

# VOX



## HUNTSVILLE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 47, Number 12

December, 2007

### The Prez Says

Have you heard the news? K4BFT is NUMBER ONE in group 4 A!!! We were initially afraid that the change from 5a into 4A would hamper our competitiveness, but were we wrong! We score number 13 overall in the nation, not bad for a little town in Alabama. Well done and thanks again to everyone who participated, from cooking hamburgers to pulling stakes!

The holidays are here. again. next week is Thanksgiving, no meeting that week. Hope you get to celebrate it with the ones you love, and not too much food becomes permanently attached to you. I'll be celebrating it with my newly found family here in Alabama and the next day fly to Virginia to spend time with my 3 girls and grandson Benjamin.

Speaking of traveling I will miss the December 7th X-mas party and the gag gifts, as well as the big stick on the week after. I'll be in California again, my 27th trip since I started working for this company. Yes it's that time of year again too! The membership drive is coming up right after the New Year, although we haven't set the final date yet.

We have decided to have meetings on December 21st and the 28th since they are both a few days away from the actual holidays. There will be no business meeting and no program, just old fashioned socializing! Of course if some one wants to bring an interesting video, go ahead and hook up the projector.

Speaking of which, the club got a DVD player that can hooked up to the projector and combined with the speaker from the club's computer, we have an easy way to make our meeting room a little theater! As a result of Kim and my recent trip to Hawaii, we saw video about the USS Arizona, the battleship that got destroyed in that day of infamy, when Pearl Harbor, by surprise, got attacked in 1941.

It was much of a surprise when Sputnik was launched in October 1957, and caught the US off guard once more. But both events awoke a great resolve in this nation as a result of it. This week we will see a great video about much of the secrets and developments behind Sputnik and the first US satellites.

November 30th we will dive into space weather or more precise weather on other planets and what we can learn from that for our own planet.

Don't forget the Rocket City Marathon December 8th! We have participated in every one since its inception. Leigh has once more taken the lead on this and still needs a few more helpers!!

After the Membership drive we need to get our planned Extra class on the road. There are many people anxiously waiting for that and undersigned is one of them. It is also time we check into our fellow clubs and see how they have progressed in obtaining their not for profit status and follow

in their tracks. The club already voted to get incorporated, so let's get that done before our term as officers expires.

Looking back I believe we had a great year at HARC and I'm looking forward to another great year. Number 1 in 4A and number 13 in the nation that's hard to beat! But let's do it again! It was sure fun!

*Have a Blessed Holiday Season, 73 de K4RRG Rolf Goedhart*  
**Field Day Results**

ARRL has posted the Field Day results and we came in number 1 for 4A division with 3,807 QSOs and 12,962 points. Our nearest competitor in 4A had over 680 less contacts. In overall standings, we came in number 13. Not exactly a lucky number but, not bad either considering the band conditions. Congrats to K4BFT and everyone who helped make it a success this year.

*73, Kevin Hibbs KG4TEI*

### Our club Is Now A Member Of The Ham Radio Promotion Project

A new program to promote Amateur Radio has been joined by our radio club. Designed to reverse the slowing growth rate of the Amateur service, the objective of the project is to spread the word about our hobby and to recruit new licensees as well as club members.

"We're happy that your radio club is among the sponsoring clubs that recognize the need to grow our ranks by active recruitment," said "Dee" Logan, W1HEO, winner of the ARRL's 2006 McGan Award for Public Relations, and a project founder. "Clubs are tremendously important to the effort, by conducting various promotional activities, offering licensing classes and supplying volunteer members of a newly formed "Elmer Corps."

The promotion project includes a four-step process. Promotion is the initial phase, which includes publicity and promotion to raise awareness of Amateur Radio. Prospecting is the second step and includes identifying persons showing interest. Third is qualifying persons for recruitment into licensing classes or referral to study materials. The fourth step is training, with radio club classes or individual help offered.

One of the first accomplishments of the project was to produce several promotional tools to make it easier for clubs to introduce Amateur Radio to the public. A major part of this was the production of a new, 21-minute video, "Amateur Radio: Wireless Window to the World," that introduces the public to our hobby. The video features several hams, plus scenes showing many aspects of ham radio, including emergency communication and DX. A copy of the video DVD was provided to our club as part of its membership package.

Other promotional items provided to the club are a 50-page promotional handbook or "Toolkit," access to banners that can be used in various demonstrations, and a subscription to the Ham Radio Promoter newsletter.

### Huntsville Amateur Radio Club Information

**Club Officers**

**President:**  
Rolf Goedhart, K4RGG  
[K4RGG@arrl.net](mailto:K4RGG@arrl.net)

**Vice President:**  
Robby Lock KG4PLK.  
[huntsvilleweather@gmail.com](mailto:huntsvilleweather@gmail.com)

**Secretary:**  
Elizabeth Wilhour, KI4VQJ  
[bluebunny@mail.com](mailto:bluebunny@mail.com)

**Treasurer:**  
Heath Thorson, KC4HRX, 325-2507  
[hthorson@knology.net](mailto: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 Editor of the Vox is Frank Emens, W4HFU, 3714 Lakewood Circle, Huntsville, Ala. 35811 or [femens@hiwaay.net](mailto:femens@hiwaay.net). Material of interest to the HARC membership should be submitted to the editor by Wednesday before the third Friday of the month of publication.

"Vox", Vol 47, Nr 11, November, 2007  
A Newsletter published monthly by the Huntsville Amateur Radio Club,

### CAVEC License Exams

*Exam sessions are held at 9:00 AM the first Saturday of each month unless a holiday causes the session to be delayed for one week.*

*Upcoming sessions are:  
Saturday, December 1  
Saturday, January 5  
For information contact:*

*Larry Frost, KR4GU, 864-3244  
[kr4gu@hamfest.org](mailto:kr4gu@hamfest.org)*

*Org  
Don Tunstill, W4NO, 536-3904  
[dontunstill@hamfest.org](mailto:dontunstill@hamfest.org)*

*Athens Exam Sessions are held the 3rd Saturday of each month at 1:00. They are held at the Athens EOC.*

*For information contact Bob Hudson,  
WARKH, 461-7905*

### HARC ACTIVITY CALENDAR FOR December, 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2	3	4 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	5 SE Linked Rptr Net 2000 +442.775/PL 203.5	6 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	7 HARC Christmas Party, Red Cross Building Starts 7:00 PM	1/8 *TWIAR Dec 1, Cavec Exams, RCB 0900  Rocket City Mara- thon Dec 8 0900
9	10	11 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	12 SE Linked Rptr Net 2000 +442.775/PL 203.5	13 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	14 HARC Meeting  Prep for HARC/NARA Joint mailout	15 *TWIAR
16	17	18 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	19 SE Linked Rptr Net 2000 +442.775/PL 203.5	20 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	21 No Formal meeting, drop by to socialize.	22 *TWIAR
23	24 Christmas Eve -- watch for sleigh mobile	25 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33 Merry Christmas	26 SE Linked Rptr Net 2000 +442.775/PL 203.5	27 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	28 No Formal meeting, drop by to socialize.	29 *TWIAR
30	31 New Year's Eve	1 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33 Beware Football Overload!	2 SE Linked Rptr Net 2000 +442.775/PL 203.5	3 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	4 HARC Meeting	5 *TWIAR Cavec Exams, at RCB 0900

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

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Publicity will be developed by a public relations volunteer working with clubs to develop interesting and informative articles. The newsletter will report club activities and serve as an idea exchange, and Amateur Radio information for the public will be available on a new Website, [www.neoham.org](http://www.neoham.org).

“Many of the promotional tools such as signs and banners are being done by commercial firms at the lowest possible cost, but will be good quality in order to represent ham radio well,” said project treasurer David Dennis, W8DDD. “We are watching our pennies, but expect that additional funds will be needed. So we’re encouraging individuals who can support this important effort to make a donation.” Copies of the video DVD are being offered for a \$20 donation to the project.

Checks should be made payable to “HAC/RP Fund” and sent to W8DDD at 30113 Robert Street, Wickliffe 44092-1717. Y

### ARES District 6 Report

Let’s talk about the weather. Today’s high and low temperature was this, the

pressure was that, the dew point - blah, blah — pretty boring stuff. Now let me take you “behind the scenes”, and show you how you can actually be a valuable part of the next severe weather outbreak in our region. The National Weather Service (NWS) has a program called SKYWARN, in which YOU participate. The next time a weather event rolls through, you can actually do something about the weather. What you do is help protect life and property - are you interested?

You probably don’t know an isobar from a chin-up bar, so you have to start out by learning the technical jargon that weather people communicate with. The NWS office regularly sends out their trained meteorologists to give courses in basic and advanced Storm Spotting. Plan to spend a few hours learning the difference between dangerous weather systems, and clouds that just look “real bad.”

Everyone can recall the storms that have rolled through Northern Alabama and Southern middle-Tennessee in the last decade. In fact, we seem to be some kind of severe weather magnet. But tor-

nados have been recorded in every state, in every month. The tornado that hit Greensburg Kansas on May 4, 2007 only got limited media coverage here. Pity the poor folks who literally have no town any more. The good news, if there was any, is that someone in the NWS office reacted properly, set off the warning sirens, and probably saved many, many lives. The bad news is that 95% of the town was destroyed, leaving 12 dead and 60 injured. The tornado outbreak spawned 91 tornados in the area that day, and the next. Almost everyone here can talk about the 1989 tornado that ripped through the south part of town. That tornado spiraled out of the clouds in the middle of November, and since it was almost directly over the radar station, it was a surprise to everyone. There were 21 fatalities that afternoon. That storm cell was part of an outbreak of 40 tornados that caused at least 30 deaths. In May 1995, another powerful tornado struck the Anderson Hills area (a direct hit, and a fatality).

By now, you’re either thinking “that can’t happen again”, or “how can I be ready next time?” If you’re in that second group: listen up. The NWS office

here is staffed by a group of highly-trained, well-educated, caring folks. Their function is to protect lives and property in our area. They do an incredible job. I know - I am privileged to work with them at the NWS office during severe weather events. I am the SKYWARN coordinator for this area, and I am an Amateur radio operator. The SKYWARN program was started in the early 1970's, and lets the NWS interact directly with their local communities. Mostly, we are called "storm spotters", because we are the eyes of the NWS. We establish "ground truth" for the folks who can either pull the switch on the siren, or hold-off. Notice that I did NOT say we are "storm chasers" - we're not. We stay close to home, or we're in our car or truck as part of normal affairs, and we communicate what we see to the NWS system in a formal way.

We all have in mind that the NWS must have about a billion dollars worth of radar, so why in the world do they need us? The dirty little secret is that radar does not tell "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth" - it just tells what might be, not what is. Try this: from my Amateur radio operators' station at the NWS office, I hear one of the NWS staff members ask for a report from a particular area. I can relay the request to the Amateur radio operators who are "activated", and are in a SKYWARN "net." If there are hams out in that area, I ask them "look East about 5 miles and tell me what you see." 99% of the time, they see some clouds and lightning, and nothing else. That's good news - very good news. I probably asked them because the radar was showing a force 999 tornado that was ripping up all of Morgan county and spitting it out into Madison county. That one simple report from a trained spotter re-focuses the entire problem, and everyone breathes a sigh of relief.

During an "actual event", there are always Amateur radio operators involved, and we hope that we get input from each of the counties where the storm track is. But really, there aren't that many ham radio operators out there, and available, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. That's where you come in - you can either get a ham license (pretty easy), or just take the storm spotter training, and learn how to use a telephone to call in your report to an 800-number — even easier, huh? Pretty darn valuable!

Don't wait for the next curious sickly green-yellow sky, and a nasty black thunderhead that seems to have waaay too much lightning to figure all this stuff out. Be prepared now, and later on, you'll be part of the solution. Later on, you can tell your friends that you actually did something about the weather, and you'll have an exciting story to tell - that's for sure!

If you would like to discuss ARES, RACES, EMCOMM, WinLink, Army MARS, or any District 6 issues, I want to hear from you. email WD0UG (at) ARRL (dot) net

*73, Doug Hilton, WD0UG / AAV4YP Alabama ARES District 6 EC, ARRL*

## ARES / RACES Update, Madison County.

The December Vox is around again, Thanksgiving is next week, the year has flown by. The weather has thank goodness been quiet for another a year. The active hurricane season that was predicted never manifested and frankly I like it that way; I'd rather keep practicing for an event that never happens then the other way round. One could argue that it is has been too quiet actually, as we are under a dry spell for the third year in a row and are several feet behind in precipitation, which makes us all excited once we do get some

weather, like we had last night. It was very conspicuous that we were on the 18th anniversary of the '89 airport road tornado breakout. The west of the state was under a watch; Skywarn was activated and it looked like things were quieting down and the nets stood down. Then the storms suddenly fired up a bit and half of the City of Madison ended up in the dark for over an hour. Which proves once more, it isn't over till it's over! But we needed the rain badly, and I am grateful for it, in spite of having to go to the office as the computers had drained the UPS-es dry.

Speaking of rain, too much of it is not good either and we had an excellent training at the National Weather Service by Jason Elliott about hydrology. How different rainfall amounts can have a different effect on our drainage systems and cause flash flooding. We discussed the different weather bulletins, the difference between flooding and flash flooding etc. It was a great night. Thank you Elliot!

In our December meeting we will discuss the flash flooding and flooding problem areas in more detail and assign teams to monitor streams when called for.

The ARES/RACES group meets the 2nd Thursday of each month, just before this newsletter goes to press. You are always welcome to join or visit and consider membership. We meet at the EOC on Fountain circle at 6PM sharp. We usually have pizza, so you don't have to stop for dinner first. We require that you do a storm spotter training at least every 2 years and get trained in CERT as well as a few online FEMA courses, but we give you at least a year to complete it. So come on over and check us out. Volunteer work is very gratifying. For general information checkout: [www.MadisonCountyAres.com](http://www.MadisonCountyAres.com)

Once more I want to thank everyone that has volunteered this year and put numerous hours in getting trained. Special thanks to our section manager Greg, district 6 EC Doug and my assistant EC's Gary, Robby, John and Chuck, and of course our friends at the EOC: Scott, Chris and Jared. Thanks a million and keep up the good work!

Have a safe and blessed holiday season, no matter how you celebrate it.

*73 de Rolf Goedhart Madison County Emergency Coordinator.  
K4RGG@arrl.net*

## Jamboree On The Air

The JOTA activity at the Talakto district Camporee was a great success. We operated from Sharon Johnston Park in New Market Alabama using call sign K4S, and had five stations active on Saturday. More than 300 scouts and leaders attended the camporee, and 59 scouts participated in JOTA. The weather was perfect. The camporee leadership has already decided to schedule the next fall camporee for JOTA weekend.

On HF, we worked mostly 20m PSK31, 20m SSTV, 40m and 80m phone. On VHF, we worked IRLP and echolink stations, and some locals.

I operated on HF using psk31, and I was very pleased with that mode. There were no pileups to deal with, and we were able to have some long QSOs during which a number of scouts were able to get on the air.

We worked the following states:

AL, NJ, NC, PA, NH, NY, SC, LA, KY, MI, VA, ID, WI, OH, WA, TX



ers to be linked during the event for communication between JOTA locations in north Alabama.

*Steve Conklin AI4QR*

## The Magic Season is Coming

Radio has a seasonal nature, particularly at HF and below, governed by the same forces which determine seasonal variation in weather. We're therefore not surprised to find that the low bands are generally less noisy in the winter, because sources of QRN like thunderstorms are less frequent or lower in intensity. We can accept the notion that long distance propagation is different at the solstices than at the equinoxes, particularly when we stay on one side of the equator, because the percentage of our path which is illuminated is very different at these two times.

We are entering that relatively quiet fall and winter period, and whether by chance or with these conditions in mind, that's also the peak of the HF contest season. Maybe contest sponsors figure more hams are available on cold weekends, and with the snow piled high outside the window, relish the thought of the amplifier warming their fingers and toes.

But there's a less reasoned and more mystical magic that comes with short days and a nip in the air. This is also the season of heightened imagination, when late on cold nights and under dim light, the source of those sounds in the headphones seems closer than in the balmy days. There seem to be more familiar calls on the air. The hams at the other end aren't anonymous - they're friends you've met before, or maybe friends you're meeting for the first time.

Experience this for yourself. Wait until the busy day has wound down, when perhaps the whole household except you is asleep, and the conventional sources of electronic entertainment are turned off. Lower the lights. If it's a cold night and your shack has a fireplace, get it going. Turn on the radio - only the radio, no computers or accessories are required.

You know the rest.

*73, Happy Thanksgiving, and a Merry Christmas, Tom Duncan, KG4CUY*

And the following countries:

Canada, Mexico, Cuba, Venezuela

The following amateur radio operators helped during the event:

Steve Conklin AI4QR, Bob Spence KF6KVR, Jason Flegal AI4XI, Tim Holland KK5H, John Trickey KB0IW, Sharen Trickey KB7ZCP, Royal Higgins KI4MBU, Richard Bartholomew (Bart) KK4AI, Gordon Brown KF42HK, Dan Miller KI4PMW, Earl Wells KZ4W, Ron Shaefer W4VM

Thanks to HARC for the use of the portable tower. The tower itself was interesting to a lot of scouts and adults, and helped draw people to the station.

I'd like to also thank the operators of the repeaters used for the North Alabama Skywarn net, who allowed those repeat-

## APRS NWS Weather Server

As I was sitting in my radio room here in mid-November I noticed the IGate server was transmitting data very frequently. So I looked at my screen to see what was causing most of the racket. As it turned out, there was some weather on the way and the Weather Server was starting to ramp up and distribute warnings and watches.

The National Weather Service (NWS) Weather Server (WXSVR) has been available on the APRS network for many years. The WXSVR on APRS was developed by Dale Huguley, KG5QD. It is an application that translates the

### ARRL Alabama Section Leadership Team

Check [www.arrl-al.org/officers.htm](http://www.arrl-al.org/officers.htm) for address and phone info.

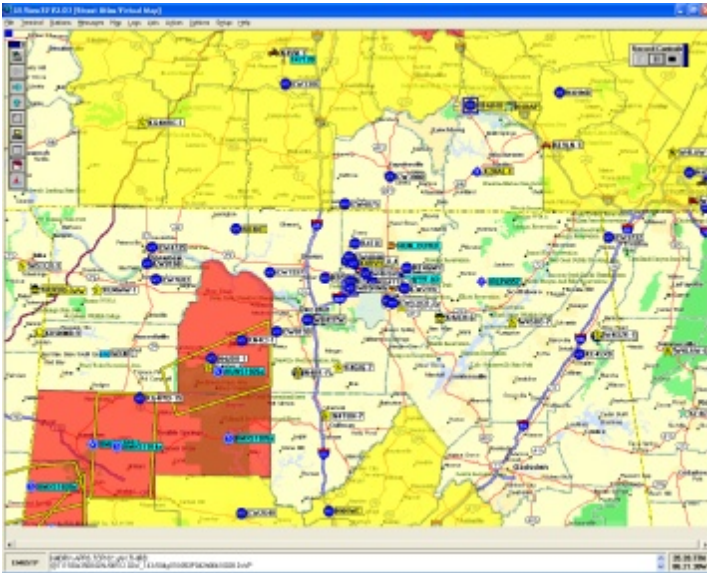
Section Manager: Greg Sarratt, W4OZK, [w4ozk@arrl.org](mailto:w4ozk@arrl.org)  
 Affiliated Club Coordinator: Jeff L O'Brien, KV4CX, [jeffo@zebra.net](mailto:jeffo@zebra.net)

Assistant Section Manager for Youth Activities, Rebekah A. Dorff, WG4Y, [wg4y@arrl.net](mailto:wg4y@arrl.net)  
 Alabama Frequency Coordinator - Liaison Alabama Repeater Council: Ron Shaffer, W4VM, [w4vm@comcast.net](mailto:w4vm@comcast.net)

Official Observer Coordinator: Ken Magnant, WA4WEY, [kmagnant@att.net](mailto:kmagnant@att.net)

Public Information Coordinator: Vacant,  
 Section Emergency Coordinator: Jay Isbell, KA4KUN, [sec@arrl-al.net](mailto:sec@arrl-al.net)

State Government Liaison: Richard D. Doll, KU4PY, [ku4py@arrl.net](mailto:ku4py@arrl.net)



NWS feed into a format suitable for dissemination on the APRS network.

As Dale's server posts these bulletins on the APRS Internet backbone, our local Internet Gateway (N8DEU-4 IGate) filters the reports for our local area and immediately disseminates the data on the local APRS network via RF transmission and digipeaters.

The WXSVR generates APRS objects for tornados, severe thunderstorms, tropical depressions, tropical storms, hurricanes, and special marine warnings. When the weather activity in the Tennessee Valley is active, the APRS network can be an active source of information with real time bulletins. There is real value in HAM radio using the APRS network. Latitude/longitude information is generated for the area of maximum concern as it is reported in real time. What does this mean to the Weather Spotter Network? Well, it is quite simple. You immediately know exactly how far you are from the activity of maximum concern and the direction of the activity.

If you are using any of the numerous APRS software programs on a personal computer (PC), handheld PALM, or a pocket PC you will see exactly where these weather objects are located on a graphical map. Some of these packages will also display watch boxes or counties highlighted in red or yellow depending on whether there is a warning or a watch posted in those areas. Advisory types such as TOR, FLOOD, FLASH FLOOD, SVRTSM, SEVERE\_WEATHER, etc. are transmitted along with all numerous types generated by the NWS. The APRS software is pretty smart and it knows when to un-highlight the affected areas on the map as the reports expire.

In our local area you may see reports generated from Memphis (MEG), Nashville (OHX), Birmingham (BMX), and Huntsville (HUN). Information reported from these NWS offices are transmitted on the APRS network immediately.

APRS activity continues to grow with more and more weather stations and users on the APRS network.

*Happy APRS Packeting,  
73's de Tim - N8DEU*

## Rocket City Marathon

The 31st running of the Rocket City Marathon will be held on Saturday, December 8, 2007, commencing at 8am. The 26.2 mile race will be conducted thru the streets of Huntsville, Alabama. Huntsville Amateur Radio Club members will be assisting the Huntsville Track Club as in past years.

We've been there since the very beginning of this, Alabama's first Marathon. Listen to NARA's 146.94 repeater for most of the coverage - some stations/locations may need to switch to the simulcasted 147.18 repeater. Look for APRS position reporting info on 144.39, too. Coverage will conclude around 1:30pm.

Still need to fill a few stations. If you wish to assist, let me know. Need phone number/cell, T-shirt size.

Currently we have:

- 1/1A WD4CPF/ KE4AHR
- 2 N4PDQ/N4PCW
- 3 K8GNM
- 4 N5AYD/KI4YRQ
- 5 Mile 2.9/25.2 open
- 6 KD4TFN
- 7 KG4CUY
- 8 N5DF
- 9 Mile 17.1 Possibly for KB3DXR
- 10 KI4MYU
- 11 W1TV
- 12 K4EGB
- 13 Med facility open
- 14 Spare open

*73, Leigh Bartlow WD4CPF*

## AMSAT News Phase IV

Have you heard the news about a possible Phase IV satellite? What does this mean? It means an Amateur radio geostationary satellite. That is correct. Just think about what that means to Amateur Radio. NO MORE DEAD band conditions. A 24 hour satellite available around the clock, with analog and digital capabilities. This is just what any public service emergency communication environment needs. Just think what field day would be like with a 24 hour band opening. Are you getting excited!

Here is a late breaking post from an AMSAT news bulletin:

Rick Hambly, W2GPS, AMSAT President along with Bob McGwier, N4HY, AMSAT

Vice-President of Engineering were able to make public the results of their recent work which will change the face of amateur radio going forward. AMSAT has been in consultation with Intelsat regarding an application of an Intelsat platform carrying our amateur radio satellites into a geosynchronous orbit.

Engineering studies, funding studies, among other negotiations are continuing at this point. However Bob, N4HY made the following observation of the project AMSAT has termed Phase IV Lite, "There is enough in place at this time that AMSAT needs to begin planning engineering work and possible construction of a geosynchronous payload so we are ready if Intelsat says they have a ride for us."

The Phase IV Lite Geosynchronous Payload is planned to consist of similar transponders already under development for the Phase 3 satellites. Accelerated development on the digital Advanced Communication Package is anticipated. In addition to the communication payload flown to space, AMSAT plans to develop an earth station attainable by the average ham so that users can immediately take advantage of the audio, digital messaging, and video services.

The Advanced Communication Package would be a self-contained earth station which could be sent with amateur radio communication teams or delivered to disaster areas for 24/7/365 emergency communications. These teams would be able to point a small dish at a predictable spot in the sky and immediately begin delivering disaster communication support without depending on HF propagation.

A Phase IV payload could also be used to provide TDRSS-like relay of ARISS communications. The 10 minute school contact could now be expanded to hours-long contact with the International Space Station. This opens possibilities for student involvement with experiments aboard the space station.

The Intelsat geosynchronous platform would be able to provide the AMSAT Phase IV Lite payload with approximately 400 watts of DC power for 15 years. The primary payload would also perform the GTO boost phase as well as perform station keeping and antenna pointing once it has arrived on station. Bob, N4HY summarized, "The Intelsat team would be doing all the things nearly impossible for amateurs and that enables AMSAT to do what we do best ... build a communication system that changes amateur radio for the better!"

More details will be coming... Stay tuned. This is a major development.

[ANS thanks Rick, W2GPS and Bob, N4HY for the above information]

73's, Tim - N8DEU, AMSAT Area Coordinator

### The Giggle Box

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO EVERYBODY THAT WAS BORN IN DECEMBER!!

A note from Giggles: Now that I have reached the four page mark on my article, I will edit it til it gets all the empty spaces out. Ok, no smart remarks. I tried to edit my brain, but there was

nothing there. Thank goodness for the computer. Anyway, the Christmas Party will be December 7th, 2007 @ 7:00pm @ the Red Cross Building. Bring a wrapped gag gift, dessert and a smile. If we are good maybe Santa Claus will surprise us.

I went to the Veteran's Day parade and enjoyed listening to the music and watching the parade go by. I enjoyed watching the children with big smiles on their faces as they waved their American flags. Some of them don't even know why they were there except to watch and listen to the people in the parade. I hope everyone enjoyed their Veteran's Day. I, personally, want to thank all the men and women who have served our country to keep it free. Thanksgiving will be coming up shortly and I can't wait. Be thankful for what we have. CUL

A Story or Two

#### TAPS

We in the United States have all heard the haunting song, "Taps." It's the song that gives is that lump in our throats and usually tears in our eyes. But, do you know the story behind the song? If not, I think you will be interested to find out about its humble beginnings.

Reportedly, it all began in 1862 during the Civil War, when Union Army Captain Robert Ellicombe was with his men near Harrison's Landing in Virginia. The Confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land. During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moans of a soldier who lay severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention. Crawling on his stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward his encampment.

When the Captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead. The Captain lit a lantern and suddenly caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the soldier. It was his own son. The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. Without telling his Father, the boy enlisted in the Confederate Army.

The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial,

despite his enemy status. His request was only partially granted. The Captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for his son at the funeral. The request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate. But, out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him only one musician.

The Captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform. This wish was granted. The haunting melody, we now know as "Taps" .. used at military funerals was born. The words are ...

Day is done  
Gone the sun  
From the lakes  
From the hills  
From the sky  
All is well  
Safely rest  
God is nigh  
Fading light  
Dims the sight  
And a star  
Gems the sky  
Gleaming bright  
From afar  
Drawing nigh  
Stills the night  
Thanks and praise  
For our days  
Neath the sun  
Neath the stars  
Neath the sky  
As we go  
This we know  
God is nigh

I, too, have felt the chills while listening to "Taps" but I have never seen all the words to the song until now. I didn't even know there was more than one verse. I also never knew the story behind the song and I didn't know if you had either so I thought I'd pass it along. I now have an even deeper respect for the song than I did before.

When you are making out your Christmas card list this year, please include the following: A Recovering American Soldier c/o Walter Reed Army Medical Center 6900 Georgia Avenue, NW Washington, D.C. 20307-5001

## PUNS

Two antennas met on a roof, fell in love and got married. The ceremony wasn't much, but the reception was excellent.

A jumper cable walks into a bar. The bartender says, "I'll serve you, but don't start anything." Two peanuts walk into a bar, and one was a salted.

A man walks into a bar with a slab of asphalt under his arm and says: "A beer please, and one for the road."

Two cannibals are eating a clown. One says to the other: "Does this taste funny to you?"

"Doc, I can't stop singing 'The Green, Green Grass of Home.'" "That sounds like Tom Jones Syndrome." "Is it common?" "Well, it's not unusual."

An invisible man marries an invisible woman. The kids were nothing to look at either.

I went to buy some camouflage trousers the other day but I couldn't find any.

I went to a seafood disco last week . . . and pulled a mussel.

What do you call a fish with no eyes? A fsh.

Two fish swim into a concrete wall. The one turns to the other and says "Dam!". (I guess Rolf read this Pun also. Rolf, I bet you thought I really wasn't listening while I was sewing during the club meeting. Some people CAN multi-task. That wasn't a dirty word or I wouldn't have put it in.)

Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly, so they lit a fire in the craft. Unsurprisingly it sank, proving once again that you can't have your kayak and heat it too.

A group of chess enthusiasts checked into a hotel and were standing in the lobby discussing their recent tournament victories. After about an hour, the manager came out of the office and asked them to disperse. "But why?", they asked, as they moved off. "Because", he said, "I can't stand chess-nuts boasting in an open foyer."

Mahatma Gandhi, as you know, walked barefoot most of the time, which produced an impressive set of calluses on his feet. He also ate very little, which made him rather frail and with his odd diet, he suffered from bad breath. This made him (Oh, man, this is so bad, it's good)... A super calloused fragile mystic hexed by halitosis.

And finally, there was the person who sent twenty different puns to his friends, with the hope that at least ten of the puns would make them laugh. No pun in ten did.

When I say I'm Broke, I'm Broke

A little old lady answered a knock on the door one day, only to be confronted by a well-dressed young man carrying a vacuum cleaner. "Good morning," said the young man. "If I could take a couple of minutes of your time, I would like to demonstrate the very latest in high-powered vacuum cleaners."

"Go away," said the old lady. "I haven't got any money, I'm broke!" and she proceeded to close the door.

Quick as a flash, the young man wedged his foot in the door and pushed it wide open. "Don't be too hasty," he said, "not until you have at least seen my demonstration." With that, he emptied a bucket of horse manure onto her hallway carpet. "If this vacuum cleaner does not remove all traces of this horse manure from your carpet, madam, I will personally eat the remainder."

The old lady stepped back and said "Well I hope you've got a good appetite, because they cut off my electricity this morning. What part of broke did you not understand?"

The Hint for the Month of December

A mouse trap, placed on top of your alarm clock, will prevent you from rolling over and going back to sleep after you hit the snooze button.

Thought for the Month of December

Don't wait for 6 strong men to take you to church.

Solve the puzzle:

MMEEBRR HOSET STLO NAD  
DARMHE LIHWE EVNSRIG HERTI  
CUTRONY DNA SOLA SOHTE  
EESRPNYLT GNVIVRES NI HET  
MEDRA ORCESF.

*Peggy Bell (Giggles) K4EGB  
pbell@hiwaay.net SEW LONG!*

### From The Editor's Wastebasket

It's time to start planning for the joint membership mailing for HARC and NARA. We usually try to get that in the mail before the end of the year and have the joint membership meeting as one of the early ones in January. I'm a bit reluctant to suggest the mailing, since it'll have me digging addresses out of the FCC database and trying to verify them during the time I'd normally be fixing up my family Christmas

Card list and getting them in the mail, but it needs to be done!

In past years, we have tried to include every ham in the area covered by the two organizations. It'd be much less effort to mail to just the existing memberships reminding everybody to re-up but that has no potential for signing up new members for the groups. Friday, December 14 is the only available night for getting ready for the mailing, so we'll need the addresses selected, labels printed and the mailout pieces printed up by that night.

Had some landline discussion recently with Bob Fanning, K4VB about the way he had set up the meeting schedule back in the time he was President. We couldn't remember exactly what was what, but basically the month had four meetings each of which had a definite purpose. I think the arrangement was like this: One Friday night was set aside for a business meeting and only emergency business was handled at the other meetings (many clubs only meet once a month and can handle their business with one monthly meeting, why can't we? Another Friday night was set aside for a program night, giving the club officers only one night a month to find a program for. Another night was Vox and Social night -- back when we had to fold, dot, label and pack the Voxes for bulk mailing -- could still be used as a social night. The fourth Friday night was set aside as a meeting for the special interest groups -- packet, ATV and whatever. As now, for months with a fifth Friday, that night was set aside as auction night. As far as possible, club business was held to a minimum on nights other than the designated business meeting night.

I wonder if a somewhat similar arrangement would work for the club now. It might be easier to come up with program material for one program night a month. And we need to work on programs. I've said it before and I still think it is so that almost any member of this club could come up with a program on some topic that would be of interest to the club -- not necessarily ham radio related, though that would be the best emphasis. Remember Bob Fanning's program on beekeeping a few months back. I think everybody found that interesting, even if the only antennas involved were on the bees.

*Enough from me! Happy Thanksgiving!  
Frank Emens, W4HFU*