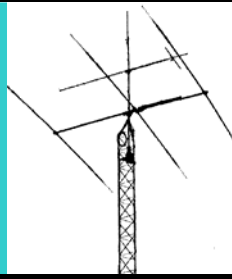


# The AARC Beacon



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

Volume 2005, No. 12



December 2005

## Inside this Issue

1	Meeting Notice
1	Dues are Due!!!
1	AARC Meetings Return to NRAO!
2	The President's Letter
2	Veep Peeps
3	Club Business
4	Repeater Etiquette
4	DX Contesting With a Modest and Average Station
5	Contest Highlights - Upcoming
7	AARC Public Service Schedule
7	Area Hamfests
7	FCC Database Updates
7	VE Session Schedule - 2004
7	For Sale Items
7	AARC Club Officers
7	Contest Calendars

## Meeting Notice

The next regular AARC meeting will be held on **Tuesday, December 13 at 7:30 PM** at the **NRAO Building on the UVA campus**. The program will feature **John Avalone from the Charlottesville Astronomical Society describe his radio astronomy experiments to us**. See you there!!

## Dues are Due!!!

**It is club dues time again!!** Marty, AG4DN, has developed a new short renewal form. The new form can be obtained from the web site or members can request one from Marty via Email or at any meeting. The form is also reproduced elsewhere in this issue of The Beacon. **There are no changes in membership fees.**

## AARC Meetings Return to NRAO!

*Bob, K4DU*

**Starting this month the AARC will return to the auditorium of the National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO) for our monthly meetings.** Club meetings were held there from 1989 until a few years ago when NRAO asked us to vacate because of pending renovations. Before NRAO the club met in the basement of the Charlottesville Court House. It was a small room that also served as a fallout shelter, home for the 146.925 repeater, an HF station and Civil Defense storage. We had to leave there when they decided to renovate. Do you see an emerging theme?

I have fond memories of meetings at NRAO. Over the years we had many very informative and stimulating presentations. I want to thank all of the hams at NRAO past and present who played a part in the club's return. Specifically I want to thank Jim AD4YM, Hein N4FWA, Bill W4TJ and Ken K2AOE. I

also want to thank Pete W4PRT for arranging the space in the Astronomy building where we have been meeting for these past few years. Pete, I hope you will convey the club's heartfelt thanks to the Astronomy Department for their hospitality.

There are some parking spaces topside near the door at NRAO. **Do not park in the circle in front of the door. There are many parking spaces behind the building. Use the front door to enter the building. It will be unlocked. The door down by the lower parking lot will remain locked.**

## The President's Letter

Jay, K4AZV

Hello and Happy Holiday season to all. This will be a quick letter as it is difficult to accomplish a whole heck of a lot around the holidays. Radio activity on VHF/UHF sideband has been minimal as we are out of tropo-ducting season now and moving towards the winter E-skip season. Check 6 meters two weeks before and two weeks after Christmas for E-skip openings. A strong E-skip opening on 6 meters may yield contacts on 2 meters and above. HF was fairly fruitful as the change in season brings changes in radio propagation to different areas of the world. Stations worked in November include: Galapagos Island, Australia, South Africa, Argentina, Sweden, Bosnia, El Salvador, Mali and Cape Verde.

I am currently working with Hein (N4FWA) in my hopes of becoming better educated and therefore being able to educate our club members about the emergency response hierarchy and procedures. This will put us in line to participate in more simulated emergency training exercises than in the past. Tim (KG4HOT) and I have also made contact with Nelson County authorities and are hoping to have a repeater site available in the near future in order to create a bridge between Lynchburg and Charlottesville as well as to provide communications in some very dead areas in Nelson and southern Albemarle. More on that later.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at our next club meeting at our new (old) location. Happy Holidays to all and Best Wishes for a healthy and fruitful New Year.

73, Jay K4AZV

## Veep Peeps

John, KI4DJT

Dear Friends -- December and the end of my first year as VP of the club. I really didn't know what I was getting into so I tried to be useful and learn as I was going along. I want to

thank again all who gave presentations and all who helped so much at Field Day making it a real ball. I also would like to thank Bob W4RQ for always getting this newsletter out; I have no idea but can just imagine the time and work he puts into it. I'd like to thank Joe W2PVY and Harry W2HD for always having the ARRL newslines on Monday nights and Dave KB1DOE for taking the Northern Piedmont Emergency Net. I especially want to thank Dave, K4DND for being the emergency coordinator for so many years. Dave did a lot of work for a long time and I think he finally got burned out. It's going to be hard to get all the ARES and RACES stuff together which is probably something very important AARC should be pursuing to be useful in a local or national emergency! I would like to get something going with it for 2006.

One thing we got going was judging at the Piedmont Regional Science Fair and giving an award from AARC. We gave plaques and a NOW YOUR TALKING to the junior and senior winners. Thanks to all who helped make this a real success and hopefully an annual tradition.

Something else I tried to do was have something good to eat at Field Day and the AARC picnic. We made fresh burgers, kosher hot dogs, brats and Italian sausage and I didn't get even a peep of a complaint and everyone seemed to enjoy the chow. I have probably wound up being the AARC grill guy as a lifelong appointment, sort of like the Supreme Court justice; I guess I'll do it till I go silent key hopefully as least 300 years or so.

For me this year I upgraded to General and have been conducting lots of simple experiments with crystal receivers and have been melting lots of solder and put up and experimented with lots of antennas. The one thing the crystal receiver experiments really drive home is how much of the radio is really antenna and ground. I'm amazed that a little wire for an antenna and a coil and a detector of a razor blade and pencil lead or simple diode along with the magical place called ground receives. It's like magic only much better because it's real and can be understood; I'm loving it and really having fun.

**For the December meeting we'll be having John Avalone from the Charlottesville Astronomical Society describe his radio astronomy experiments.** I'm going to ask if we can **have his presentation first** so he will not have to stay for our business meeting.

**Finally, we'll be having the club dinner at the Pantops Ponderosa again.** Some have complained about the place but I feel it's about getting together and they have a nice room for us. If you don't want to eat then have a beverage with the friends and eat elsewhere. Thank you all so much and ...

73 de KI4DJT, John

## Club Business

### AARC Board Minutes November 8, 2005

Members Present: PRES Jay, K4AZV; VEEP John, KI4DJT; SECY Marty, AG4DN; TREAS Bob, K4DU; Stephanie, K4BMM; Pete, W4PRT; Dennis, K4THE. Members Absent: Mike, W4XN; Bill, AD6JV.

Jay opened the meeting at 6:45 pm. A quorum was present.

Bob informed the Board that there was \$4274.70 in the club general fund account.

The Board was informed that Ron K4RKA was working on the "coordination" of repeaters.

Jay reported to the board on the progress being made between the amateurs of Nelson County interested in emergency communications and the County EC Ray Uterro. Jay reviewed the problem of the County not being in the same ARES region as Charlottesville/Albemarle and the logic for a move by Nelson County. Tim KG4HOT participated, as did Harry W2HD in a general discussion covering repeater utilization, locations and linkages. Jay noted that he has been in contact with the Albemarle County sheriff regarding the use of Bucks Elbow. Bob addressed the breakdown in liaison between the club and The Charlottesville/Albemarle EC. He commented that a new EC was recently appointed and he would initiate contact to reestablish communication. Harry noted that the newly organized Media Action Committee as well as liaison activities are part of a broader awareness campaign that the club is undertaking. Also mentioned were the classes offered by ARRL on the Internet for training in emergency radio operations for amateurs. Dennis brought to the attention of the Board that in some areas, clubs designated members as liaison to local emergency services such as Fire, Rescue, and Red Cross etc. This arrangement would be beneficial at the present time to support other current initiatives noted. Further action and follow up will be pursued.

Pete was recognized for his long time service to the club.

John addressed the January club dinner. He will be looking for an appropriate location.

With no further business the Board Meeting closed at 7:33 PM.

*Submitted by Marty Mait AG4DN, Secy.*

### Regular Meeting November 8, 2005

Jay opened the meeting at 7:50 PM. As is the custom, there followed the introduction of members and guests.

Jay called for the approval of the October 2005 Minutes as they appeared in the November Beacon. Marty noted the need for a correction, page 3, paragraph 2, left column, line 8, change "76" to "440." Jay called for approval of the minutes as changed, seconded and with no further discussion the minutes were approved.

Marty presented Chris van Gorp, PA7RHM, from the Netherlands for approval as a club member. A motion was made, seconded and approved with no comment. He was welcomed to the club by a round of applause.

Marty reported 74 club members.

Tom W4RAE reported that he is working with Bill as Bill assumes responsibility for the Education Committee and training.

Bob reported the General Fund account at \$4274.70.

Tim KG4HOT reported on Tech Committee activities. He had not as yet purchased the antenna for the 220 repeater. Funding has already been approved. A general discussion followed on repeater use, location and linkages. (See Board minutes 8 November.)

Dennis requested club members E-mail their home location coordinates to him. He is compiling a location map of the membership.

No further business came before the General Membership.

The presentation for the evening was "Test Equipment Used in Radio Repairs by the Seeing Impaired." Joe W2PVY made the presentation and demonstrated various pieces of equipment he uses for this work.

Joe noted that prior to retirement he earned his livelihood in this manner. The use of the senses a blind person has available such as smell, taste, touch, hearing are a very critical and are highly developed to compensate for sight loss. He noted that computerization has greatly assisted the sightless. Currently there is test equipment that has speech, memory, can perform calculations, maintain activity calendars, and has the ability to read communications. These are just a few of the functions available through computerization of test equipment and PC's. The presentation was enlightening as well as interesting.

Jay, on behalf of the membership, thanked Joe for his presentation.

With no further business Jay called for a motion to close the meeting, made, second and passed with no comment at 8:55 PM.

*Submitted by Marty Mait AG4DN, Secy.*

## Repeater Etiquette

Bob Pattison, K4DU

This article is not written as a response to an existing situation. Rather it is offered as general advice for situations that have arisen elsewhere and may arise in the future.



We are all one big happy family on the AARC repeaters and it should always stay that way. Folks who visit here often comment how friendly the hams are here and how it is almost always possible to find help when it is needed on the club's machines.

Every once and awhile someone may take umbrage at the way something is handled or feel the procedure used was not correct.

We are all students AND we are

all teachers. We must remember that conversations over the air are not private and our conduct will be observed or heard not just by our friends but also by others who may be thinking about becoming amateur radio operators. At all times we must put our best feet forward.

In matters of form it is appropriate at times to offer advice to operators designed to help them gain knowledge about proper operating procedures. We encourage operators to do this gently. There is no need to discourage or embarrass the newbie. There are times when even seasoned operators need to tighten things up. Sometimes it is more appropriate to offer guidance privately and in person.

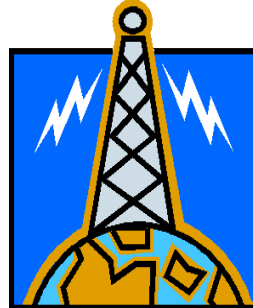
If at some point in time you become bothered by something, don't let it fester and don't talk to others about it. Go to the person that you have the issue with and tell them about your concern. Discuss openly it and with honor. Try earnestly to work through the issue. Sometimes just getting it off of your chest will make the issue pass. You may discover in the conversation new information that you did not have. If someone comes to you with a concern, listen to with care. Consider their opinion and discuss the matter with respect. If the two of you cannot work through the question to a satisfactory solution, seek assistance from a third party that you both respect.

Amateur radio is the greatest hobby in the world. Enjoy it and make certain that your use of it adds to the enjoyment of others.

## DX Contesting With a Modest and Average Station

Bob, W4RQ

**You don't have to have a super-duper antenna farm to do well in a DX Contest!!!**



Over the Thanksgiving weekend, through the auspices, courtesy and hospitality of Roger, W4EI, I had the pleasure of participating as a guest op in the CQ Worldwide DX CW Contest. As this is a very popular contest, we were sure the ionosphere would be well exercised over the weekend. Even though we

are approaching the solar cycle minimum, I believe I did rather well in the contest. It was lots of fun and I worked many interesting DX stations.

The station setup consisted of an Icom IC-756ProII transceiver into an Ameritron AL-1500 amp, capable of putting out a full KW on all bands. Several antennas were used: two Carolina Windoms perpendicular to each other at anywhere from 20 to 30 feet high, a GAP vertical and a small 10 and 15 meter HexBeam at about 35 feet. Obviously, this not the super contest station we usually here about --- stacked huge yagis on 200 foot towers --- and one such tower per band! It is just a fairly average and modest station!!

I was able to work most everything I heard. The notable exception was Saturday morning when a station in Thailand was calling CQ on 40 meters. There were a bunch of us calling him --- even the "big guns" --- but he wasn't coming back to anyone. Sounds like a classic case of one-way propagation. I was usually able to "clean sweep" a band in fairly short order, working everything there was to work on that band at a given point in time.

The other interesting point to note was the ability and ease with which I was able to crack a pileup. On quite a few occasions, I would jump into a huge monster pileup on a DX station, thinking I'll never get through this mountain of RF. However, I was usually able to crack the pileup and work the station with only a few calls --- and in most cases, get through on the first call!!! Many times when I do that, I scratch my head and think ... "I should not have been able to do that...". And I was regularly beating out many of the "big gun" stations, right and left!! That is always a great feeling, knowing that your little pipsqueak station has prevailed over the big boys. Now, how is it possible to do this? **A vertical or wire antenna generally has a lower radiation take-off angle than the yagi array at 200 feet, and hence a better skip characteristic. This can often give you a distinct advantage over a yagi in working the DX**

**station.** From the Charlottesville area, this ability to prevail in a pileup was particularly noticeable in working stations in Africa, the Indian Ocean and the Caribbean. In addition to the usual garden-variety stations in Europe and South America, I was able to work many stations in Africa and the Indian Ocean, such as Reunion Island, Mayotte, Tunisia, Swaziland, Egypt and many more.

My goal in this contest is to work at least 1,000 stations and attain a score of at least one million points. I did not quite make that goal this year. Given the current state of the solar cycle, I did not seriously expect to. Over the last three years, however, I was able to reach that goal. This year I made 767 QSO's and a score of 864,270 points. The breakdown goes like this:

	QSOs	QSO points	Zones	Countries	Multipliers
160m:	1	1	1		
80m:	82	224	12	47	
40m:	135	364	22	69	
20m:	353	1000	30	98	
15m:	168	474	21	75	
10m:	28	72	11	18	
Totals:	767	2134	97	308	405

Obviously, 20 meters was the best band, and 10 meters was about as dead as a doornail most of the time.

So, what is the point of all this? Simply that you can have lots of fun in an HF contest, work many stations with ease --- some of them exotic DX --- and earn a respectable score --- using nothing more than an average station. I obviously won't wind up as top dog in the contest, but who cares? I had fun and worked a lot of interesting stuff. The main point is to have fun doing it!! If we can do well now when HF conditions are generally yucky, think how much fun it will be when the bands are hopping at and near the solar cycle maximum --- and 100 meters is open for long periods of time!! Not to mention that it helps me to sharpen and improve my operating skills. So, if you've wanted to try your hand at some contesting, don't shy away from a major contest just because you don't have the biggest and best station and antennas. Jump on in and have a ball. Hope to CU in the pileups in the next contest!!

## Contest Highlights - Upcoming

Bob, W4RQ

### ARRL-Sponsored Contests

#### Dec 10-11 ARRL 10-Meter Contest

Complete info, rules and log forms for these events can be found online at the [ARRL Contest Calendar 2004](#) webpage.

### Other Contests of Interest

#### Dec 17-18 International Naval Contest

The [SM3CER Contest Service - Contest Calendars](#) has info and rules for these contests and just about every contest that exists.

73, Bob W4RQ

*Best Wishes  
for a Happy  
Holiday  
Season!!*



# Albemarle Amateur Radio Club

POST OFFICE BOX 6833  
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA 22906  
E-MAIL: [MEMBERSHIP@WA4TFZ.ORG](mailto:MEMBERSHIP@WA4TFZ.ORG)  
ONLINE: [HTTP://WWW.WA4TFZ.ORG](http://WWW.WA4TFZ.ORG)

## RENEWAL FORM 2006

MEMBERSHIP TYPE:  LIFE NO FEE     YOUTH NO FEE  
 FULL \$20         FAMILY \$25

PLEASE PRINT

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ CALL SIGN \_\_\_\_\_

NO CHANGES FROM 2005   
CHANGES FOR 2006         NOTE BELOW:

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

AARC Public Service Schedule	
None reported	

Area Hamfests	
None reported	

FCC Database Updates	
New Calls	
None Reported	
Upgrades	
None Reported	
Vanity Calls	
None Reported	

VE Session Schedule - 2004	
Date Location  (ARRL VEC)	For other exam sessions in Virginia outside the AARC area, check the <a href="#">ARRL Exam Session Search</a> web page.

For Sale Items	
Dual Band VHF Transceiver and Antennas	ICOM, Model IC-T7H transceiver, 2 meter and 440, with external mike and 12 VDC adapter. Also included are 2 window mounted 2 meter antennas with 20 ft. of cable for each. Will sell all for \$150.00 or best offer. Contact Ed, KG4ZDO at 434-242-8426.
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	<a href="mailto:k4azv@turing.org">k4azv@turing.org</a> 434-263-5795
Vice President	John Turchi	KI4DJT	<a href="mailto:m51John@juno.com">m51John@juno.com</a> 540-543-2037
Secretary	Marty Mait	AG4DN	<a href="mailto:ag4dn@earthlink.net">ag4dn@earthlink.net</a> 434-589-2825
Treasurer	Bob Pattison	K4DU	<a href="mailto:rep4@aol.com">rep4@aol.com</a> 434-960-3344
Director	Pete Thorsen	W4PRT	<a href="mailto:w4prt@arrl.net">w4prt@arrl.net</a> 434-982-4690
Director	Mike DiGirolamo	W4XN	<a href="mailto:w4xn@arrl.net">w4xn@arrl.net</a> 434 977-6377
Director	Stephanie Rostow	K4BMM	434-263-5795
Director	Bill Phillips	AD6JV	<a href="mailto:billp1048@earthlink.net">billp1048@earthlink.net</a> 434 872-0686
Director	Dennis Mennerich	K4THE	<a href="mailto:k4the@arrl.net">k4the@arrl.net</a> 434 973-5407

Contest Calendars	
<a href="#">ARRL Contest Calendar 2004</a>	ARRL sponsored contests
<a href="#">SM3CER Contest Service - Calendar 2004</a>	Contests all over the world! Also has links to online rules for most contests
<a href="#">Contesting Online</a>	Just about everything contests!

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

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



**THE AARC BEACON**  
**Vol 2005 No. 12**  
**December 2005**



© Copyright Albemarle Amateur Radio Club 2005. Content in this newsletter may be used if proper credit is given to the AARC Beacon.

**ISSUE DEADLINE - 23<sup>rd</sup> of each month**

**Contact Information**  
 Daniel R. (Bob) Dorsey, Jr. W4RQ  
 PO Box 530  
 Ruckersville, VA 22968-0530  
 (434) 990-2659  
[W4RQ@yahoo.com](mailto:W4RQ@yahoo.com)

**Next Club Meeting : December 13 - 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
December 13	Regular Club Meeting
January ??	Annual Winter Dinner Meeting – Ponderosa Pantops
February 13	Regular Club Meeting
March 13	Regular Club Meeting
April 13	Regular Club Meeting
May 13	Regular Club Meeting
June 13	Regular Club Meeting

**AARC - PUBLIC SERVICE SCHEDULE**

DATE	EVENT
------	-------

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](http://www.people.virginia.edu/~ejd4e/aarc/images/AARC_Application.pdf)