

VOX



HUNTSVILLE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 40, Number 3

March, 2000

Huntsville Amateur Radio Club Information

Club Officers

President,

Don Tunstill, W4NO
dtunstil@hiwaay.net

Vice President,

Woody Zeigler, K8GNM
tzeiglerjr@aol.com

Secretary,

Brian Bender, KD4FGL
kd4fgl@mindspring.com

Treasurer,

Heath Thorson, KC4HRX, 828-9380
hthorson@hiwaay.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 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 40, Nr 3, March, '00
A Newsletter published monthly except for August by the Huntsville Amateur Radio Club, P.O. Box 423, Huntsville, AL

News from the Treasurer

Hello all. It was good to see such a big turn out at the HARC-NARA drive in Jan. I got to meet several new people and was finally able to put a voice with the call. We have had problems in the past with former administration on getting checks deposited in a timely fashion. I hope I am able to set a good example for solving that problem. I have been working on that ever since I have been in office. I think this is our best year yet. We have got all checks received by me deposited as of 2-18-2000. If your check has not cleared, I have not received it. This means it could be lost in the mail or is still being processed by NARA. Please let me know if there is any problem. I can't solve it if I don't know about it. You may email me or call me anytime.

By the way, I wish to extend sympathy to the family and friends of W4YZ in reference to his passing. He was a good man and very dedicated. He had many friends in the amateur community. We will all miss him. My phone number is 829-0225. My email is hthorson@hiwaay.net Take care and hope to see you all at upcoming meetings.

73 Heath Thorson, KC4HRX

NARA Notes:

I don't have much to report this month. We did get the newly re-worked 224.94 Repeater back on the mountain. We had a bad feedline connection pop up in the initial 3 weeks of operation which hampered our performance however that has been corrected as of Feb 12th. While we were on the hill, we checked SWR on some suspected 443.500 remote base antennas. We do have high SWR again on one remote antenna so we moved the 440 remote to the lower antenna however the 220 remote is down in performance. It should only be used for brief checks and not prolonged operation until the problem is corrected. Also, the 443.500 patch has been down for a few days. The phone line checked out OK but my scouts

haven't isolated the problem yet. Likely related to the severe Wx we experienced Sunday night Feb 13th. Hopefully it will be back on line by the time you read this. One quick mention about AICN. Ralph and I have adopted this little project from Harley apart from NARA. Things are still fluid at this point but look for progress soon on the same frequency (145.23) Current plans are for dual usage (both a local repeater and a dedicated AICN link).

Don is still eagerly checking the NARA P.O. Box for 2000 dues payments. Please get your checks of \$16 per family for the calendar year in soon in order to be included on the March newsletter & command sheet e-mail / snail mail distribution.

*Thanks & 73, Ron Shaffer, KS4LU NARA
President.*

Fox Hunt

I'm sure many of you will agree that it's been too long since we've had a fox hunt. So dust off your DF equipment and meet us at the Red Cross on Washington St. at 7:00pm on March 17 for the first fox hunt of the new Fox Hunting Season. After a few minutes of assembling the VOX and a quick pre-hunt briefing, the hunt will begin. Each member of the winning hunt group will receive a free Mitsumi Internet Scroll

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, March 4

Saturday, April 1

For information contact:

Larry Frost, KR4GU, 379-3582

Or

Don Tunstill, W4NO, 536-3904

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Mouse from GigaParts. For those of you who have never hunted before, this is a good opportunity to learn some of the techniques of finding a hidden transmitter (as well as some of the techniques used for preventing a transmitter from being found). The hunt will be coordinated on the 146.94 repeater, as usual.

If you have any questions regarding fox hunting or would like make arrangements to ride along with a veteran hunter, please email me at robby@gigaparts.com

Also, watch the VOX and listen to the 146.94 DVR for the date and time of the first Sunday Hunt of the new Fox

Hunting Season!
73, Robby Sperr, KF4LFQ

From the Grid Leak

The following items were found in the drip pan we keep under the old grid leak. Take them for they are worth.

Ron Shaffer, KS4LU passed element 4B at the January testing session after only one night of studying. He is on his way to getting a "welfare" extra ticket after April 15, like many including this reporter (who needs a little longer than one night of studying). Congrats, Ron!

Our trusted leader, Don Tunstill, W4NO was unable to make it to the first February meeting and our intrepid

Vice-President Woodie Zeigler, K8GNM had to stand in for the Prez. We hope Don is feeling much better now!

Bill Hull, W4GBF is now up to around 239 countries confirmed. Way to go Bill!

It deeply saddens us to report the loss of a local amateur that has become a silent Key. Jim McAdams, W4YZ passed away on February 5, while taking his customary afternoon nap.

We recently learned that Linda Osmer, WA4TJE had a rather painful incident with a horse. We hope she gets to feeling better soon!

Scotty, W4WW and the rest of the Volunteer Examiner Coordinator Question

Weekly Activities

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Christian Fellowship Net 2100 on 145.33	ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	Southeast Linked Repeater Net 1900 on 147.240	EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000 Mercury Radio Net @ 2030 on 147.240 Mad. Co. Radio Oriented Net @ 2130 on 147.18	HARC Meeting	

Pool Committee have been working hard and now have the new question pools out for the test given after April 15.

Rumor has it that Ernie, WA4BPS has been working some gud DX on 10 meters with the folded dipole he got back at the Hamfest.

Back in the fall Chris Reed, KF4MMF got his tower up and has been trying to light up the ether with a pair of 6146's.

We understand there was a pretty good crowd of test takers at the February CAVEC exams, around 40!

Last Friday we learned that John Morris, K4XH had done some wheeling and dealing and is now sporting a new Icom 756 Pro; Nancy said that she had dibs on the 781, though.

If you have any newsy tidbits about local going's on in Huntsville's amateur radio community just shoot an email to: gridleak@harc.net

Less is More

For all you folks that think they cannot afford to get on HF, I say "OH YES YOU CAN!". I admit that most HF transceivers can be very intimidating as far as price goes, taking into consideration that a low end rig will cost somewhere in the neighborhood of \$700, and another \$100 to \$200 for a power supply to power the thing. Then there are things to consider like antennas, SWR meters, antenna tuners etc that add to the price. Yes there is the used market, but you always stand the chance of getting equipment with problems, and a lot of times an obsolete rig with hard to find parts and service information. Well, the truth of the matter is, you can get on the air, on HF, for the same price or less than most 2 meter rigs and that includes HTs! How? you say, well forget all the hype about needing at least 500 watts, an ultra modern all the bells and whistles dsp do everything digital Yaecom wood rig and super all band 40 db signal shooter antenna that takes a construction crane to install.

The answer is simple, you go QRP! Most QRP rigs are CW only rigs, but there are SSB QRP rigs too. First, QRP means "low power", for CW it is considered 5 watts or less and for SSB it is 10 watts or less. What can I do with low power ? you say. A lot! I recently worked a station in Chino Valley, Arizona on 40 meters with "2 watts from my old Heathkit HW-8!". That's approximately 1650 miles from where I live, and with 2 watts, that's 825 miles per watt! Pretty impressive when you consider that the same contact with 100 watts is only 16.5 miles per watt, so - Less is more in this case! OK, you can get a QRP single band CW rig for less than \$100, Ten Tec has a neat kit rig that does 3 watts out for \$95, and yes you have to build it but that's part of the fun. And there are many others out there in the market too.

For the Antenna, you can put up a simple wire dipole that will cost you next to nothing if you scrounge around and build that yourself and for the power supply, you can use any 12 volt dc supply that does at least 1.5 amps and you probably already have that since most of you have a 2 meter rig with a power supply to run it. If you don't have that, then a small gel cel rechargeable battery will work just fine. The bottom line is, if you can afford a standard 2 meter mobile rig, then you can afford to get on HF with a QRP rig, and making contacts with QRP is much more satisfying than blasting your signal through the ether with a kazillion watts and a rig that would put a dent in the budget of Bill Gates! Oh, and by the way - "don't let CW scare you - it's easy!" After all, after April 15th all you need is 5 words per minute - get in on the fun, you might just like it! See ya next time, and hopefully on the air.

73, Richard S. McKee, KC8AON

Schedule Didn't Slip, The Neighborhood Did

Usually when I'm "inspired" to pull something out of the dark recesses of my mind for the VOX, it's on Sunday night.

Had actually sat down at the computer when the brownouts started. got maybe a few lines into it when the xxxx hit the fan.

Just as well..... I'll save my sure-fire cure for garden-moles for another time. It's not planting season just yet anyway.

This Sunday a "small breeze" came through Sandhurst Park. Just now getting things in shape from the mess. Only caused about \$1K in property damage. Mostly shingles and dead trees. Spent monday and today hacking at the lumber with my new Stihl 029.

Power was off 14 hours, so no VOX input this time around.

Hope some other folks start submitting stuff. If not.... I'll have a dandy one for you next month. As always, some really weird stuff happened. (is it just ME??) It'll be about emergency preparedness for Hams. I'll try to keep it under 5K

73, Chris

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From: "Don Bonner" austin.rr.com
To: "Frank Emens" hiwaay.net
Subject: New Ham from Texas
Date sent: Sunday 13 Feb 2000 07:49:38 -0600

Frank, I know this is silly but I have to tell you this. I feel like a new ham again. I just worked 3 Japan stations and Kwajalein Island this morning...on 5 watts and a vertical antenna!! This QRP is great. I have a Red Hot Norcal 20 on order and can't wait to put the thing together. Great radio. That's all.

73's

Don W4WLG (Maybe I should get a new call)

The HARC Web Site

Most of you by now know that HARC has a web site but have you ever wondered how many people visit our club's little place in cyberspace? If you have we're gonna give you the answer along with some other statistics. If you haven't even seen the web site yet (shame on you) we have included the opening page here in the VOX so you can see the club's opening web graphic. You will notice that there are many buttons surrounding the club's logo. Each of those buttons is linked to subsequent pages.

The top button takes you to the "what's new" page, which is where all the latest major updates are posted.

The next button takes you to the "our club" page, which provides details about the club like how to join, when and where the meetings are and some of the history of the club, including quite a few pictures.

The third button links you to the "calendar of events" page, which is pretty self-explanatory.

Next up is the button to the "how to" page, which is set up to provide basic info about various aspects of amateur radio and how to do or get involved in them.

Another self-explanatory button is the "local repeaters" button and it takes you to a page that lists many of the local repeaters here in Huntsville.

The "other local amateur radio organizations" button takes you to hyperlink listings of many of the other local and state clubs.

The "links" button transports you to a page with hyperlinks to many other amateur radio related sites. If you get lost on one of the pages and want to get back to the main page all you have to do is click on the club logo in the header bar at the top and you'll be able to get back to the main page.

On to the statistics...Since we moved the web site to the GigaParts web server back in October of 1999 we've had a total of 675 different computers accessing our page. Currently, aside from the opening page, the most visited page is the "what's new" page, followed by the "local repeaters" page, "calendar of events" page and "our club" page. Most every other page has been hit at least a few times; these were the top five. An interesting statistic is where are all the hits originate. Most of the visits to our site come from people with .net and .com domains, but as many of you know, many DX domains have a desig-



nator for the country where the domain is located. Because of this we can tell we have had 32 hits from Poland, 14 from the UK, 12 from Japan, 11 from Canada, 9 from Bulgaria, 5 from Germany, 4 from Italy, South Africa, and Denmark and 2 from France. As you can see more than just local hams are checking out what's happening in the amateur radio community here in Huntsville. HARC has gone global!

I hope you enjoyed this little analysis of our web site. As you can see we've had a lot of folks checking us out. Please check out our site if you haven't or even if you have at least to check and see what's been added recently. The URL is <http://www.harc.net>. Also, please let me know if you have an idea for the web site or if you have an article for the "how to" page as I would really like to add some stuff about getting into packet, APRS and satellites. You can email me at: webmaster@harc.net

73, Jared Cassidy, KQ4VT

March Hamfests

There is only one near by in March

- March 18, 2000 Kennehoochee ARC
<http://qsl.asti.com/hootch/KARC.html>

- Contact Charles Golsen, N4TZM
PO Box 1245 Marietta, GA 30060
404-252-3303
cgolsen@atlanta.com
Talk-in Frequency 146.880 Mhz

John Farr

The Editor's Wastebasket

By now most of you have heard about the fire at HARC President, Don Tunstill's house over Tuesday night. I've not been able to talk to Don yet for details, but apparently the house is just about totalled, along with ham gear, computers, records, etc. Don was not at home when the fire started, so he is unharmed. Unfortunately his toy poodle pup, Bill, was in the house and didn't survive.

All our hearts go out to Don at his loss and I'm sure the membership will agree, if there is anything we can do, all Don needs to do is ask.

It is with regret that we record the passing on February 5th of Jim McAdams, W4YZ, a long time member of the Huntsville Amateur Radio Community. He will surely be missed.

Any communication from Chris Teuber is interesting as was his note explaining why he has not provided a piece for this month's Vox. A much better excuse than "The dog ate my

homework." Figuring you'd all be interested, we've included his note (only slightly edited) in this issue.

The article "Less Is More" was sent to the QRP-L mailing list by the author who wrote it for inclusion in his local club newsletter. He graciously gave us permission to include it here. It seemed especially timely coupled with the email note from ex-member Don Bonner, W4WLG, now of Round Rock, Texas..

With the aid of a mostly anonymous contributor, we are resurrecting a feature of long-past Voxes, the material collected in the drip pan we keep under the old grid leak. We hope you'll keep enough pressure on the grid leak so there will be enough tidbits collected in the drip pan each month. This sort of article can do a lot to draw the membership closer together.

Jared Cassidy, KQ4VT, has scanned some of the Vox covers drawn by Bill

Owens, W4YXW back in the sixties and we'll be including some in the Vox as space permits. The quality of the cover drawings is especially amazing if you realize they were done before the age of laser printers and Xerox reproduction. The Vox was printed on "Ol' Ink-Slinger" a rather decrepit mimeograph machine. Bill executed his cover drawings directly onto a mimeograph stencil with a scribe. He never really saw his results until the Vox was printed.

73, Frank Emens, W4HFU

Flea Market

For Sale:

- 1987 Yaesu FT 767GX. Former owner, Bud Zimmerman, KJ4BH. Less than 20 hours use. No modules (HF only) No Microphone, Built-in Antenna Tuner — all HF Amateur bands,

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Thought you might appreciate this additional goodie from the HARC web site. Here is a photo of Ed Berisford, WA4KMA

VOX

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HUNTSVILLE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



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