VA
Aug. 19 – Westminster, MD
September 15 - 16 – Virginia Beach, VA
Oct. 28 – Westminster, MD

Contests

May 5 - 7

North American HSMS Contest
MARAC CW Contest

10-10 International Spring Contest -
CW/Digital

Microwave Spring Sprint
Indiana QSO Party

ARI International DX Contest

New England QSO Party

7th Area QSO Party

IPA Contest

Radio Club of America QSO Party - Phone

Portugese Navy Day - CW/SSB/PSK31

May 12 - 13

Armed Forces Amateur/Military Crossband
Communications Test

Mid-Atlantic QSO Party

CQ-M International DX Contest

2 GHz and Up World Wide Club Contest

FISTS Spring Sprint - CW

Alessandro Volta RTTY DX Contest

50 MHz Spring Sprint

Nevada QSO Party

May 19 - 20

40th Annual Baltic Contest

EU PSK DX Contest

His Majesty King of Spain Contest - CW

US Counties QSO Party - SSB

All America Contest - CW

EU EME Contest

May 26 - 27

CQ WW WPX Contest - CW

QRP ARCI Hoot Owl sprint - CW

MI QRP Memorial Day CW Sprint

Commentary

Marty, W4MY

A Time to Pluck Up That Which is Planted

A Requiem to CW

As I look back over my lifetime, I remember learning about pivotal moments in history, and wondering what it would have been like to have been there, seeing it happen. My next thought was wondering if any of the people alive during that time had any inkling of the impact that event would have had over the ensuing years.

In 1942, a young mother named Ann Miller lie in a New Haven, CT hospital bed near death from a streptococcal infection, commonly fatal in those days, due to a complication of child birth. As her temperature soared and she drifted in and out of conciseness, the first vial of Penicillin arrived for use in her case (it was 5.5 mg, half of the US supply at the time) Doctors debated as to the ethics of administering this highly experimental drug as this was just not the way this illness was treated. Dr. John Bumstead felt as

though he was running out of options and went against the old guard and administered the new antibiotic to Mrs. Miller. We all know the outcome, and by June 6th of 1944, Penicillin was available to every wounded service man on the beaches of Normandy, saving countless lives.

That story is an example of how change will always be resisted, no matter how good, and that those in the middle of it rarely have the capacity to know what impact it will have for the future. Did Dr. Bumstead have any idea he would have a hand at saving 80,000 plus lives in just two years hence? I doubt it.

“Objection,” called out the defense attorney in the trial FCC vs. CW, “What does this have to do with Ham Radio?” “Please get to your point, Mr. Prosecutor,” said the judge peering over his reading glasses with a very stern look.

OK, OK We have all just witnessed the last vestige of official recognition of CW relegated to the archives of antiquity. Yes, the mode that started it all in ham radio, the mode that won two world wars, the mode that saved countless lives at sea for almost a full century, the mode that can get through when no other will work; and yes, the mode that we old timers can boast about to show our moxy, our “mo-jo,” as committed hams, the mode that separates us from the masses.

Don't get me wrong, not all change is good. But it is inevitable. And you will please note that “relegation of CW to antiquity” is in no means to say its dead. If all things that were no longer “needed” just died, then there would be no horses, sailboats, '55 Belair, and slingshots. We can now add CW to this list of things that are fun, but no longer important.

Just so you know, I taught myself CW only having a rock and two clumps of dirt to work with. To say I did it the hard way is an understatement. So if anyone has the right to be self righteous about how “easy” it is now to get a ham ticket, its me. But that's not what I want to do. I realize that I am in the middle of a very significant change in history. I know enough to know that I'm in the middle of it and have no way to gauge its implication.

Well, it looks like I found out what it is like to be part of a pivotal moment in history. I can say to my grandchildren that I was there when CW was a matter of life and death, and I was there the day it passed into antiquity.

“A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted...” Ecclesiastes 3:2

2007 Club Dues/ARRL Dues

This is just a reminder to everyone that the 2007 TRARC dues are now due... \$15 per yr for individuals \$6 per additional family member for family's.

If you are interested in becoming a 'new' ARRL member, we now have a special form that you can completely fill out, pay thru the club, and the club keeps \$15. If you are RENEWING your membership in ARRL, you may now pay thru the club, and it keeps \$2. ARRL dues are \$39 for regular and \$36 for SENIORS per year. There are others options also.

Help support your club.

Pay your dues at the meeting or send your check to: Fred Winner KE4LXW, 8972 Lancaster Store Rd., Castalia, NC 27816.

Ham Gear for Sale or Trade

If you have any ham gear or other electronic gear to sell or trade, send a copy of your ad to W4FRA@trarc.org.

This is a list of the Items from WA4TCC's estate. If you desire to bid for any of these items please send a message to me mailto:rdkeller@nashvillenc.com... do not send to list (If you do...Everyone on the list will know your bid). Please specify WA4TCC Estate in the subject line and identify the item for your in the text of your message. Please include your contact information. If you desire to bid for more than one item, submit separate bids for each.

The highest reasonable bid will be accepted. That is, if an item is worth \$100, please don't waste our time by bidding \$5.00 for it. Please examine the list carefully. If it says "condition unknown" it means we are either unable or UNWILLING to turn the device on and test it.

There is no financing involved. All sales are final. Cash, no checks or credit. All proceeds go to WA4TCC's widow.

All sales must be approved by WA4WPD, N4JEH AND WT4S.

ADI AT-600 S/N 8350001047
VHF/UHF dualbander HT with external mic
replacement battery by W & W Manufacturing
One original battery
Manual
missing charger

Aerotron External Speaker

Hallicrafters S108 S/N 284925 / 29602
receiver
unknown condition
Missing Manual

Hallicrafters S120 S/N 120000D 44309
receiver
manual
unknown condition

Heathkit HD 1426 S/N 00816
Field strength meter
unknown condition
missing manual

Icom TV-R700 S/N 03753
video from a scanner unit

Kenwood PG-5A
TNC data cable
new in box \$15.00

KLM mutil 2700 S/N 93130
2meter 10 meter receive OSCAR transceiver
unknown condition
missing manual

MFJ 280
compact speaker

MFJ 1278 S/N 3014854
TNC, CW, and RTTY decoder early 80's model
condition unknown
power supply
interface cable for unknown radio
Parallel cable
missing manual

Mirage B108 S/N 5289-1181
Two meter AMP
condition unknown
missing manual

Realistic HTX 404 S/N 0075992
440 HT
works
charger
speaker mic
missing manual

Realistic BTX 124 S/N 70200578
commercial VHF business band radio

Realistic BTX 124 S/N 70200579
commercial VHF business band radio

Vibroplex Vibrokey standard

Ham Key

Yaesu FV-107 S/N OC 030150
external VFO

Yaesu FP-107E S/N OG 020594
power supply

Yaesu FC-107 S/N OE 030700
Antenna Tuner

Yaesu FT-107M S/N OE 050118
160-10 HF transceiver
desk mic
Display malfunctions
missing manual
no WARC bands

Yaesu FTV 107/R S/N 040326
transverter 430 Mhz
new in box
was 229.95

Yaesu FTV 707 S/N 020170
2 meter transverter

Yaesu FTV 700 S/N 6K140050
6 meter transverter

FOR SALE – IC-735 HF RIG.... excellent condition..... with manual..... asking \$500.
57 ft. free-standing commercial grade tower in three sections, PLUS the top tripod to hold antenna, asking \$300.

– Fred Winner, KE4LXW, 252-459-4332

FOR SALE - Kenwood TH-215A w/manual \$50;
Azden PCS-7200 220 MHz w/manual \$200; KLM Beam Antenna, KT-34A, 10, 15,20M w/manual \$100;
5 Rohn 25 tower sections, HyGain Mark IV Rotator, Mast, Thrust Bearings, package \$300; Radio Shack DC Power Supply, regulated, 3 Amp, w/manual \$25; Icom IC-03AT, 220 MHz, \$100; Radio Shack HTX-202, \$50.

- John Faulkner, KR4SV, 252-442-7946

Input Wanted

If you would like to see something in particular in YOUR newsletter, let me know. If you have an article of interest, send it to me. – Les, W4FRA.

NC ARES Hams meet in Raleigh

by Gary Pearce, KN4AQ, Wake Co. ARES PIO

Here's a quick review and a few comments on the statewide NC ARES meeting held at the State EOC in Raleigh on March 31, the Saturday before the RARS Hamfest. Several dozen EC's and other ARES appointees and guests attended the meeting. Most came from the eastern 2/3 of the state. The meeting was chaired by **NC SEC Bernie Nobles, WA4MOK**. Bernie introduced several speakers who made presentations.

Before the speakers began, **John Gurriero, KG4HDT, EC for NCEM**, welcomed everyone to the newly revamped State EOC in Raleigh. The room has been upgraded with plenty of audio/visual display capability, and the "fishbowl" communications center has been moved out to another part of the basement to make more room. But the biggest change hams familiar with the EOC would notice is that the huge map of North Carolina is gone, replaced by projection screens.

First up was **Jeff Orrock, KI4KKX, NWS Raleigh Warning Coordinator**. Jeff noted that the 2006 Hurricane season was quieter than expected because of a surprise "El Niño" in the Pacific that calmed activity in the Atlantic, and kept hurricanes that did develop away from the coast. This year, the la Niña is back in effect in the Pacific, and more hurricane activity is expected in the Atlantic, along with a sustained Bermuda High that could make the climate warmer and drier across the southeast. Jeff also said that spotter reports are useful for more than immediate watches and warnings – they are part of the statistics that the NWS uses to show how accurate the system is. Not surprisingly, the severe weather forecasts are better in areas of denser population where more reports are received.

Next up, **NC Section Manager Tim Slay, N4IB**, commented on the ARRL NERPC Committee's recently released report on Amateur Radio's ability to respond to widespread or national emergency situations. The committee's full report is available on the ARRL web site. Tim's highlights included the need for hams to be able to respond faster to fill the immediate need, before the various communication utilities restore their service (and they're getting faster!). The committee also noted that ARES, and Emergency Management in general, is decentralized and organized from the "bottom up." That's good most of the time, but it doesn't scale up well in widespread or national disasters. The committee recommended creating some higher level ARES positions, including one at Headquarters, to oversee wider area situations.

Bob Conder, K4RLC, AEC Wake County ARES, spoke on the Red Cross background checks issue, and also gave some background on the possible Avian Flu Pandemic. Some hams have been concerned following the announcement that the Red Cross would require fairly invasive

background checks on all volunteers, apparently including hams. Bob said that the RC has revised their policy in a couple ways. First, a "spontaneous" volunteer doesn't need background check (that's a volunteer who assists with a specific event for no more than 7 days). And volunteers associated with a "Partner" organization, like ARES, don't need background checks if they are only wearing ID of their organization, and not a Red Cross ID. Those volunteers would be limited in what jobs they can perform for the Red Cross, and Bob also noted that a Red Cross ID is widely recognized and will get volunteers into affected areas more easily than IDs from some other organizations.

A flu pandemic (a worldwide outbreak with significant loss of life) could last for months and affect the communications grid as technicians are unavailable to maintain the systems. No one has immunity to the Avian Flu, and there are no vaccines. Everyone, hams included, can take precautions such as obtaining a two-week supply of N95 Particle Respirators (masks). And washing your hands really well.

David Williams, KF4CQS, the New Hanover Co. EC, discussed the NC ARES Digital Plan. David is leading a new committee to try to make some progress on a long-stalled effort to supplement the voice/cw nets with a digital system. He said that the ARRL recommends Winlink 2000 for digital communications, though he didn't go into detail on what the capabilities were. There were some negative comments about the fact that the Pactor III element of Winlink 2000 is supported by only one manufacturer and is fairly expensive. NC Emergency Management has been asking for a digital system from ham radio for years, but has declined to fund it.

My comment is that NC ARES has never achieved the "critical mass" of hams interested and equipped for effective data operations. Not enough hams are interested, a few actively oppose it, and those who are interested are split among a variety of incompatible modes. Evidence of the last point appeared at the meeting as discussion spun into the technical details of one mode vs. another until WA4MOK brought things back on track (to a scattering of applause). This has held back what could be an extremely effective tool in emergency communications. I hope the new effort is successful.

Dave Roy, W4DNA, NC Traffic Manager, also referred to the NERPC report, noting that hams have to get better at handling traffic. With a nod to the digital plan, he admitted that "what our customers want today is to be able to get into the Internet when the lines go down," but added that until that gets all built, we still need NTS radiograms. Dave said that the biggest challenge NTS has in North Carolina is traffic delivery into some, mostly rural parts of the state.

Dave also said that the #1 reason hams don't want to get involved in NTS was the redundant traffic – the "don't forget to renew your license" stuff that originates from a few stations and fills the traffic nets. A few hams in the meeting complained about that traffic, but Dave noted that NTS still can't deliver even that simple traffic in some parts of the state. Dave would like to see a SET style NTS training event.

Pat Gorman, KE4WZY, DEC for Areas 3&4 made a pitch for using 10 meter SSB for local emergency communications. All hams can now use 10 meter SSB, and Pat claims that he can achieve far beyond county-wide coverage with 100 watts and a vertical antenna – 70 miles from base to mobile. Carteret County ARES is building a 10 meter system to supplement HF and VHF in that area. (My comment: I'd like some of the magic beans used to grow the antennas they're using down there. My experience with 10 meter SSB, home and mobile, doesn't come close to the distances Pat claims for daily communications. But I haven't watched his system in action. Show us, Pat!.)

Tarheel Emergency Net manager Dave Fleming, KE4JHJ, was unable to make the meeting. Bernie reminded everyone that the primary frequency for THEN is 3923 kHz, and the net meets nightly at 7:30 PM. He'd like to see more activity. I'll add that during emergencies when the net operates around the clock, it moves to 3927 kHz in the morning to join the NC Morning Traffic Net, while 3923 is used by a ragchew group that's been holding forth on that channel for decades. That switch doesn't make sense to me, but tradition can be hard to fight. In the daytime, when 75 meters usually fades well below statewide coverage, the net may move to 40 meters. The published frequency is 7232 kHz, but since THEN has no routine presence there, it may have to move up or down the band a bit to avoid other activity. I asked about 60 meters, and

Bernie noted that he's done a bit of operating there and daytime coverage is usually good. But NC ARES has no formal plans for using that band.

Finally Bernie noted that he's looking for a statewide Training Officer to plan, staff and implement operator training across the NC Section. Anyone interested should contact Bernie or SM Tim Slay, N4IB.

The NC Section web site is www.ncarri.org.