The Amplifier

Tar River Amateur Radio Club — September 2004

President	Robin Keller, WA4WPD	252-459-9345
Vice President	Bill Fairley, WA4TCC	252-977-1477
Secretary	Bill Thomas, N2BT	252-442-6131
Treasurer	Fred Winner, KE4LXW	252-459-4332
VE Director	Bill Thomas, N2BT	252-442-6131
Newsletter Editor	Les Zavadil, W4FRA	252-446-7816

WEB SITE: www.tarriverarc.org

Next Meeting - Holiday Sked

The September meeting of the Tar River Amateur Radio Club will be held **Monday, September 13**, 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 September program will be PL-259 Installation.

2004 VE Exam Schedule

Bill, N2BT

The Tar River Amateur Radio Club, Rocky Mount, NC, will hold ARRL/VEC Amateur Radio Exams in 2004 as follows:

October 2
December 4

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 $12 payable to ARRL/VEC (checks preferred)

For further information visit our club web site at www.TarRiverARC.org or contact:

Bill Thomas N2BT
VE Team Coordinator
Rocky Mount, NC
(252)-442-6131
Email: N2BT@arrl.net

President's Corner

Robin, WA4WPD

Let's all congratulate ourselves. Tar River ARC made the big times. Page 47 of the SERA Repeater Journal. Not one, but two pictures and a blurb from John Covington (W4CC). Great going.

As a side item, Charlie Overcash passed the technician test and is now KI4GRB. Great work Charlie.

As some of y'all know, CP&L (or is it Progress Energy ;)) has cancelled the BPL trials in the Raleigh area (http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2004/08/06/2/). I hope this means BPL is dead. But that nagging little voice in me says it's not. Please read the article. I'm still confused over what the Utility said. Seems to me like there is still a few "hanging chads". What y'all thunk? Eh?

I would like to thank Les (W4FRA) for the program last month. Did have a few computer issues. Les handled them well.

This month's program by Roy (WA4DOU) concerns coax and connectors. Should be very interesting. Just make one note. The meeting is not on the first Monday. The club voted to move the September meeting to the 13th to avoid conflicts with Labor Day.

Now that hurricane Charley has passed, let me spend a few moments rambling.

For those you have asked, YES the IRLP Raleigh reflector was connected to the National Hurricane Center and a great net was run. Also YES, I deliberately did not connect the local node to it. I did listen to it via the internet. This link http://www.voipwx.net/ had, yes HAD a link to the real time voice data stream. The listen only link should be activated again during the next event.

It is imperative that the IRLP network not be bothered by non emergency stuff. This was the first major test of the IRLP system and it worked flawlessly. I wish I could say the same for some of the operators. So please keep the following points in mind.

When you connect to another node or reflector always wait before you start talking. The connect message you hear, well the folks on the other end also hear a connect message. But, it's not the same message. You have NO IDEA how long that message is. Please monitor for a few minutes before you start talking.

For example, Fred's son (KL7IP) wants to talk to Fred. He connects to our node. At the same time I am blabbering with Rick. Since I'm long winded, the Node on this end has to wait until COS drops before it can announce that Brian has connected. Brain has no way of knowing this. It might be several minutes before the our local node even tells us Brian has connected. It gets more confusing if a third party jumps in. The IRLP node on this end will ID and Announce as soon as COS drops. When the repeater is busy timing issues can be very confusing. This leads to the first rule of IRLP use, pause, pause.... Pause... Pause and pause some more. Even if our node is not connected, you still need to pause. If Brain wants to talk to Fred, you will never hear the IRLP node come on line if you don't pause. I have set the squelch hang time for all the IRLP repeaters short for a reason. Please let the machine DROP before you start talking.

None of the emergency nets allow incoming health and welfare (H&A) traffic. This holds true with IRLP. Some persons connected to the net and wanted to talk to someone local or send a H&A message. Some got huffy when they were told no. Some nodes were forcibly disconnected and BLOCKED because of the actions of a few.

The IRLP gurus are going to try to create a monitor only channel. That is, our node will be able to connect to it, but not talk to it. I'll keep y'all posted on this as soon as I know.

The Tar Heel Emergency Net (3.923 and 7.323) was active all day Saturday. Not much went on. It was a good exercise. I also had 14.325 in monitor mode on my HF rig. It was nice hearing the activities first hand. For those without HF you could listen to 149.270. This covered most of the North Carolina Eastern Branch activities.

A side note, Fred (KE4LXW) has the program for November - ARES structure. If you have any questions give them to him, I'm sure he

would appreciate it if answers to all our questions filled all the available time :).

If you want to know more about nets and traffic please refer to the ARRL Operating Manual for Radio Amateurs (ISBN: 0-87259-913-2). It's available from the ARRL http://www.arrl.org/. All it cost is $25.00. For those without internet access it's.

ARRL --The national association for Amateur Radio
225 Main Street
Newington CT 06111-1494
Voice: 860-594-0200
Fax: 860-594-0259
Item # 9132
E-mail: hq@arrl.org
Internet: http://www.arrl.org/

Till next note. See ya on the bands.

Weekly ARES Net

The Northern Coastal Plain ARES net, covering Nash, Edgecombe, Halifax, and Wilson counties, meets Tuesday nights at 8:30 p.m. on 145.290 MHz, 146.805 MHz, 146.745 MHz, 224.220 MHz, 444.500 MHz, 444.700 MHz, 442.125 MHz and 443.700 MHz repeaters. Check into the net, participate in ARES training, and enjoy the informal rag-chew afterwards.

Upcoming Hamfests

Sep. 18-19 – Virginia Beach, VA
Oct. 10 – Maysville, NC
Oct. 30 – Myrtle Beach, SC
Nov. 13 – Gastonia, NC
Nov. 21 – JARSFEST, Benson, NC

Contests

Sep 4-7
All Asian DX Contest
IARU Region I Field Day – SSB
DARC 10-Meter Digital Contest
MI QRP Labor Day CW Sprint

Sep 8-13
North American Sprint – CW
YLRL Howdy Days
WAE DX Contest – SSB
ARRL Sept. VHF QSO Party
Russian RTTY WW Contest
SOC Marathon Sprint
Tennessee QSO Party

Sep 18-19
ARRL 10 GHz Cumulative Contest
North American Sprint – SSB
Scandinavian Activity Contest – CW
Washington State Salmon Run
South Carolina QSO Party
Mediterranean Islands Contest
QCWA Fall QSO Party
Fall QRP Homebrewer Sprint – CW/PSK31
QRP Afield
Collegiate QSO Party

Sep 25-27
CQ Worldwide RTTY DX Contest
Scandinavian Activity Contest – SSB
Arkansas QSO Party
Texas QSO Party
Alabama QSO Party
Classic Exchange

VHF Fall Sprints:
144 MHz – Sep 20
222 MHz – Sep 28
432 MHz – Oct 6
Microwave (902 MHz & Up) – Oct. 16
50 MHz – Oct 23-24.

A Different Kind of Hamfest

On April 29 and 30, 2005, Charlotte, NC, will host a different kind of Hamfest. For the first time the Southeastern VHF Society will hold it's annual Conference in North Carolina.

Friday morning will consist of Registration, Antenna Gain Measurements, and Preamp Noise Figure Measurements, followed by a Kick-Off Lunch with a special Guest Speaker. Friday afternoon will consist of a business meeting and several technical sessions. Some of the technical topics from 2004 included Meteor Scatter; Software-Defined Radios; Amplifier Protection Circuitry; EME Communications and Antennas; Crystals and Oscillators; MOSFET Hybrid Modules; and Beacons.

Saturday will consist of further technical sessions, an Auction of Rare and Valuable Stuff, and a Banquet Saturday evening, complete with Awards Presentations, a Keynote Speaker, and door prize drawings.

There is also a flea market and Manufacturer's exhibits by the likes of C3I Antennas, Down East Microwave, M2 Antenna Systems, Max-Gain Systems, Elecraft Electronic Kits, Lunar Link Amplifiers, and CQ-VHF Magazine. Every registrant receives a printed copy of the conference proceedings. There will be planned activities for non-ham XYLs both days.

When more information on this conference is available in a couple of months, we'll pass it along here.

Planned ARRL Petition

Later this year the ARRL plans to file a petition with the FCC seeking the regulation of amateur subbands by bandwidth rather than by mode of emission.

Some key points of the proposal that the ARRL wishes to emphasize:

– Double-sideband AM operation is preserved unchanged, but without opening the phone bands to digital and other modes of the same bandwidth.

– At the present time, RTTY and data emissions are permitted by FCC rule throughout the HF "CW subbands." It is only through compliance with "gentlemen's agreements" that RTTY and data signals are not heard in parts of the band that are generally used for CW. The proposed rules would limit bandwidth in these "CW subbands" to 200 Hz.

– Bandwidth in the existing "RTTY/data subbands" would be limited by rule to either 500 Hz or 3 kHz. In the following subbands where 3kHz would be permitted, phone emissions would specifically **not** be permitted: 3650-3725, 7100-7125, 14100-14150, and 21150-21200 kHz. The reason for this is to encourage the development of higher-speed data communications in these subbands by preventing them from becoming *de facto* "expanded phone bands." The prior ARRL proposal to expand some HF phone bands is included in the separate FCC Notice of Proposed Rule Making, WT Docket No. 04-140, and is taken into account in these new proposals.

– Amateurs would not be required to be able to measure the bandwidth of their signals. The proposed bandwidths are more than sufficient for "clean" signals using the traditional HF modes. We have had regulation by bandwidth for certain data operations for many years without fomenting great debate over whether or not a particular signal was legal. Measurement would only arise as a potential problem for those who try to push the edge of the envelope.

– Bandwidth limits would be eliminated in the 222-225 MHz band; the only bandwidth limitation would be that the signa; must be confined within the band.

The proposed rules would use the following bandwidths:

200 Hz – Intended for CW, will also permit data modes such as PSK31.

500 Hz – For RTTY and data modes and possibly new image modes. Will not exclude experimentation with highly compressed phone.

2.8 kHz – Required by NTIA for 60-meter channels.

3 kHz – Would accommodate SSB and digital telephony, image, high-speed data and multi-media.

6 kHz – For Independent Sideband (ISB).

9 kHz – For DSB-AM.

16 kHz – Permits analog FM voice, data, digital voice and multimedia on 10-meters.

100 kHz – Presently permitted for RTTY and data above 420 MHz. This proposal would extend that starting at 50 MHz (avoiding 50-50.3 MHz and 144-144.3 MHz) to permit both digital multimedia and high-speed meteor scatter (burst) communications.

The complete proposal can be reviewed at http://www.arrl.org/announce/bandwidth.html.

Don't forget – The September meeting will be on Monday, September 13, due to the holiday.