

# BULLETIN



ALBEMARLE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

MAY 1997

## *The AARC at the Dogwood Festival Parade*



The AARC marching crew display the new club banner. *Photo by Ernie Sardi, W2EIU*

**May Club Meeting**

Tuesday, May 13  
at 7:30 p.m.

National Radio Astronomy  
Observatory Auditorium  
Edgemont Road (UVa area)

*This month's topic: Boatanchors!  
See AD4YM's article on p. 6*



Special Event Station organizers Ernie, W2EIU, and Janie, KF4NOQ. *Photo by Bill, KC4TQF*



Dave, KF4NOP, and Janie, KF4NOQ show off the HT. *Photo by Ernie Sardi, W2EIU*



## The President Speaks

## VEEP CORNER

I am sitting here amid the beginning of the influx of QSL cards that the Club's Dogwood Festival Special Event station has garnered. I must say that I am quite impressed with the number of states I see represented - 21 so far, and I know for a fact that we have several Canadian contacts as well. I think that for our first outing we did pretty good. I also want to say that I had an absolute BLAST in the Dogwood Parade. You folks really need to try it out...it is really neat. I prompted these 2 events with the idea that they would become a yearly item for the Club. We learned a lot this year so I feel that next years Dogwood festivities should be even better.

I want to thank all the folks who gave their time to make this happen as well as all of you who checked in on one of the Special Event stations and help make this event a success, but I want to pay a special Thank You to Ernie Sardi - W2EIU and his wife Mella - W2HTJ (who had to put up with him) for all the work he did in organizing the Special Event station as well as the Dogwood Parade entry. I kind of placed a double whammy on him and he did an excellent job. I also want to say a big Thank You to Dave Narducci - KF4NOP and his wife Janie - KF4NOQ for the wonderful HT we saw in the parade. Most of you saw it at the Club Meeting when it was unveiled, but I understand that it looked really spiffy on TV.

Those of you who saw the parade on the tube also got to see our Clubs new banner. From the talk I've heard, it's getting a pretty warm response. This weekend, our banner will be making its 2nd official appearance during the March of Dimes Walkathon. For those of you who have not yet gotten a chance to see the banner, it will make it's official Club Meeting debut at the next meeting. We now have official jackets for the cooler, rainier weather and a banner to announce us, but what about during the warm weather of Field Day? How about polo shirts with AARC on the pocket and maybe your call sign over the pocket? Just an idea.

We're gearing up for Field Day so be sure to make your plans to attend and operate. Dave - KE4YLR and Don - KE4DDR are on the Committee this year and there will be another one or two by the time you read this. This year, in addition to the operations we've had in the past, we're going to see if we can also run an Oscar station. No promises yet as much needs to be decided on, but it is something different and I think it will be a lot of fun. When the Field Day committee members knock on your (See President, p. 3)

As I write this it is a really beautiful Spring day. It's a bit cool, with a stiff breeze blowing, but it makes you glad to get outdoors.

That brings me to my soapbox session for this month. You probably have had a wonderful year of amateur operation, despite poor band conditions on HF. Many of you have been enjoying your two-meter equipment and perhaps have even worked some DX on that band. All of this is great! Over this year we have experienced heavy winds, like what I have here right now. We've had quite a bit of rain. These two things can combine to create deterioration of your antenna and ground systems.

This is a good time to plan, and do, your Spring station cleanup. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Check each of your grounds. Remove any corrosion from the connection between the ground rod and your actual ground wires. Check for corrosion in hose clamps or other fasteners used to hold ground wires to masts. Come to think of it, you do have a good station ground system, right??

I cannot over-emphasize the importance of this work; if this is Spring, thunderstorms have to be lurking around, just waiting for that poorly grounded antenna system.

2. Check out your antenna system. Be sure that the bolts holding your masts are secure. If they have corroded too badly, remove them and replace with new ones. Check the anchors into which the bolts go to be sure that they are solidly mounted to your chimney or other structure. Check the bolts and hardware which holds your rotator to the mast. Tighten and/or replace if necessary.

Similarly, check the hardware associated with your beam or other antenna to be sure it is solid and will stay up for another year.

If you have HF antennas, be sure that the ropes are not frayed. You wouldn't want your favorite long-wire to come down during a contest! While replacing any rope, it gives you the opportunity to check and perhaps resolder ladder line or coax.

If you have a tower, check all guys for deterioration. Check their fasteners to be sure they are properly tied to their anchors and to the tower itself.

Don't neglect your mobile antennas. Check the whip to be sure it is tight. Check for coax (See VP, p. 3)

# Lake Monticello Races a Success

Brian Meadowcroft, KE4FRP

Not only were the first-ever crew races a success for the colleges, but also for AARC and, more importantly, the Rivanna Auxiliary Radio Team (the Fluvanna County radio group). This was the first large public service event worked by the hams in Fluvanna. In the planning sessions and on the race days, March 22 and 29, we met with the coaches from UVa, Coast Guard Auxiliary, and some of the many associations of Lake Monticello. We were given a great opportunity to let organizations in Fluvanna County see what amateur radio can do.

The races were scheduled for two different weekends, to allow for the highest amount of races. With two days, we had two coordinators: Fred, KE4ZNO, on the 22 and myself, KF4FRP, on the 29. Communication was great on both days, but with more knowledge about what was going on the second day. Three radio systems were operating on both days: Coast Guard on Marine band, Fire and Rescue, and the Amateur net. The Coast Guard stated that information was faster and more reliable over the amateur net. A big thanks to all stations who participated, especially on Easter weekend. Overall, every thing went great and UVa would like to race out here again next year.....Stay tuned.

## resident

(from page 2) door, please give generously of your time.....oh yeah, by the way, they'll begin knocking at this month's meeting.

Also, by the time you read this, the current Novice-Tech and General Upgrade classes will be a thing of the past and the VE session will be completed. I would like to thank Harry and Bob who made the General Class happen. I know a lot of folks enjoyed having it. Finally, please remember that we are just getting into the heart of our Public Service events season, so tune up your rigs, tweek your antennas, wax your coax, and get out there and have some fun. That's all I have for now. I better get this thing e-mailed to Eileen before the deadline or she's gonna shoot me.....hihi

KC4TQF

## VP

(from page 2) deterioration, especially at the base of connectors. Check trunk-mounting hardware for tightness and for corrosion.

Be sure to check for all of the things I forgot while writing this piece.

Till next month, 73 de Joe, W2PVY sk sk

## CLASSIFIED COLUMN

### WANTED: GENERAL COVERAGE RECEIVER (4/10/97)

Two non-hams are looking for a way to become exposed to the rf spectrum. One is interested in a better quality receiver or possibly a transceiver with a general coverage receiver. The other is looking for a cheaper one including possible a portable radio with a shortwave band. So, there is a market for a cheapie and a better one. Contact Ron, K4RKA, at 804-973-3640 if you have one or the other which you would like to sell.

### WANTED: MONITOR RECEIVER (4/11/97)

Brian, KF4FRP, wants Motorola Minator pager receiver or similar high band small unit to modify for two meters. Working or not working ok. If you have something you want to get rid of, call him at 804-589-3073.

### FOR SALE: DUAL BAND MOBILE (4/17/97)

Sam, N4WJQ, is interested in selling an Alinco 570 dual band (2m/70cm) mobile transceiver with cross band repeat, 10 memory channels per band, CTSS encode, manual. 15/50 watt. \$400. If interested, call Sam at 804-973-6384.

### FOR SALE: 80386-40 MOTHER BOARD (4/17/97)

Sam, N4WJQ, would like to sell a 80386DX40 computer mother board with 8 Meg of RAM and manual for \$60 or offer. Call him at 804-973-6384.

### WANTED: HF radio (4/17/97)

Hi everyone. I am looking for a good used HF radio, either Icom or Kenwood. Must be in good condition and working. I can be reached on this BBS or by phoning 540-943-9968 after 5pm. Richard....N4SIH.....73..

### WANTED: 10M SSB RIG (4/24/97)

Ham-to-be Clarke Norman is looking for one of the Uniden equal 10 meter SSB transceivers. He prefers model 2600 but might consider a 2510. You may contact him at Sperry during the day at 974-2032 or home at 296-1131 or pass a message via Ron, K4RKA, or Sam, N4WJQ.

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## WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON?

To those of us who work on the HF bands, conditions have not been too hot for some time now.

Signals which were S9+ are now fading up and down from less than that level to even lower. There isn't any reason to worry because we will be back on track in the not-too-distant future as the sun spot cycle improves. What does all this mean to you who are no-code techs or who operate only on our VHF/UHF repeaters?

Well, simply, it means that you have "bought" some more time in which to up-grade and get ready for the big times on HF. Talk to KD4RWX who worked all States and a hundred plus countries during the time that the 10-meter band was alive... and it was really gasping for breath toward the end of Joe's achievements. He did it all with low power, sometimes as low as 5-watts, and a simple dipole (rotatable on occasion.)

Yes, you can put a signal around the world when ten meters is one of the HF "open" bands. And, there are lots of other real estate in which you can play HF radio, too. Chatting with stations half way around the world can be common place when the bands are just right. Many friendships are made over the miles... some of them leading to face-to-face meetings either here or overseas. What do you need to enjoy this part of Ham Radio?

A Tech-plus license provides you with ten-meter phone and c.w. privileges. Actually, the Novice license does the same thing for ten-meter operation. Operation on the other HF bands requires a little more if you desire to work phone, but c.w. privileges on a good DX band, 15-meters, is available to Novices and a Tech-plus.

Equipment for 10-meter operation, especially, can be a little bit easier on the budget. A single band unit, a used Radio Shack, a Uniden or one of the other rigs which became available a little more than ten years ago, can be found on flea market tables. You can have a simple antenna... a quarter-wave vertical is only eight feet high and a dipole is sixteen feet across. The latter can be rotated by a simple TV rotor or the "armstrong" method can be put into use. The latter is about as cheap as you can go! You can't go wrong by chatting a little with Joe, KD4RWX, on his successes using modest equipment on 10-meters. Come on... jump in...

the water will be just about right in a relatively short time.

Of course, I'd like to make a pitch for operation on the other HF bands because there is so much to enjoy there. Antennas become a little longer, you might want a little more power, but these are not necessities. It's amazing what can be accomplished with low power and a reduced size HF antenna. Take a look at some of the HF mobile installations and their shortened antennas. See you on HF on or before 1 January 2000? Let's plan on it! 73...

/s/ Harry, W2HD

## Bits and Pieces

**New Vanity Call** - Richard Florence, K4VY, (former W4OFR) is the area's newest Vanity call recipient. His call was issued on April 8th. Congratulations Dick. We will listen for K4VY [K4 Veteran Yachtsman] to be on the air soon.  
*from Joe, KD4RWX*

### **Upcoming SKYWARN Classes -**

**Basic I** (a 3-hour class covering the essential basics for Skywarn spotters): Thursday, May 15th from 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM; Saturday, June 14th from noon to 3:00 PM; Wednesday, July 16th from 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM. Classes are held at the Weather Service Forecasting Office in Sterling. Call 703-260-0107 to register and for directions.

**Basic II** (an optional sequel to the Basics I class, lasting 2 1/2 hours): Tuesday, April 15th from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at NWS Sterling. Tuesday, May 6th from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at WSFO Sterling. Friday, June 6th from 7:00 pm to 9:00 PM at NWS Sterling. Wednesday, July 30th from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at NWS Sterling. Call 703-260-0107 to register for any of these sessions. You must have taken Basics I in order to attend Basics II.

**EC Needed for Louisa** - *From Brian, KE4FRP:* Hopefully by the time you read this my appointment for Emergency Coordinator for Fluvanna County will have come through. The County of Louisa still does not have an EC, so...if any amateur living in Louisa is interested in working with the local government and other hams, please contact Dave, KE4LYR, or myself, KF4FRP.

**Greet the New Folks** - Listen for new members Todd Black (KF4MFL) and Dennis Terribile (WR4I)

The following is taken directly from the ARRL Field Forum, Vol. 13, No. 2 for April-June, 1997. It was written by William Continelli (AB2CA). Since it never hurts to emphasize these points, I thought it would be constructive if you heard it from someone outside our club. I can find more than one of the following 10 points that would apply to me. See any that might apply to you?

### 10 Ways to Optimize Your Effectiveness in Public Service Events

1. Make sure your radio is in top operating condition. Small problems (such as loose antenna connections, bad microphones, intermittent operation, etc.) may be just annoying during casual operation, but WILL cause major grief under the continuous/severe service of net/emergency operation. If your radio is not in 100% top shape, buy, beg, or borrow one.

2. Don't operate your handheld with it hanging on your belt. Using the radio while it's strapped to your waist reduces your effective radiated power by more than 10 dB. That's a 90% reduction in power! Hold the radio in your hand, with the antenna in the clear.

3. Regarding antennas, those 3" rubber dummy loads may be cute, but you're throwing away 3-6 dB of power when using one. (If you're really into math, compute the loss of a 3" dummy load used on the beltclip). A telescoping half-wave has a gain of as much as 10 dB over a 3" rubber duck and a quarter wave provides a 4-6 dB improvement. Even a 12-15" rubber duck will boost your signal by 3-6 dB over the 3" ones. Remember that one dB can mean the difference in whether or not a critical message gets through.

4. Have charged batteries and spare battery packs! If you also have a dry cell battery case, fill it with alkaline batteries. Make sure you have enough batteries with you to carry you through, even on high power.

5. Use headphones or an earphone rather than a speaker/mike. Most earphones will plug directly into your HT. Low cost stereo headphones are widely available and will work perfectly with your HT using a mono to stereo adapter. The headphones also have the advantage of concentrating the communications in your ears, with partially shutting out the outside noise. Headphones will also prolong battery life by allowing the radio to operate at lower audio output. A speaker/mike is the worst thing you can use- it doesn't cut the outside noise, it doesn't save

batteries, and where is that HT while you're using the speaker/mike?? (Hint- see #2)!

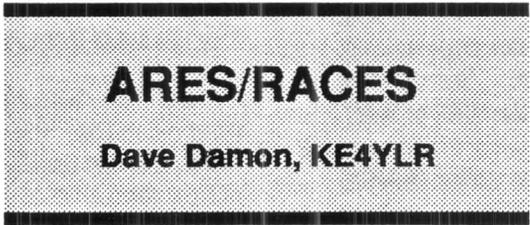
6. Speak slowly and clearly when transmitting! You may take pride in your ability to run your words together and mumble, but the station on the other end may be in a noisy environment and may not receive your message.

7. Check out your ability to use simplex. Even if the operation is being conducted on a repeater, there may be "dead spots," the repeater may go down, or, sad to say, there may be jamming. Even if you can only work the two or three stations closest to you, a message can still be relayed. To maximize your simplex range, please reread #2 and #3.

8. Listen to net control and direct all communication through him/her. Identify your station when calling net control and keep all communications direct and to the point.

9. If you must leave the radio or the area to which you have been assigned, first seek permission and acknowledgment from the net control station, make your "time off" as short as possible, and check back with NCS immediately upon your return.

10. Project a good image to the non-hams around you that are part of the event/emergency. This means acting professionally, while being friendly and courteous to all those with whom you are interacting.



## Public service events 1997

Contact Hein, N4FWA, to sign up for events.

- BKR3** Saturday 31 May 1997  
James Madison Stage Race. Start at Orange High School
- BKR4** Sunday 1 June 1997 James Madison Stage Race. Swift Run Gap Hill Climb. Start 0730 EDT near Stanardsville.
- BKR5** Sunday 1 June 1997 James Madison Stage Race. Criterium race downtown Orange 1300 EDT
- MSB1** Saturday 7 June 1997  
Multiple Sclerosis 150 mile bike tour, first day. Overnight in Farmville
- MSB2** Sunday 8 June 1997  
Multiple Sclerosis Bike Tour, second day
- DRL1** Thursday 18 September 1997 - 911 Emergency drill
- BKR7** Sunday 28 September 1997  
State championships. Walnut Creek Park
- HRS1** Saturday 1 November 1997 Montpelier Horse Races

Other possible/probable events:

Diabetes walk — March of Dimes --- American Heart Association Walk

# Boatanchors

by Jim Condon, AD4YM

"Boatanchors" are obsolete heavy radios good only for anchoring boats. The classic example is the Heathkit DX-100, an AMCW HF transmitter weighing over 100 lbs. This monster only produces 100 watts, it isn't easy to operate, it drifts, and it chirps. But like old cars, boatanchors have fans who enjoy seeing, collecting, restoring, and even using them. Some hams reconstruct their old novice stations and try to make WAS or WAC, an operating challenge similar to QRP. Others buy the "dream" ham stations or exotic military radios (such as the Collins R-390A) that they couldn't afford 30 years ago. Most like to work on equipment which has real components--resistors, capacitors, coils, tubes--big enough to be seen, in circuits simple enough to be understood. Boatanchorites appreciate the warm glow of vacuum tubes and analog frequency dials, the smooth feel of a good tuning mechanism.

The May 1997 meeting of the AARC is "Boatanchor Night" with a slide show and demonstrations of real boatanchors. If this awakens your interest in boatanchors, how should you proceed? First, learn more about boatanchors by talking to people who have them and by reading. The best single book covering receivers is Raymond Moore's *Communication Receivers--The Vacuum Tube Era: 1932-1981*. In addition to pictures and descriptions of most old communications receivers, it has a very intelligent discussion of the technical advances during that era, the major manufacturers (Collins, Drake, Hallicrafters, Hammarlund, Heath, National, RME, etc.), and the individuals responsible for the more innovative designs. Moore's companion book, *Transmitters, Exciters, and Power Amplifiers 1930--1980*, is also good, although it does not include transceivers, which can be found in *Tube Type Transmitter Guide*, by Eugen Rippen. If you are interested in Heathkits, Chuck Penson's book, *Heathkit: A Guide to the Amateur Radio Products*, is indispensable. You can order most boatanchor books from Electric Radio (14643 County Road G, Cortez, CO 81321-9575 or er@frontier.net or 970-564-9185) or Antique Electronic Supply (6221 South Maple Avenue, Tempe, AZ 85283 or 602-820-5411).

The premier boatanchor magazine is "Electric Radio." It contains articles about restoring boatanchors, a current list of times and frequencies for vintage nets, and classified ads. There is even a boatanchor list on the internet. For a trial subscription, send the message "subscribe boatanchors" to listproc@theporch.com.

The next step is getting your own boatanchor, from a friend, at a hamfest, or via classified ads in magazines or on the internet.

It is probably best to start with a fairly common radio built in the 1950's or 1960's by a well-known manufacturer. Be selective and stay away from the basket cases--radios which are badly corroded or damaged, modified, or incomplete--and choose something which YOU can restore with limited tools and a beginner's skills. Bad generic components (tubes, resistors, capacitors, etc.) are usually easy to replace, but proprietary parts (such as frequency dials, front panels, cabinets, knobs, special tuning capacitors and plug-in coils) are not. I have never regretted paying a little more for a old radio which is in better shape to begin with. Most boatanchor collectors run out of shack space before they run out of money!

Don't be discouraged by the oily dirt and dust that covers most old radios. The grunge on cabinets, chassis, knobs, and metal parts can usually be removed by applying ammonia with a narrow (about 1/2 inch) paint brush followed by a water rinse, wiping with clean paper towels and a good drying (use a hair dryer or wait at least 24 hours before plugging in the radio). The paint brush is effective even in tight spaces, such as between the plates of tuning capacitors. Don't use ammonia on transformers or meters. The most delicate part to clean is usually the frequency dial, which should be only dusted or wiped very gently with a soft cloth--you don't want to wipe off the numbers! After cleaning, you can protect a smooth front panel with automotive wax. Antique Electronic Supply sells a plastic polish to remove scratches from knobs and a "lacquer stick" to fill in any dull or worn white lines.



*A classic example of a boatanchor - the Heath Company DX-100, advertised as a "modern design transmitter" in the Dec. 1955 QST.*

Next comes electrical restoration. If your radio didn't come with one, get a copy of the instruction manual and schematic (see ads in Electric Radio). Old volumes of the ARRL Handbook contain helpful descriptions of how (See *Boatanchor*, p. 7)

## AREA HAMFESTS

**May 4** - Antietam Radio Association, Hagerstown, MD. Matt Redding, N3XJO, 103 Patrick's Ct., Smithsburg, MD 21783, 301-416-0086. E-mail: n3xjo@fred.net

**May 25** - Maryland F. M. Association, West Friendship, MD. Craig Rockenbauch, WA3TID, 429 Severnside Dr., Severna Park, MD 21146, 410-987-6042

**June 1** - Ole Virginia Hams, Manassas, VA  
For information, contact: Mary Lu Blasdell, KB4EFP  
9727 Loudoun Ave., Manassas, VA 20109  
703-369-2877; E-mail: anyezhka@aol.com

**June 8** - Charlotte ARC, Charlotte, NC. Daryl Sampson, KM4GO, 704-522-4971 (Ext. 3330) E-mail: w4cq@callsign.net

## TEST SESSIONS IN VIRGINIA

**05/08/97** (ARRL) Pat Phelps KE4URC 757-421-9598 Chesapeake

**05/08/97** (ARRL) David Roberts 540-773-2446, Galax

**05/14/97** (W5YI) Charles D Lowery 804-572-1581, South Boston

**05/17/97** (W5YI) Tony Amato, 804-717-2436, Richmond

**05/18/97** (ARRL) Terrance V Vlug, 540-890-6782, Roanoke

**05/24/97** (W5YI) Mark W Mullins, 540-926-8193, Clintwood

**05/31/97** (W5YI) Harry Kepley N4THN, 804-642-3517, Gloucester

**06/04/97** (ARRL) Terrance V Vlug, 540-890-6782, Roanoke

*Remember, call ahead for test sessions. Not all sessions accept walk-ins.*

## Boatanchor

(from p. 6) vacuum tube circuits work and tube pinout diagrams. Give your radio a good visual and electrical inspection insided and out, replace anything that is missing, and check doubtful-looking components such as blackened resistors or leaking capacitors. Before you plug in your boatanchor for the first time, remember: old radios can kill! Their power supplies generate potentially lethal voltages, and they were built in the days when safety standards were shocking. Avoid transformerless AC/DC radios (or use an isolation transformer) because the full line voltage can appear on the chassis and anything connected to it (e.g., knob shafts). For AC-only radios, I always replace the original 2-conductor line cords with modern 3-conductor cords to ensure that the chassis is always grounded, and for fire safety I install a fuse in the hot lead (black) under the chassis if there was none.

Some IF transformer adjustment screws have B+ on them, so always align them with a fully insulated screwdriver. If at all possible, use a Variac to bring up the line voltage slowly the first time, to allow electrolytic capacitors to reform and minimize the smoke should anything fail. Most electrical problems with boatanchors are caused by dead tubes, bad or leaky electrolytic and paper capacitors, and resistors that have drifted out of tolerance. They can usually be diagnosed with a multimeter (I use one with a capacitance scale) and the instruction manual. Antique Electronic Supply has most tubes and other parts that you might need but can't find at Radio Shack or in the junkboxes of your packrat ham friends.

Finally, carry your restored boatanchor up to the shack (if you can), and put it on the air!

MAY 1997						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>☺ Congratulations to the May Birthday Hams!</i>				1 ARES Net 8:00 pm	2	3 6-m net 50.200 8am ☺ KD4QBB
4	5 INFO-NET 7:00 pm 220 Net 8:00 pm Youth Net 8:00 pm	6 Board and Technical Session 7:30 pm	7 Lunch - Old Country Buffet 11-1	8 ARES Net 8:00 pm	9	10 6-m net 50.200 8am
11	12 INFO-NET 7:00 pm 220 Net 8:00 pm Youth Net 8:00 pm	13 AARC Meeting 7:30pm	14 Lunch - Old Country Buffet 11-1	15 ARES Net 8:00 pm	16 ☺ KE4AQD	17 6-m net 50.200 8am
18	19 INFO-NET 7:00 pm 220 Net 8:00 pm Youth Net 8:00 pm	20	21 Lunch - Old Country Buffet 11-1	22 ARES Net 8:00 pm	23 ☺ KQ4MZ ☺ WA0TPN ☺ KF4NOQ	24 6-m net 50.200 8am ☺ KD4QBC
25 ☺ AD4AD	26 INFO-NET 7:00 pm 220 Net 8:00 pm Youth Net 8:00 pm	27 ☺ W2CK	28 Lunch - Old Country Buffet 11-1	29 ARES Net 8:00 pm	30	31 6-m net 50.200 8am BKR3

# New Ham Partner

This begins a series of articles for new hams by Gerry Crenshaw, WD4BIS, from Garland, Texas. Gerry writes: *This column was started for the Garland Amateur Radio Club newsletter when the influx of new NO-Code technicians started to ask questions on the local repeater that many of the older hams had struggled with 20 years ago. These articles deal with both technical and non-technical subjects and address many questions raised by the newer membership.* Additional articles from Gerry will be coming your way as space in the AARC Bulletin permits.

## After your License Arrives, now what?

Gerry Crenshaw, WD4BIS, Garland, Texas

Well, that great day finally came and your license is in your hand. You have a call sign and the desire, now what equipment do you spend your hard earned money on.

You have been to one or the other stores in the area that sell ham gear or looked at the catalogs and seen all the snazzy offerings from Kenwood, Yaesu and Icom. Where do you start and how much to spend??

First take a deep breath and sit down. Make a list of the things you want in your first radio. If your interest is 2 meter, your first thought is a handi-talkie, maybe one of new dual banders. OK, let's be honest. If you can get on the local repeater with a basic radio, do you really need all the bells and whistles found on the newer HT's. Is your local repeater carrier or tone access? Do you need autopatch capability? What's the other band for crossband repeating? Are you good with Techno whizbang things like the VCR? Pick that first radio with these things in mind.

One of the things you look over when you are buying that first radio is that you tend to stay in the same area, talk to the same bunch of people on the repeaters, and stay on the same frequencies most of the time. Get a radio that will do the job for now. It's going to take awhile to get over "microphone fright" until you have found a few people from the local repeater crowd that you want to talk to or have common interests with. Don't forget to look at the used equipment that's available before buying that new dual bander. When looking at used equipment ask to see it demonstrated or put on the air. No one will mind and we usually enjoy showing off our proficiency.

Many of the newer radios have to be programmed from the keypad with multi-keystroke commands, having the instruction book open and three hands. If you are not good with these things, seek advice on the model you are considering buying. Some of them are easier to use and program than others. If you have a friend who is a ham, seek his advice before buying that first radio, and don't be afraid to ask for help (for most of us this is easier said than done).

Other things to look for in a HT are items like: will it take an external 12 volt DC voltage? Can you run it from a car battery? How much are the NiCad battery packs, and does the radio have a battery pack that uses Alkaline batteries like "AA's"? If you're on a trip and forget the charger, you can buy the double A cells anywhere.

Other than the radio remember that a good antenna is your best investment. You have to be able to hear the other station before you can talk to them. Although the rubber duck looks impressive, it's really not much of an antenna. Remember that you can trade antenna gain for power. For every 3 dB of antenna gain you double your effective power. So, a 2 watt radio with an external antenna that has 3 dB of gain is about equivalent to a 6 Watt transmitted signal. If the antenna has 6 dB of gain, that's 2 watts from the radio doubled to 6 watts, and 6 watts doubled again to 12 watts.

Remember to monitor the frequency first prior to calling a "CQ". In most cases, the statement over the air that "This is (CALL SIGN) monitoring" is enough to get several responses. Our radio spectrum is a shared resource. Use it wisely lest it be taken away.

Regardless of your buying decision, most of us soon find that the radio is a welcome and trusted companion whether it's used just rag-chewing on the way to work or school and are grateful the first time it brings help in a crisis. Have fun and enjoy your privilege. You earned it.

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**DEADLINE for the June issue of AARC  
Bulletin is May 23!**

Send your articles to Paul (WB9HGZ) or Eileen (WD9EIA) at: 4300 Sylvan Lane, Charlottesville, 22911 (U.S. mail), or at wd9eia.zippo.com (email). To reach us through the club bulletin board, send your messages to Mike, KE4UKX, our resident packet operator, and he'll pass them along.



# CLUB BUSINESS

## AARC Board Meeting Date: April 1, 1997

No Official action took place. However, over the radio on a later date, several AARC Board members approved the purchase of a tone board (value between \$50 and \$70) to replace the malfunctioning one on the 146.760 repeater.

Mention was made up the coming need for a Chair/Leader for the June Field Day.

A source of connector plugs has been found. The price will be \$1.15/plug pair (male & female). Watch for announcement.

Some discussion related to the upcoming Dogwood Festival activities was conducted.

A preliminary report on the anticipated higher cost related to publication of the monthly newsletter and the annual directory. Some suggestions were made as to how accommodations could be made. Joe (KD4RWX) will gather and better summarize the data so that a more informed discussion can take place.

## ARC Regular Meeting Minutes

Date: April 15, 1997

The April 8th Regular Meeting was postponed due to the regular meeting place being used by NRAO personnel. The meeting was resched-uled for April 15th.

Special thanks go to Rob (W3DX) for donating a MFJ 8621 Data Radio for packet. It was won by Mella (W2HTJ).

The May minutes were approved.

Two new members were approved:

- Todd Black (KF4MFL)
- Dennis Terribile (WR4I)

A motion was made and approved to purchase a quantity of Club adopted Molex connectors for resale to Club members. Dave (KE4YLR) will handle the transaction.

The proposed modifications to the Bylaws (previously reported in the monthly newsletter) were approved. The changes were related to when committee assignments would be made. They will now be made by the incoming Board each January. Also, written

committee reports are to be submitted at the annual meeting.

The President (Bill, KC4TQF) called for volunteers for Field Day Chair. No one volunteered.

Ken (WA4GHY) announced that there was a need for instructors for the Fall session of the Novice/ Technician course.

Bow (K4QKH) presented a program on his home-brewed antennas. It was well received.

Bow (K4QKH) assumed the role of gathering names for individuals who might like to make the trip to the NRAO facility at Greenbank, West Virginia. The date for that trip is May 10th. If you are interested, please contact Bow - SOON!

*Submitted by Joseph D. Fritz, KD4RWX, Secretary of the AARC*

## ALBEMARLE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB INC MARCH TREASURER'S REPORT

### INCOME

Donations		
Repeater	15.00	
Surplus Equipment	<u>55.00</u>	
Total Donations		70.00
Dues		825.00
Directory Sales		<u>2.00</u>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>897.00</b>

### EXPENSES

Equipment	177.77	
Refreshment	40.00	
Entertainment (Winter Dinner)	31.00	
Postage & Publishing	399.95	
Telephone	72.92	
Recreation (Park Shelter #1)	50.00	
Textbook Sales Purchase	-317.00	
Sale	<u>302.00</u>	
Total expense from sale:		15.00
Pager Service		<u>225.60</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>-1011.64</b>

<b>TOTAL INCOME/ EXPENSE</b>	<b>-114.64</b>
<b>BALANCE FORWARD</b>	<b><u>4067.82</u></b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>3953.18</b>

Club fund	\$1278.70
Repeater Fund	2523.38
Packet Fund	190.00

Treasurer: Sharon Duvall, KO4OC

**1997 ALBEMARLE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB**

**OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS**

President	Bill Bearden	KC4TQF
Vice-President	Joe Giovanelli	W2PVY
Treasurer	Sharon Duvall	KO4OC
Secretary	Joe Fritz	KD4RWX
Directors:	Rick Berman	KO4WQ
	Dave Damon	KE4YLR
	Hein Hvatum	N4FWA
	Bob Pattison	K4DU
	Jessie Preston	KE4OID

**COMMITTEE LEADERS**

	<u>Committee Chairman</u>	<u>Director</u>
Activities	Hein Hvatum N4FWA	Dave Damon KE4YLR
Education	Ken Johnson WA4GHY	Bill Bearden KC4TQF
Fundraising	E.J. Bearden KD4IGX	Sharon Duvall KO4OC
Publications	Joe Fritz KD4RWX	Joe Fritz KD4RWX
Public Relations	Janie Narducci KF4NOQ	Joe Giovanelli W2PVY
		Rick Berman KO4WQ
Technical	Mike Duvall AC4ZQ	Hein Hvatum N4FWA
Youth	Noah Hillstrom, KF4JHB	Jessie Preston KE4OID

**OTHER POSITIONS**

ARRL Liaison	Bob Pattison	K4DU
ARES/RACES Coordinator	Dave Damon	KE4YLR
ARRL VE Coordinator	John Gray	W6JZ
Trustee (WA4TFZ)	Morris Jones	NM4R
Newsletter Editors	Paul Dean	WB9HGZ
	Eileen Dean	WD9EIA

**CLUB MEETINGS**

Regular Meeting: Second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM  
 Board & Technical Meetings: First Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM

Meetings are held at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO) building, Edgemont Road (UVA area)

**WA4TFZ REPEATERS**

<u>INPUT/OUTPUT</u>	<u>TONE ACCESS</u>
146.160/146.760	88.5 (if enabled, DTMF 325* will produce temporary Tone off and 326* will turn Tone back on)
Door alarm OFF.....	DTMF 100*
Emergency Autopatch to access 911 Center.....	DTMF 911*
Emergency Autopatch to access VA State Police.....	DTMF 918*
Autopatch exit.....	DTMF 0*
Time.....	DTMF 10*
Tone status of repeater.....	DTMF 700*
146.325/146.925	88.5 Hz (if enabled)
223.160/224.760	no tone
449.250/444.250	151.4 Hz (if enabled)
145.030 MACHO node	
145.030 CHO WA4TFZ Packet Bulletin Board	

**NETS**

**Northern Piedmont Emergency Net**

146.76 repeater Thursday 8:00 p.m.  
 Plus Swap/Trade & Technical Sessions  
 Net Control: Morris, NM4R

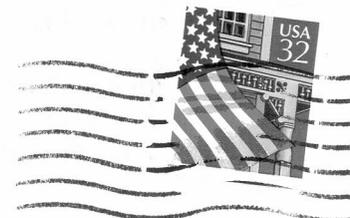
**Information Net**

146.76 repeater  
 Monday 7:00 p.m.  
 Newslines program & general news  
 Net Control: Harry, W2HD

**Youth Net**

146.76 repeater  
 Monday 8:00 p.m.  
 Ragchew net for hams under 21  
 Net Control: Totating

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



**AARC BULLETIN MAY 1997**

TO CORRECT LABEL INFORMATION CALL PHONE 973-1738: Your License expires... Oct 31, 2004 D Y  
 KA4JJD G 1997 CURRENT MEMBER

**Michael F. Rein**  
 109 Sturbridge Rd.  
 Charlottesville VA 22901