

# VOX



## HUNTSVILLE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 43, Number 4

April, 2003

### Huntsville Amateur Radio Club Information

#### Club Officers

##### President:

Tom Duncan, KG4CUY  
Duncan1@ds-s.com

##### Vice President:

Tim Cunningham, N8DEU

Tim\_cunningham@mindspring.com

##### Secretary:

Rolf Goedhart K4RGG.  
k4rgg@arrl.net

##### Treasurer:

Heath Thorson, KC4HRX, 722-0250  
hthorson@knology.net

The club's address is Box 423, Huntsville, Ala. 35804. Meetings are held each Friday night at 7:30 P.M. at the American Red Cross Building, 1101 Washington Street. Dues are \$12.00 per year, family memberships are \$15.00 per year. The club maintains a Web Site at "http://www.harc.net"

The North Alabama Repeater Association operates repeaters on 146.34 / 146.94, 147.78 / 147.18, 223.34 / 224.94 and 448.5 / 443.5. NARA dues are \$16.00 per year and may be sent to NARA at P.O. Box 18941 Huntsville, AL 35804-8941.

The club's packet radio interest group, HUNTSPAC, maintains an extensive packet network for the Huntsville area. Dues for use of this network are \$15.00 per year, and can be paid through the HARC Secretary-Treasurer listed above.

The club's ATV special interest group, TVATV operates an ATV repeater. It's input frequency is 439.25 MHz and its output is 421.25 MHz. A voice coordination repeater is operated with output frequency of 145.33 MHz, input 600 kHz down.

The Vox is published the third Friday of each month except for August. Editor of the Vox is Frank Emens, W4HFU, 3714 Lakewood Circle, Huntsville, Ala. 35811 or femens@hiwaay.net. Material of interest to the HARC membership should be submitted to the editor by the second Friday of the month of publication.

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A Newsletter published monthly except for August by the Huntsville Amateur Radio Club, P.O. Box 423, Huntsville, AL 35804

### From The Prez

It's been a good month for programs at the Red Cross. We had over fifty people in attendance at Old Timers' Night. Thanks to all who brought in stories and equipment, and to everyone who came to be counted in the longest licensed ham poll. Paul Nelson's Spread Spectrum presentation was the kind I could take in every day. Not only did we hear some fascinating history of this technology, but learned about engineering and manufacturing efforts which happen right here in Huntsville.

Our shack has had a major, long-needed, reorganization, thanks to Dick Christiansen and Chris Reed. Somehow the room is now twice as big, radios are clearly visible, there are places for mikes and keys and the computer. Thanks to Woody Zeigler and the Red Cross for finding storage space for our overflow. Come on by and take a look - you can even walk in and have a seat.

As I write this, I'm hoping for a good HARC turnout at the Gigaparts/DX Club presentation of Icom gear at the Red Cross. Now that we know where the antenna cables are, the coax from the Wikle room to the shack will actually connect to a known antenna! Our next such cooperative effort is Field Day. It's not too early to start planning for that.

73, Tom Duncan, KG4CUY

### Weather Spotter Training

The DeKalb County Amateur Radio Club will host the last Weather Spotter Training Course of the spring season.

When: April 1st 2003

Where: Fort Payne Alabama, Activities Building, second floor meeting room

Time: 6:00pm

This course will be great for first time attendees and anyone needing refresher training. The class duration is around an hour and a half and will be taught by Tim Troutman from the Na-

tional Weather Service office in Huntsville. After the class there will be a tour of the EMA radio room and operations center for interested parties.

look for additional information at:  
<http://www.dekalbamateurradio.com/>  
or <http://www.srh.weather.gov/hun/>

Come to the class and get ready for the upcoming severe weather season. I look forward to seeing you there,

73, Greg, W4OZK President, DeKalb  
County Amateur Radio Club

### NARA Notes

I almost missed this month's VOX by spending the last evening before the deadline working with Ralph on the new 147.18 and 443.500 repeaters. They are both coming along very nicely and we should have '18 on the air very soon. These are both GE Master II Base units like the '94 systems that has served us so well. The new '18 system will become the NARA internet linking center of activity starting with IRLP and adding Echo Link and WIRES II on a switchable basis. As we add UHF links to other repeaters (NARA and other) '18 may become dedicated to one of the three. Stay tuned to the NARA web page and repeater announcements for the latest. Speaking of IRLP, I took Frank's hint in the January VOX to heart: I will be

### CAVEC Amateur Radio License Exams

Exam sessions are held the first Saturday of each month unless a holiday causes the session to be delayed for one week.

Upcoming sessions are:

Saturday, April 5

Saturday, May 3

For information contact:

Larry Frost, KR4GU, 536-4154

[kr4gu@hamfest.org](mailto:kr4gu@hamfest.org)

Or

Don Tunstill, W4NO, 536-3904

[dontunstill@hamfest.org](mailto:dontunstill@hamfest.org)

presenting a HARC Program on IRLP on April 11th. Come on down and hear what it is all about and get ready for world wide linking enjoyment!

I have completed the NARA newsletter and I am putting the finishing touches on the new NARA command sheet for 2003. You should see them in your e-mail and snail mail boxes very soon. Also for the 6 meter repeater fans, we have the Tx antenna in along with hardline connectors. We are only waiting on a tower mounting bracket to have that antenna party at the Green Mtn site. Meanwhile Ralph is wiring a tone encoder/decoder and putting other finishing touches on the Tx drawer. It won't be much longer till 6M FM fun here in Huntsville. Speaking of The W4XE Green Mtn site, the grid leak is that the new 444.300 "Green Machine" will soon have an all new sound with an

RC-96 controller and 3 band remote base. See you on the repeaters!

73, Ron Shaffer: W4VM NARA President. Programs for April 2003

We have another great line-up of programs scheduled for the month of April. Come on down and support the presenters and the club on Friday nights.

In March, we saw part 1 of "Empire of the Air" presented by Tom Duncan and he will show part 2 of that video in April. Paul Nelson, K4JAZ, enlightened us on Spread Spectrum and John Hilliard showed us new ways to use APRS with pocketAPRS.

Thanks to Tom Duncan, Paul Nelson, and John Hilliard for their dedication and commitment in sharing knowledge with their fellows Amateurs. When you see them, thank them for their time and tell them how much you enjoyed their

talks and the time they put into making them happen.

This month we have more interesting topics on the agenda. Check the calendar in this edition of the VOX for specific dates.

Frank DuVall, will give us a talk on "Adventure in Physics". Mr. DuVall worked at Redstone Army Missile Command for over 25 years in Technical Planning, System Synthesis, and System Analysis and spent much time studying Physics and Mathematics. He received his degree from The University of Arkansas in Electrical Engineering.

Tom Duncan, KG4CUI, will present part 2 of "Empire of the Air".

Ron Shaffer, W4VM, plans to share his knowledge on IRLP with the group. This is a relatively new com-

HARC ACTIVITY CALENDAR FOR April, 2003						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	31	1 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	2 Southeast Linked Repeater Net1900 on 147.240	3 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	4 HARC Meeting Frank Duvall - Ad- ventures in Physics	5 CAVEC Exams, Red Cross building 0900
6	7	8 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	9 Southeast Linked Repeater Net1900 on 147.240	10 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	11 HARC Meeting Ron Shaffer - IRLP	12
13	14	15 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	16 Southeast Linked Repeater Net1900 on 147.240	17 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	18 HARC Meeting Vox & Social Night	19
20	21	22 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	23 Southeast Linked Repeater Net1900 on 147.240	24 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	25 HARC Meeting Empire Of The Air, Part 2  25 & 26 Southeast- ern VHF Conference Huntsville, AL	26 SE VHF Conference, Huntsville, AL  26, Cherokee Capitol ARS, Calhoun, GA
27	28	29 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	30 Southeast Linked Repeater Net1900 on 147.240	1 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	2 HARC Meeting	3 CAVEC Exams, Red Cross building 0900

\*TWIAR -- This Week In Amaterur Radio, + 442.775 PL203.5 Hz 8 PM Every Saturdays  
 ATV Net @ 20:00, Check in on 145.33, Tuesdays  
 Southeast Linked Repeater Net on + 442.775, PL 203.5 Hz @ 19:00, Wednesdays  
 Madison County Emergency Net on 34/94 @19:30, Thursdays  
 SkyWarn Net on 147.24 @ 20:00, Thursdays

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Come see us next to Chili's!

munications median that will be very interesting.

We have a busy schedule forthcoming, so support the club and the presenters by joining us on Friday nights to hear what you have been missing.

73, Tim Cunning(ham), N8DEU

## The Giggle Box

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO  
EVERYBODY THAT WAS BORN IN  
APRIL!!

A note from Giggles: Spring is finally here. I am so glad that Winter is almost over. The trees and flowers are so pretty. When I saw my daffodils coming out of the ground, I knew that Spring was almost here. Unfortunately, daffodils don't bloom all summer long. I have to admit that I take stuff that people have sent me in emails and submit it in the VOX. I know some is duplicated, but not everybody has a computer. Sometime I slip up and put something that isn't too nice. If I send something that offends someone, it was because a little devil was in me. Oops! By the way, I want to

send a special happy birthday to someone that was born on April Fool's Day.

### A Joke or Two

Brian Hester invited his mother over for dinner. During the course of the meal, Brian's mother couldn't help but notice how beautiful Brian's roommate, Stephanie, was. Mrs. Hester had long been suspicious of a relationship between Brian and his roommate, Stephanie, and this had only made her more curious. Over the course of the evening, while watching the two, Mrs. Hester started to wonder if there was more between Brian and his roommate, Stephanie, than met the eye. Reading his mom's thoughts, Brian volunteered, "I know what you must be thinking, but I assure you Stephanie and I are just roommates." About a week later, Stephanie came to Brian saying, "Ever since your mother came to dinner, I've been unable to find the beautiful silver gravy ladle. You don't suppose she cook it, do you?" Brian said, "Well, I doubt it, but I'll send her an e-mail just to be sure." So he sat down and wrote,

"Dear Mother, I'm not saying that you 'did' take the gravy ladle from the house, I'm not saying that you 'did not' take the gravy ladle. But the fact remains that one has been missing ever since you were here for dinner".  
Love, Brian

Several days later, Brian received a letter from his mother that read: "Dear son, I'm not saying that you 'do' sleep with Stephanie, and I'm not saying that you 'do not' sleep with Stephanie. But the fact remains that if she were sleeping in her own bed, she would have found the gravy ladle by now."  
Love, Mom

LESSON OF THE DAY:  
NEVER LIE TO YOUR MOTHER

Its amazing how small things can have a large impact on things. One day, when I was a freshman in high school, I saw a kid from my class was walking home from school. His name was Kyle. It looked like he was carrying all of his books. I thought to myself, "Why would anyone bring home all his books on a Friday? He must re-

ally be a nerd." I had quite a weekend planned (parties and a football game with my friends tomorrow afternoon), so I shrugged my shoulders and went on.

As I was walking, I saw a bunch of kids running toward him. They ran at him, knocking all his books out of his arms and tripping him so he landed in the dirt. His glasses went flying, and I saw them land in the grass about ten feet from him. He looked up and I saw this terrible sadness in his eyes. My heart went out to him. So, I jogged over to him and as he crawled around looking for his glasses, and I saw a tear in his eye. As I handed him his glasses, I said, "Those guys are jerks. They really should get lives."

He looked at me and said, "Hey thanks!" There was a big smile on his face. It was one of those smiles that showed real gratitude. I helped him pick up his books, and asked him where he lived. As it turned out, he lived near me, so I asked him why I had never seen him before. He said he had gone to private school before now. I would have never hung out with a private school kid before. We talked all the way home, and I carried some of his books. He turned out to be a pretty cool kid. I asked him if he wanted to play a little football with my friends. He said yes.

We hung out all weekend and the more I got to know Kyle, the more I liked him, and my friends thought the same of him. Monday morning came, and there was Kyle with the huge stack of books again. I stopped him and said, "Boy, you are gonna really build some serious muscles with this pile of books everyday!" He just laughed and handed me half the books. Over the next four years, Kyle and I became best friends. When we were seniors, we began to think about college. Kyle decided on Georgetown, and I was going to Duke. I knew that we would always be friends, that the miles would never be a problem. He was going to be a doctor, and I was going for business on a football scholarship.

Kyle was valedictorian of our class. I teased him all the time about being a nerd. He had to prepare a speech for graduation. I was so glad it wasn't me having to get up there and speak. Graduation day, I saw Kyle. He looked great. He was one of those guys that really

found himself during high school. He filled out and actually looked good in glasses. He had more dates than I had and all the girls loved him. Boy, sometimes I was jealous. Today was one of those days. I could see that he was nervous about his speech. So, I smacked him on the back and said, "Hey, big guy, you'll be great!"

He looked at me with one of those looks (the really grateful one) and smiled. "Thanks," he said. As he started his speech, he cleared his throat, and began. "Graduation is a time to thank those who helped you make it through those tough years. Your parents, your teachers, your siblings, maybe a coach...but mostly your friends. I am here to tell all of you that being a friend to someone is the best gift you can give them. I am going to tell you a story."

I just looked at my friend with disbelief as he told the story of the first day we met. He had planned to kill himself over the weekend. He talked of how he had cleaned out his locker so his Mom wouldn't have to do it later and was carrying his stuff home. He looked hard at me and gave me a little smile. "Thankfully, I was saved. My friend saved me from doing the unspeakable." I heard the gasp go through the crowd as this handsome, popular boy told us all about his weakest moment. I saw his Mom and dad looking at me and smiling that same grateful smile. Not until that moment did I realize it's depth.

Did You Know:

Today someone asked me what the difference was between a tornado watch and tornado warning. I always get the two mixed up. I had remembered seeing it in the phone book. There is a lot of information in the phone book, but you have to take time to look for it.

**A TORNADO WATCH INDICATES THAT WEATHER CONDITIONS MAY CAUSE TORNADOES TO DEVELOP IN AN AREA.**

**A TORNADO WARNING IS ISSUED BY LOCAL WEATHER BUREAU OFFICES WHEN A TORNADO FUNNEL HAS ACTUALLY BEEN SIGHTED OR INDICATED BY RADAR.**

The Thought for the Month of April

Friends are angels who lift us to our feet when our wings have trouble remembering how to fly.

Solve the puzzle:

DOYTA SI A FTIG

73 Peggy Bell (Giggles) K4EGB

### On Learning CW For Pleasure

Folks have always looked at learning CW as an onerous chore that had to be completed before they could get permission to operate on HF. Now the need for CW as a qualification for a license is about gone. Well, there are other reasons to learn CW!

Equipment for CW operation can be simple and inexpensive to acquire.

It is not unthinkable to build CW gear yourself where building a SSB transceiver is probably beyond consideration.

For the above reasons, many more "indigenous population" DXers, as opposed to DXpeditions, operate CW only. Many can't afford expensive SSB gear.

There is no substitute for the feeling of pride you have in utilizing a skill you have developed through application and practice to communicate with someone at a distance. It doesn't involve capability you've bought, but it involves a skill you've learned.

Though you can't really enjoy the back and forth of a free-wheeling ragchew session until you can comfortably copy CW in your head without writing it down, it is still necessary to learn to get accurate copy on paper. You never know when you may be given information that you need a record of. "Head copy" will come as a bonus as you get proficient.

The traditional learning method has been to start with letter sets like "E", "I", "S", "H", "5" and "T", "M", "O", "0" sent at a pretty slow speed. That immediately starts you off with the bad habit of counting dots and dashes. That may work at 5 WPM, but it will be a real obstacle to developing greater speeds. What you want to do is make an automatic connection between your ear and your hand. When you're in "copy" mode, if you hear "dahdiditdit" your mind should automatically picture a "B" and your hand should automatically form a "B". What you want to avoid is a process that goes "dahdiditdit", that's a dash followed by three dots, lets see, and that's a 'B'." The usual next step in getting around

this "dit counting" approach is to establish something like a lookup table in your brain. This allows you to copy faster, but it still requires a certain amount of mental overhead that is undesirable.

The solution has been around for years. It was first developed by a German Psychologist named Koch in the 1930s. There are quite a few implementations of the training process available. Other than to say that it starts you out learning at or near your target speed, I'll not go into how it is done. Fire up your favorite internet browser, go to "google" and search on "N1IRZ". That'll take you to an article named "So You Want To Learn Morse Code" which gives you a full description of the process and how it works by a fellow named David G. Finley. If Dave manages to sell you on trying the program, go back to "google" and search for "G4FON". The second hit you find there will take you to a description and download site for the "Koch Method "CW Trainer", which is the handiest implementation of the method I've seen. It takes effort and dedication on your part, but I think you'll find it worth it.

*73, Frank Emens, W4HFU*

## April Hamfests

April 25-26 Southeastern VHF Conference,

Huntsville, Alabama.

See <http://www.svhfs.org>

or contact Robin Midgett, KB4IDC .615-773-5215 or [kb4idc@arrl.net](mailto:kb4idc@arrl.net).

April 26. Cherokee Capital ARS, Calhoun, Georgia.

See <http://www.qsl.net/k4woc>

or contact Felton Floyd, AF4DN, 706-629-0369 or [ffloyd@pointlink.net](mailto:ffloyd@pointlink.net).

*73, John Farr, KC4ZXX*

## From The Editor's Wastebasket

Thanks to Heath's good work, we have an updated mailing list this month. The list has been pruned of those who did not heed the warning about membership renewal last month. Three months is about as long as we can manage shipping you free Voxes after your dues become due. If you're not reading these words, it is because you are no longer a paid up member. It's too late to look at your mailing label, because we didn't print you one. The total list is now at 259. That will gradually increase over the months with a boost at the Hamfest.

I hope everybody is ready in their way for our severe weather season. Ready or not, Spring along with it's sometimes fractious weather is upon us. Already I find myself dropping the driver's side window and turning the heater off in the car. Before long I guess we'll all be running our air conditioners and complaining about the heat. I will not be complaining much though, I'm not really a fan of Winter weather.

It will soon be time to start thinking about who we can select to carry on HARC's activities in the next year. I sure hope we can come up with a slate that will carry it off as well as the current officers have done. It used to be a truism around the club that outgoing President would not be seen around the club for a year or so after his term. That doesn't seem to be so any more. Chris has been pretty active in club affairs this year. Maybe it isn't the "burnout" job it used to be.

We've been having a good string of programs. I would rather see more "home-grown" programs, but members have to be willing to volunteer for those and I guess they just want to keep it to themselves. I've been led to believe we have the resources for a really interesting presentation on beekeeping. Maybe the bee guys could be persuaded to do something before this year is up.

Enough! I've rambled on enough this month. Enjoy the Spring!

Oh, look at the space that would have been available for your article this month

*73, Frank Emens, W4HFU*

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