



THE AARC BEACON

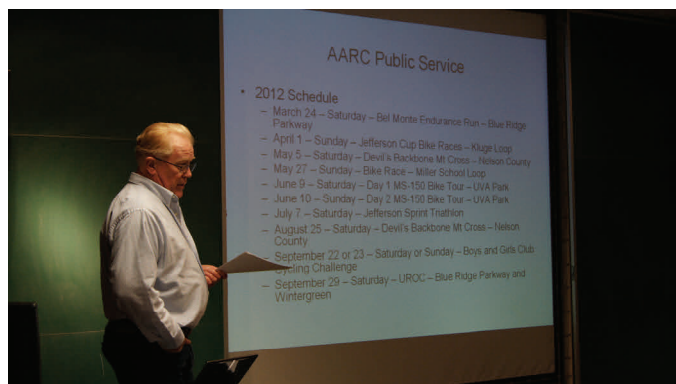
A monthly publication of the Albemarle Amateur Radio Club

VOLUME 2012, No 4

APRIL 2012

Remembered as 2011 Dayton Hamvention "Ham Club of the Year"

2012 PUBLIC SERVICE EVENTS



Dave, K4DND, Director of AARC Special Events gave a special presentation about the upcoming 2012 schedule for Special Events to the general membership at the AARC March 2012 meeting. Dave invited special guests Terry Knizner, Ruth Stornetta, and Marty Robby.

Terry Knizner presented the 2012 MS Society Special Events



Ruth Stornetta, KF4AGV or the Jefferson Cup Bike Races.



2012 BELMONTE ENDURANCE RUN



Picture taken by Marty, W4MBW, at the "Kennedy Ridge Aid Station" during the BelMonte Endurance Run as part of the 2012 Special Events participation by the Albemarle Amateur Radio Club. Several racing bike members received bike maintenance and refreshments to help speed them on their way.



Be sure and don't miss the April 2012 AARC Meeting on Tuesday, April 10, 2012 to be held at 7:30 in the auditorium of the National Radio Astronomy Observatory, 520 Edge-mont Road, Charlottesville, VA.

Joe Flamini, W4BXG, will be moderating a discussion of Grounding Systems...an important subject too often misunderstood.

Marty Robby presented for the Extreme Mountain Runs



2012 VIRGINIA PIEDMONT REGIONAL SCIENCE FAIR

On Monday, March 12th, six members of the Albemarle Amateur Radio Club served as judges at the 2012 Virginia Piedmont Regional Science Fair. Students from thirty-one (31) schools participated. The AARC team was headed up by Bill Phillips, AD6JV and the other team members were Will Seay, KJ4XZ; Jim Wilson, K4BAV; Jim Crosby, K4JEC; Jim Owen, K4CGY; and Joe Flamini, W4BXG.

The two AARC winners are: Rachel Thomas and Diane Shoup.



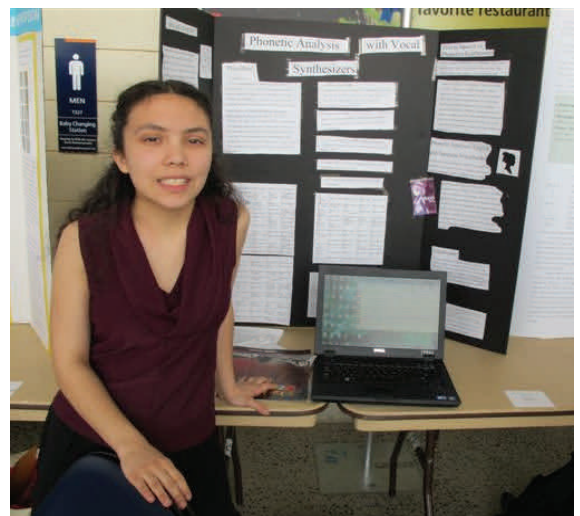
First time AARC judges Will Sea KJ4XZ and Joe Flamini W4BXG study the contest rules.



Rachel Thomas of Barboursville, VA who is a senior at Albemarle High School. The title of Rachel's exhibit was "Phonetic Analysis with Voice Synthesizers."



Bill Phillips, AD6JV and Jim Crosby, K4JEC strategize before the judging begins.



Diane Shoup of Stafford, VA who is a seventh grader at Rodney Thomas Middle School. The title of Dian's exhibit was "Crystal Radio Antenna Length":

AARC MARCH 2012 BOARD & GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Call to order – President Jim (K4JEC) called the board meeting to order at 7 pm.

The following members were present: K4JEC, WD4AYS, N4UVA, K4PMC, K4DND, A4DH, KA4JJD, AD6JV and K4CGY.

Secretary's Report – Pat (K4PMC) asked for approval of the board meeting minutes from the March Board Meeting that appeared in the February Issue of *The Beacon*. Minutes were approved as published. She advised she had one new application to be voted on this evening at the General Membership Meeting.

Treasurer's Report – Don (N4UVA) reviewed the club's accounts showing income and expenses.

Feb 2	Bal	5,730.86
	Debits	183.13
	Credits	1,013.83
Feb 29	Balance	6,561.56

Vice President's Report – Carter (WD4AYS) I currently have about five programs under construction.

Technical Committee – Jim (K4CGY)— Nothing for the board.

Fund Raising Committee – Michael (KA4JJD) suggested we consider offering a free raffle ticket to any member wearing their name badge to a meeting citing that the cost to the club would be miniscule. Discussion was held for the report of the Public Relations Committee on name badges. Michael described the raffle prizes for the evening and offered tickets for sale.

Education Committee – Bill (AD6JV)— Nothing for the board.

Public Relations Committee – Jim (K4BAV) – Harry (W2HD) reported on behalf of Public Relations Committee in Jim's absence. Harry stated that wearing a name/call badge at meetings was very important to members get-

ting to know each other. He stated he would like to see members provided with a name/call badge with very big letters for identification and displayed several examples. Michael (KA4JJD) asked if he was suggesting making badges for everyone or only the new members. Harry responded with "only the new members." After much discussion over cost/benefit a motion was made to provide badges for new members and that they be encouraged to wear them at all club functions. The motion was made by Pat (K4PMC) and seconded by Carter (WD4AYS). During a discussion of the motion, it was pointed out that someone would have to take responsibility for making these badges and Harry stated that Jim (K4BAV) said he would do it. In Jim's absence to confirm that, a motion was made to table further discussion until the April meeting by Don (N4UVA) and seconded. The motion carried.

Public Service Committee – Dave (K4DND)— Nothing for the board.

Estate Committee – Dayton (AA4DH) – No report

President's Report – Jim (K4JEC) – We tabled a discussion of the idea of offering a free first-year club membership to those who successfully obtain their entry level license from our tech classes. My feeling on this is the Bylaws currently do not authorize the club to give away memberships or waiver dues beyond youth members up to their 21st birthday. Without Bylaw authority, such a move would require an amendment to the Bylaws. If that is the club's desire, the first step would be for the board to appoint a Bylaws Committee to formulate a recommendation to the General Membership and present a proposed Bylaw Amendment to follow the process as set forth in the Bylaws and by precedence. As always, I will be guided by the will of the board. Anyone want to speak to this issue? A discussion followed in which Dayton (AA4DH) agreed that such a move would require a Bylaw amendment. It was generally agreed that such a move would not be undertaken at this time.

New Business – None

Old Business – None

Board Meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Call to Order -- President Jim (K4JEC) called General Membership Meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. He recognized Dave Damon to present this evening's program.

The Program – Dave (K4DND) started off with some comments about the importance of public service events to the club and to Amateur Radio in general, and then introduced his guests. He asked Terry to speak for the MS Society, Ruth for the Jefferson Cup Bike Race, and Marty spoke for the Extreme Mountain Runs. He recognized Michael to list the raffle prizes for the evening and encouraged members to get their tickets.

Call Back To Order -- President Jim (K4JEC) called General Membership Meeting to order at 8:30 pm. and invited everyone to introduce themselves.

Secretary's Report – Pat (K4PMC) asked that the minutes of the February meeting as published in *The Beacon* be approved. They were approved as published. She advised that we have 138 members on the roster with one new application for approval this evening. She then offered Christopher Allen's (W9CCA) application for vote. Christopher filed his application electronically on our website. He lives in Locust Dale, Virginia which is up in Madison County on the eastern side of Route 29. He was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Treasurer's Report – Don (N4UVA)

Feb 2	Bal	5,730.86
	Debits	183.13
	Credits	1,013.83
Feb 29	Balance	6,561.5

AARC MARCH 2012 MEETING CONT:

Technical Committee – Jim (K4CGY)

– Everything is about the same as they were at our last meeting. We are planning trips to our repeater sites to make adjustment and get them all functioning up to par.

Fund Raising Committee – Michael (KA4JJD) announced the raffle prizes once again and offered tickets.

Education Committee – Bill (AD6JV)

Reported on the Regional Science Fair last Monday and announced the winners of the AARC Awards. Junior Award Winner: Diana Shoup, Rodney Thompson Middle School, Stafford, VA. Senior Award Winner: Rachel Thomas, Albemarle High School, Project: Phonetic Analysis with Vocal Synthesizers

Bill asked Jim to report on the Tech Class and the Skywarn Class. Jim stated we have 22 students registered for the Tech Class and that Bill will be the instructor for next Monday. He suggested that members are invited to drop by to check on the class. He stated that the Skywarn Class set for April 19 at the County Office Building South has 21 registered at this time.

Public Relations Committee – Jim (K4BAV) was absent.

Public Service Committee – Dave (K4DND) passed around a clipboard for members to sign up for the upcoming public service events.

Estate Committee – Dayton (AA4DH) – No activity to report.

Vice President's Report – Carter (WD4AYS) outlined five potential programs he was working on and reminded members that he would like to hear from anyone who has a program in mind or could suggest one.

President's Report – Jim (K4JEC) – Mark Gorlinski could not be with us this evening and I would like to offer a report on his behalf from this past License Exam Session. We have ten members of the club show up to assist and eight candidates – five techs, two

generals and one extra. They all passed.

Next, I would like to offer Marty Wangberg an opportunity to offer comments on the newsletter. Marty pointed out that he would like to receive more stories from the members and suggested the topic of “How I Became A Ham.” He also urged members to get a picture of themselves in their ham shack and submit it to him as well.

Let's turn the discussion to our Third Annual Cruise-In set for April 28. My immediate questions regarding this year's event are: Will we have a raffle and what should the prize be? Will we have food and or drinks available? Will we have a Go To Station? Bill Phillips has suggested this and offered to set one up for us. He confirmed that he would set up such a station. Will we have a talk-in station? Harry Dannals volunteered to handle this from home by monitoring the club repeaters and offering directions. Who will volunteer to be judges or volunteer to recruit judges? Over the past couple of years I have heard discussions of how the Judging Sheet could be improved. Does anyone want to address this issue or make suggestions? Dave (K4DND) pointed out that he felt we should have a planning session specially to work on the Cruise-In. Jim said he would work on setting one up.

Old Business – a recommendation was made at our last meeting that we consider offering free first-year Club membership to Tech Class participants who successfully obtain their entry level license. It was decided to table his discussion for the next meeting. The board discussed this during their meeting and all aspects of the idea were considered. The board resolved that it would require a change in the Bylaws and that would not be undertaken at this time.

New Business – Skip Thacker (WD4LT) stated that next year will be the 50th Year for the Club and that we should begin planning for a great celebration. Alan Swinger (K9MBQ) stated that he thought it would be a good idea to have

our banquet in January to celebrate the event. It was pointed out that the banquet was moved to December and the Annual Meeting was set for January each year in the last revision of the Bylaws. Crosby stated that it would be appropriate to appoint a committee to work on our 50th Year Celebrations during 2013 and that he would appoint such a committee.

Adjournment – The Meeting was adjourned at 9:04 pm.

Prior to adjournment, Dave (K4DND) reminded everyone that as guest of the NRAO we must leave the room as we found it with the chairs addressed up to the tables and everything we have taken into the room must be removed.



Alan, K9MBQ, is pictured in his “shack”.

Every month the AARC Editor would like to feature one member of the club that has submitted his photo for publication. Alan, as we all greatly appreciate, writes the AARC monthly DX report.

Alan is an avid and skilled DX'r and provides us with valuable advice and information about current and upcoming DX-peditions and upcoming events.

When asked about the “interface device” he is holding Alan proudly announced that it was a USN Blue Angles coffee cup from his son's time as the Blue Angel Team's #3 and #4 pilot in 2008 and 2009.

DX NOTES - FOR APRIL 2012

Two main subjects related to DX this month – CW and Split Operations . . .

First – I heard a new Ham in the club mention on the repeater his interest in learning and operating on CW. Good for him and there may be others, and if you want to work the hard-to-get DX, being able to operate CW is essential!!

So, if you want to learn or improve without concerns about being embarrassed on-air, how to proceed? Several sources of “HOW TO” and code practice tapes are:

AMECO Corp (amecocorp.com) and

Gordon West, WB6NOA.....
(www.gordonwestradioschool.com)

Both have any and all you need. Also, W1AW runs on-air code practice sessions 5 days a week – see QST or

ARRL.ORG for specifics. Once you are reasonably comfortable, get on the air and try it . . . you might even do some AARC buddy QSOs.

Second – For SPLIT ops, you need to listen on the DX freq and also “split” your VFOs so the other is set to transmit where the DX is listening (e.g. up 2, up 5-10, etc); then listen to the pileup to find the station that is being worked . . . so you will know where to transmit!! If you want to know more, listen to any dxpedition so you get the hang of how they do it. Also happy to discuss further (awswinger@earthlink.net) .

So here is some upcoming DX of possible interest.

9M0L – Spratley Island: This is a BIG one; April 10-24, 13 ops on 160-6M, all modes with 4 stations. See web site –

<http://9m0l.legendchew.com/>

T6MO – Afghanistan: Eric (K9GY) is active and a deployed Army soldier. Best times are 0700-0900Z on 17, 12, & 10M; sometimes early 0130-0300Z on 20 & 40M. QSL to K9GY.

VP5 – Turks & Caicos: Dave, W5CW, is there thru 11 April; ops on all bands CW and SSB. QSL to home call.

XV2RZ – Vietnam: Retu, OH4MDY, will be there until 16 Apr. Ops on 80-6M on CW & SSB, w/ a Digital focus. See QRZ.com for details.

There are many others so watch QST's DX column and the ARRL DX Bulletins.

Good luck and see you in the pileups.

73, Alan K9MBQ

PRESIDENTS LETTER

What a month! It seems that club activities increase with each succeeding month. This month has witnessed the institution of the largest Tech Class in recent club history. The total enrollment at this time stands at 25. The class will conclude with the last Monday in April. So far, Bill Phillips and I have taught and we are looking for others who would like to contribute some teaching time. Please contact Bill and get on the schedule.

Looking ahead, the next big club activity will be the Skywarn Class on April 19 at the County Office Building South. If it has been several years since you have taken the Skywarn Class, this would be a great refresher opportunity. That registration list currently stands at 26.

The next project heading our way is the Cruise-In on April 28. Planning for the Third Annual Cruise-In is underway and it looks like it might be more of a club event than much beyond. Skyrocketing gas prices are taking their toll

on out-of-the-area participation this year and it has been decided that we will concentrate on making this more of a club event with any guests who do show up made welcome. We are planning a day in the park with a “bring your own picnic fare – a tailgating party if you like.” There will be no competition or fees collected and everyone who shows up will receive a souvenir QSL Card. The club will provide drinks and the shelter will be available with picnic tables and restrooms. Remember, it is a rain or shine event with no cancellation possible. We are adding a “Swap Meet” so bring any amateur radio equipment you have to sell or swap. Swap meet negotiations will be strictly person-to-person with no club fees are involvement. Be sure to bring your mobile or portable amateur radios to show and tell, discuss or gain help with programming and/or operating. We will have a HF GO TO Amateur Station setup for your use compliments of Bill Phillips (AD6JV) and you can bring your own for field testing

especially non-grid power sources. If you have programming software, please bring it and offer assistance to those who do not have such. Power will be available for laptops, radios, etc. I will have programming software for the Wouxun on my laptop that can be copied or used to download to a radio. Come one, come all – children, spouse, special friends are invited as well -- especially prospective amateur candidates.

The special request is that you send an email or make a phone call to register your participation with the number in your party. This is important because we must have a pretty firm head count upon which to base our club support and purchases. Call 434-823-2277 or email: jecrosby@comcast.net. The sooner, the better but the deadline for your reservation is April 20 – one week ahead.

This is exciting and I look forward to seeing you there!!!

PRESIDENTS LETTER, CONT.

Membership is running at an all time high with 141 on the roster for 2012. We can expect another great year for Public Service Activities and thankfully, our newest members are all expressing an interest in this area of amateur radio. For those interested in ARES/RACES work, I strongly suggest you consider obtaining and reading the *ARRL Emergency Communications Handbook*, First Edition, Sixth Printing

with a Copyright date of 2010. I have two copies that I would be glad to share with any member who would like to borrow one for reading. We are also coming to a time when ARES/RACES operators should consider becoming familiar with the Incident Command System by taking some of the free online courses offered by FEMA. More information is available on the Web at <http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/IS/ICSResource/index.htm>.

Three of their courses at a minimum should be of particular interest to amateurs: ICS-100, ICS-200 & ICS-700. Take a look and try the ICS-100 as an introduction.

What a privilege it is to serve the best Amateur Radio Club in the world and it is all because of you – the members!

Jim, K4JEC

YOUR HAM RADIO STATION—FINAL PART 3, HARRY W2HD

In earlier parts of this series relating to Your Ham Radio Station we mentioned my priority listing of Operator, Receiver, Transmitter, Antenna and Location. The Antenna subject was left for last because it may very well be the single subject which requires the most difficult decisions for you to make. Band coverage, the place where your equipment will be housed and the location in which you live are important considerations, but they are usually easily resolved in your planning efforts. However an antenna system while also very important has limitations and they are frequently related with that dream world all of us have versus the reality in which we live and that's the key to the entire story.

Among the many questions which must be answered are the following. What bands are involved? What space is available and is there access available for the R-F cables and possible control wires? If the answer is positive and the location will be outside the house, the rest is easy. Put up the best antenna you can afford at a height and length that your property can accommodate. Why??? Well, simply because a good antenna is far better than increasing power or any other thing you may employ to have an effective Ham Radio station. A well-planned antenna system delivers dividends on both sides of the station... both receiving and transmitting. If the actual location won't

handle the dimensions you require, it is possible to bend down the ends of the wire or elements by reducing the span by approximately 10% hanging vertically or horizontally as long as the angle is a preferred 90 degrees. This change will hardly effect the radiation of the antenna because the antenna current approaches zero at those ends. I have used that scheme with attic antennas and the results have been quite good.

Now, of course, the description provided cites the more conventional set-up and those are radiating devices which will achieve almost every desire you might envision including towers and beams. BUT (and there's that word again) you may not be able to have the satisfaction of such an effective system. Does that mean you don't operate and enjoy the HF bands? Not by a long shot readers! It is possible to radiate a readable HF signal at distances far beyond your location using a little compromise here and there and lots of thought in between. You have undoubtedly heard about "stealth" antennas and reduced size antennas which can be put inside the house or possibly on a window sill, an attic, or even the room in which you spend your leisure time.

There are a number of these possibilities and they will not be covered in detail here because there are so many considerations in the planning and

installation of such antennas that entire articles and books have been written to cover the ideas in great detail. Let's just list a number of subjects for your consideration. Mobile whips with associated loading calls can also be installed in non-mobile style and provide the same results, and possibly better, when installed in an attic or room within your home. And they come in all flavors from the simple short whip to the "screwdriver" configuration which will cover a number of bands. A short loaded antenna can be installed on a window sill and these are available commercially.

Our own Marty, W4MBW, (the "Beacon" editor) has been developing an antenna he places in the magnetic loop category which has some interesting figures. It can easily become another consideration for limited space plans and deserves consideration for indoor installation.

By the way, don't forget the popular "flag pole" vertical. It is also available from suppliers and can cover several bands, Who would complain about a flag pole?

An antenna called a Buddipole is also available. I had one, but gave it to my son, W2GG, because he could use it much more readily than an installation here.

Additionally, while this part of the series is basically concerned with anten-

YOUR HAM RADIO STATION; CONT.

nas, a great deal of interest has been added by digital communications with amazing low power success. Several of the members of our club are using this mode and enjoying a successful communications experience. The club has received talks on the subject and further knowledge can be obtained first hand from those "in the know" today. Several recent conversations has proven to me that these folks are more than anxious to tell others about their success and success it has been.

To conclude this short series of articles on "Your Ham Radio Station," allow me to make the following statement: You can operate on HF in a wonderful world of communications with good results with a little special consideration and effort. To assist you in attaining that goal, we are all blessed to have a club which includes members with several unique talents and the desire to help others. Do not hesitate to call these folks and tap this great resource. 73... Harry W2HD

More BelMonte pictures



More BelMonte pictures



AARC Club Nets

Monday-Night Information Net:

The Information net is held every Monday night at 7:00 PM local time on the 146.760 repeater. Your regular net control, W2HD, brings you news from the ARRL Bulletin and W2PVY provides the Amateur Radio newslin in real audio format.

Northern-Piedmont Emergency Net:

The Northern-Piedmont Emergency Net meets every Thursday evening at 8:00 PM on the 146.76 repeater. The NPEN is a directed net with rotating net-control intended to assist local amateurs with building emergency operating capabilities.



THE BEACON MISSION

The official newsletter of the Albemarle Amateur Radio Club, Inc. will strive to communicate with, enlighten, and entertain the members of the club in strict compliance with the official word of the club as set forth in the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws as administered by the officers and directors who constitute the Board of Directors. The newsletter shall be published monthly on or before the 1st day of the month of issue. The deadline for submissions shall be the 25th of the month preceding the month of publication. The primary role of the publication shall be to promote upcoming activities, report past activities and accomplishments of the club and its members, carry the minutes of the preceding month's Board Meeting and General Membership Meeting, include an official club calendar of the month, as well as, become a recorded history of the club by the archival of all past issues as paper copies contained within a single notebook for each year of publication.

Hams Helping Hams

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AARC Club Repeaters

146.760 (-) 151.4 Hz Tone
146.925 (-) 151.4 Hz Tone
146.895 (-) 151.4 Hz Tone
224.760 (-) No Tone
444.000 (+) 151.4 Hz Tone
444.250 (+) 151.4 Hz Tone

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AARC Elected Leadership 2013