

VOX



HUNTSVILLE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 42, Number 1

January, 2002

Huntsville Amateur Radio Club Information

Club Officers:

President,

Chris Reed, KF4MMF
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Vice President,

Tom Duncan, KG4CUY
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Secretary,

Scott Worsham, W4SSW
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Treasurer,

Heath Thorson, KC4HRX, 722-0250
heath.thorson@home.com

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 42, Nr 1, January '02
A Newsletter published monthly except for August by the Huntsville Amateur Radio Club, P.O. Box 423, Huntsville, AL

Huntsville Times Rocket City Marathon 2001

It was about 6:50am on Saturday, December 8, 2001 in Huntsville, Alabama. The sky was almost completely overcast as we started getting set up in the south parking lot of the Huntsville Hilton. All stations were manned on time, and the 25th annual running of the race started promptly at 8am, with KF4MMF Chris doing the starting honors on the N4HSV 146.94 Mhz 2M voice repeater. It was warmer than we thought it would be - in the low 60s, but then the rains came. The cooling effects of the cloud cover and the rain made for an extremely high finish rate. Our sag wagon operators reported only about a dozen runners picked up altogether - out of some 1100+ runners!

The first male runner finished at 2:20, a good time for the 26 mile, 385 yard race, considering the weather. And of note, the first 2 female finishers were both over 40. Then, too, many of us will remember the gal who finished about 7th among the ladies. Her jacket covered her competitor number for much of the race - so she was reported as 'green jacket' on our time sheets. Finally, late in the race, she pulled the jacket up enough for one of our hams to see the number - and the mystery was solved. She turned out to be a high school classmate of the Huntsville Track Club member in charge of the Bankston motor home we used for Communications central.

As he did last year, Tim Cunningham, N8DEU installed an APRS unit in the lead vehicle, and provided a street map position display on his laptop in the motor home. This was augmented by Tim's large flat screen monitor and allowed us to accurately track the lead male in real time and give stations a heads up. And - new this year - John, N5AYD, had his APRS unit installed and operating on the back of the bike ridden by the HTC rider who accompanied the first female, and this too gave us some good position info.

My special thanks go to all who worked this major community service

event - many of them out in the rain: K4DRW Don, K4EGB Peggy, KE4AHP Randy, KF4MMF Chris, KG4IGL Rolf - who jumped in Friday nite when KD4TFN Steve turned up puny, KW4D Gene, N5AYD John, N8DEU Tim, W4WAD Gobe, W4YNT Bob, WA4LAF Jim, WB4LTT Leon, and WD4CPF Leigh. Also to KD4TFN Steve who stayed home and minded the repeater and stored the APRS info for later viewing, the North Alabama Repeater Association for the use of the 94 repeater, all those who stood by during the event while we tied up the repeater, and - not to forget, our most senior operator - 83 years young KR4EO Mr. Walter Pont, who stood by in the Medical facility inside the Hilton. And a final note - although I believe all of our ham operators received their long-sleeved white Marathon T-shirts, I still have one Large size left - if I missed anyone.

73 Leigh WD4CPF

From The Prez

I hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas. Santa brought lots of amateur toys this year I'm sure of it. January 2002 is here and that means the "big meeting" is just around the corner. Of course, I am speaking of the joint HARC/NARA membership kick off meeting scheduled for Friday night, January 11th at 7:30 p.m. at the

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, Jan.5

Saturday, Feb 2

For information contact:

Larry Frost, KR4GU, 536-9154

KR4GU@bellsouth.net

Or

Don Tunstill, W4NO, 536-3904

dtunstil@hiwaay.net

Red Cross building on Washington St. This year, the joint membership forms went out to the current HARC and NARA memberships plus most of the amateurs in the Huntsville-Madison County area. We invite you to attend the big meeting and show your support for both organizations.

In preparation for the "big meeting", the big stick on was held back on December 14 in addition to the Christmas Party. Everyone had a great time and enjoyed the food and fellowship. Several people deserve a special mention in making it all happen. Peggy Bell, K4EGB our "giggle box" organized the food, refreshments and door prizes. Don Tunstill, W4NO also helped organize the printing and stuffing for the membership drive. Vox editor Frank Emens, W4HFU compiled the mailing database and managed all of those labels. HARC Treasurer Heath Thorson, KC4HRX and HARC Secretary Scott Worsham, W4SSW was on hand to lend a helping hand wherever it was needed. Thanks to Woody Zeigler, K8GNM who reserved the room at Red Cross. Most of all, I would like to thank all those who came out and worked hard stuffing all those envelopes. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Another Rocket City Marathon is behind us and as usual, the event pro-

gressed smoothly with the help of many amateur operators who were working behind the scenes and along the route. Tim Cunningham, N8DEU helped to organize the APRS tracking while Leigh Bartlow, WD4CPF chaired the event and has all the details in a later article in this edition. Thanks to everyone for helping out!

Our VP, Tom Duncan KG4CUY is at it again. He has been working hard getting those programs scheduled for 2002. Several already tentatively on the calander for January and February. Stay tuned for more details!

It wouldn't be appropriate to end the January presidential entry without a New Year's resolution for 2002. I would like to encourage every HARC member to become more active in the upcoming year. Whether elmering a future ham, teaching a class, helping to raise a tower or storm spotting during severe weather, all of us can contribute in some way to help our hobby prosper. Helping others is one of the most rewarding traits of being a "ham".

73 and Happy New Year, KF4MMF

From the Web

Bell Telephone Laboratories was from its inception in 1925 home to researchers whose names we associate with key dis-

coveries, theories, inventions, and standards: Shannon, Colpitts, Bardeen, Ritchie, Brattain, Nyquist, Stroustrup, and Bode are some. The Labs arose from smaller, parallel departments at Western Electric and AT&T with the express purpose of performing research of commercial value to the phone company. As such, the average employee was average at very few other places: advanced degrees in the sciences and engineering were more the norm than exception, and academic rigor expected in the exposition of ideas bearing the Labs' name as birthplace.

In 1927, Harold Black, a member of one of the lower castes of Labs engineers, had been tasked to work on reducing distortion in the troublesome transcontinental phone lines. The tube amplifiers used in repeaters were unwilling to drive miles-long cables, often presenting highly reactive loads, without breaking into oscillation. Even when tamed into operating as amplifiers, the repeaters had far from flat frequency response, and exhibited wide variability in gain with different tubes of the same type. Black reasoned that the positive feedback causing oscillation was also the culprit responsible for these and other ill effects: he sought to combat this with

HARC ACTIVITY CALENDAR FOR January, 2002						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	31 Christian Fellowship Net 2100 on 145.33 Don't over celebrate, Drive carefully!	1 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33 Hangovers, Football, Black-Eye peas & Hog Jowl	2 Southeast Linked Re- peater Net1900 on 147.240	3 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	4 HARC Meeting	5 CAVEC Exams, 0900 at Red Cross building Lakeway ARC, Morristown TN
6	7 Christian Fellowship Net 2100 on 145.33	8 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	9 Southeast Linked Re- peater Net1900 on 147.240	10 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	11 >>>Joint meeting with NARA<<<	12
13	14 Christian Fellowship Net 2100 on 145.33	15 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	16 Southeast Linked Re- peater Net1900 on 147.240	17 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	18 HARC Meeting Vox and Social Night	19 Summer County ARC, Gallatin, TN
20	21 Christian Fellowship Net 2100 on 145.33	22 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	23 Southeast Linked Re- peater Net1900 on 147.240	24 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	25 HARC Meeting Craig Behrens on QRP	26 Troy RC & Butler County RACES Troy, AL
27	28 Christian Fellowship Net 2100 on 145.33	29 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	30 Southeast Linked Re- peater Net1900 on 147.240	31 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	1 HARC Meeting	2 CAVEC Exams, 0900 at Red Cross Bldg.

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out-of-phase negative feedback. The notions of trading gain for bandwidth, and "programming" the transfer functions of amplifiers with surrounding passive components, trace back to Black.

David Mindell's "Opening Black's Box - Rethinking Feedback's Myth of Origin"

(www.mit.edu/6.933/www/black.pdf) treats Black's discoveries, and his dealings with Harry Nyquist and Hendrick Bode on closed-loop systems, in some thirty pages. Other information on Black is available at the National Inventor's Hall of Fame website, www.invent.org/book/book-text/12.html.

Though no theorem bears his name, Harold Stephen Black's legacy is alive and well in the active filters and audio stages of our radios.

73 de Tom Duncan, KG4CUIY/VE3

EMA and RACES news...

I would first like to begin this article by thanking all of you who participated in the Madison County Emergency Net on 146.34/94 during the tornado event of November 24th! I am glad to see the increase in amateur radio activity during severe weather...It is great! Doug Childs, N2GTP, left his house about the

same time as I when the watch was issued. We both headed to the EOC. Chris Reed, KF4MMF, was headed out the door himself minutes later. When we got to the EOC, Chris and Doug went to the RACES radio area and began getting things rolling. Doug called the net on '94 while Chris relayed the info to Skywarn. I have received compliments about how professional they were. I, being at work, could not listen to the net myself as I was watching the radar relectivity and at the velocity display showing the bright green pixels next to the bright red ones in the areas that were under tornado warnings. I also kept busy getting information off EMWIN. Jared Cassidy, KQ4VT was on duty at the EOC and was keeping the events logged and handling telephone notifications while Rusty Russell, KF4NTX, EMA Acting Director, was directing all EMA staff and coordinating with other departments. Huntsville Police had officers in the EOC as well. As the storm approached Madison County, Birmingham Weather radioed that they were issuing a tornado warning for Madison Co. All 102 outdoor warning sirens were set off instantaneously from the EOC (some in New Hope stated they heard the New Hope siren, even though it was more

than a couple of miles from their home) and announcements were made to all Madison County and city agencies via public safety radios. Casey Thrower, W4CRT, was at the Sheriff's Department radio position in the EOC and received word from New Hope Police that a funnel cloud was being observed by the officer just minutes after the warning. Then, moments later that was upgraded to a tornado in contact with the ground! Reports of damage then began coming in over the Sheriff's Dept. radio.

The EMA staff prepared to respond on scene to access the situation once the storm exited Madison County. Crews from numerous departments throughout Madison County sent units to help with the disaster. I could tell you many kind things about the responders and utility crews that responded to the area, but that would require a whole other column to do it justice.

Winter weather is becoming more of a concern as we are at the end of the year. Please make a winter storm plan for your family and keep an emergency kit on hand at home and in your vehicle just in case you are caught in a

winter storm unexpectedly. For information on winter storms or many other hazards, please visit our Agency's website which has lots of information: <http://www.ci.huntsville.al.us/EmergencyManagement>

Last, I would like to announce that on November 20th, Brian Peters of the National Weather Service in Birmingham was on hand at the City Council meeting in Huntsville to present our city and county with the NWS StormReady County certification award. This is good for 2 years. It means that Madison County has demonstrated and verified that we have numerous ways to receive weather information and disseminate the information to the public, provide public education, and maintains a good working relationship with the Weather Service officials in order to promote weather awareness in the county. As a side note related to being StormReady, several persons in the path of the New Hope tornado told EMA and Weather Service officials that they were watching tv, heard NOAA weather radio sound the warning, and some even heard the EMA outdoor warning siren at the New Hope Telephone Cooperative offices. They had a plan. They survived by taking action and seeking shelter in small in-ground storm shelters (in one case, 13 persons fit into a shelter built to hold 4 comfortably). Thankfully, no one was hurt - even though their mobile homes were heavily damaged or destroyed. Stay safe!

Scott Worsham, W4SSW

Welcome New Members

HARC is proud to welcome several new members to our club. We welcome you to HARC and glad to have you as a member and hope you will participate in many of our club activities. As new members, there are many ways to get involved and have lots of fun. The following amateurs have recently joined HARC:

- K4IY Ron Harvey
- NV4B Christopher Arthur
- KG4QAH Charles Harbin
- KG4PKK James Bell
- KG4QAK James Worley
- KG4NAC William Grimwood
- N4CCO Robert Lock, III
- KG4PLK Robert Lock, IV

Welcome aboard and thank you for your support of HARC!

73, Chris Reed, KF4MMF

Programs Please!

Our program calendar for 2002 is firming up. Jan 25 features Craig Behrens on QRP. Craig hosted the QRP presentations at this year's hamfest, and has edited the last four issues of QRP Quarterly. Other presentations to be scheduled include Gary Dion on ATV, Carol Blair on hummingbirds, and perhaps another receiver clinic, this time for your HT.

What programs do you have in mind? Please let me know in person (I'll be back in January) or via email: thomas.k.duncan@ds-s.com.

Thanks and 73 Tom Duncan, KG4CUY

NARA Notes

I've had a great record for Vox articles this year (of course this is 2002)! I always seem to get behind when the deadline comes up. Yes, we will have our joint meeting and election of officers on January 11th. Now that brings up another issue - candidates. I'll hang in for another term but I could use a good VP to help. If you are new to the hobby, I can't think of a better way to learn more about repeaters and their operation and maintenance than getting involved and the position does NOT require a Masters in Tinkering. We are good for the Technical Advisor and Secretary slots but with Todd (Todd's XYL) expecting their first in February, we may be in need of Treasurer. Let me know if you are interested and I can be reached at WD5GOZ@aol.com or NARA@QSL.net.

We will have an up date on all the repeaters and the latest status of on going projects as well as the usual semi annual meeting stuff. Once we all recover from the holidays it will be good to get out again and some of those old ham contacts in person. I look forward to seeing you all again on January 11th

73's & Happy Holidays, John Zeiler, WD5GOZ

Murphy's Little Truths for Life:

Lights travels faster than sound. That's why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.

He who laughs last, thinks slowest.

Everyone has a photographic memory. Some don't have film.

A day without sunshine is like, well, night.

On the other hand, you have different fingers.

Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.

In life, pain is inevitable. Suffering is optional.

I just got lost in thought. It was unfamiliar territory.

When the chips are down, the buffalo is empty.

Seen it all, done it all, can't remember most of it.

Those who live by the sword get shot by those who don't.

He's not dead, he's electroencephalographically challenged.

You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say will be misquoted, then used against you.

Honk if you love peace and quiet.

Despite the cost of living have you noticed how it remains so popular?

Nothing is foolproof to a sufficiently talented fool.

It is hard to understand how a cemetery raised its burial cost and blamed it on the cost of living.

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The 50-50-90 rule: Anytime you have a 50-50 chance of getting something right, there's a 90% probability You'll get it wrong.

It is said that if you line up all the cars in the world end to end, someone would be stupid enough to try to pass them.

If the shoe fits, get another one just like it.

The things that come to those that wait may be the things left by those who got there first.

Flashlight: A case for holding dead batteries.

As long as there are tests, there will be prayer in public schools.

When you're swimming in the creek, and an eel bites you, that's a moray.

A fine is a tax for doing wrong. A tax is a fine for doing well.

It has been discovered that research causes cancer in rats.

I wished the buck stopped here, as I could use one.

I started out with nothing, and I still have most of it.

When you go into court you're putting yourself in the hands of 12 people who weren't smart enough get out of jury duty.

Steve Bell KD4TFN

Reward Offered For Return Of Stray Current

A reward is offered for information leading to the arrest of Eddie Current, charged with the induction of an eighteen-year-old coil, called Milli Henry, who was found half choked having suffered the theft of valuable joules. This unrectified criminal, armed with a carbon rod, escaped from his primary cell at Zing Zing, where he had been clamped in ions.

The escape was planned in three phases. First, he fused the electrolytes, he then climbed thru the grid, despite the impedance of the warders, and finally ran to earth in a magnetic field. He has been missing since Faraday.

Watt seems most likely is that he stole an AC motor. This is of a low capacity and he is expected to change it for a megacycle and return to ohm by way of a short circuit. He may offer series resistance and is a potential killer. Miss Milli Henry is now sadder Budweiser.

(Poor Eddie, I am sure it was not his volt.) "The Spark Gap"

Received at the Vox courtesy of Steve Bell, KD4TFN and Frank Brown, W4LNN

The Giggle Box

Happy Birthday To Everybody Whose Birthday Is In December!!

By the time you get this newsletter, the holidays will be almost over. I hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

A Joke or Two

It is that time of year again and a fruitcake recipe is always a plus. Enjoy!

Fruitcake Recipe

1 cup water 1 teaspoon salt

1 cup sugar 1 cup brown sugar

4 large eggs 1 teaspoon lemon juice

2 cups dried fruit nuts teaspoon baking soda 1 gallon whiskey

a. Sample the whiskey to check for quality. Take a large bowl. Check the whiskey again to be sure it is of the highest quality.

b. Pour one level cup and drink. Repeat.

c. Turn on the electric mixer; beat 1 cup butter in a large, fluffy bowl. Add 1 teaspoon sugar and beat again.

d. Make sure the whiskey is still ok. Cry another tup. Turn off mixer.

e. Break 2 legs and add to the bowl and chuck in the cup of dried fruit. Mix on the turner. If the fried fruit gets stuck in the beaters, pry it loose with a drawscraper. Sample the whiskey to check for consistency.

f. Next, sift 2 cups of salt. Or something. Who cares? Check the whiskey.

g. Now sift the lemon juice and strain the nuts. Add one table. Spoon. Of sugar or something. Whatever you can find.

h. Grease the oven. Turn the cake tin to 350 degrees. Don't forget to heat up the turner. Throw the bowl out of the window. Check the whiskey again.

i. Go to bed. Who the heck likes fruitcake anyway?

Can you say these three times... fast?

Seven Santas sang silly songs.

Santa's sleigh slides on slick snow.

Bobby brings bright bells.

Running reindeer romp 'round red wreaths.

Tiny Timmy trims the tall tree with tinsel.

Chilly chipper children cheerfully chant.

Two trains travel together to Toyland.

Eleven elves licked eleven little lico-rice lollipops.

Santa's sack sags slightly.

Ten tiny tin trains toot ten times.

Santa stuffs Stephanie's striped stocking.

Comet cuddles cute Christmas kittens carefully.

The Thought for the Month of December

Did You Know...

One can see the stars during the day from the bottom of a well.

GOD BLESS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Happy Holidays, 73 Peggy Bell K4EGB

January Hamfests:

January 5, 2002. Lakeway ARC, Morristown, Tennessee. Contact Dennis Bechner, K8DRB, 423-587-4584 or k8drb@lakewayarc.org

January 19, 2002. Summer County ARA, Gallatin, Tennessee. Contact John Hermon, WB5OOL, 615-451-0213 or hamfest@scara.net. Driving directions and other info available at <http://www.scara.net>.

January 26-2002, Troy RC & Butler County RACES, Troy, Alabama. Contact Thomas Johnston, KC4FIG, 334-566-1373 or kc4fig@arrl.com.

73, John Farr, KC4ZXX

The Editor's Wastebasket

January, 2002! I'd swear it was only yesterday we were wondering what miseries the dreaded Y2K glitch was going to bring us. I wonder how many folks still have emergency supplies piled up from their Y2K readiness efforts. I suppose a lot of the preparations made sense even for non landmark years. After all, the ice & snow season is fast approaching and, though it doesn't happen often, we do have those episodes where Doppler Dan or one of the other weather guys says the magic "S" word and the grocery stores immediately sell out of bread and milk. Sometimes it even snows and we get to be snarled up and housebound for a few days.

Fired up my receiver last night to listen for the spark beacon transmissions from Ontario in commemoration of

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the 100th anniversary of Marconi's first transatlantic transmission. I didn't have much hope of hearing a 20 watt spark station because of the distance, but was curious anyway, never having heard a spark transmitter. Naturally I didn't hear anything of the spark transmissions. I gather from discussion afterward on the internet that there was also a PHØNY station there who had garbled his rig up so it had a raspy note and was making contacts claiming to be the spark station. I suppose I could step up on the soap box and claim that folks didn't do that sort of thing back in "My Day", but I remember the day back in '55 in Birmingham when I hooked the out-

put of my Meissner Signal Shifter (known as the Signal Drifter) directly to the antenna and had a 15 Meter QSO with a high school kid four or five blocks away who was later to become a well known CEO of a local company. I used the call LU2BA, told him my name was Raul, and that I was in the jungle using a bicycle cranked generator, running the output power up & down to enhance the story. I told him I was getting exhausted and had to sign, then let the power tail off to nothing. Within ten minutes I got a telephone call from him telling me all about this great QSO. Turns out I was lucky there really was a LU2BA in the Call Book and his name

was Raul. No, folks didn't do that sort of thing back in my day, they were often worse. (I do hope the Statute of Limitations on this sort of thing has expired!)

Since the Vox is being mailed a week early this month, it's not too late to hope everybody is well on the way to being ready for Christmas and the New Year. I hope all the HARC family has a happy holiday season with lots of family interaction and tradition going on.

73, Frank Emens, W4HFU

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