



THE RICHMOND HAM

Published Monthly by the Richmond Amateur Radio Club
P.O. Box 35279, Richmond, Virginia 23235
81st Year 1929 - 2010



APRIL 2010

The RICHMOND AMATEUR RADIO CLUB will meet Friday, April 9, 2010, 7:00pm at the Bon Air United Methodist Church, 1645 Buford Road.

PROGRAM: Sheila Blackley, K4WNW, will present "Contesting 101". Come and learn the secrets of successful contesting. It promises to be a fun and interesting program.

Coming Events:

March of Dimes Walk-a-thon, Sunday, May 2
VE Exams Saturday, May 8, 9:00 AM
"Cap 2 Cap" bicycle event Saturday, May 8
RARC Yard Sale, Saturday, May 15, 8:00 AM
MS Bike Ride, Saturday and Sunday, May 22/23

Getting to know this month's speaker

I was licensed as KG4WNW in 2002 after observing my husband, Bruce, WD4LBR, enjoying the hobby for about 30 years.

My main reason for getting licensed was for emergency purposes. I never thought I would enjoy the hobby that much. After getting my Technician class license I thought I would try to upgrade before they did away with the Morse code requirement. Well, I guess you could say about that time the Ham Radio Hobby Bug had bitten me. I went ahead and kept upgrading and received my Extra Class License in 2004. I then changed my call to K4WNW.

You might ask, "How does it work for a husband and wife to both be Ham Radio operators in the same house?" We have been married for 45 years and throughout our marriage we have always been each other's best friend and tried to enjoy any interests the other one might have. We have enjoyed contesting as a team as well as for our own individual accomplishments.

I have now confirmed 280 countries and currently have DXCC on 10 Meters, 15 Meters, 17 Meters, 20 Meters, 40 Meters, also RTTY and phone. I also have my WAS. I am currently 15 countries away on 80 Meters from having 5 band DXCC.

I have enjoyed my association with all the nice people I have met through the hobby.

I am a member of two ham radio clubs in the Richmond Area, Central Virginia Contest Club and Dominion DX Group

My current interests are DXing and contesting. I also would like to learn more of the digital modes.

I am presently President of the Dominion DX Group Club and invite you to attend a meeting if you are able.

* * *

The program I will put on for RARC is called "CONTESTING 101". The idea is to show fellow ham radio operators how they can have fun and achieve different goals by contesting. I will show tools that can be used in contesting or just everyday ham radio operating as well as some pictures of different stations, antennas, awards, etc.

Sheila Blackley, K4WNW

From the Prez:

On March 18th about 20 people showed up at Bon Air United Methodist church to take FCC exams for Amateur Service licenses. Some were students of the club's Radio School, but most were from the community who had heard about the testing session. There the testing team for the club assembled to give and grade the tests. Compare that to the first time I considered – and decided against – going for my ham license. First, there was study either on your own or with a ham you happened to know. Then, there was the code. And finally, there was taking a day off from work to travel to Norfolk or Washington, DC, to take the test before an FCC engineer. For all that you got a Novice license that let you use only CW at low power on a limited group of frequencies. It wasn't much of an incentive.

Our Radio School is well respected in the Richmond metro area and its instructors are thanked for their 10 weeks of effort each semester. What is not so recognized is the VE (volunteer examiner) team. They have to study

and pass an exam to become examiners. They give tests every other month, school or no school. Led by Mac McNeer, K4YEF, they are Andy Anderson-KB4JSX, Richard Arnold-WA4FEH, Fred Berger-K4LJF, Barbara Chase-WA4VUO, Ron Chase-KD4XA, Marshall Ervine-N4XBP, Ronnie Farley-KG4QIV, Judie Henry-N5JCH, David Hines-K4HIN, Herb Johansen-KI4HWS, Allan Johnson-WA3J, Amanda McGlough, Bev McNeer-KF4SPU, Mike Ratcliff-KC4AHE, Roy Shultz-KI4MCX, Mary Beth Schumacher, and Fritz Schumacher-KI4HWQ.

They have helped transform the "Amateur Service" into a more friendly and welcoming hobby.

73, Bruce, W4BRU

Paul Watson – W4MQE–SK

Amateur Radio recently lost another jewel. Paul passed away March 22nd.

History Bits

When the RARC was reorganized following the close of WW II, we met at the Radio Supply Co. This newly-opened store was a branch of a Norfolk radio store which catered to hams.

About the time the store changed its marketing goal to audio-visual and educational devices (and its name to AVEC), our club was into Civil Defense programs. So, when AVEC relocated to a shopping center at West Marshall and Staples Mill Road, our meeting place became the Maple Avenue Fire Station. There the club was given space to set up a communications center, complete with antennas! This was during the middle 1960s.

Sometime in the 1970s the RARC relocated to meet in Forest Hill Park, meeting in the main room of the Stone House. Then, problems..... (To be continued)

Ray W4MYI

The Tech Corner

Anthony, KG4YXP, reports there is a new software application that is exceptional. It's called **Airlink Express** and it is for digital modes, including PSK31. You might want to check it out. <http://www.airlinkexpress.org/>.

RARC Radio School

Our next scheduled license prep classes will begin in September. Complete information on our license prep classes is available on the Club's website www.rarclub.net. If you have questions, please call Ron or Barbara Chase at 320-1627.

RARC Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date _____3/12_____ 2010

Meeting Time ____7:00PM Called to Order at ____ PM

Presiding Officer – Bruce MacAlister, W4BRU, President

Recording Secretary ___Rob Thomas_____ Call:: KC4NYK

Old Minutes Approved? Y N ____
Discussion::

Treasurer's Report – Approved

Announcement - VA

New Business Discussion Items::

1. Robert Thomas reported on the Genesis Radio as potential for Kit Build for 2010 – Orders will be taken at the next meeting and placed the following day. [See page 3 of this newsletter for details on ordering the kits]
2. Roy Schultz – mentioned MD Walkathon – May 2 and May 8 Bike Event
3. Peter Fundinger, AA4PF, Talked about Robot Competition 18 – 20 March 2010
4. Welcomed new members::
Rich Manderski W2SKI
Michael Westfield N6PFK

Evening's Program

John Cross, WB4TYS, will discuss plans for the second ham radio station at the 2010 Scout Jamboree at Fort A. P. Hill. They will be needing radio operators - contact John if interested.

Presenter :: John Cross_____ Call:: WB4TYS

Title IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers)

Certificate? Y N ____

Meeting Adjourned at ____7:27_____ PM for presentation

Submitted by Rob Thomas__ Call:: KC4NYK

RARC VE News

The RARC VE March 18, 2010 Testing Session resulted in ten new Techs, three new Generals, and four new Extras! Congratulations to all.

We had 14 Club members and associates helping with the exams at this session. Because of their help, we were able to set up a second grading team to handle the volume of applicants and expedite the grading process.

A special thanks goes to all those who helped.

73, Mac

* * *

Our next VE testing session will be **Saturday, May 8th, 9:00 AM**, at the Bon Air United Methodist Church.

If you have questions about a session, please see our website, www.rarclub.net/ or contact Mac K4YEF at 272-6185.

FCC EXAMS EVERY MONTH on the SECOND SATURDAY.
For January and all odd-numbered months: Bon Air United Methodist Church, 9am. Call coordinator Mac McNeer K4YEF, 272-6185, or visit <http://www.rarclub.net/>.

For February and all even-numbered months, FCC test sessions are provided by the RAVE group. Coordinator Pat Wilson K4TTM (932-9424) has information on his website, <http://pwsite.org/hamtests.htm>.

Welcome to our new members!

Rich Manderski W2SKI, Michael Westfield N6PFK.

CLUB NETS:

Sunday	7:00 PM	50.135	USB
	7:30 PM	52.525	FM
Wednesday	7:00 PM	28.470	USB
	8:00 PM	147.255	D-STAR Repeater
	8:15 PM	145.730	Packet

Field Day or No Field Day? It's Up to You

It's June 1933 and hams initiate the first Field Day. Quoting from the December 1999 QST, "The real object of this contest is to test 'portables' wherever they may be available.... If successful, we want to make it an annual affair." 1933 was a time when portable operation was new and very challenging. It's varied a lot since then. Some groups head for

the hills to operate remotely and some set up at a church like we do. However it's done, thousands of hams in the U S and Canada get on the air and make contacts. It's a fun group activity where you meet field day hams on the other side of the QSO.

The question for our club is, do you still want to do that? In recent years almost all the set up work and operating has been done by the club's Technical Committee. Most of the rest of us don't participate. So what's the point?

Some members have talked about setting up one or two remote stations in parks or on museum grounds this year. Others have suggested we discuss a partnership with RATS, DDXG or other ham groups and do a joint field day. The Technical Committee is open to helping with any of those, but they want some members to lead the effort and be responsible for it.

So, what do you want to do? We need a half dozen enthusiastic hams who want to do it. It can be a simple remote set up running battery powered QRP outside or we can set up in the church. If there is no interest then the Richmond Amateur Radio Club will not do Field Day in 2010.

Let President, Bruce MacAlister, or Technical Committee Chair, Ron Chase, know if you are willing to take part in Field Day on Saturday, June 26 and/or Sunday, June 27.

Attention Kit Builders!

For those who wish to order the Genesis Radio kits, here is the breakdown:

- The single band kits are the G40, G80, G160 and the G3020. They are \$125 + \$12 shipping = \$137 each.
- The Multiband kit is the G59. That is \$250 (plus whatever other boards you decide you want) + \$12 shipping per board.

Please visit <http://www.genesisradio.com.au/order.html> to see the various kits and their prices.

To order you may use your credit card or Paypal account to send your order total to Rob's Paypal account: sales@klikhome.com on Paypal (be sure to get the spelling right!). Or, bring cash to the meeting on **Friday April 9th** and Rob will transfer that to the Paypal account. The order will be placed on the next business day after the meeting. **No late orders will be taken.** If you wish to participate **please place your order by meeting time on April 9th** and bring a printout of your receipt or bring cash.

If you have any questions or issues using Paypal, please feel free to call Rob Thomas at 804-833-4470.

Public Service

The March of Dimes Walkathon is their annual fundraiser which consists of a 5K walk around downtown Richmond beginning and ending in Monroe Park (Sunday, May 2). We provide radio coverage at the relief stations situated along the route in case someone has difficulty and needs to get a ride back to the park. We also have a radio operator who shadows the event coordinator so he knows what's going on. One ham also rides in the pickup van. The equipment needed is an HT radio and an extra battery if you have one. We have usually operated on 146.500 without a repeater. This event usually takes about half a day and is over by 1 pm, often earlier. In recent years parking has been in the parking deck across from the Landmark Theater. Contact Roy Schultz, KI4MCX, royshultz@hotmail.com, if you will help.

The Cap 2 Cap is a one day bicycle event on a route from Richmond to Williamsburg and back (Saturday, May 8, 9:00 AM). We provide communications coverage for the Richmond side of the route including the SAG wagons, relief stations, and event headquarters. We coordinate with the other group as necessary. This year the cyclists will again be leaving from Rockett's Landing and (hopefully) finishing there as well. This is an all day event. Contact Roy Schultz (KI4MCX), royshultz@hotmail.com, to help.

Hams will be providing communications support for the Multiple Sclerosis Society Bike Ride on May 22nd & 23rd. The event will take riders from Richmond to Williamsburg on Saturday where they will spend the night. On Sunday, they will ride back to Richmond. This is a big commitment requiring nearly twenty operators. Any operators that participate in the event will be provided with lunch and can attend the after ride festivities.

Events such as this are always fun and a great way to hone communications skills. If you are interested in participating, please contact George Bean AI4VJ at 804-247-0742 or by email at ai4vj@puwaba.com.

Strays

Scientists monitoring the sun's activity were recently stunned by the increasing number of sun spots appearing on the sun's surface. They concluded that this phenomenon hasn't occurred since the late 1400's. The scientists of that day tagged the phenomenon "Magnetic-Emissions Ascending from SoLar Ejection Sites" or more commonly known as *MEASLES*. Amateur radio operators from around the world rejoiced as the amateur bands came alive with activity. Unfortunately, this activity was short lived. Beginning at 0001Z, 1 April, 2010 and lasting only to 2359Z, 1 April, 2010. Scientists do not expect this phenomenon to occur again until the year 2012.

New feature: Expert Needed

The Richmond Ham starts a new feature with this edition called "Expert Needed". This will be a program similar to Elmering, but more focused on a single amateur radio related problem or issue. We have all faced problems with our stations that seem to have no answer. Many of us have spent hours and hours searching books and the web for answers. Sometimes we get lucky – sometimes we don't.

"Expert Needed" will function in a similar manner to the Swap Shop in that we provide the media for you to present your question or problem and an expert will contact you directly to try and help you.

Many folks are put off by being called an expert. If you can help a fellow ham solve a problem, we are sure the recipient will call you whatever you wish to be called!

So keep an eye out for this new feature and if you can help someone with a problem, please contact them and give them a hand. And, don't be bashful about submitting your questions. Send your questions to Ray at w4myi@arrl.net.

RARC's Annual Yard Sale

Saturday, May 15th is the date for our Club's annual yard sale. Every year we count on our members to donate "stuff" to be offered at the sale. This is the only fund raising event we do each year so it is pretty important. Please start looking for things around your house that you are willing to donate to help the club out. It's always a fun event and it always makes our piggy bank a little fatter. We can also use help at the sale so we are looking for volunteers. More information is provided on the next page.

RARC YARD SALE
Saturday, May 15, 2010
8:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Bon Air United Methodist Church, Fellowship Hall

Please help make this a great fundraiser for the Club.

Bring donations of clean, usable items of any kind with you to the May 14th Club meeting. Suggestions include: household items, children's toys, books, (technical books are popular), pet items, computers, kitchen appliances, dishes, electronic items, sports items, decorations, crafts, tools, exercise equipment, plants, DVDs/CDs, jewelry, watches, and furniture. Please price as many of your items as you can. Please note on your electrical/electronic items whether they work.

Donated items that are not sold will be given to a local charity unless they are picked up prior to 2:00 PM the day of the sale.

If you have any questions, please call Bruce MacAlister at 353-7535.

EXPERT NEEDED

NEC or EZNEC expert needed

Bruce MacAlister needs to dramatically change his antennas. The best alternative seems to be a rectangular antenna on the parapet of his 100-year-old house. It would be about 40 meters in total length. To reduce the amount of cut-and-try in this project he wants to model it in one of the NEC modelers. Not having done it before, he seeks an expert, someone with actual experience, to guide him. The expert can contact him at 353-7535 or by e-mail at W4BRU@ARRL.NET.

The SWAP SHOP

Club members may list their wares in the newsletter. Send your request to Ray at w4myi@arrl.net. The Swap Shop is presented in the newsletter as a benefit to our members. RARC takes no responsibility for items sold or traded in this newsletter. ***You must be an RARC member to place an ad.***

The Club has a novel arrangement to bring buyers and sellers together--- a "swap shop." Have something to sell or swap? Looking for something related to radio or electronics? Write a brief description and send it in. It will appear in the newsletter three times unless extended. Any interested parties will contact you directly. Questions? Bring them to the meetings.

For Sale: Icom 720A with manuals. \$300.00 or best offer. Ben Richardson, KD4TZQ, 359-9538, kd4tzq@comcast.net.

Join the Richmond Amateur Radio Club

Annual Dues are:

80 and over	\$0
Age 12 and under	\$5.00
Age 13 to 18	\$10.00
Regular Membership	\$15.00

73 de:

Bruce MacAlister	W4BRU	PRESIDENT
Grif Griffiths	KF4JG	VICE-PRESIDENT
Robert Thomas	KC4NYK	SECRETARY
Richard Arnold	WA4FEH	TREASURER

Thought for the Day

Drive as if you owned the car, not the road!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE, <http://www.rarclub.net> Much information available!