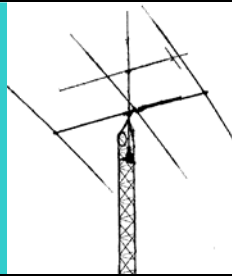


The AARC Beacon



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

Volume 2006, No. 8



August 2006

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Meeting Notice

The next regular AARC meeting will be held on **Tuesday, August 8 at 5:30 PM** at **McIntire Park, Shelter 1**. This is our **annual AARC Club Picnic and tailgate hamfest**. See you there!!

**C U at Picnic !!
August 8
McIntire Park -
Shelter 1**

The President's Letter

Jay, K4AZV

Hello and welcome to another fine edition of the Beacon. It has been rather quiet on the HF bands and 6 meters continued its magic until about the third week in July. Anyway, here's what we worked on HF: Japan, Antigua, Montenegro (which is now a separate entity), American Samoa and numerous islands. On 6 meters we worked: Britain, Costa Rica, Canary Islands along with several west coast stations due to nice double hops.

The club's 440.250 machine, after proving itself reliable at Sugarloaf Mountain, has been moved to Martha Jefferson Hospital. The idea here is to provide the best possible communications to Charlottesville and the surrounding counties. Please make it your responsibility to program this frequency into your dual band radio and learn the coverage area.

Dave KB1DOE and Bill AD6JV have committed to bringing more ARES related readiness exercises and information talks during our Thursday night emergency net. This will no doubt bring us all closer to being on the same page in the event of a call out.

Our club's website reconstruction is still underway with much time and effort being put in by Josh KG4NGV and Cayman KG4OVD. Quite a bit of consideration is being given regarding the ease of updating the website on a regular basis.

The club's 220 repeater is still under the doctor's care. No word on its chances of survival as of yet. Grounding is a good thing and yet so is lightning insurance.....

Hope to see all of you at the picnic!!

73, Jay K4AZV

Veep Peeps

John, KI4DJT

Dear friends: Almost August and time for the annual picnic at McIntire Park on August 8. I think there is a lot of equipment that will be offered on the swap tables so be sure to bring a few bucks. I will be asking folks to bring a side dish or dessert. As usual the club will provide the burgers, hot dogs and sausages and all the usual stuff that goes with it. I'll be cooking and hope to be very busy with lots of hams and families attending! I'm not sure if we should shoot for 5 or 6 o'clock, any feedback would be appreciated. I'm kind of thinking it would be easier for folks who work if we waited until 6 but I could be wrong. Let me know what you think.

Ed Robb works for the sheriff department in Albemarle and wants to address the club on their needs for communication for emergency and search and rescue. I'm trying to get him to give his presentation at the September meeting. Personally, I'm very interested in what he has to say and am eager to see how we can be of further service to the community.

One other thing I want to mention is this fall when the kids go back to school I would like to see if there is any interest from earth science teachers who would like to have a class with some of us attending and giving a presentation and let a few kids get on the air. I've had a lot of success and fun with my telescope and solar filter with the kids and teachers in Madison High School, so I would like to try a radio thing too. Again, my friends, let me know what you think! Take care and ...

73 de KI4DJT

Club Business

AARC Board Minutes July 11, 2006

Board Members Present: Jay K4AZV, Bob K4DU, Steph K4BMM, Bill AD6JV, Tim KG4HOT, John N4SYH, John KI4DJT.

Jay called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM. He asked about interest in listing our club in the World Radio Journal. The fee is \$65.00 per year which includes 8 free subscriptions for club members. After a brief discussion it was decided that this was a nominal amount of money for advertising and that it would be worthwhile to try it for a year. An ad will be written and submitted along with the yearly fee.

The club's 220 machine has experienced a problem and has been temporarily taken out of service. Bill, AD6JV checked it out and decided that it would probably be best to send it out for repairs.

There was a discussion regarding whether or not we should have a different controller installed in the repeater while it is in the shop. This would allow this repeater to be linked with other repeaters. Tim KG4HOT stated that he has a CAT 200B controller but didn't know if it would be compatible with our machine. Bill AD6JV agreed to call to see if it could be used.

Bill AD6JV stated that CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) folks are interested in an amateur radio course to help them get their licenses. During a recent emergency they experienced a problem with not having an effective means of communicating. That raised a question regarding who would be willing to teach a technician class? Jay talked about the idea of a one day course and perhaps utilizing the Gordon West approach and that we will need to investigate to see how that course is set up. Bob K4DU spoke about a 3 pronged approach, namely: setting up a course, administering the exam and then "Elmering the new licensees." Gordon WW4GW stated that next exam is scheduled for September 16.

Jay asked a question about buying a shed for the Hart's Mountain site. This was a brief discussion about buying one versus building one. The shed would be used for housing our repeater. Tim Miller said that he would need to get in touch with our host at that site to make sure that it would be alright for us to put a shed at that location. Jay stated that there is a plan for testing our 440 machine at Martha Jefferson Hospital. Harry Dannals said that recently a band pass filter was added to the 925 machine at the Martha Jefferson site but that the coverage of that repeater still seems less than optimal. There has been some talk about the future of the 925 machine at Martha Jefferson. Some suggestions included moving the 925 to the Heard's Mountain site, putting the 444.250 machine at Martha Jefferson and linking to it a simplex 2 meter frequency.

Several members thought having our 440 machine in a central location would be a good idea.

John KI4DJT talked about the upcoming club picnic in August. He plans to take care of the food for the picnic but desserts and salads are welcomed if anyone wants to bring something.

Tim KG4HOT spoke about the need for having a central location for storing the club's equipment perhaps a shed with a combination lock on it. He is willing to house the goods at his place but he isn't centrally located. One suggestion was to ask Albemarle County for a place where the club could keep its equipment.

The board meeting was adjourned at 7:25 PM.

Submitted by Stephanie Rostow, K4BMM, Acting Sec'y in absence of Marty Mait, AG4DN, SEC'Y

Regular Meeting July 11, 2006

Jay called the meeting to order at 7:42 PM. The meeting started with introductions of those members present. Jay asked for approval of last month's minutes which were approved.

He also told those present that Mr. and Mrs. Flavin had generously donated radio related gear to the club. The club will have a nice set of Kenwood headphones and a nifty Bencher key at its next radio outing. The rest of the items will be made available to club members.

Field Day went quite well in spite of the rain causing us to have to shut down operations for a few hours. It appears we will still have a good score and everyone who participated had a good time. It was also a wonderful demonstration of how everyone is able to pitch in and get things done. Jay commended everyone who participated for their great teamwork.

An ad will be placed in World Radio magazine for our club noting its meeting times, place, etc. in order to give the club more exposure.

Ron K4RKA is planning an Alaskan cruise for next June and there are several hams going. Jay talked about the fact that it would be fun to have an expedition for our club members and that an effort will be made to do one this year.

It was suggested that Fan Mountain might be a good place to hold our Field Day next year. This led into a lively debate about the relevance of the general public at Field Day..... some voiced opinions in support of continuing to encourage public participation. Others voiced opinions in support of a Field Day where little or no emphasis is placed on public participation. A Field Day committee was established consisting of Tim KG4HOT, Chair, Gordon, WW4GW and Josh, KG4NGV.

Gordon WW4GW noted that he is now the official coordinator for the VE team. Mike W4XN has turned over all of the paperwork to Gordon and has received all of his personal items back. **Our club's next testing session will be held on September 16th.**

Bill AD6JV spoke about the procedures for activating the net in Albemarle County. He has developed an AARC-ARES Albemarle County Emergency Activation Phone Tree which he shared with those present. He asked everyone to review the information to make sure it is correct. He also distributed the AARC-ARES Northern Piedmont Emergency Net Emergency Activation Frequencies. Everyone was asked to review the plan. He stated that at this point in time he has no way of knowing who, in our club, are members of ARES and asked those present at the meeting to fill out the form he supplied to provide him with this information.

Last but not least Tim KG4HOT gave a brief talk on 6 meters. He mentioned that there are serious DX'ers on 6 meters and just because you don't hear DX stations doesn't mean they are not there. The main emphasis was on respecting other operators and utilizing the band appropriately. There will be more and more operators on 6 meters so good operating will be very important. He also mentioned Field Day and stated that we need to look at what works and doesn't work and strive to make it better. It is also vital that everybody contributes and participates. Jay echoed that and ended by saying that this is everyone's club and that there are a lot of resources.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 PM.

Submitted by Stephanie Rostow, K4BMM, Acting Sec'y in absence of Marty Mait, AG4DN, SEC'Y

Contest Highlights - Upcoming

Bob, W4RQ

ARRL-Sponsored Contests

Aug 5-6 ARRL UHF Contest

Aug 19-20 ARRL 10 GHZ & Up Contest

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

Aug 12-13 Worked All Europe Contest - CW

Aug 26-27 Hawaii QSO Party

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

AARC Field Day '06 in Pictures

Photos courtesy of Kevin, K4BDR

Here is a representative sample of photos from our Field Day effort this year.



Getting ready to put antennas up...



Jay, K4AZV and Stan, K2SSB chasing down a good QSO



The main operating tent and the Quad antenna



Getting ready for dinner by our Chef/VP, John, KI4DJT



The main operating position with Kenwood TS-2000 transceiver and laptop with FD logging software

Solar Update de K7RA

From ARRL Propagation Bulletin ARLP030

There wasn't much change this week from last, with average daily sunspot numbers down slightly, less than five points to 14.6. This doesn't result in high enough MUF values to see much propagation on the highest HF bands, such as 10, 12 and 15 meters. But even with a low MUF, there is still occasional long distance propagation on 10 and 6 meters.

Larry Godek, W00GH of Gilbert, Arizona says he monitors 6 and 10 meter FM all day. Larry scans many channels on both bands with multiple receivers. On 29.62 MHz, he often hears W1OJ in Boston and another repeater in Florida, although not so much recently. Lately he hears quite a bit of W5DFW in Dallas on 29.66 MHz. On Tuesday, July 25 Larry was hearing W5DFW, alternating with a California station.

On the same day he heard a repeater on 53.09 MHz, but didn't catch the ID. He suspects it was in Oklahoma or Texas. He also heard stations near Sacramento, California.

For parsing those mystery signals, Larry wishes he had a database of six and ten meter FM repeaters that he could sort by frequency. Ideally, it would cover all of North America, so he wouldn't need to look through separate state lists.

Joe Alvin, KB1JVW of White River, Vermont asks for some comments on how current sunspot numbers affect MUF, or Maximum Usable Frequency. Generally MUF is lower with lower sunspot numbers, but there is quite a bit of variation depending on where the two ends of the communication path are located. For instance, from Joe's location, the MUF recently (calculating from average sunspot numbers using a propagation prediction program) on a path to Germany would vary from 13.3 MHz at 0300Z to a peak above 17 MHz from 1500-1530Z and 1830-2030Z, and up to 17.4 MHz around 0000Z. But with the same sunspot number on the same date, the path from Dallas to Costa Rica would show an MUF that peaks above 24 MHz from 2330-0230Z and dips below the 20 meter band around 0900-0930Z. A few years from now, if the sunspot number rises to around 100, that path from Dallas to Costa Rica would peak above 28 MHz from 1730-2200Z and around 0200Z.

Over the next week, don't expect any huge increase in sunspot numbers. We are near the bottom of the solar cycle, and in the summer season, which is not as interesting as fall or spring for working long distances. But if the predictions are correct, a little over a year from now the sunspot count should be heading higher than it is now, and the MUF will rise with it.

Dean Wilmoth, KC0SRM of Sturgeon, Missouri asks about trends over the next weeks and months. Sunspot numbers will still be low, and will head lower, but of course seasonal effects will change. For a path from his area to Central America, for instance, 20 meters will prove more reliable than 17 meters or higher. But move that out two months, and 20 meters will be closing earlier, and 17 meters will be more useful during the day than it is now. Also, with longer nights and less seasonal noise from thunderstorms both near and far, 80 and 40 meters will improve in the fall compared to summer.

Currently, early Friday, July 28 there is a strong solar wind stream hitting Earth, and the planetary K index is at six. This should decline over the next couple of days, but then come back again on Tuesday. Lower geomagnetic indices generally mean better HF propagation, or at least not as poor as it is commonly when the K index is high. The predicted planetary A index for Friday through Tuesday, July 28 to August 1 is 15, 5, 5, 12 and 20.

If you would like to make a comment or have a tip for our readers, email the author at, k7ra@arrl.net.

August 2006

For more information concerning radio propagation, see the ARRL Technical Information Service at <http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/propagation.html>. For a detailed explanation of the numbers used in this bulletin, see <http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/k9la-prop.html>. An archive of past propagation bulletins is at <http://www.arrl.org/w1aw/prop/>.

Sunspot numbers for July 20 through 26 were 14, 12, 0, 21, 19, 16 and 20 with a mean of 14.6. 10.7 cm flux was 72.2, 72.6, 73.6, 76.5, 77, 75.5, and 74.7, with a mean of 74.6. Estimated planetary A indices were 3, 2, 4, 4, 4, 6 and 6 with a mean of 4.1. Estimated mid-latitude A indices were 2, 1, 3, 4, 7, 5 and 5, with a mean of 3.9.

AARC Club Correspondence

Tnx to Steph, K4BMM and Jay, K4AZV

July 19, 2006

Dear Bob (W4NPX) and Sharon Blodinger;

Thank you both so much for the corporate work you have done and continue to do for the Albemarle Amateur Radio Club. You are two of the true "behind the scenes" people instrumental in keeping our club afloat. Your efforts are very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

L. Jay Rostow, K4AZV

President AARC

July 19, 2006

Dear John (KB2C) and Peggy (KB2B) Flavin;

Thank you for your generous donation to the Albemarle Amateur Radio Club. This donation will benefit members of the club as well as the entire Virginia radio community. Good luck in your future endeavors.

Sincerely,

L. Jay Rostow, K4AZV

President AARC

Albemarle County Parks and Recreation

Attention: Bob Crickenberger

For the past two years the Albemarle Amateur Radio Club has utilized Walnut Creek Park for our annual Field Day. This weekend exercise is held for the purpose of sharpening the emergency preparedness skills of amateur radio operators so that we can better assist with emergency communications in the face of natural disasters. These skills are also used to assist with communications during public service events

which we were able to do while we were conducting our exercise this year at the park. We provided communications and picked up bicyclists during the Charlottesville triathlon at Walnut Creek Park.

We very much appreciate your willingness to allow us to hold our Field Day at the park and would like to add, your staff was very friendly and accommodating to us. Thank you so much.

L. Jay Rostow, K4AZV

Pres. Albemarle Amateur Radio Club

Swain's Island Is the Newest DXCC Entity

From the ARRL Letter, July 28, 2006

A recent addition to the DXCC rules has led to the designation of Swain's Island (KH8) as the 337th DXCC entity. A brief inaugural Dxpedition operating under the call sign KH8SI was to get under way soon.

In June, the ARRL DXCC Desk announced the addition of a Paragraph (c) under Section II, DX List Criteria, 1. Political Entities of the DXCC Rules: "The Entity contains a permanent population, is administered by a local government and is located at least 800 km from its parent. To satisfy the 'permanent population' and 'administered by a local government' criteria of this subsection, an Entity must be listed on either (a) the US Department of State's list of 'Dependencies and Areas of Special Sovereignty' as having a local 'Administrative Center,' or (b) the United Nations' list of 'Non-Self-Governing Territories.'"

The new language effectively reclassified American Samoa as a political entity for DXCC purposes. Subsequently, the DX Advisory Committee and the Awards Committee concurred with a request, accompanied by substantiating evidence, and added Swain's Island to the DXCC List as the first "separation entity" from American Samoa.

"The distance between American Samoa and Swain's Island has been determined to be in excess of 350 km as required by DXCC Rules Section II, Paragraph 2, Section b)," the DXCC Desk said. Contacts made with Swain's Island on or after 0001 UTC on July 22, 2006, will count for DXCC credit.

For more information, including the DXCC Reference Number for Swain's Island, contact the DXCC Desk at URL [<dxcc@arrl.org>](mailto:dxcc@arrl.org).

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 - 2006	
Date Location (ARRL VEC)	For other exam sessions in Virginia outside the AARC area, check the ARRL Exam Session Search web page.

For Sale Items	
None reported	

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.wa4tfz.org/index.htm>



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ISSUE DEADLINE - 23rd of each month

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

Next Club Meeting : August 8 - 5:30 PM McIntire Park

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 NRAO building on Edgemont 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
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
June 11-12	MS 150 Bike Tour

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.wa4tfz.org/images/AARCrenewalform2006.pdf>