

VOX



HUNTSVILLE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 43, Number 2

February, 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.

"Vox", Vol 43, Nr 2, February, 2003
A Newsletter published monthly except for August by the Huntsville Amateur Radio Club, P.O. Box 423, Huntsville, AL 35804

Marconi 100th Anniversary

The 100th anniversary of Marconi's first transmission from the United States (Cape Cod) to England was this past January 18th. The "S" had been transmitted from Newfoundland and received by the same station in Poldhu, Cornwall only a little over a year before. The substance of the transmission had certainly increased: a 54 word greeting from Teddy Roosevelt compared to one letter sent repeatedly.



At least two special events stations, KM1CC and WA1WCC, commemorated this event. There are numerous web sites chronicling both the 1901 and 1903 events which searches "marconi poldhu 1901" and "marconi poldhu 1903" yield. Some of these have sounds of code received from spark-gap transmitters: quite loud, but barely decipherable - I'd give them a 1-9-1. While these signals lacked clarity, they certainly made up for it in bandwidth! A few experimenters even applied modulation to this very raw RF to produce the first AM phone signals, which must have produced significant sidebands 100 kHz away.

Beyond their wildest dreams, spark gap pioneers were using the spectrum! We need to do the same (but let's not use spark gap), to help us keep it. It was comforting to hear at the January 10th HARC/NARA Joint Membership meeting that a 1.25m repeater outage caused a stir, when conventional wisdom says there is no activity on the band. Let's try to fill up the huge 10m and 6m bands when conditions permit - a lot of room remains there for FM, full carrier DSB AM, and anything else that's legal.

In other words, make waves!

73, Tom KG4CUY

CQ Old Timers

Check your VOX calendar: Friday, February 28th is Old Timer's Night. We're looking for radio lore, personal experiences, and tales of all descriptions from those who have been around ham radio for a while. Plan to come and have a good time!

NARA Election Results:

President: Ron Shaffer W4VM

Vice President: John Zeiler WD5GOZ

Secretary: Charlie Emerson N4OKL

Treasurer: Todd Freestone KD4ALP

Technical Advisor: Ralph Hogan W4XE

HARC Liaison: Don Tunstill W4NO

'94 Control Op: Don Trammel AI4CW

Web Page Curator: Cliff Goehagen:

W4CSG

From the new NARA president

We had a great turn out at the HARC / NARA kickoff meeting on January 10th. It was more than a repeater meeting alone we heard a good overview of all that HARC does as well. The results of the NARA election can be seen elsewhere in this edition of the Vox. Kudos to outgoing NARA president John Zeiler for his work in keeping NARA rolling on all fronts for over 2 years. The recent re-work of the '94 PL deck, the Joint membership drive and the '03 kickoff meeting all went

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, February 1

Saturday, March 1

For information contact:

Larry Frost, KR4GU, 536-4154

kr4gu@hamfest.org

Or

Don Tunstill, W4NO, 536-3904

dontunstill@hamfest.org

smoother with John's contributions. John will continue to help as a very able Vice President.

A very sincere thanks also to Don Tunstill for all his hard work as NARA secretary for several years. Some may not realize that there is not only a lot of behind the scenes work with the NARA data base but with the mechanics of interaction with HARC as well. The Joint membership drive, Field day Hamfest & SET are just a few examples of this. Because Don is so actively involved in both organizations, I have asked that he continue functioning as a liaison because he makes more of the HARC meetings than I do in my effort to balance hobby & family activities.

The list goes on and on for all who have helped in NARA's success so I'll hit a few & go on: Ralph W4XE - his tireless technical work in keeping our machines in tip top shape, Don AI4CW - handling all the speed dials, announcements and programming on '94, Cliff: W4CSG - doing a fantastic job with the NARA web page (www.qsl.net/nara) (by the way,

we have adopted the NARA logo created by Cliff), Todd KD4ALP for his long standing tireless efforts in keeping our treasury straight, Charlie: N4OKL for his work as vice president, help in repairing '18 and for jumping in as secretary this year and already doing a lot of database work, Leigh WD4CPF for keeping '18 up and running, Ernie WA4BPS and Carol N4QPE for hosting 2 repeaters with lots of wires! Doug W4PS and Danna K4RPS for hosting our second UHF repeater and Frank: W4HFU for a mountain of work in making the joint mail out happen. Thank you very much to all the folks at Gigaparts for contributing SIGNIFICANTLY to the door prizes at the meeting. We all need to really support Gigaparts in both radio and computer purchases! I know I may have forgotten someone & I'll remember after I turn this in to Frank but please know that I speak for all who are part of NARA when I convey a heart felt thanks to each of you - named and un-named. Speaking of unnamed - thank you to whoever came up with refreshments at

the meeting since we didn't plan or budget for it in our haste. Whoever you are, if you'd pass the hat my way, I'd like to contribute.. grin.

Now, what about "campaign promises" ? I make none the election is over.. grin. But you know Ralph and I and others will get the stuff done on the technical side! I think the first priority is to follow through on the '18 replacement quickly and hopefully say goodbye to our "crackle". Part of that plan is to wean ourselves from the '18 patch and rely more on patches on '94, 443.500 and planned patches on 145.33 and 224.94. In addition, I encourage the use of the patch on 147.10 and possibly a planned one for 147.30. This would free up a linking antenna system for exciting new internet linking modes which has become very popular. It will also allow us to save costs in replacing an aging set of UHF link radios currently dedicated to the patch. If you have thoughts or questions on this, send me an e-mail.

HARC ACTIVITY CALENDAR FOR February, 2003						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	29 Southeast Linked Repeater Net19:00 on +442.775 PL203.5 Hz	30 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	31 HARC Meeting Auction Come ex- change junk box contents	1 CAVEC Exams, 0900 RedCross Bld Jackson, MS Hamfest, 1-31 & 2-1 *TWIARg
2	3	4 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	5 Southeast Linked Repeater Net19:00 on +442.775 PL203.5 Hz	6 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	7 HARC Meeting	8 *TWIAR DisieFest, Memphis, TN Feb 8/9
9	10	11 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	12 Southeast Linked Repeater Net19:00 on +442.775 PL203.5 Hz	13 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	14 HARC Meeting Vox night	15 *TWIAR
16	17	18 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	19 Southeast Linked Repeater Net19:00 on +442.775 PL203.5 Hz	20 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	21 HARC Meeting	22 *TWIAR
23	24	25 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	26 Southeast Linked Repeater Net19:00 on +442.775 PL203.5 Hz	27 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	28 HARC Meeting Old Timer's Night - Come here about our history!	1 CAVEC Exams, 0900 Red Cross Bldg *TWIAR

*TWIAR -- This Week In Amaterur Radio, + 442.775 PL203.5 Hz 8 PM Saturdays

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Come see us next to Chili's!

The next priority is to finish deployment of the 6 meter machine. There has been a lot of interest in this and we hope to do it early this spring. About equal priority is the East '94 remote receiver. My apologies for not mentioning it in the haste of the meeting but it is progressing along thanks to efforts by John: K4JCH, Paul KF4TTB and others. I hope we can finish this up as soon as warm weather allows tower work.

One other thing to mention before I close: As one who not only works to maintain Club repeaters but several repeaters of my own, I have come to appreciate the work and cash flow of others who do the same such as Harlie: KB4CRG and Ralph: W4XE and Steve: WA4OUE and Scott W4SSW just to name a few. These folks keep lots of repeaters going on far less of a budget than NARA and just as much work. With that in mind I believe it fosters a much better Ham community to look for ways to work together with these folks and encourage them rather than compete with them. I see only benefit to all involved with this kind of posture.

With that in mind let me say how much I enjoyed the recent '24 repeater meeting and continue to pledge whatever support I can. I hope you will do likewise. You will hear me on nearly all of the Huntsville repeaters, NARA and others alike but most times if you shout on '10 I will answer there. In this same spirit, look for information about an upcoming W4VM /W4EX repeater group meeting elsewhere in this issue of the Vox.

Well, I'm getting a rather long article so I'll save the rest for future NARA notes and the 2003 NARA newsletter. One other thing I'd like to mention is Stay tuned and I'll see you on the air

73, Ron Shaffer, W4VM NARA President
(w4vm@comcast.net)

W4VM / W4XE repeater meeting January 30th.

The users on the 147.10 repeater have been talking about a get together for some time now. Since Ralph: W4XE and I work together on most all we do with repeaters we decided to have a combined support meeting for users of both

groups. Ralph: W4XE operates the 145.23 Alabama Inter City Link (AICN) machine on Monte Sano as well as the 443.625 repeater (127.5 tone) on Monte Sano and the 444.300 repeater (103.5 tone) on Green Mountain. This Green mountain site is where the Transmit side of the new 6 meter repeater will be. The pending 53.21 machine is a joint venture with W4XE and NARA with NARA supplying portions of the antenna system and Ralph supplying most of the RF equipment. The AICN machine took a massive lightning hit last summer which destroyed most of Ralph's equipment but it is finally almost ready to re-deploy.

W4VM operates the 147.10 repeater in Weedon Mountain RSA in a joint venture with the North Alabama DX Club (NADXC) and the Marshal Amateur Radio Club (MARC). W4VM supplies most of the equipment and MARC supplies the patch / phone line control. The 147.10 machine took a lightning hit a year or so ago but stayed on the air thanks to the NADXC back-up equipment and help

from individuals who are part of the Huntsville Cave Rescue Unit to get the damage repaired. W4VM also operates a UHF machine on 443.475 with a 103.5 tone which has a patch and part time HF remote base. A second UHF machine: 443.150 is in the works to support Internet linking and the W4VM IRLP node 4950 operates on 446.200 Mhz with a 100 Hz tone and is open to all. Ron also maintains the 147.30 flagship repeater for the NADXC. Interesting projects with this machine to spur interest in the DX club will also be discussed at the meeting.

The meeting is at 6:30 PM on Thursday January 30th at Papa Lovett's on University Drive at the Northwest corner of Sparkman and University. All who are interested in these facilities are encouraged to attend and hear about them as well as meet others who frequent these repeaters.

73, Ron Shaffer, W4VM

The Giggle Box

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO
EVERYBODY THAT WAS BORN IN
FEBRUARY !!

A note from Giggles: The other day, I was talking to a hopefully, prospective ham, who made me glad that I write the Giggle Box. The article gave them an excuse to pick up the VOX and read it. While reading the Giggle Box, I hope that something catches the reader's eye and causes them to read the rest of the VOX. I admit that if you aren't a ham than you don't understand what you are reading and it is a little dull. Before becoming a ham, I would never have picked up the VOX because it didn't interest me, but now that I am a ham, I think the articles are informative and fun to read. Believe it or not, I do read the VOX from cover to cover, do you? I also have been known to put some error in my article, just to see if someone actually reads the VOX. And you thought I wasn't paying attention. ;-) If I do make a mistake, I want you to come to me and tell me about it and we will both know that at least the G Box is being read. Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that only the Giggle Box is worth reading and I'm not patting myself on the shoulder. I'm just glad that I can contribute to the VOX and make someone giggle and laugh at my article. Don't forget to buy your valentine a surprise for Valentine's Day.

A Joke or Two

Just Repairs

Mrs. Davidson's dishwasher quit working, so she called a repairman. He couldn't accommodate her with an evening appointment, and since she had to go to work the next day she told him, "I'll leave the key under the mat. "Fix the dishwasher, leave the bill on the counter, and I'll mail you the check. By the way, don't worry about my Doberman. He won't bother you. But, whatever you do, not under any circumstances talk to my parrot!" When the repairman arrived at Mrs. Davidson's apartment the next day, he discovered the biggest and meanest looking Doberman he had ever seen. But, just like she had said, the dog just lay there on the carpet watching the repairman go about his business. However, the whole time he was there the parrot drove him nuts with his incessant cursing, yelling, and name-calling. Finally the repairman couldn't stand it any longer and yelled: "Shut up, you stupid ugly bird!" To which the parrot replied: "Get him, Spike!"

Diary of a Snow Shoveler December 8:
6:00 PM.

It started to snow. The first snow of the season and the wife and I sat for hours by the window watching the huge soft flakes drift down from heaven. It looked like a Grandma Moses Print. So romantic we felt like newlyweds again. I love snow!

December 9: We woke to a beautiful blanket of crystal white snow covering every inch of the landscape. What a fantastic sight! Can there be a more lovely place in the Whole World? Moving here was the best idea I've ever had. Shoveled for the first time in years and felt like a boy again. I did both our driveway and the sidewalks. This afternoon the snow plow came along and covered up the sidewalks and closed in the driveway, so I got to shovel again. What a perfect life.

December 12: The sun has melted all our lovely snow. Such a disappointment. My neighbor tells me not to worry, we'll definitely have a white Christmas. No snow on Christmas would be awful! Bob says we'll have so much snow by the end of winter, that I'll never want to see snow again. I don't think that's possible. Bob is such a nice man. I'm glad he's our neighbor.

December 14: Snow, lovely snow! 8" last night. The temperature dropped to -20. The cold makes everything sparkle so. The wind took my breath away, but I warmed up by shoveling the driveway and sidewalks. This is the life! The snowplow came back this afternoon and buried everything again. I didn't realize I would have to do quite this much shoveling, but I'll certainly get back in shape this way. I wish I wouldn't huff and puff so.

December 15: 20 inches forecast. Sold my van and bought a 4x4 Explorer. Bought snow tires for the wife's car and 2 extra shovels. Stocked the freezer. The wife wants a wood stove in case the electricity goes out. I think that's silly. We aren't in Alaska, after all.

December 16: Ice storm this morning. Fell on my butt on the ice in the driveway putting down salt. Hurt like heck. The wife laughed for an hour, which I think was very cruel.

December 17: Still way below freezing. Roads are too icy to go anywhere. Electricity was off for 5 hours. I had to pile the blankets on to stay warm. Nothing to do but stare at the wife and try not to irritate her. Guess I should've bought a wood stove, but won't admit it to her. I hate it when she's right. I can't believe I'm freezing to death in my own living room.

December 20: Electricity's back on, but had another 14" of the stuff last night. More shoveling. Took all day. Snowplow came by twice. Tried to find a neighbor kid to shovel, but they said they're too busy playing hockey. I think they're lying. Called the only hardware store around to see about buying a snow blower and they're out. Might have another shipment in March. I think they're lying. Bob says I have to shovel or the city will have it done and bill me. I think he's lying.

December 22: Bob was right about a white Christmas because 13 more inches of the white stuff fell today, and it's so cold it probably won't melt till August. Took me 45 minutes to get all dressed up to go out to shovel and then I had to a nature call. By the time I got undressed, took care of business and dressed again, I was too tired to shovel. Tried to hire Bob who has a plow on his truck for the rest of the

winter; but he says he's too busy. I think he's is lying.

December 23: Only 2" of snow today. And it warmed up to 0. The wife wanted me to decorate the front of the house this morning. What is she ... nuts??? Why didn't she tell me to do that a month ago? She says she did but I think she's lying.

December 24: 6". Snow packed so hard by snowplow, I broke the shovel. Thought I was having a heart attack. If I ever catch that guy who drives that snowplow, I'll drag him through the snow by his hair. I know he hides around the corner and waits for me to finish shoveling and then he comes down the street at a 100 miles an hour and throws snow all over where I've just been! Tonight the wife wanted me to sing Christmas carols with her and open our presents, but I was busy watching for the snowplow.

December 25: Merry Christmas. 20 more inches of the #S%&*!! slop tonight. Snowed in. The idea of shoveling makes my blood boil. I hate the snow! Then the snowplow driver came by asking for a donation and I hit him over the head with my shovel. The wife says I have a bad attitude. I think she's an idiot. If I have to watch "It's a Wonderful Life" one more time, I'm going to kill her.

December 26: Still snowed in. Why did I ever move here? It was all HER idea. She's really getting on my nerves.

December 27: Temperature dropped to -30 and the pipes froze.

December 28: Warmed up to above -50. Still snowed in. SHE is driving me crazy!!!

December 29: 10 more inches. Bob says I have to shovel the roof or it could cave in. That's the silliest thing I ever heard. How dumb does he think I am?

December 30: Roof caved in. The snow plow driver is suing me for a million dollars for the bump on his head. The wife went home to her mother. Another 9" predicted.

December 31: Set fire to what's left of the house. No more shoveling.

January 8: I feel so good. I just love those little white pills they keep giving me. Why am I tied to the bed?

Did You Know:

You can rub your comb and hair brush with a sheet of fabric softener to hold down static in your hair.

The Thought for the Month of February

He fell out of the ugly tree and hit every branch on the way down

Solve the puzzle:

HWNE A KCCLO SIGRYNUH IT
SOEG ACKB 4 CDSSENO.

73, Peggy Bell (Giggles), K4EGB

Do you know what the word FAMILY means? FAMILY = (F)ATHER (A)ND (M)OTHER (I) (L)OVE (Y)OU?

The Editor's Wastebasket

I hope everybody was able to enjoy the holidays and got their fill of turkey and football. It's pretty hard to settle down to the somewhat dismal prospect of January and February after all that. I've always figured if there was a month among the twelve that we could dispense with it would be February. It seems to have no redeeming features other than shortness -- and it's easy to see why it was picked for the shortest month.

Apologies to KG4CUY for springing the photo on him. I hope it survives the Xerox process safely. Other regular contributors to the Vox might find something similar in the future. Gee, I hope that doesn't scare off any contributors!

Speaking of scaring off contributors, something seems to have done that both last month and this month. Last month I figured it had to do with the fact that everybody was distracted by their holiday "doings" and didn't get to write anything, I hope it was not a contagious or chronic problem. We'll have some short Voxes if it is. Maybe it's time to remind everybody --I'm not the Vox "writer". I put the newsletter together from material sent to me by the members. No material, no Vox.

I'd sure like to see a program on IRLP. It sounds like a potentially fascinating possibility and I'd like to understand more about it. In fact, it became obvious during the NARA/HARC joint meeting that the repeater system has gotten complex enough that you can't begin to take advantage of its capabilities by just monitoring "94" any more. Am I the only one who'd like to see a presenta-

tion on the operational aspects of the system?

73, Frank Emens, W4HFU

Area Hamfests

January 31 - February 1, 2003. Capital City Hamfest, Jackson, Mississippi

See www.jxnarc.org or contact ab5wf@arrl.net.

Hours are 8 to 4 on Saturday. Free parking. Talk-in frequency is 146.76 MHz..

February 8-9 2003. Tennessee Section Convention, Memphis, Tennessee.

See <http://www.dixiefest.org> or contact Ben Troughton, KU4AW at 901-372-8031 or bktrough@bellsouth.net.

Hours are 9 to 5 on Saturday and 9 to 2 on Sunday. Admission is \$5.00. Parking is free. Talk-in frequencies are 146.82 and/or 146.88 Mhz.

73, John Farr, KC4ZXX

CAVEC Test Sessions - Huntsville & Athens

The CAVEC testing sessions for this area are as follows. 1st Saturday at the Huntsville Red Cross at 9:00 am 3rd Saturday at Intergraph in Madison at 1:00 pm. Bldg. 15 in the back door. Odd numbered months only. 3rd Saturday at Athens EOC on Market st. in Athens at 1:00 pm. Even numbered months only. The only exceptions are when the date would fall exactly on a holiday or the week of the Huntsville hamfest.

Bring a picture ID, a copy of your amateur license, any certificates of successful completion that you may have, and 10 dollars.

IF you've got any other questions just give me call. Home phone 461-7905. Cell phone 603-0049.

BTW I typically monitor 147.240 on the 3rd Saturday and 146.940 on the first Saturday.

C U there.

Bob Hudson W4RKH

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