The Ham Arundel News

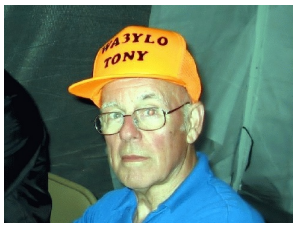
Providing Fellowship and Community Service Through Amateur Radio Since 1951

28th Year of Publication

Anne Arundel County's Premier Radio Club

August 2005

The Prez Sez...



We had a very interesting presentation on Tornado Hunting in July. Hardy souls actually pay money to ride through tornado alleys, looking for funnels. The video was "up close and personal" with several twisters. The hail that accompanies many tornadoes can be harmful to the body; especially the car body.

The first 21 "bodies" that arrive at The AARC Clubhouse are now able to sit in padded "conference" chairs. Dick McKelvie/K3HQ UNCOVERED them on the internet. They had been hiding in a cow barn (really) at The Naval Academy farm for two years. We rented a truck to move them, soo they actually cost about $4 each. A crew of four dusted them off, and scores of spiders now live in our shop vac.

I am pleased to announce that Eric Fairbank/N3EF and Lisa Fairbank/K3LUVare now LIFE MEMBERS of AARC. These two have poured themselves into the club for several years now. There is scarcely an inch of club property that remains untouched by either Eric or Lisa. They are both quite handy and energetic. I marvel at their projects, that enrich us both literally and figuratively. My sincere thanks to BOTH of you.

Being a CW person, I must remark on the FCC plan to eliminate Morse code as a license requirement. It is the last proof that a ham is "different" and STILL the mode that gets through when nothing else does.

MD Governor Schedules Bay Bridge Walk for 2006

The walk is scheduled for Sunday, May 7, 2006, and will coincide with the restart of the Volvo Ocean Race, which returns to the Annapolis area next spring.

"When you think of the first Sunday in May, you think of the Bay Bridge Walk," said Ehrlich. "I look forward to bringing this special event back to the tens of thousands of Maryland's citizens and visitors, who often travel from across the country to walk this magnificent structure."

The 4.3-mile walk is hosted by the Maryland Transportation Authority and allows participants to experience the bridge and the Chesapeake Bay from a vantage point that is not usually available.

The walk attracts between 20,000 and 50,000 walkers.

The 2005 Bay Bridge Walk was canceled to allow state officials a chance to examine fiscal issues, manpower requirements, security issues and the walk's impact on traffic, according to Ehrlich's office.

Calendar

Club Events

August 18 - Program Meeting - John Williams K8JW - Lightning protection for ham radio operators

August 28 - Annapolis 10-Mile Run

September 1 - Business Meeting

September 15 - Program Meeting - *Frank Winner N3SEO - ARES*

October 2 - Metric Marathon - Southern H..S.

Hamfests, Contests and Other Events

August 13-14 - MD/DC QSO Party

September 10-11 -FAR-Fest - Gaithersburg, MD

VE Testing Schedule

August 13 - AARC - Robert Rose/AA3RR, 410-437-8193

August 20 - Laurel ARC - John Creel, 301-572-5124

August 23 - HEMARC - wb4ogc@arrl.net

To all exams bring:

- Picture ID
- Social Security Number or FCC Registration Number (FRN)
- **ORIGINAL** and a **COPY** of current FCC amateur radio license
- **ORIGINAL** and a **COPY** of all element credits (e.g., FCC letters, old licenses or unexpired Certificates of Successful Completion of Examination-CSCE).

The ***Ham Arundel News*** is the monthly official publication of The Anne Arundel Radio Club, Inc. (ARRL Club No. 0484).

Editor: William Smith / AB3BZ

Send Newsletter Information to:
Internet: **ab3bz@w3vpr.org**
Deadline is the last Thursday of the month.

Mailing Address:

Anne Arundel Radio Club
Post Office Box 308
Davidsonville, MD 21035

Meetings:

General Business 1st Thursday at 7:30 PM
Program/Activity 3rd Thursday at 7:30 PM
Board Meeting 4th Thursday at 7:00 PM

Dues:
$20 per year, payable December 1st

World Wide Web:
www.w3vpr.org

Repeater Frequencies:

Davidsonville	Millersville	Annapolis
147.105+	147.075+	
223.880-	224.560-	
444.400+		442.300+

PL: 107.2 for all repeaters except Davidsonville 440 which is 156.7

Maryland Slow Net:
3.717 MHz CW 7:30 P.M. Daily

Visitors are welcome *- at all meetings and nets. Meetings are held in the Clubhouse at the Davidsonville Family Recreation Center, Queen Anne Bridge and Wayson Roads off of MD Route 214 near Davidsonville, MD. For en-route directions, make initial contact on the 147.105 repeater.*

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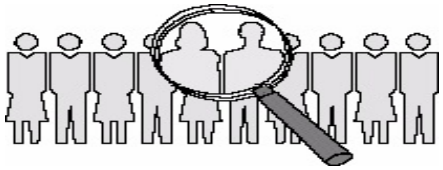


Member Information

by Holly/N3MB and Lisa/K3KUV

New Members:
Mike Barrett KB3MLE Tech
Al Fitzsimons W3YRS Extra
Lorenzo Williams KB3MLG Tech

Upgrade to General:
Bob Montagne/KB3LYD

Donations:
Mike Barrett KB3MLE
Annapolis Striders

Equipment Donations:
Allison Transmission
Bill Shepherd W3WS (Silent Key)

FIELD DAY Scoring

Due to time restraints, the breakdown of this year's Field Day scoring did not format well in last month's edition. It is printed again below for your perusal.

	CW x2	Digital x2	SSB	QSOs	Total Points
80m	153		95	248	401
40m	175		107	282	457
20m	96	19	178	293	408
15m			2	2	2
6m			25	25	25
GOTA			111	111	111
QSOs	424	18	518	962	1404
Total Points	848	38	518		

Running on Battery < 150watts defines a power multiplier of x 2

1404 Points x 2 = 2808 Total Contact Points

400 - 100% Emergency power x the # of Stations
100 - Media Publicity
100 - Set-up in Public Place
100 - Information Booth
0 - NTS message to ARRL SM/SEC
100 - W1AW Field Day Message
0 - Formal NTS messages handled
0 - Satellite QSO completed
0 - Natural Power QSO's Completed
100 - Site Visited by invited officials
100 - GOTA maximum QSO's achieved
0 - Non-Traditional mode Demo
60 – Youth Bonus (60 pts for 3 youths 20 pts each)
50 - Submitted via WEB (50 pts)

Total Bonus Points Claimed: 1110

FINAL TOTALS:
Contact Point Totals: 2808
Bonus Point Totals: 1110

VE Report

On 11 June 2005, six applicants arrived at the AARC clubhouse for amateur radio license exams. A total of 10 exams were administered and all 10 were passed.

I was asked recently if this had ever happened before and the answer is "Yes". I keep records back to Jan 2000 and since then it has happened on five previous occasions but never with such a large number of exams. In July 2000 it happened when two exams were administered, twice in 2002 (September - 5 and November - 2) and again in 2004 (July - 4 and October - 2).

During the June test session, two code exams were taken and passed, as well as three Technician, three General and two Amateur Extra written exams.

As a result of this test session two applicants upgraded to Amateur Extra and three became new hams (two Generals and one Technician). One applicant passed the General written but did not earn an upgrade.

I received the following e-mail from one of this month's applicants which speaks volumes about our VE team and their professionalism. I receive similar comments after nearly every test session. Most are

verbal but some arrive by e-mail. All of them make a comment about the friendly and helpful Volunteer Examiners:

"*Bob Rose, AA3RR -*

I wanted to thank you and the Anne Arundel Radio Club VE Team for helping to foster and promote all that is good in amateur radio. Back in 2003 when I earned my Technician license, I was nervous and had no idea what to expect. I did not know the test session was free, nor did I know that the VE Team was unpaid. That day still stands out in my memory as what I could expect from the amateur radio community – a group of friendly, caring people read to help. I have been encouraged and supported by many people within the hobby, but it has been the smiling faces and warm welcome by the AARC VE Team that has really encouraged me to succeed. To think the VE team gives up a Saturday each month to help others up the ranks shows the character of all involved.

Please share with the Anne Arundel Radio Club VE Team my sincere gratitude for the investment in time they have made to the future of amateur radio. Without the various Laurel VEC VE Teams, the hobby can not grow and flourish.

Sincerely,
Steven Hanlon, KB3KAQ (now WM3O)"

The following Volunteer Examiners participated in this test session:

N3MB – Holly
N3EMI – Ellen
KB3ATI –Brenda
K3SZN – Larry
K3BAY – Steve
W3VQY – Skip
AB3BQ – Richard
W3ZEH – Bob
K3EQ – Ken
AA3RR - Bob

On July 9 2005 five applicants showed up for amateur radio license exams at the AARC clubhouse. A total of six exams were administered with five being passed and one failed.

Two code exams were administered and one was passed. The one that was passed resulted in an upgrade to General (Congratulations to AARC member Bob – KB3LYD).

In addition to the two code exams, four Technician exams were administered with all four being passed. This resulted in four new hams.

The following Volunteer Examiners participated in this test session:

N3MB – Holly
N3EMI – Ellen
KB3ATI –Brenda
K3SZN – Larry
K3BAY – Steve
WW3ZZ - Richard
AB3BQ – Richard
N3FDH - Harold
K3TH – Tom
AA3RR - Bob

Since January 2005, we've had 47 applicants take 62 exams and have produced 20 new hams and upgraded 12 hams (seven to General and five to Amateur Extra). So far the pass rates for the exams are running higher that last years except for the Amateur Extra exam. As you can see in the table below, the pass rate for code is improving but still lower than any previous year (2000-2005). The Technician pass rate has been steadily improving as has the General. It's important to remind the reader that while we try to make the applicants feel comfortable, the successful pass rates are a reflection of the degree of preparation by applicants.

Pass Rates(%) by Year and Element						
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Code	64	68	60	92	48	53
Tech	69	78	79	81	84	91
General	73	73	78	65	78	86
Extra	59	71	68	53	68	63
Total	67	75	73	75	73	76

Unfortunately, it doesn't look like we'll match all the figures from last year and equally disappointing is the continuing decline in the number of applicants taking exams and new hams. I'm unable to offer an explanation based on empirical data. However, we continue to advertise our test sessions in multiple outlets. As I pointed out, in my last article on this subject, we don't see a lot of folks who earned their Tech license through our test sessions choosing to upgrade. Again, I don't have any empirical data to back up what is nothing more than a best guess.

Since April 2002, when the surge of activity related to the 2000 restructure of amateur radio licensing began to stabilize, we have seen the average number of applicants per test session decline from 13 to 11 and the average number of new hams per session decline from 6 to 5. While these figures don't sound too terrible, I need to point out that they are based on the month-to-month average since April 2000.

When we look at the yearly average we see slightly different numbers.

Year	Average number of applicants per session	Average number of new hams per session
2000	13	4
2001	11	6
2002	12	5
2003	10	6
2004	9	4
2005	7	3

On July 1, 2005 there was a posting on QRZ.COM which indicated that the number of radio amateurs in all license classes was 674,792 as of May 14, 2000. And on June 30, 2005 there were 664,905 radio amateurs in all classes. It doesn't matter how many people upgraded from one class of license to another, the bottom line is that this is a net loss of 9,887 radio amateurs over a five year period. No factual explanations were provided as to why we lost nearly 10,000 hams.

Next time: Do left handed applicants do better on the code exam? Uh, what code exam?

FCC proposes dropping Morse code requirement entirely

The FCC has proposed dropping the 5 WPM Morse code element as a requirement to obtain an Amateur Radio license of any class. The Commission included the recommendation in a July 19 Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) in WT Docket 05-235, but it declined to go along with any other proposed changes to Amateur Service licensing rules or operating privileges. Changes to Part 97 that the FCC proposed in the NPRM would not become final until the Commission gathers additional public comments, formally adopts any new rules and concludes the proceeding with a Report and Order specifying the changes and an effective date. That's not likely to happen for several months.

"Based upon the petitions and comments, we propose to amend our amateur service rules to eliminate the requirement that

individuals pass a telegraphy examination in order to qualify for any amateur radio operator license," the FCC said. The NPRM consolidated 18 petitions for rule making from the amateur community--including one from the ARRL--that had proposed a wide range of additional changes to the amateur rules. The FCC said the various petitions had attracted 6200 comments from the amateur community, which soon will have the opportunity to comment again--this time on the FCC's NPRM.

The Commission said it believes dropping the 5 WPM Morse examination would encourage more people to become Amateur Radio operators and would eliminate a requirement that's "now unnecessary" and may discourage current licensees from advancing their skills. It also said the change would "promote more efficient use" of amateur spectrum.

To support dropping the code requirement, the FCC cited changes in Article 25 of the international Radio Regulations adopted at World Radiocommunication Conference 2003. WRC-03 deleted the Morse testing requirement for amateur applicants seeking HF privileges and left it up to individual countries to determine whether or not they want to mandate Morse testing. Several countries already have dropped their Morse requirements for HF access.

ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, said he was not surprised to see the FCC propose scrapping the Morse requirement altogether, although the League had called for retaining the 5 WPM requirement only for Amateur Extra class applicants. Sumner expressed dismay, however, that the FCC turned away proposals from the League and other petitioners to create a new entry-level Amateur Radio license class.

"We're disappointed that the Commission prefers to deny an opportunity to give Amateur Radio the restructuring it needs for the 21st century," he said. "It appears that the Commission is taking the easy road, but the easy road is seldom the right road."

Sumner said ARRL officials and the Board of Directors will closely study the 30-page NPRM and comment further once they've had an opportunity to consider the Commission's stated rationales for its proposals.

In 2004, the League called on the FCC to create a new entry-level license, reduce the number of actual license classes to three and drop the Morse code testing requirement for all classes except for Amateur Extra. Among other recommendations, the League asked the FCC to automatically upgrade Technician licensees to General and Advanced licensees to Amateur Extra. In this week's NPRM, the FCC said it was not persuaded such automatic upgrades were in the public interest.

The FCC said it did not believe a new entry-level license class was warranted because current Novice and Tech Plus licensees will easily be able upgrade to General once the code requirement goes away. The Commission also said its "Phone Band Expansion" (or "Omnibus") NPRM in WT Docket 04-140 already addresses some of the other issues petitioners raised.

A 60-day period for the public to comment on the NPRM in WT 05-235 will begin once the notice appears in the Federal Register. Reply comments will be due within 75 days.

The Long Anticipated FCC Notice of Proposed Rule Making and Order.

Opinion by Bob/AA3RR
aa3rr@ki3ds.org

It seemed like it took forever, but the FCC finally got around to publishing a Notice of Proposed Rule Making and Order concerning the future of Morse code as an exam element. So what does it mean and when will it happen? Or will it?

The bottom line up front is this:

1. When implemented, **no one will be required to pass a Morse code test to earn any amateur radio license.** To upgrade, you will simply pass the next level of written exam. Nobody will be “grandfathered” to General.

2. **Western civilization as we know it will not end** as a result of this change. However, it will very likely change our hobby significantly. Whether it will be a good change or a bad one remains to be seen.

3. **There are no other changes to the amateur radio licensing program or any operating privileges.** The frequencies currently reserved for CW operations are safe. For now.

4. I believe that CW could ultimately become more popular as a result of this proposed change. Most new hams and those who upgrade are not generally interested in CW, so I believe the voice bands will become terribly crowded as a result of the increase in Generals and Amateur Extras. I believe this could, drive a lot of hams (old and new) towards CW (and possibly digital communications) in order to find an available frequency.

Here are the two key extracts from the FCC's 30 page Notice of Proposed Rule Making and Order that deserve some close inspection.

a. Based *upon the petitions and comments, we propose to amend our amateur service rules to eliminate the requirement that individuals pass a telegraphy examination in order to qualify for any amateur radio operator license.*

b. We *decline to propose any other changes to amateur radio service licensing or operating privileges in this proceeding.*

The FCC reviewed over 6,200 comments related to 18 petitions that proposed changing the Morse code requirement in some manner ranging from deleting it to keeping it in place for Amateur Extra licenses. The petitions and ensuing comments have convinced the FCC that this is the right thing to do. They are soliciting comments based on a regulatory requirement and I suggest it is also somewhat disingenuous. After reading over 6,200 comments on the topic, what more can be said that hasn’t already been said that would change their minds? Probably nothing. I seriously doubt that someone has held back a compelling argument for or against the proposal waiting for the FCC to solicit more comments.

When will the proposed changes be implemented? That’s a very good question. The last major NPRM took about 20 months from the time it was published (Aug 10th, 1998) until it was implemented (Apr 15th, 2000).

Apparently the FCC is predicting that they will implement the current NPRM sometime in 2006. We'll just have to wait and see.

In the meantime, if you have a Technician license without code, you'll have to wait until sometime in 2006 (or later) to upgrade to General without code. You can of course, take the General written exam prior to then and use your CSCE to be upgraded. Remember - a CSCE is only valid for 365 days. If you wait until January 2006 to take and pass the General written exam, your CSCE will be good for the rest of 2006 and part of January 2007. When the implementation date is announced, all you have to do is show up to any VE session with the original version of your unexpired CSCE indicating you passed the General written exam and a copy, your original version of your current, unexpired license and a copy, and a photo ID. You'll then be issued a new CSCE indicating you have been upgraded to General class.

On the other hand, if you want to upgrade to General before then, you'll just have to do it the old fashioned way: Pass the General written and the 5 WPM code exam.

Annapolis 10-Mile Run

Got your 2-meter HT handy? The 30th Annual Annapolis 10-Mile Run is coming up on Sunday morning, August 28. It's an interesting way to use your excellent hobby in a public service event. I'll need about 15 (or so) operators to man the Net Control stations, the water stops, the Lead Runner car, and some other perhaps new spots this year. I also plan to use APRS on the Last Runner operator who this year will be N3WOF (Ron Boller) riding his bicycle! All other positions are open and up for grabs! Please let me know your intention to participate by emailing me at: tredick@verizon.net. If you have a favored job, let me know and I'll try to accommodate you. -Ted K3TED

MMARC Foxhunt

It seems like rain always threatens lately for fox hunts, but this time it held out (mostly) until we were finished. Four teams assembled at Baldwin Hall on Saturday morning July 16. They were:

Ted Redick K3TED and Art Kissner KB3DCA

Bob Anderson AF3D (solo, doppler used)

Russ Slye N3GT and Tom Ostrosky W3NI

Bill Boston N3DCI and Roby Robinson WG3R

The fox was my vehicle (Mike KA2JAI) hidden in the parking lot of Randazzo Softball Park. This was a beautiful location with three softball fields, a snack bar, and real restrooms. Across the street you can see horses and goats grazing. It was a nice place for me, and later, first place finisher Bob AF3D, to take in a ball game during the quiet time in-between tasks.

The hunt was based on finding the fox within 2 hours with the minimum number of miles traveled. The winner as mentioned earlier was Bob AF3D with only 9.3 miles. Second place went to the team of Ted K3TED and Art KB3DCA with an impressive non-doppler finish of 15 miles.

The single entry to the hiding place off of New Cut Road required some precision that was made difficult by the multipath environment, which in the vicinity of the fox was especially confusing. The hunters found many deceptive signals and often multiple signal peaks at the same location that sometimes steered them off course.

Bill N3DCI and Roby WG3R were accustomed to using a doppler. This time they decided to make it more challenging and left the doppler home. Bill and Roby had not previously attended a MMARC fox hunt, and it was great having them on the event and sharing their experiences with us.

In true Mobileer fashion we concluded the event with food. We DF'd on the Double T Diner, had a late breakfast, and reviewed our techniques and experiences. Robbie's belgian waffles piled high with fruit and whipped cream were clearly the best selection at our table. And as Bob and Tom will tell you, the Double T's stack of pancakes is so large you can't eat it all. If you missed the hunt, join us next time. If you don't have fox hunting equipment, you can ride along with someone who does. I hope to see more of you at the next event!

AMATEUR RADIO, TRAFFIC-HANDLING OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND AT SCOUT JAMBOREE

From Monday, July 25 until Wednesday, August 3, thousands of Boy Scouts will converge on Fort AP Hill, Virginia, for the 2005 National Scout Jamboree. K2BSA, the official Amateur Radio station of the Boy Scouts of America, will be on the air (as K2BSA/4) for the duration of the Jamboree. Staff and volunteers (including ARRL staff member Larry Wolfgang, WR1B) will assist already-licensed scouts to operate the station and experience all that ham radio has to offer. In addition to workshops for the Radio merit badge, the K2BSA staff will offering licensing classes and examinations for those bitten by the radio bug while at the Jamboree.

By monitoring the Scout frequencies and making a contact with K2BSA, you just might be helping a Scout to earn his Radio merit badge or even be the first to contact for a scout who's earned his new Amateur Radio privileges.

Band SSB CW
80 meters 3.940 MHz 3.590 MHz
40 meters 7.270/7.290* MHz 7.030 MHz
20 meters 14.290 MHz 14.070 MHz
15 meters 21.360 MHz 21.140 MHz
10 meters 28.360/28.990 MHz 28.190 MHz

* Note that 7.290 MHz is the AM Calling Frequency, according to the ARRL Band Plan <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/40m>.

With a ban on cell phones at the Jamboree, K2BSA will serve as an important contact point for message traffic into and out of the Jamboree. Those who know scouts who will be attending the National Jamboree can surprise them with a greeting via Amateur

Radio! Make your station and traffic-handling skills available to parents and Scout leaders back home and offer to send messages to the campers.

Traffic handlers are encouraged to use the National Traffic System (NTS) rather than the Scout frequencies to pass traffic. There's a list of traffic nets on the ARRL Web site <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/nets/>.

To address traffic to a scout at the Jamboree, use the following address format:

Richard Kelly
Jamboree Troop 2016
Subcamp No 20
2005 National Scout Jamboree
Bowling Green, VA 22428-2016

The Troop number used in the address is a special number assigned for use during the Jamboree. It is not the scout's hometown troop number. Scouts and parents can get the Jamboree troop number and subcamp number from the Jamboree registration information they received. If you don't have the Jamboree troop number and subcamp number, then use the scout's hometown BSA council name.

July 25 until August 3 is also a good time to check into your local traffic net, because scouts may be generating traffic home from the Jamboree. Outlets are needed to clear traffic from the nets and deliver them to parents and friends.

K2BSA/4 has been approved for a contact with the crew of the International Space Station. The date and time of the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) QSO have not yet been established, however, and current plans to launch the shuttle Discovery to the ISS on July 26 could complicate matters.

For more information, visit the K2BSA Web site:
<http://www.lightlink.com/bbm/k2bsa.html>

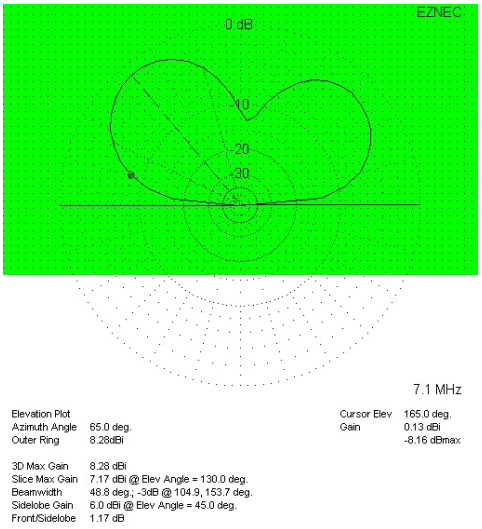
73
Larry
KB3KAK

The Simple Vee Beam for Real Gain

The plot of a sloping 122 ft/leg, 90 degree vee beam is shown below. The peak is at 30 feet and, the low ends are at 6 ft. What's really interesting about this antenna is the amount of gain at fairly low angles it develops. Please notice the 8+ db. gain is at 40 meters where obtaining serious gain can be a real challenge.

I chose the dimensions fairly arbitrarily. 120 feet was an even number on the axis and 30 feet is obtainable by three ten foot sections of something available from Home Depot. The decision to use 90 degrees rather than something more optimal was based solely on taking the easy way out in setting up the model. THERE IS NOTHING MAGIC WITH THIS CHOICE OF DIMENSIONS; you can vary them somewhat, and the antenna will still work fine.

Do not expect to have a 1:1 VSWR with an antenna like this. Tuned feeders made from open wire/ladder line will be the order of the day. A 4:1 balun will be needed to transition to coax near where the tuner is placed, and an antenna tuner will be needed.



Not everyone has a backyard to house such an antenna. Think about using something like this as a portable antenna that will require only one support.

ANNE ARUNDEL RADIO CLUB
P.O. BOX 308
DAVIDSONVILLE, MD 21035

Minutes of AARC Business Meeting for July 7, 2005

Officers present for the meeting were:

Anthony Young/WA3YLO	President
Dick McKelvie/K3HQ	Vice Pres.
William Smith/AB3BZ	Secretary
Lisa Fairbank/K3LUV	Treasurer
John Williams/K8JW	Director

The Meeting came to order at 7:37 P.M.

A quorum was not present; therefore no club business could be transacted.

Tony/WA3YLO announced that Eric/N3EF had a serious fall from a Field Day tower during its dismantling. He was reported to be convalescing at home.

A presentation on towers was given by Alan/WA3KL, a technician that works at WBAL.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 P.M.

Minutes of AARC Board Meeting for July 28, 2005

Officers present for the meeting were:

Anthony Young/WA3YLO	President
Dick McKelvie/K3HQ	Vice Pres.
William Smith/AB3BZ	Secretary
Lisa Fairbank/K3LUV	Treasurer
Eric Fairbank/N3EF	Director
John Williams/K8JW	Director

The Meeting came to order at 7:00 P.M.

A summary of the current status of the 501(3)(c) application was discussed. The proposed By-Lay changes will not be ready for the Juky edition of the newsleeter. They should be ready for the August edition for a vote a the September Business metting.

Field Day plans were reviewed.

EOC plans are going forward.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 P.M.

Maryland Slow Net

July 2005
TO: MSN
FROM: W8CPG

June Honor Roll (15+ check-ins)
W8CPG, WE2G, KG2HA, KG4YLZ

March Statistics
Sessions: 30 Minutes: 811
QTC: 55 QNI: 198

Student News

- Several emails arrived in Hoot'N Holler, WV this month delivered by way of Indian runners over old buffalo trails. New student Eric/N3EF noted that he had received his Info Packet and was working on polishing his CW a bit, and said to look for him after the July 4th holiday.
- Ted/W1HGY (or Doc Ted) noted that he had been swamped with domestic chores like painting and landscaping. He enjoys the Newsletter and hopes to bring a friend and join us on the net soon.
- Randy/KD8RB also emailed his thanks for the Newsletter and explained that his new daughter, Brandi (3/24/05) has been keeping him pretty busy especially with his XYL in graduate school. He hopes to join us ASAP. Thanks for the emails folks and I'd like to hear from others regarding your busy lives.
- MSN students in general: The season the Indians called The Time of Heat, Humidity and Outdoor Chores is here in force. We also call it the Summer Doldrums – but don't despair! This is a great time to escape the heat and enjoy the MSN Training Course. It is a great opportunity to get those traffic handling skills under your belt, before the snow falls and the ski slopes beckon. HI HI. Join us soon

Net Protocol

- A large word of thanks to our steadfast NCS and MDD representatives. You folks are the backbone of the net and really support the operation and communications. Thanks also to Bob/N3MNT for preparing, maintaining and delivering the monthly Roster. Many thanks to all of you who help to make the net operate smoothly.

Around The Net

- Steve/AB8CR is away for a short time on active reserve duty.
- Frank/N3ZOC mentioned that he'd had some minor nasal surgery. His surgeon, Dr. Woody Gepetto commented that Frank has fully recovered and really smells much better.
- Pete/K3IN mentioned that he has nearly completed the break-in period for his new Royal Enfield motorcycle. No longer made in England, they are imported to there from India. Pete and family experienced some scary moments recently when an inmate from a local mental institution escaped. Local schools were shut down while police searched the area including Pete's tool shed. (Insert NRA commercial here).
- Twin gremlins were found in W8CPG's rig: 1) a piece of coax that deserted and went south without warning, and 2) two loose ground connections in the tuner. Who'd a thunk? Robin/AA3SB is also back on the air with a replacement antenna, after wrangling with an empty spooled EZ Hang device.
- *"Cryptoqwiticisms" and Philosophy dujour:*

I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver. Unknown. Living a life is like constructing a building: if you start wrong, you'll end wrong. Unknown. Standard tune about a Dubliner's many horrible miseries: "My Wild Irish Woes".

Free to a good home: Postage stamp mica capacitors

John, WB4LNM has been cleaning up the junque boxe in his shack and has the following items available FREE to a good home: A quantity of new, old stock, mica 'postage stamp" capacitors, 34 values in sorted manilla envelopes. The values range from 5 to 4700 picofarads, with the majority being in the less than 1000 picofarad range. Each envelope has about 4 to 8 capacitors. These are great for someone who is refurbishing old radios or homebrewing tube type amplifiers or receivers. All WB4LNM asks is that you don't immediately turn around and sell them on eBay or at a hamfest; he prefers them to go to some one that will use them. If you have an interest, please contact John at email: WB4LNM@AOL.COM, or give him a call on the 444.400 repeater.

ARRL CITES "ADDITIONAL AUTHORITIES" TO BUTTRESS BPL RECONSIDERATION PETITION

The ARRL has cited the conclusions of a UK study and of the FCC itself to further support its call for the Commission to "reconsider, rescind and re-study" the broadband over power line (BPL) rules it adopted last October. In its Petition for Reconsideration last February in the BPL proceeding, ET Docket 04-37, the League argued that in permitting unlicensed Part 15 devices such as BPL, the Commission's main obligation is to establish a radiated emission level low enough so that the devices "will predictably not interfere" with licensed services.

"Unless this conclusion can be fairly reached, the Commission has no statutory authority to permit the facilities to operate on an unlicensed basis," the League maintains in a Citation of Additional Authority (Citation) filed July 8. Furthermore, the League says, the FCC itself affirmed the ARRL's argument in another proceeding.

The League cited a Commission conclusion in last December's Second Report and Order and Second Memorandum Opinion and Order in the Ultra-Wideband (UWB) proceeding, ET Docket 98-153. The FCC held in its UWB Order that a reasonable reading of Section 301 of the Communications Act would limit licensing to "any apparatus which transmits enough energy to have a significant potential for causing harmful interference." The FCC, the League asserts in its Citation, cannot authorize BPL--although it's an unintentional radiator--due to "acknowledged (and field-proven) substantial interference potential to licensed services." The solution, the ARRL said, is to establish radiated emission limits at a level that would make the chances of interference negligible.

Accompanying the Citation are studies of BPL systems in Scotland conducted by Ofcom, the UK's telecommunications regulator. Ofcom says concern over signal leakage is one reason for BPL's small UK market share compared with DSL and cable. "Although efficient for their primary

purpose, electricity supply cables are not designed, screened or balanced for high frequency use, and in this application they produce significant leakage emissions," the Ofcom study said, adding that the emissions potentially can interfere with radio communication services "including short wave broadcasts."

In its Citation, the ARRL again argues that the FCC "incorrectly rejected" the League's recommendation for a 20 dB extrapolation factor in measuring BPL signal decay on HF based on distance from the signal's source. Instead, the FCC opted to apply the existing--and less stringent--40 dB/decade factor in Part 15.

"The existing Part 15 standard is clearly inapplicable and underestimates the BPL field strength by up to 11.5 dB," the ARRL said, pointing to the Ofcom studies to support its assertion. The League called the FCC's adopted 40 dB/decade factor "inappropriate." The ARRL also said the Ofcom studies clearly show that notching is ineffective to mitigate interference and that certain BPL systems cannot even meet the FCC's "overly liberal" Part 15 field strength.

The League further noted that the FCC already applies a 20 dB/decade standard to measure signal decay of Part 18 Industrial, Scientific and Medical devices that can operate below 30 MHz.

In last October's BPL Order, the League pointed out, the FCC stated that if new information became available auguring in favor of alternative emission limit/distance standards or extrapolation factors, it would revisit the issue.

"There is no time like the present," the ARRL urged.

A copy of the ARRL's Citation is on the League's Web site <http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/HTML/plc/filings/BPL-Reconsideration-Citation-of-Additional-Authority.pdf>.

Thanks to The ARRL Letter

VoIP MODES CRITICAL FOR HURRICANE CENTER SUPPORT, WX4NHC SAYS

Radio amateurs using voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) modes such as EchoLink <http://www.echolink.org/> and IRLP <http://www.irlp.net/>are doing an outstanding job of supporting forecasters tracking hurricanes. So says WX4NHC Assistant Amateur Radio Coordinator Julio Ripoll, WD4R. The latest example was during WX4NHC activations--in cooperation with the Hurricane Watch Net (HWN) <http://www.hwn.org/> --for Hurricane Emily. Ripoll, says VoIP-mode users have supported WX4NHC in collecting ground-level weather data as well as relaying hurricane advisories to residents and agencies in affected areas.

"The EchoLink and IRLP partnership created for hurricanes and severe weather is unique," Ripoll told ARRL, adding that he's seen upward of 100 VoIP connections during storm emergencies, many of which represent repeaters and conference rooms "with untold numbers listening." Ripoll said VoIP modes also have served to connect Red Cross headquarters stations, state emergency operations centers (EOCs), National Weather Service offices and other agencies.

"The VoIP-WX Net <http://www.voipwx.net/> has also added a large number of Technician class operators who were not able to report on HF in the past," he noted. Although it has a defined and trained cadre of regular member-operators, the HWN operates on 14.325 MHz--beyond reach of operators lacking at least a General ticket. Ripoll said those connecting via VoIP modes often do so using low-power VHF/UHF radios running on battery power via an IRLP or EchoLink-equipped repeater.

Ripoll spotlighted WX-Talk Conference Net Manager Kevin Anderson, KD5WX, of Texas, IRLP Reflector 9219 Net Manager Danny Musten, KD4RAA, of North Carolina, and ARRL Eastern Massachusetts Section Emergency Coordinator and SKYWARN Director Rob Macedo, KD1CY, for being "very supportive" of WX4NHC.

Ripoll reports that the VoIP Hurricane Net most recently generated "some of the most important surface reports" as Hurricane Emily tracked over Grenada, St Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago. He cited specific information during Emily that arrived via VoIP modes including a report from J73CI, relaying for J39JQ, of a roof being blown from a hospital and damage to homes on Grenada caused by strong winds. Other VoIP reports came via Julien Dedier, 9Z4FZ, in Trinidad, of power outages. Reports relayed by the Trinidad EOC from Tobago at one point indicated heavy rainfall and sustained winds of 60 MPH.

Reports such as these, Ripoll said, were "especially vital during the very late evening hours, when there was a lack of HF propagation into the affected area."

For additional information, visit the WX4NHC Web site <http://www.wx4nhc.org/>.

Thanks to The ARRL Letter

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