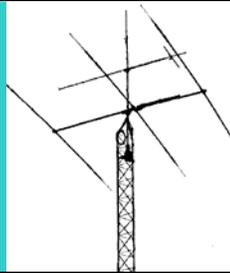


The AARC Beacon



Serving radio enthusiasts and communities in Central Virginia – The Radio Club for Central Virginia

Volume 2006, No. 3



March 2006

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Meeting Notice

The next regular AARC meeting will be held on **Tuesday, March 14 at 7:30 PM** at the **NRAO Building on the UVA campus**. The program will be presented by **Jim Condon, AD4YM, on how to give new life to "boat anchors"**. See you there!!

The President's Letter

Jay, K4AZV

Hear ye, hear ye come one, come all to the Albemarle Amateur Radio Club meeting. There's lots to discuss! We'll be talking a bit about direction and purpose regarding the WA4TFZ repeater system including, but not limited to, placement of repeaters and the linking of repeaters. There will be some discussion of Field Day. I would like to be able to have a volunteer to spearhead the Field Day project this year. These duties will include: completion of any paperwork related to site acquisition and working with the media action committee to facilitate advertising/public awareness in the various forms of media.

Our club desperately needs a volunteer to oversee, organize and designate responsibility to others in public service work. If at this next meeting we cannot find a volunteer for public service work I will recommend that the club discontinue public service completely and permanently. Being involved in a club means just that. Being a member of a club does not necessarily mean involvement. Many members of our club are physically unable to volunteer their services so they are excused from this rant. We have some wonderful, active people in our club and I want to invite you to become as involved as you possibly can. Volunteer for repeater site cleanup day. Do a couple of public service events per year. Write some articles for the Beacon. Help a fellow HAM with a radio related project. Much of this is already being done but at I've said before ----- it's your radio club! You don't need an invitation to become involved, you just need the desire to help. Clubs need this participation in order to survive. Part of amateur

radio involves furthering the hobby. It is up to us as individuals to come with ideas and concepts and inevitably new ideas generate excitement --- some good, some not so good but this also gives us learning experiences. As KG4HOT recently said, "as long as we can agree to disagree in some situations the result is tolerance and acceptance." This way everybody can have a piece of the pie. Our club will continue to support the desires of the individual as well as the desires of the many so don't be afraid to step up to the plate and swing the bat.

We had a wonderful testing session last month with nine tests given. Six Technician, two General and an Extra exam with all passing. **AARC is looking for a new VE coordinator to fill the space vacated by W4XN.** Mike, thank you for your service to the AARC as VEC.

On VHF/UHF our 444.250 repeater is in fine shape. Give it a try. It will eventually move but for now it's functioning well. Working HF has been very good this past month. Stations contacted included: Aegina Island, Malawi, Guadeloupe, French Polynesia, Marquesas Islands, French St. Martin, Orkney Island, Mali and last but not least, the Peter 1 Expedition of four bands.

See you at the next meeting!!

73, Jay K4AZV

Veep Peeps

John, KI4DJT

Dear Friends -- I'm not sure if I'll be able to attend the March meeting or the Science Fair on March 9. On the first they are going to try to fix my worn out arm and I'll probably be out of commission for 4 to 6 weeks.

Here is what's going on. **At our meeting Jim Condon, AD4YM will be giving a new life to boat anchor program.** On March 9 is the Piedmont Science Fair where we present a trophy and a "Now You're Talking" to the junior and senior winners we feel have the best project related to radio. Gary Henry is begging for judges as they only have about a third of the volunteers they need. If you can please volunteer, it is a very rewarding experience and you're desperately needed.

I want to thank Bud KB4JNI for a great presentation on Puff. I understood Bud's talk very well and he easily answered my questions that really brought it home for me. Several of the friends commented on how enjoyable and informative it was. Way to go Bud!

I'm trying to get a station set up in the house for my recovery so I can work on CW and be on the club nets and since I'll probably have a little time on my hands I hope to study for extra class and be able to get into the DX phone window on 80 meters. Speaking of CW, last weekend was a

CW DX contest and the folks were sending so fast I had to listen to them call four or five times before I could even get their call sign. I don't know how they do it? I keep trying and I'm beginning to grasp a little more but it's just going to take a lot of practice to be able to be where I want. I don't care if I can only send 10 or 12 words a minute but my ultimate goal is to copy 20 word per or better. Take care ...

73 de KI4DJT

VEC Exam Session Results

Bob, W4RQ

The AARC VEC Team held an amateur licensing exam session on Saturday, February 18 at UVA. We had a 100% pass rate this session!! Nine candidates were served. We had six new Tech licensees, two upgrades to General and one new Extra --- our own club director Dennis, K4THE! Congratulations, Dennis, and to all our new licensees and upgrades!!

Club Business

AARC Board Minutes February 14, 2006

Members Present: PRES Jay, K4AZV; VEEP John, KI4DJT; TREAS Bob, K4DU; Stephanie, K4BMM; John, N4SYH; Bill, AD6JV; Dennis, K4THE; Tim, KG4HOT. Members Absent: Marty, AG4DN.

Jay opened the meeting at 6:47 PM.

Jay and Tim entered into a discussion regarding club repeater sites. There is continued investigation being conducted regarding various repeaters and their locations. The plan is to continue performing propagation studies to determine the best location for our repeaters and once a plan is finalized take action with SERA to effect coordination. Sugarloaf Mountain appears to be a good testing site, but whether or not it becomes a permanent location for a repeater will be determined. Tim also stated that perhaps two repeaters can be located up on Heard's Mountain. He, as well, has a good lead on an outdoor cabinet for our repeater currently on Heard's Mountain.

The next topic covered was the need to update the club web site. It seems that the site has inaccurate meeting location and meeting dates as well as many other areas that require updating. Our web manager will be asked to update the site.

John KI4DJT informed the Board that the Science Fair will be coming up soon and asked whether the club would participate as last year. The club made awards to students of a plaque and a copy of "Now You're Talking" for projects relating to communication. Jay indicated that this was a

worthwhile activity and with no objection from the Board, the club would again participate.

John KI4DJT asked if there was any plan to have an up-to-date club directory. He stated that there was no effective way to contact other club members. Bob answered that he was working on this project utilizing some of the work Bob Dorsey had completed earlier. Bob plans to send a list of last year's members for the time being. The new directory will be complete shortly and will include club members as well as other Amateurs in the area. There will be hard copies available and the list will be available on our web site. Josh KG4NGV indicated he would help with the directory as well.

With no further business Jay closed the meeting at 7:20 PM.

SUBMITTED BY: Stephanie Rostow K4BMM, Acting SECY (with the

Regular Meeting February 14, 2006

Jay called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM.

Bill announced the VE session is scheduled for 9:00 AM, Saturday 18 February. He noted that a review session would be available prior to testing for those individuals who felt they needed one.

There followed introductions by each club member along with a brief summary of what each is interested in regarding Amateur radio. Club members showed great interest in what other members were doing.

Bob reported that the club's current balance is \$4850.34.

Jay called for approval of December 2005's minutes as they appeared in the January 2006 Beacon. The motion was made, second and approved with no comment.

Bill notified the membership that there would be a VE session on February 18 at 9:00 AM at the Astronomy Building, UVA and there would be a review session prior to the examination.

Tim took the floor and discussed the location of the club 444.250 repeater currently on Sugarloaf Mountain. He indicated testing of this repeater would take place. He believes that a Heard's Mountain site would serve Albemarle County better than Sugarloaf Mountain. There will be more information forthcoming on the subject.

Bud KB4JNI provided a very informative program on antenna modeling using a PUFF software program. After the presentation he showed the membership a 440 antenna he built of aluminum coax. The membership found Bud's presentation informative and useful.

With no further business Jay called for a motion to close the meeting at 8:45 PM. A motion was made, second and approved with no comment.

SUBMITTED BY: Stephanie Rostow K4BMM, Acting SECY (with the

Call for Volunteers for Jefferson Cup Bicycle Race

Bill Phillips, AD6JV

The Jefferson Cup Bicycle Race is scheduled for March 26. The race this year is a bit different than in the past. It starts earlier with a morning session at 9:00 AM, a mid-day session at 11:00 AM and then an afternoon session that starts at 2:00 PM. Registration begins at 7:30 AM. Three race groups will be on the 10 mile loop at a time.

A map of the course can be found at the web address <http://www.bluewheel.com/maps/klugeloo.htm>. The registration area and starting point for the race, and the gathering point for volunteers, is at the Walton School.

We need a large group of volunteers for this event.

Please sign up at the March meeting, or send an email to Bill Phillips AD6JV at billp1048@earthlink.net.

Contest Highlights - Upcoming

Bob, W4RQ

ARRL-Sponsored Contests

Mar 4-5 ARRL Int'l DX Test - Phone

Complete info, rules and log forms for these events can be found online at the [ARRL Contest Calendar 2004](http://www.arrl.org/contests) webpage.

Other Contests of Interest

Mar 19-20 Russian DX Contest CW/SSB

Mar 19-20 Virginia QSO Party

Mar 25-27 CQWW WPX Contest – SSB

The [SM3CER Contest Service - Contest Calendars](http://www.sm3cer.com) has info and rules for these contests and just about every contest that exists.

73, Bob W4RQ

Virginia QSO Party Time !!!

Bob, W4RQ

It is that time of year again --- one weekend where the rest of the world is looking to work **US** in Virginia!!! The Virginia QSO Party is scheduled to run from **1800 UTC, Saturday, March 18 to 0200 UTC on Monday, March 20**. Modes allowed are CW, SSB, Digital or a combination of all of them.

For the QSO exchange, Virginia stations give signal report plus your county (or independent city, if you live in one). Full detail and rules can be obtained from [VA QSO Party 2006 website](#).

So join the fun and let the QSO's come looking for you!! See in the party!!

Updated Element 2 Question Pool Released

From the ARRL Bulletin, Feb. 24, 2006

The Question Pool Committee (QPC) of the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators (NCVEC) has announced the release of a **revised and corrected Element 2 (Technician) question pool**. The new Element 2 question pool becomes effective for all Technician-class Amateur Radio examinations administered on or after July 1, 2006. Changes from the initial Element 2 question pool include elimination of some questions (T5D06, T6B09 and T7A08) and rewording of others to increase clarity. "We thank those users who reported the errors and made other suggestions for ways to improve the product," the committee said. "The QPC reviewed all submissions and incorporated the changes that were appropriate." The QPC warned that only the Element 2 question pool dated February 6, 2006, is valid. The new Element 2 database is available for download from the NCVEC Web site as a PDF, MS-Word, Rich Text Format (RTF) or ASCII text file from the Web at address http://www.ncvec.org/ama_news_article.php?id=82. The QPC says subsequent changes will be handled by deletion of the affected question. The QPC invites additional input via e-mail qpcinput@ncvec.org.

SuitSat-1 Officially SK

From the ARRL Bulletin, Feb. 24, 2006

SuitSat-1 is now a confirmed "Silent Key." So says its sponsor, the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) program. In operation for more than two weeks, SuitSat-1 -- designated AO-54 -- easily outlasted initial predictions that it would transmit for about one week. ARISS International Chairman Frank Bauer, KA3HDO, says the mission captured imaginations around the world, despite a much-lower-than-expected signal strength.

"The outreach, press requests and visibility of SuitSat were absolutely amazing and appear to be unprecedented for a ham radio event," Bauer said. "While the press requests are just now starting to wane, we expect that you will continue to see SuitSat status reports and pictures in magazines, Web sites and other literature over the next few months." The

more than nine million hits at the SuitSat Web site attest to the level of interest in the SuitSat-1 experiment, Bauer noted, calling the tally "quite impressive indeed!"

Bob King, VE6BLD, in Alberta posted the last confirmed reception of SuitSat-1's voice audio, Saturday, February 18, at 0332 UTC. Richard Crow, N2SPI, in New York received the last confirmed telemetry, which indicated the battery voltage dropping precipitously to a low of 18.3 V before the novel satellite ceased to transmit.

Hearing SuitSat-1's puny signal strength generally required gain antennas, but Bauer says he heard SuitSat with a 3-element Arrow antenna and a handheld radio. Bauer's daughter Michelle recorded the English-language voice identification. Another challenge to signal reception, he said, was the very deep fading due to the suit's rotation in orbit.

"One great positive that came from these issues is that it challenged the ham radio community worldwide to improve their station receive capabilities so that they could pull every bit of signal from SuitSat," Bauer remarked.

Bauer says reports that SuitSat-1 was non-operational and that the battery was frozen shortly after deployment are false. "This never occurred," he stressed. "As the telemetry has shown, temperatures within the suit were a somewhat comfortable 12-16 degrees C during the entire mission."

So, he adds, is the tale of SuitSat-1's early demise and resurrection. "It was alive and operated flawlessly, except the signal strength issue, from the time the crew flipped the switches until the battery power was used up," he said.

Bauer says he's also not ready to buy into an AMSAT calculation that the transmitter may have been putting out between 1 and 10 mW. "It is entirely possible that the radio output could have been at 500 mW, and the feed line, connector or the antenna caused the problem," he said, adding that the SuitSat team has only just begun studying what might have caused the weak signal.

The AMSAT/ARISS team already is looking forward to a SuitSat-2. "Correcting the signal strength issue would be a top priority for this flight," Bauer said. "So would be a longer-term power generation device, like solar arrays."

Although no longer transmitting, SuitSat-1 could continue orbiting Earth for another 70 to 120 days, depending on atmospheric drag, Bauer said. More information on the SuitSat-1 project, including QSL information, is available on the AMSAT Web site <http://www.amsat.org/> and on the SuitSat Web site <http://www.suitsat.org/>.

AARC Public Service Schedule

March 26	Jefferson Cup Bike Race
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Area Hamfests

None reported	
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FCC Database Updates

New Calls

None Reported	
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Upgrades

K4THE	Dennis Mennerich --- to Extra!!
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Vanity Calls

None Reported	
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VE Session Schedule - 2004

Date Location (ARRL VEC)	For other exam sessions in Virginia outside the AARC area, check the ARRL Exam Session Search web page.
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For Sale Items

Quantum Rechargeable Battery	Quantum ham radio rechargeable battery. 13.8 volts with a wall wart for charging and two outputs. This will run your handy talky all day and then some! Asking \$100. Contact Rick, KO4WQ at 434-245-1128.
Antenna, Coax, Mast	Ringo Ranger II ARX-2B 2 Meter antenna w/manual, 10 foot steel mast, 30 feet Belden 9913 RG-8U Coax with PL-259 on each end. Asking \$30, Call Fred, KE4ZNO at (434) 589-5488.

AARC Club Officers

President	Jay Rostow	K4AZV	k4azv@turing.org 434-263-5795
Vice President	John Turchi	KI4DJT	m51John@juno.com 540-543-2037
Secretary	Marty Mait	AG4DN	ag4dn@earthlink.net 434-589-2825
Treasurer	Bob Pattison	K4DU	rep4@aol.com 434-960-3344
Director	John	N4SYH	
Director	Tim	KG4HOT	
Director	Stephanie Rostow	K4BMM	434-263-5795
Director	Bill Phillips	AD6JV	billp1048@earthlink.net 434 872-0686
Director	Dennis Mennerich	K4THE	k4the@arrl.net 434 973-5407

Contest Calendars

ARRL Contest Calendar 2004	ARRL sponsored contests
SM3CER Contest Service - Calendar 2004	Contests all over the world! Also has links to online rules for most contests
Contesting Online	Just about everything contests!

Albemarle Amateur Radio Club
P.O. Box 6833
Charlottesville, VA 22906

<http://www.people.virginia.edu/~ejd4e/aarc/index.htm>



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ISSUE DEADLINE - 23rd of each month

Contact Information
 Daniel R. (Bob) Dorsey, Jr. W4RQ
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 Ruckersville, VA 22968-0530
 (434) 990-2659
W4RQ@yahoo.com

Next Club Meeting : March 14 - 7:30 PM NRAO Bldg at UVA

CLUB MEETINGS and NETS

REGULAR Meeting: Second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM
BOARD & TECHNICAL Meetings: Prior to regular meeting at 6:30 PM
 Meetings are held at the UVA Astronomy building at 530 McCormick Road.
LUNCHEON: Wednesdays -- Area hams gather at the **Wood Grill Buffet** on Rte 29 North from 11 AM – 1 PM
Monday Night Information Net – Each Monday at 7:00 PM
Youth Net: Each Wednesday at 7:30 PM on 147.075
Northern Piedmont Emergency Net / Swap Net / Technical Session: Each Thursday at 8:00 PM
All Nets are held on the 146.760 repeater (except for the Youth Net)

AREA REPEATERS

WA4TFZ

<u>INPUT/OUTPUT</u>	<u>Tone Access (If needed)</u>
146.160/146.760	151.4 Hz
146.325/146.925	151.4 Hz
223.160/224.760	No Tone
449.250/444.250	151.4 Hz (If enabled)
145.030	MACHO Node
145.030	CHO Packet Bulletin Board

Other Area Repeaters

145.410 (-) 100 Hz Tone (if enabled) -- **AF4CY (Madison)**
 442.075 (+) 151.4 Hz Tone -- **KF4UCI**

AARC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DATE	EVENT
March 14	Regular Club Meeting
April 11	Regular Club Meeting
May 9	Regular Club Meeting
June 13	Regular Club Meeting
July 11	Regular Club Meeting
August 8	Annual Club Picnic and Hamfest
September 12	Regular Club Meeting
October 10	Regular Club Meeting
November 14	Regular Club Meeting

AARC - PUBLIC SERVICE SCHEDULE

DATE	EVENT
March 26	Jefferson Cup Bike Race

Please sign up at meetings as the SIGN UP CLIPBOARD is passed around. Contact Greg N4PGS indicating your interest in working particular events.

Membership application available in PDF format at http://www.people.virginia.edu/~ejd4e/aarc/images/AARC_Application.pdf