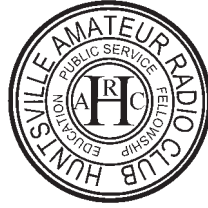


VOX



HUNTSVILLE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 49, Number 1

January, 2009

Dr. Robert Brown, W4YNT, SK

Bob passed away on Thursday, December 11. Bob got licensed in the '40s with a W8 call. I'm not sure of his first call.

Jack W5WQQ

32nd Rocket City Marathon

The 32nd running of the Rocket City Marathon is history. On Saturday, December 13th, 2008, chilly temperatures - starting out in the low 30s - but no wind or rain, made for overall fair running conditions, with an amazing 99 percent finish rate.

Thanks to the following hams who came out and braved the cold weather to help with race communications, and make the day a success: Kris Kirby KE4AHR, John Trickey KB0IW, Sharen Trickey KB7ZCP, Woody Zeigler K8GNM, Al Bacon W6GBG, Jeariene Bacon KI4MLS, Lee Rizor KD4TSV, Steve Bell KD4TFN, Tom Duncan KG4CUY, John Reynolds N5AYD, Brigit Reynolds KI4YRQ, Doug Mathes N4CZ, Charlie Tedder W1CST, Tom Cash KI4VFB, Peggy Bell K4EGB, visiting from Pensacola Gene Bannon KB4HAH, Chris Green KI4ZGB, and yours truly.

Thanks also to the North Alabama Repeater Association for the use of their 146.94 and 147.18 repeater systems, linked together to blanket the Marathon footprint.

73, Leigh Bartlow WD4CPF

SKYWARN

I am your SKYWARN coordinator for Northern Alabama and Southern-middle Tennessee. Did you watch the Harry Potter movies? Pop quiz: What was the role of the owls?

There are several real tough problems involving emergency communications. Perhaps you can name some of them from your own experiences. I have been working with Bill Adams

(KB4NEI), trying to solve one of these problems and I think we may have an answer. The name of the problem is "The Last Mile Problem" and it goes something like this: An EF-4 tornado touches down somewhere in our area — let's say on Redstone Arsenal, at let's say 0300 (yes, that's the middle of the night dark 3:00, but we already know for a fact that we are plagued by tornadoes that have total disregard for our sleepy-time), and it causes lots of damage — let's say LOTS OF DAMAGE!! Now the following people have to be notified (insert list of people here), but the telephones are inoperative. OK: that sounds like a job for a bunch of Amateur radio operators and Army MARS radio operators (DA! Da DAH!). So some MARS operators appear at the Army MARS station in Fox Army Health Center and get handed the list of people who should be notified, along with a brief message (probably something like "HELP! NOW!"). OK: we have a message; we have a radio operator; we have a recipient — what's missing? That's right: the owls from Hogwarts Academy.

In Harry Potter's world, owls are used to deliver important messages all across the countryside (maybe the whole world). Since we're all hams, we can get the message from Point "A" to Point "B" pretty well — we've practiced Morse code, speaking, digital modes and all that jazz. Problem is: how to get the message to, let's say, "The Commander", since he lives in Bug Tussle, out past where the Evergreen trees end; and maybe one of the important Doctors lives in Tennessee. And right up the road, past where the sidewalk ends is the person to whom we really, really need to get the information about the storm damage. Now you understand "The Last Mile Problem" in detail. "How do we hand-deliver a message to the proper recipient at 0314 local time, in a bad rainstorm, over muddy roads,

to beautiful downtown Wherever, Alabama?" That is the question. The answer is "OWLS can be counted on to deliver messages in any situation."

So I'm asking you: "Do you want to be an owl?" Now that may seem like a strange question, but you and I are dedicated volunteers, so it's OK to ask. Many a storm blows through our area each year, and every time we have the potential problem of delivering a critical message to someone. It might be someone who needs to be "activated", or it might be some wounded soldier's mom, who really is worried about her son — who just got home from Iraq, and is now stationed on the Base — and now she hears about the tornado that hit the Base and the damage — and she is freaking-out worried. If we get a message to flow between them, we have done a Good Thing. If we get a message to any of the people who really need it, we have done a Good Thing. I know that there are a few owls out there, and one of them might be you. You don't need to take the FEMA courses, or pass the Army MARS license test; and you don't really even need a ham license, as long as you can get the message from a ham and hand it to the waiting recipient.

Think about it, and let me know: "Can you be counted on to deliver a message (no matter what)?" If so, you are the solution to a real tough EMCOMM problem. Plus: you will be amazed at the look that you will get from someone answering their door in the middle of the night, and there you are, and you have an Important Message for them! The look on their face will be like an owl blinking in amazement, and will be truly be priceless!

(Text continued on page 3)

Huntsville Amateur Radio Club Information

Club Officers

President:
Rolf Goedhart, K4RGG
K4RGG@arrl.net

Vice President:
Woodie Zeigler, K8GNM
tzeigler@aol.com

Secretary:
Doshia Wilson, KI4VFU
wilson.00.doshia@comcast.net

Treasurer:
Heath Thorson, KC4HRX, 325-2507
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", and a discussion forum at

"http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/harc-al"

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. They have a web site at "http://www.qsl.net/nara"

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. Material of interest to the HARC membership should be submitted to the editor by Wednesday before the third Friday of the month of publication.

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 6
Saturday, January 3
For information contact:

Larry Frost, KR4GU, 864-3244
kr4gu@hamfest.org

Or

Rick Earl, AA4II, 256-653-0101
aa4ii@bellsouth.net

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

For information contact Dean Thompson, WW0I, 256-230-0270 or Rick Earl, AA4II (see above)

HARC ACTIVITY CALENDAR FOR January, 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	31 SE Linked Rptr Net 2000 +442.775/PL 203.5 New Year's Eve-don't overcelebrate	1 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000 Get your fill of football	2 HARC Meeting	3 *TWOAR Cavec Exam Session, Red Cross
4	5	6 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	7 SE Linked Rptr Net 2000 +442.775/PL 203.5	8 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	9 HARC Meeting	10 *TWOAR
11	12	13 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	14 SE Linked Rptr Net 2000 +442.775/PL 203.5	15 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	16 HARC Meeting	17 *TWOAR Athens Exam sSession, 1:00 at Athens EOC
18	19	20 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	21 SE Linked Rptr Net 2000 +442.775/PL 203.5	22 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	23 HARC Meeting	24 *TWOAR
25	26	27 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	28 SE Linked Rptr Net 2000 +442.775/PL 203.5	29 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	30 HARC Meeting	31 *TWOAR Cavec Exam Session, Red Cross

*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

Gigaparts
www.gigaparts.com

☑ Huntsville's Only Amateur Radio Store

NEW LOCATION!

Map showing location at University Dr. - Hwy 72, near Back Yard Burgers, Providence, and Research Park Blvd. Hours: Mon - Sat 10am - 7pm. Target is also nearby.

(256) 535-GIGA

HEIL SOUND, ICOM, KENWOOD, YAESU (Choice of the World's top DX'ers™), ALINCO, DIAMOND ANTENNA, MFJ

Any volunteers owls out there? WHO? WHO??? (Sorry: I couldn't resist that)
73, Doug Hilton, WD0UG / AAV4YP
SKYWARN Coordinator, Northern Alabama / Southern-middle Tennessee
email: WD0UG@hotmail.com

THE GIGGLE BOX

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE GUYS AND GALS THAT HAVE BIRTHDAYS IN JANUARY!!

Notes from Giggles: Is everyone working on their list of resolutions for the year, 2009? It is almost time for Christmas and I'm not ready. I've bought the gifts but I still haven't gotten them wrapped. Thank goodness for pretty bags and tissue paper. I can remember when my parents would give my sister and I, gifts in the customary brown paper bags from the store.

They weren't made of plastic then.. After they bought the gifts, they didn't have the money for fancy paper or bags and tissue paper. They didn't have Dollar Tree back then. I remember, one

time, my parents told me they got my gift at Buy-Wise. I laughed because I envisioned an owl on the building. I miss those days.

You never know what you or someone else will remember in the future, so make good memories in 2009. I am amazed at how time has flown by since the year, 2000. We were all worried that the computers would get a virus or our bank accounts would be tampered with. Well, now as I think about it, that is happening now. Saturday, I was watching a western show, Bonanza and it sort of happen to Pa, Little Joe, and Hoss. They were talking among themselves about the money that was in their saddlebag and someone was listening around the corner. It caused a little trouble, but Little Joe came to the rescue. I think twice when I talk about money to someone in public. You think you're safe in your car or your house, but you never know who is listening. I'm glad that we still have the old shows on tv to remind us what it was like years ago.

BTW, we had a fun Christmas party earlier in the month of December. There was plenty of food and smiles. We didn't see Santa, so I guess we have been B-A-D. As I read this over, I realized that I'm supposed to be writing for the January, 2009 VOX. Oh, well, I guess I can write whatever I want, besides its my article. GRIN.

Better go. CUL

A Story or Two:

The older I get, the more I enjoy Saturday mornings. Perhaps it's the quiet solitude that comes with being the first to rise, or maybe it's the unbounded joy of not having to be at work. Either way, the first few hours of a Saturday morning are most enjoyable.

A few weeks ago, I was shuffling toward the garage with a steaming cup of coffee in one hand and the morning paper in the other. What began as a typical Saturday morning turned into one of those lessons that life seems to hand you from time to time. Let me tell you about it: I turned the dial up into the phone portion of the band on my ham

radio in order to listen to a Saturday morning swap net. Along the way, I came across an older sounding chap, with a tremendous signal and a golden voice. You know the kind; he sounded like he should be in the broadcasting business. He was telling whomever he was talking with something about 'a thousand marbles.' I was intrigued and stopped to listen to what he had to say

'Well, Tom, it sure sounds like you're busy with your job. I'm sure they pay you well but it's a shame you have to be away from home and your family so much. Hard to believe a young fellow should have to work sixty or seventy hours a week to make ends meet. It's too bad you missed your daughter's 'dance recital' he continued. 'Let me tell you something that has helped me keep my own priorities.' And that's when he began to explain his theory of a 'thousand marbles.'

'You see, I sat down one day and did a little arithmetic. The average person lives about seventy-five years. I know, some live more and some live less, but on average, folks live about seventy-five years. Now then, I multiplied 75 times 52 and I came up with 3900, which is the number of Saturdays that the average person has in their entire lifetime. Now, stick with me, Tom, I'm getting to the important part?

'It took me until I was fifty-five years old to think about all this in any detail', he went on, 'and by that time I had lived through over twenty-eight hundred Saturdays.' 'I got to thinking that if I lived to be seventy-five, I only had about a thousand of them left to enjoy. So I went to a toy store and bought every single marble they had. I ended up having to visit three toy stores to round up 1000 marbles. I took them home and put them inside a large, clear plastic container right here in the shack next to my gear.' 'Every Saturday since then, I have taken one marble out and thrown it away. I found that by watching the marbles diminish, I focused more on the really important things in life.'

'There is nothing like watching your time here on this earth run out to help get your priorities straight.' 'Now let me tell you one last thing before I sign-off with you and take my lovely

wife out for breakfast. This morning, I took the very last marble out of the container. I figure that if I make it until next Saturday then I have been given a little extra time. And the one thing we can all use is a little more time.'

'It was nice to meet you Tom, I hope you spend more time with your family, and I hope to meet you again here on the band. This is a 75 Year old Man, K9NZQ, clear and going QRT, good morning!' You could have heard a pin drop on the band when this fellow signed off. I guess he gave us all a lot to think about. I had planned to work on the antenna that morning, and then I was going to meet up with a few hams to work on the next club newsletter.

Instead, I went upstairs and woke my wife up with a kiss. 'C'mon honey, I'm taking you and the kids to breakfast.' 'What brought this on?' she asked with a smile. 'Oh, nothing special, it's just been a long time since we spent a Saturday together with the kids. And then, can we stop at a toy store while we're out? I need to buy some marbles.'

Today is a Good Day!:

The Story of Sambo By Dominic Fabrizio
Once upon a time, there lived a hard-working and loving family. Sambo was the youngest of eight children. Every morning before school, the children's mother would wake them up with her sweet voice. "Good morning, my children. Today is going to be a good day." The children would wake, go outside, and do their chores. The chores were very difficult, and none of the children liked doing them, especially Sambo. You see, Sambo disliked getting out of bed in the morning to do his chores.

After the chores, their mother always prepared a hot breakfast for them. The children would eat and walk to school. After school, they would hurry home to do their afternoon chores so they would have time to play before getting ready for dinner.

One morning, his mother came and said, "Good morning, my children. Today is going to be a good day." Sambo did not get out of bed. His mother repeated, "Get up, Sambo. Today is going to be a good day."

Sambo replied, "Momma today is not going to be a good day. Today is a bad day, and I want to stay in bed."

His mother said, "Okay Sambo, you stay in bed since today is a bad day." Sambo had a smile on his face as he went back to sleep. His brothers and sisters snickered at Sambo as they went to do their chores. Sambo fell back to sleep. An hour later, he woke up to the sound of his brothers and sisters laughing at breakfast. His stomach growled. He was very hungry. Sambo walked down the stairs into the kitchen. He sat down at the table with his brothers and sisters.

When he put two BIG pancakes on a plate, his mother stopped him and said, "What are you doing Sambo?"

"Momma, I'm so hungry," Sambo replied.

omma said, "Oh no. Sambo today is a bad day. You go up to your room, and go back to bed."

Sambo looked sad, "but I'm hungry Momma."

"Remember today is a bad day Sambo. Now go back to bed." Sambo walked slowly back up to his room with his stomach still hungry. He was very sad. You see, in his room there were no toys, TV or computers. Nothing but his bed and a stuffed bear. All day long Sambo sat in his room alone and hungry, until finally he heard his brothers and sisters come home from school. They ran upstairs to change their clothes for chores before they went to play. Sambo went down with the other children to do his chores when his mother saw him. She said, "Where are you going Sambo?"

"Out to do my chores, Momma."

"Oh no, Sambo. Today is a bad day. Now go back up to your room." Sambo started to cry on the way up the stairs.

He thought to himself, "I am so hungry and bored. I hope Momma lets me eat later." When dinnertime came, Sambo walked slowly down the steps to see if he could get something to eat.

He was met at the bottom of the steps by his mother. She said, "Oh no, Sambo. Today is a bad day. You need to go back up to bed." Sambo woke up the next morning to the sound of his

mother. "Good morning, my children. Today is going to be a good day."

Sambo jumped out of bed and cheerfully said to his mother: "Yes, Momma. Today is going to be a good day!"

The Thought for the month of JANUARY:

The person who removes a mountain begins by carrying away small stones. -

Anonymous -

The Puzzle for the month of JANUARY:

TTGNESH R SI HET IILTYAB OT
AKEBR A OOLHACCET AREB NTOI
OURF EEICSP IHTW ROUY RABE
NHDAS NAD HENT EAT USTJ NEO
FO HOEST IPCEES.

- Judith Viorst -

73. Peggy (Goggles) Bell, K4EGB

Pbell@hiwaay.net

or

sbell@hiwaay.net

From The Editor's Wastebasket

When I sent out the email reminder to all the usual (and semi-usual) contributors to the Vox, I mentioned that everybody was probably pretty busy getting ready for the Holidays. Well, seems I was right. Inputs for this month's Vox have been sparse.

Well, my input is a little attenuated too. Every year, the preparation for the "little stick-on" and the Vox get in the way of preparing Christmas cards to be mailed. I still haven't accomplished that, but expect to do it tomorrow (I hope!)

Very sorry to hear that Bob Brown, W4YNT is now a Silent Key. Had some interaction with Dr. Brown in the past and remember him as a very personable fellow -- and an accomplished ham.

Some of you will see this before Christmas and to you I say "Merry Christmas". To those who see it after Christmas, I hope it was all you wanted it to be and I wish you all a Happy New Year.

That's it from me for this month. Happy and Merry to all of you and see you next year.

73, Frank Emens, W4HFU