



The Beacon

A monthly newsletter of the Albemarle Amateur Radio Club serving Central Virginia
Celebrating our 53rd Year

March _____ 2016



At our February meeting, we had Gordon Miller NQ4K, president of the Sterling Park Amateur Radio Club, visiting Charlottesville to give us a presentation at NRAO on the upcoming Virginia QSO Party later in March.

The AARC Monthly Meeting will be held at the NRAO, 520 Edgemont Road, Charlottesville, at 7 p.m. on March 8.

President's Corner

By Ed Berkowitz N3US



Despite this year's being a leap year, February went by quickly. I haven't seen any actual attendance data, but I was impressed with the Richmond Frostfest in terms of the crowds and "goodies" available. Thanks to the fine work of K4DU and others on our Estate Committee, we had a particularly extensive selection of items for sale. Our sales dramatically fattened our rainy day funds. Thanks to K4DU and K8RVR, who organized and arose at about 0400 to set up the tables.

On April 9, 2016 the Culpepper Amateur Radio Association will once again host an ARRL-affiliated Amateur Radio Swapfest at Agricultural Enterprise, which is located on Route 29 in Culpeper. A \$5 donation per car entering the Swapfest is requested, so carpooling is a good deal! Tailgating will be FREE, and there will also be a limited number of inside swap tables available at no cost. The gates will open at 6 a.m. for early birds. This is probably the only hamfest that is less than an hour's drive for most of us!

Although it would require a significant effort, AARC should consider sponsoring a swapfest. I envision starting out with a tailgate swapfest during the early fall. Let me know if any of you would be interested in organizing such an event.

At the February 13 breakfast and coffee gathering at Panera Bread, we had 15 attendees. The more the merrier, so try to make it to our get-togethers on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month. Bob Pattison, K4DU, does an admirable job notifying us about these social gatherings, which are a great time to relax, ragchew, and swap ideas.

At the Board Retreat held on February 13, we discussed several issues of current interest to the Club:

KQ9P is the trustee of the UVA Amateur Radio Club, W4UVA, and has been very active in promoting their activities and developing interactions with the AARC. Any amateur with a UVA connection (e.g. student, faculty, former faculty, staff, etc) may become a member of W4UVA, and there are currently no membership dues. A special VE session, principally aimed at UVA engineering students, was unfortunately canceled because of weather but will be rejuvenated. Other collaborations are planned.

The AARC is also considering another Saturday Tour of the Green Bank Observatory, which has been very popular in the past.

The Education Committee, under the leadership of Rick W3KDR will survey interest in conducting a combination General and Extra License Class in the near-term and in assigning an Elmer matched to each new member.

We will undertake more regular postings to our website by Officers, Elected Directors, and Club appointments. We have begun posting and maintaining a list of Silent Keys from our area, with help from N3US, K4CGY, K4DU, W2PVY, K4RKA, K4JEC, and K4DND.

The AARC is thriving. Please contact the chairs of our various committees (and do remember our Field Day Committee, chaired by Larry K4JZQ) and volunteer to help out in upcoming projects.

Our VP's Report

By Larry Eicher K4JZQ



We had our second video taping of a presentation on February 9, thanks to the technical skill of KK4JP, John Porter. Gordon Miller NQ4K of the Sterling Park Amateur Radio Club and his wife were our guests for the evening. He gave us a fine presentation on the upcoming Virginia QSO party, scheduled for 19-20 March. The sponsors are hoping for more Virginia hams to participate this year so if you are interested, please check out the video on U Tube which gives all the rules on how to participate:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0V7Bmhtt0zGbXSy3N9kTzw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0cosn9bW7PU>

One item of interest you may have noticed John's video microphone system is very sensitive so you might notice the video picked up a lot of ambient noise during the presentation. As a courtesy to future speakers who we will also be taping, please feel free to excuse yourself if you need to take care of a bad cough or other problems. Our speaker and the viewers of our U tube video would certainly appreciate it.

For our March 8 meeting we have Col. Steve Sellers, Chief of the Albemarle County Police who will give us a talk on technology and policing and briefly talk about interoperability. Steve will be retiring from his post on June

1, 2016 after 32 years of law enforcement, both here in Albemarle County and elsewhere in Virginia. We are honored to have such an important person at one of our meetings. We hope you will be able to attend to thank Col. Sellers for his service to our community and the commonwealth.

Good news to announce: The 2016 list of speakers for our monthly AARC meetings is now complete. Thanks to those who have volunteered to give various presentations. We appreciate all who volunteered. I will be posting the full list on our Website but I quickly remind others that there are still openings for speaking engagements in 2017 so don't be shy. Just let me know and I'll happily pencil you in. In the meantime, the Field Day committee must now start work in earnest to get ready for our Field Day exercise June 25-26, 2016. We still need volunteers to handle the GOTA station Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning. Also if you have contacts with any youth groups, boy or Girl Scout troops who we could invite to the GOTA station please let me know.

The Question of Lifetime FCC Amateur Licenses

From ARRL Weekly Newsletter

The FCC seeks comments on petition to grant lifetime Amateur Radio Licenses.

The FCC is seeking comments on a *Petition for Rule Making (RM 11760)* that asks the FCC to grant lifetime Amateur Radio licenses. Mark F. Krotz N7MK, of Mesa, Arizona, filed his request with the FCC last November. He wants the FCC to revise § 97.25 of its rules to indicate that Amateur Radio licenses are granted for the holder's lifetime, instead of for the current 10-year term. Krotz noted that the General Radiotelephone Operator License (GROL) already is issued on a lifetime basis, and he maintained that not having to renew licenses would lighten the FCC's workload.

"It would be mutually beneficial for the FCC and Amateur Radio operators to update Part 97 to grant operator licenses for lifetime," Krotz said in his filing. "The FCC would benefit by reducing administrative costs."

In 2014, the FCC granted lifetime credit for examination elements 3 and 4, but applicants seeking relicensing under that provision still must pass examination element 2.

Individuals may [submit](#) comments via the FCC's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS).

Editor's Note: This is an important opportunity to have a say in this matter and each amateur who holds a current license should be heard.

Charlottesville Mini Maker Faire to Host Builders of All Kinds - Volunteers Needed!

By Rick Oliver W3KDR

Here's another excellent opportunity for the AARC to demonstrate amateur radio activities to the public, including young people. On March 26 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at

Monticello High School, AARC will join rocketry and drone enthusiasts, 3D printer and robotics fans, do-it-yourselfers, architects, woodworkers, sculptors, engineers, scientists, and designers at the Charlottesville Mini Maker Faire. It promises, and I quote, "Six hours of Creative Collusions and a Smorgasbord of all you can eat Brain Food!" <http://makerfairecville.com>

Previously held in the fall, the event is sponsored by Make Magazine, Albemarle County Public Schools, PVCC, Tandem Friends School, and others. The intent is to get folks involved in all kinds of building and making.

Take a look at this WHTJ video to get an idea of what it's like:

<http://video.ideastations.org/video/2365480750/> (starts at 13:30)

Last fall, at another maker fair at Barnes and Nobel, Michael KA4JJD demonstrated entry-level maker projects including an MFJ 8100 World Band Shortwave Receiver assembled from a kit and an Arduino single-board computer with an elementary program that flashed his call sign.

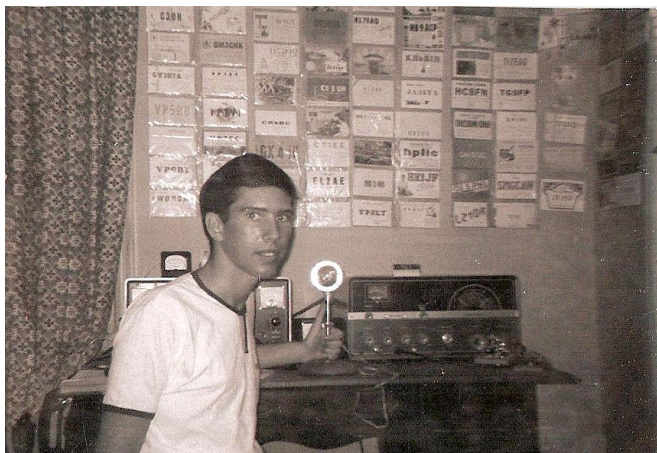
Jim K4BAV was dressed in a traditional, 19th century telegrapher outfit and attracted many young people (and one senior, former ham) to send code on his straight key. The sound of code drew people to the table.

Alan K9MBQ explained the marvels of DX and displayed lots of exotic QSL cards. He also discussed the advanced ham station and the fun of restoring old equipment. Ed N3US described the activities of AARC, including public service, Elmering, introductory and upgrade courses, and support of "making." He handed out lots of AARC and ARRL material.

Finally, Larry K4JZQ circulated in the crowd, talking to many people about all aspects of ham radio, and vigorously inviting people to stop by.

The March 26 Faire is likely to be even bigger and better. Please consider joining in to communicate the fun of ham radio to the community. Please contact Rick Oliver W3KDR (rickoliver45@hotmail.com) or Paul McKee AK4OH (ak4oh@arrrl.net) if you are interested in volunteering or have ideas about what we should exhibit. Thanks!

Stations from Yesteryear!



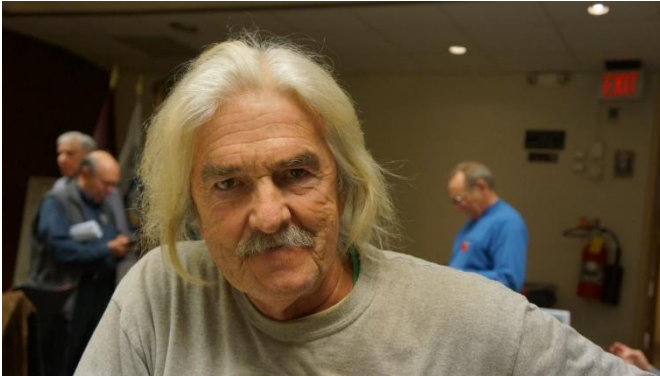
Ed N3US shared these pictures of his yesteryear stations with the call WB2HWH. Is another member willing to share a picture of a yesteryear station? Send them to k4jec@arrrl.net!



Marking the return of the AARC K9 Corps, Joe Flamini W4BXG and his workmate K9DOG were caught at the February meeting. (Jim Wilson Photo)



Vice President Larry Eicher K4JZQ, chats with AARC member Jerry Stenger K8OG, Virginia State Climatologist. The subject had to be climatology. (Jim Wilson Photo)



First time visitor to our February meeting, Bill Walters, hopes to soon earn his ham radio license. (Jim Wilson Photo)

Virginia QSO Party is 19 and 20 March for 2016

By Stan Hazen K2SSB

Gordon Miller of the Sterling Park Amateur Radio Club (SPARC), our speaker at the February meeting of the AARC, presented an extensive overview of the Virginia QSO Party that is held every year in March. This year's event will be held on March 19 and 20.

The goal, for radio amateurs' resident in Virginia, is to contact as many other amateur radio stations in as many counties and independent cities as possible. QSO points are earned as follows:

Phone: 1 point, CW and digital: 2 points, and contact with a mobile (any mode): 3 points

In previous years, contact with K4UVA, the SPARC station, was the only contact that merited extra points. Rules regarding "bonus stations" have been expanded this year. Operators of stations that were located in counties or independent cities that had very few operators the previous year were asked to apply to be considered as "bonus

stations". In addition, stations that "commemorate (d) a special event or activity" were similarly asked to apply. As of this writing, 13 such stations have been accepted, including my own K2SSB. (I operated the only participating City of Charlottesville station for the past three years. Jim Owen, K4CGY, has operated the only participating Albemarle County Station.)

Providers of readily available logging software programs include state QSO Party programs among their offerings. If a given program does not appear to include recent rules changes, SPARC volunteers will adjust submitted logs to take these into account. Cabrillo formatted submissions are, of course, preferred.

More information, including links to complete rules, can be found at the SPARC web site:

http://www.qsl.net/sterling/VA_QSO_Party/2016_VQP/2016_VQP_Main.html

In recent years, there has been only one participating station in Charlottesville City and one in Albemarle County. It's an easy contest, as available contest hours are limited to 10 on Saturday and 10 on Sunday.

How about adding this to your operating fun?



Happy Days Are Here Again! You can just hear the chorus at the recent celebration of Harry Dannals W2HD's 70 Years as a licensed amateur staged by the local chapter of the Quarter Century Wireless Association at the Double Tree in Charlottesville.



Fellowship reined as Harry's friends joined the celebration. (Photo by Vicky Eicher)



Vic Culver W4VIC, Kay Cragie N3KN, John Johnston W3BE hold the QCWA banner behind the honoree, Harry Dannals W2HD at the celebration of his 70 year as a licensed ham. (Jim Wilson Photo)

Happy 97th Birthday W4DGN

Please note the 97th birthday on March 1st of AARC member Phil Lawrence W4DGN. Members should mail Phil a birthday card at his home address: 700 Caro Court in Earlysville, VA 22936-9694, or to his email address at pdlawr@centurylink.net. He would love to hear from us because he doesn't get out much.

AARC Meeting Minutes

Minutes of AARC meeting Tuesday, February 9, 2016

President Ed Berkowitz N3US called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. Mike McPherson KQ9P announced that the AARC website is currently down but he is working with tech support at Dreamhost, the website company, to get everything back up and running. Some things are working but not the part that relates to membership renewals on line so he suggested folks simply renew directly by mail until the website is fully operational.

AJ Miller KE4AJM our fund raiser for AARC described the door prizes available via raffle at tonight's meeting to encourage the purchase of tickets. Final tally of the sale of tickets at the end of the evening was \$75 to benefit the club.

Rob Capon W3DX stopped by to drop off a number of excess property items that he was donating to the club for raffle purposes. Ed thanked Rob for his generosity.

Our speaker for the night was Gordon Miller NQ4K, president of the Sterling Club Amateur Radio Club who had come down from Northern

Virginia to speak about the upcoming Virginia QSO Party, scheduled for 19-20 March 2016. Gordon was given the opportunity to speak early in the meeting so he and his wife could then depart early enough to travel to Richmond the same evening to see their grandchildren.

Details of the Virginia QSO party and how to participate can be found on the Sterling Park Amateur Radio Club's website http://www.qsl.net/sterling/VA_QSO_Party/QSOParty.html

Gordon participated in his first Virginia QSO Party in 2002. Shortly thereafter Gordon became president of the Sterling Park Amateur Radio Club and began his involvement with the coordination of the VQP. Over the past 10 years the VQP has attracted increased number of hams in Virginia participating in this event. Gordon gave a fast paced power point presentation on the VQP event and encouraged all members of the AARC to increase the profile of Virginia throughout the Nation March 19-20.

John Porter KK4JP videotaped the presentation and members who attended the meeting, as well as those who were unable to be present can now view that video on U Tube. John's videotaping is a good record of our efforts to educate our members as well as show others via U Tube the activities that AARC is involved in.

At the conclusion of Gordon Miller's talk on the Virginia QSO Party and his departure, Ed N3US called for **approval of last meeting's Minutes** by the Secretary. In the absence of Patsy Crosby K4PMC, Larry Eicher K4JZQ drew the members' attention to the fact that the Minutes had been published in the February issue of the AARC monthly newsletter, *The Beacon*. It was moved and seconded that if there were no changes to these Minutes that they are accepted. The Minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

Ed N3US then called for the **Treasurer's report**. Due to illness, Don Eason N4UVA had departed at the conclusion of the speaker's presentation so Larry Eicher K4JZQ presented the following information to members:

Treasurer's Report as of January 2016:
 Beginning Balance \$8,327.32
 Debits: \$340.77
 Deposits: \$509.89
 Ending Balance: \$8,496.44

Bob Pattison K4DU, then gave a brief talk on the results of AARC sale efforts at the recent Frostfest convention in Richmond February 6. Much of this sale effort was to help sell items from Harry Dannels W2HD's collection of amateur gear that he no longer needed. Additional items were also sold from other used collections with the usual commission being donated to AARC. Approximately \$3,100 in total sales was made at the hamfest and club sales totaled \$1,000. Commissions to benefit the club totaled \$366.10.

Bob K4DU, thanked all members who donated or sold equipment and/or bought at the hamfest to benefit AARC, and especially pointed out the major efforts made by Mike Gilmore K9RVR and AJ Miller KE4AJM.

There was a general announcement of a Hamfest in Culpeper on April 9.

Bill Pond N0WP gave his technical report on our repeater system. All repeaters seem to be working well. 146.895 At Bucks Elbow is performing nicely with the dual mode Fusion repeater. It detects and switches to digital as expected with incoming digital signal (Yaesu C4FM), and switches to analog FM upon sensing an FM input signal. 146.925 continues to be operating well at Marshall Manor, much better than the former 146.760 at that site. We still have some work to do to make audio improvements, etc., but at this time, Monday night nets are running there without problem, and it gives good coverage over the Charlottesville area. 146.760 at its new site on Heard Mountain is doing nicely as well. The linking will begin to be re-instated fairly soon, with the goal of having it fully operational prior to the beginning of the public service event "season". The newest Fusion repeater is still on order. No updates from Yaesu as to its anticipated delivery date. Our intention is to initially at least; install it at Martha Jefferson Hospital on 444.250, replacing the current Yaesu Vertex machine. It will support Fusion digital or Analog FM, so is expected to continue to support the remote base capability that currently exists at that site. If circumstances permit, we might later on consider moving it to one of our other VHF repeater sites to get more usage than it's likely to see on 444.250.

Larry K4JZQ then gave a glimpse of the upcoming program scheduled for March. Our speaker will be Col. Steve Sellers, head of the

Albemarle Police Department who will be speaking to the club on the use of emergency communications and intra-governmental communication in times of emergency. Steve is also a ham operator KD4ZPF, who has recently announced his retirement from the police force effective June, 2016. We hope everyone will turn out to wish Steve well in his new life.

Larry also gave an update on Field Day preparations scheduled now for the 4th full weekend in June 2016. (June 25-26). He encouraged all members to put those dates on their calendars. AARC will again have its Field Day site at the Emergency Communication Center on Ivy Road, Charlottesville, just like last year. Our thanks to Tom Hanson and Chief Mike Gibson of the UVA police force who has allowed us to utilize this site again this year.

Marty Wangberg W4MBW and Michael Rein KA4JJD both did yeoman service for us last year as co-captains of the GOTA station during Field Day. This is an important position to demonstrate ham radio to the public and allow young folks without a ham license to experience the thrill of making a radio contact. Unfortunately both hams will not be able to be with us at this year's Field Day event. We need two volunteers for these positions so if you are interested in helping the Club, please let me know ASAP. Both Marty and Michael really enjoyed their experience last year; so will you.

Following a call for any old or new business with no response N3US President Berkowitz adjourned the formal part of the meeting at 8:10 p.m. and the people broke into individual groups for general social interaction.

Respectfully submitted

/s/ Larry Eicher K4JZQ acting secretary in lieu of Patsy Crosby K4PMC, Secretary

Editor's Note: In that an Amateur Radio Licensee's call is his name on the air, this publication's policy is to treat the call as a part of the amateur's name with no intervening punctuation as in Jim Crosby K4JEC, Jim K4JEC or Jim K4JEC Crosby. Most input has it both with and without punctuation. Let's strive for consistency and comply with the policy.



Photo by Jim Wilson, K4BAV

Elected Leadership 2016

Ed Berkowitz – N3US	President	eberkowitz@sbcglobal.net
Larry Eicher – K4JZQ	Vice President	tuzlu@comcast.net
Pat Crosby – K4PMC	Secretary	patcrosby73@gmail.com
Don Eason, Jr. – N4UVA	Treasurer	deason@comcast.net
Dave Damon – K4DND	Dir Public Services 1-YR	dnd@virginia.edu
Jim Owen – K4CGY	Dir Estate Services 1-YR	k4cgy@yahoo.com
Bill Pond – N0WP	Director Technical 1-YR	n0wp@arrl.net
Rick Oliver – W3KDR	Dir. Ed 2-YR	rickoliver45@hotmail.com
A.J. Miller – KE4AJM	Director Fundraising 2-YR	aj@ke4ajm.us
Paul McKee – AK4OH	Dir Pub Rel 2-YR	graphjim@gmail.com

Bill Pond was absent from the above picture

Appointed Leadership 2016

Larry Eicher – K4JZQ	Field Day Chairman	tuzlu@comcast.net
Mark Gorlinsky – WA1A	Vol Exam Liaison	mgch@mac.com
Michael McPherson – KQ9P	ARES/RACES	mcpherson@acm.org
Jim Owen – K4CGY	Club Stations Trustee	k4cgy@yahoo.com
Ron Richey – K4RKA	Swap Fest Coordinator	k4rka@juno.com
Jim Crosby – K4JEC	Beacon Editor	jamescrosby073@gmail.com
Michael Rein – KA4JJD	Awards Committee	mfr6t@virginia.edu
Michael McPherson – KQ9P	Webmaster	mcpherson@acm.org

That's all for now!