

W4CA LOG

Roanoke Valley Amateur Radio Club - Roanoke, Virginia

November / December 2006

Volume 3 Issue 6

Roanoke Valley Amateur Radio Club
W4CA
P.O. Box 2002
Roanoke, Virginia 24012

Officers

President: Floyd Ponton KB4WYW
Vice President: Charlie Draper AB4SK
Secretary: Karen Anderson KI4GOT
Treasurer: Leroy Maxey AG4RW

Board of Directors

Phil Roark K4WFO
Ray Crampton AB4YZ
Kathy Page KG4PBX
Ron Ramsey AB4A
Ray Pillow KK4HR

Appointed Positions

Net Manager: Russ Abbey KG4MAV
RVARC Chef: Bob Anderson K4UMK
Membership: Fred Krack K4HVB
Club Call Trustee: Ray Crampton AB4YZ
Log Editors: David Jones N4JED
Catherine Jones KI4EVA

The Roanoke Valley Amateur Radio Club meets the second and fourth Friday of the month at the Roanoke Red Cross Building at 352 Church Ave beginning at 8pm. In addition, the club sponsors a weekly net every Wednesday at 8 pm on the W4CA 146.985- repeater, tone 107.2. Check in five times and receive a number and certificate. Everyone is welcome. The W4CA Log is published bi-monthly by the RVARC for it's membership.

The RVARC owns and maintains the following open repeaters:

Voice

146.985- tone 107.2
442.50+ tone 107.2

Packet Digipeaters:

145.050 Rke5 - 1200 baud
145.710 Mill - 1200 baud

Internet Homepage:

www.w4ca.net



L-R: AG4RW-Treasurer, AB4SK-VP, KI4GOT-Secretary, KB4WYW-President

New Officers Elected for 2007

Congratulations to the new officers of the Roanoke Valley Amateur Radio Club. Returning to the post of President after a several year hiatus is Floyd-KB4WYW. The Vice President position is being filled for a first time by Charlie-AB4SK. Retiring for another year as Secretary is Karen-KI4GOT who still hasn't had enough of Ray's objections. And for Treasurer returns Leroy-AG4RW, also a previous position holder who couldn't stay away.

Be sure to thank our new officers for volunteering to the positions and a special thanks to our outgoing officers for their well done jobs. AB4YZ leaves a big hole to be filled (but he hasn't gone far as he heads the activities committee for the coming year.

Big plans are in the wings for the coming year and a tentative schedule through next October has been prepared. Watch for schedules here in the Log and at the w4ca.org web site.

Highlights and Overheard Facts of the Last Two Months

- The following stats have crept out concerning the Blue Ridge Bonanza; there was a station operating at least one day of the event from each of the 14 locations. The maximum worked number of Bonanza stations was 12 of the 14. Special certificates will be sent those who worked 7 or more stations. All qsl cards have been sent out.



- O. Winston Link Museum special event made 160 contacts from the museum. Special cards are in production.
- William Byrd Middle School had 53 students participate in the School Club Roundup. They operated the entire 24 hour maximum. The high school station operated for 21 hours.
- The RVARC Christmas Party and Awards Banquet is Saturday night December 9 at Hollins University. Cost is \$20 per person. Fred-K4HVB must have your money in hand by Dec. 1

- Former club President and centerfold Ray- AB4YZ announcing the results of the



uncontested election of new officers. Ray will chair the Activities committee for 2007

- New ham radio classes to start January 11 at the Red Cross. Tech, general, extra and CW classes will be offered
- Phil-K4WFO is the new EC for Roanoke County

W4CA – Rocky Knob / Mabry Mill by Stan, K4UK

Mabry Mill

During Saturday of the Blue Ridge Bonanza, the location at Mabry Mill was manned by Charlie, K4BSF, Riley, K4ORD and Stan, K4UK.

We drove up the twisty Route 640 to the Parkway and then on down to Mabry

Mill. We got there in time to enjoy a very good breakfast at the Restaurant.

We parked Stan's van in the first space of the parking lot and set up our Hamstick dipoles on poles whose bases were held in place under the tires of the van. Our first contact was on 40 Meters at 1338 UTC and our first contact on 20 Meters was at 1405 UTC.

Two Ten-Tec Scouts were used. Powered from batteries. In addition to the Hamstick Dipoles we used the Mobile whips.

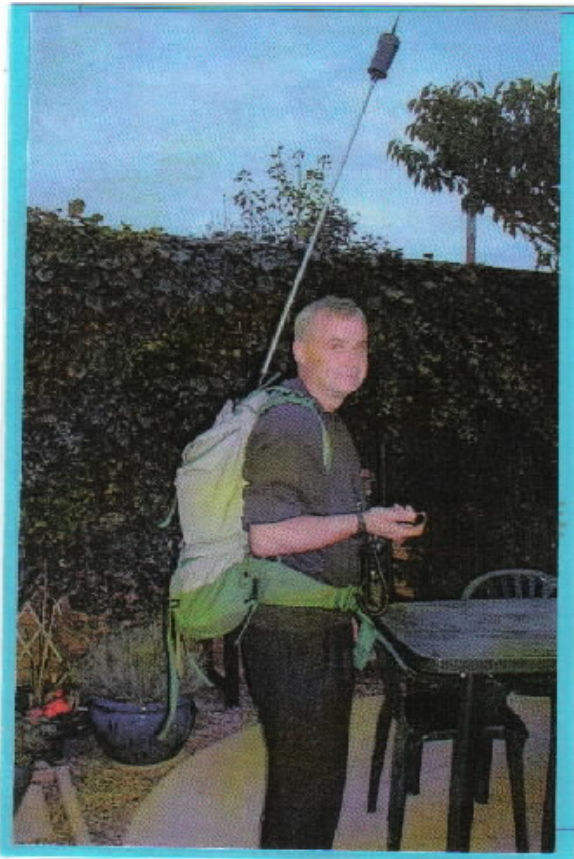
We found that we had competition with the South Carolina QSO Party. We had been assigned 7.253 MHz which was quite busy, but were able to stake out the frequency of 7.249 MHz and make a bunch of QSO's there. We noted that the 7.249 frequency was the one listed in the September QST for Rocky Knob/Mabry Mill.

On 20 Meters we had major competition from the Washington State Salmon Run, their annual QSO Party. So we worked a bunch of the folks in that Party. Getting very few answers to our CQ's on 20 Meter phone, we went to CW and found the Scandinavian Activity Contest going full tilt. So we made a few contacts in that contest.

By far the most interesting QSO was the one which Charlie, K4BSF had with Dave, G4AKC in Blackpool, England on 14.262 MHz who was running a 3 Watt transceiver as "Pedestrian Mobile" with an antenna on his backpack.

Many visitors stopped by to ask what we were doing, which gave us an opportunity to talk about amateur radio

and to point out that "When all else fails – Amateur Radio works". The most interesting visitors were a young couple from Belgium who we talked with for quite awhile.



G4AKC operatin backpack mobile from England

A Park Ranger did visit us during the day and he wondered why we didn't set up at Rocky Knob instead of at Mabry Mill. That got us to thinking.

The last contacts in our logs for the day were made at 2054 UTC with N2ZHF on 40 Meter CW and N7AAL on 20 Meter CW. We made a total of 74 QSO's - 48 on SSB and 26 on CW. After "breaking camp" we left Mabry Mill and proceeded back along the Parkway and down twisty Route 640 to home.

Rocky Knob

Feeling that the location at Mabry Mill, which is in somewhat of a valley area, limited our propagation we elected on Sunday to set up at Rocky Knob. Riley, K4ORD and Stan, K4UK again drove up the twisty Route 640 to the Parkway. We found "The Saddle" overlook which appeared to us to offer a great location to operate from.

We set up the Hamstick Dipole and fired up the Ten-Tec Scout. Our first QSO was at 1310 UTC with Charlie, K4BSF who confirmed that the dipole provided a two S-unit better signal than the mobile whip at his home. We also set up the Elecraft K2 and ran it into the mobile whip antenna.

I am sure we confused folks by identifying our QTH this day as Rocky Knob/Mabry Mill. Many wanted to know if they could claim it as a new location on the Parkway. We explained that the announcement in QST had shown "Rocky Knob/Mabry Mill" as one of the locations, but we suggested that they show their Sunday contact with us at Rocky Knob and the "Powers that be" would decide whether it qualified for a separate location.

We did not do quite as well on Sunday with a total of only 34 QSO's - 32 on SSB and 2 on CW. We did work Pete, W4WWQ on both 40 and 20 Meter phone. He was operating mobile at Apple Orchard Mountain. Since Don, K4PK had operated from there on Saturday but wasn't planning on returning on Sunday, we tried to convince Pete to operate as W4CA to put that location on the air. But we couldn't talk him into it.

Stan used the K2 to have a nice 10 minute chat with Bill, W9ZN in Chicago on 30 Meter CW. And Riley also operated some CW on 30 Meters.

Most interesting QSO was the one we had with AA1KS - Rick on Moose Island, Maine on 14.259 MHz which is US Island ME335 and Lighthouse USA 458. He is a fellow member of the FISTS CW Club. We chatted for 15 minutes while other stations were "patiently" waiting to contact him.

We did not have as many visitors this day, but many bikers came by to ask what we were doing. Also a few "Hawkers" came by who were busy counting birds. One chap said he had logged sighting 600 hawks during his time there on the Parkway.

The last contact in our logs for the day was made at 2055 UTC with W3TXQ on 40 CW.

After "breaking camp" we left the Saddle overlook and proceeded back along the Parkway. We thought traveling down Route 8 and then Route 40 might be a better way to return. But we learned that both Route 8 and Route 40 and much more twisty than Route 640. Ah yes, "Live and Learn"!



W4GMX, KS4JB, K4WVS, and AB4SK at Peaks of Otter station

Check out the www.w4ca.org web site for additional photos by K4UK and others filed with this club newsletter. Charlie-AB4SK sent along some nice photos of the Peaks of Otter station. Also see this and past issues of the newsletter in full color there.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



1994 file photo by Jerry-K1SO

Hello Everyone,

I recall a time, in 1998, that I was thanking everyone for making my first R.V.A.R.C. meeting as president a successful one. Well, here I am again, and again, I am encouraged by all the positive feedback that I have received.

I am excited at the possibilities of what we, as a club, and as individuals, might accomplish in the next year. As we all realize, EACH of us, as RVARC members,

is responsible for our success, and our success depends on YOUR participation!

As the holiday season approaches, we certainly have much to be thankful for. WOW! Here we are in November. The fact is Thanksgiving and Christmas will be here soon!

Hey, speaking of holidays, it's time for the annual R.V.A.R.C. Christmas Dinner! We will be gathering on Friday, December 9, at the Hollins University Moody Center. Many thanks to Fred, K4HVB, for setting everything up! I hope to see you there!

We will have lots of good things to talk about as the year goes on!

Oh, by the way, keep this in mind. We always need interesting articles for the Log. Contact Dave, N4JED. He and Co-Editor Catherine, KI4EVA, are doing a fantastic job!

OK, I will keep it brief!

I have made this threat before – If you don't send articles, I will start publishing some of my best jokes. AGAIN, THAT'S A THREAT !!

Have a GREAT holiday season!!

Floyd, KB4WYW

FCC releases long-awaited "Omnibus" Amateur Radio Report and Order from the ARRL Bulletin

Ending a protracted waiting period, the FCC's Report and Order in the so-called "Omnibus" Amateur Radio proceeding,

WT Docket 04-140, was adopted October 4 and released October 10, 2006. In it, the FCC adopted nearly all of the proposed changes in the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking released back in 2004. The FCC has:

- + expanded the phone subbands in the 75 and 40 meter bands;
- + permitted auxiliary stations to transmit on portions of the 2 meter band;
- + permitted the use of spread spectrum on 222-225 MHz;
- + permitted amateurs to retransmit communications from the International Space Station;
- + permitted amateur licensees to designate a specific Amateur Radio club to receive their call sign in memoriam;
- + prohibited an applicant from filing more than one application for a specific vanity call sign;
- + eliminated certain restrictions on equipment manufacturers;
- + permitted Amateur Radio stations in Alaska and surrounding waters more flexibility in providing emergency communications;
- + clarified that "amateur stations may, at all times and on all frequencies authorized to the control operator, make transmissions necessary to meet essential communication needs and to facilitate relief actions";
- + deleted the frequency bands and segments specified for RACES stations;

+ deleted the requirement for public announcement of test locations and times.

In addition, the FCC took several other miscellaneous actions.

In "refarming" the frequencies currently authorized to Novice and Technician Plus licensees, the Commission increased the voice segments for General, Advanced and Amateur Extra licensees.

On 75 meters, Generals will be able to use voice from 3800-4000 kHz, an increase of 50 kHz. Advanced class licensees will be able to use voice from 3700-4000, an increase of 75 kHz, and Amateur Extras will be able to use voice from 3600 to 4000 kHz, a generous increase of 150 kHz.

On 40 meters, Advanced and Extra Class licensees will be able to use voice from 7125-7300 kHz, an increase of 25 kHz. General class licensees will be able to use voice on 7175-7300 kHz, an increase of 50 kHz.

On 15 meters, General class operators will have phone privileges on 21275-21450 kHz, an increase of 25 kHz.

ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, expressed the ARRL's gratitude to the FCC Commissioners in a letter dated October 11: "On behalf of the ARRL and the Commission's licensees in the Amateur Radio Service I want to express appreciation for your release yesterday of the Report and Order in WT Docket 04-140 (FCC 06-149) amending Part 97 of the Commission's Rules. The Commission's action in

clearing this pending proceeding will assist the Amateur Radio Service in meeting its objectives, particularly with regard to providing emergency and public service communications."

The changes will go into effect 30 days after the R&O is published in the Federal Register.

The School Club Roundup

by Charlie AB4SK

We believe the Roanoke Valley is unique in having two ARRL Big-Project Schools sharing one campus. The schools, the William Byrd Middle and William Byrd High School in Vinton, are supported by members of the RVARC.

This October, both schools participated in the major school-club operating event, the School Club Roundup. SCR is sponsored by the Council for the Advancement of Amateur Radio in the New York City Schools, by the ARRL, and it's Hudson Division Education Task Force. SCR fosters contacts with and among schools.

William Byrd Middle School, K4WBM: Our emphasis was to get as many kids on the air as possible. Steve Sizemore, KI4DKH, the faculty advisor, saw to it that 53 middle school students came to the radio room during and after class. Some kids showed up every day. 44 kids got on the air and made one or more contacts. About 90% of the contacts were made by the kids. Some sounded like experienced operators by the last day.

K4WBM operated 23.9 hours, made 266 contacts and scored 39,634 points. We

worked 37 states, 4 countries, and 18 school clubs.

William Byrd High School, WB4HS: Eleven students operated the station making multiple contacts. Several classes sent half their students at a time to the radio room to observe the activity. About 30 kids observed the operation during the week.

WB4HS operated 21.9 hours, made 267 contacts and scored 50,196 points. They worked 41 states, 13 countries, and 23 school clubs.

Soapbox: Where were the schools? K4WBM worked 43 schools during the February School Club Roundup, less than half this time. Poor propagation may have had something to do with it. As they say, wait 'till next year. Both schools will be back in the fray in February.

Those who made it happen at K4WBM: Coy, W4GMX; Dave, KS4JB; Doug, K4WVS; Leroy, AG4RW; Ron; AB4A; and Steve, KI4DKH

And at WB4HS: Pat, KI4ICW; Phil, K4WFO; Richard, KZ4VT; Ron, AB4A, and Woody, W4TU



Club members at a recent club meeting

ARRL President Airs Concerns about Required Red Cross Background Checks

NEWINGTON, CT, Oct 25, 2006 -- ARRL President Joel Harrison, W5ZN, is urging Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and other ham radio volunteers to tread cautiously when submitting information for background checks the American Red Cross (ARC) now requires. The ARC, with which the ARRL has a Statement of Understanding (SoU), this summer notified local chapters that volunteers and staff members must submit to criminal background checks by October 31. Harrison says the requirement extends to ARES volunteers who support Red Cross disaster relief efforts. In a statement today, Harrison said the League recommends that anyone submitting personal information for a background check very carefully read what they are giving the ARC permission to collect.

"The Red Cross is requiring volunteers to grant permission for more than just a criminal background check," Harrison asserted. "They are also requiring permission to draw a consumer and/or investigative consumer report on the volunteer." Harrison said that could also include a credit check and a mode-of-living check.

ARRL Field and Educational Services Manager Dave Patton, NN1N -- whose department supports and oversees the ARRL Field Organization -- is among those who believes the Red Cross stands to lose a fair number of volunteers because of the requirement -

- and not necessarily just ARES volunteers. "ARES members who are providing communications for ARC are working for ARC," Patton maintained, "and, as such, will follow their guidelines." He added that whatever position the ARRL might adopt, the decision to go along with the new Red Cross policy is up to individual volunteers.

Measure Makes Amateur Radio Part of Emergency Communications Community

NEWINGTON, CT, Oct 4, 2006 -- A section of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) 2007 Appropriations Act, HR 5441, formally includes Amateur Radio operators as a part of the emergency communications community. Congress approved the measure before adjourning for its pre-election break. President George W. Bush signed the bill into law October 4.

Amateur Radio is included within the legislation's Subtitle D, Section 671, known as the "21st Century Emergency Communications Act." Radio amateurs are among the entities with which a Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Group (RECC Working Group) must coordinate its activities. Included within the DHS's Office of Emergency Communications -- which the measure also creates -- RECC Working Groups attached to each regional DHS office will advise federal and state homeland security officials. House Subcommittee on Homeland Security Chairman Rep Harold Rogers (R-KY) sponsored HR 5441. The final version of the legislation

incorporates language from both House and Senate bills and was hammered out in a conference committee.

In addition to Amateur Radio operators, RECC Working Groups also will coordinate with communications equipment manufacturers and vendors - including broadband data service providers, local exchange carriers, local broadcast media, wireless carriers, satellite communications services, cable operators, hospitals, public utility services, emergency evacuation transit services, ambulance services, and representatives from other private sector entities and nongovernmental organizations.

According to the bill, the RECC Working Groups will assess the survivability, sustainability and interoperability of local emergency communication systems to meet the goals of the National Emergency Communications Report. That report would recommend how the US could "accelerate the deployment of interoperable emergency communications nationwide."

RECC Working Groups also will be tasked with ensuring a process to coordinate the establishment of "effective multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency emergency communications networks" that could be brought into play following acts of terrorism, natural disasters and other emergencies.

At the state and local level, RECC Working Groups will include state officials; local government officials; law enforcement; local fire departments; 911 centers; state emergency managers, homeland security directors or representatives of state administrative

agencies; local emergency managers or homeland security directors, and other emergency response providers.

At the federal level, RECC Working Group members will include representatives of the DHS, the FCC and other federal departments and agencies responsible for coordinating interoperable emergency communication with or providing emergency support services to state, local and tribal governments.

In the wake of the bill's passage, the ARRL plans to follow up to determine how it can interact with the DHS and its Office of Emergency Communications.

Schedule of Events

NOVEMBER

- 4-6 ARRL November Sweepstakes CW
- 10 Club meeting @ 8pm, Roanoke Red Cross Building**
- 18 Raleigh Court Christmas Parade, contact KE4PIC
- 18-20 ARRL November Sweepstakes PHONE by W4CA**

DECEMBER

- 1 Salem Christmas Parade, contact KB4WYW
- 1-3 ARRL 160 Meter Contest
- 8 Club meeting @ 8pm, Roanoke Red Cross Building**
- 9 RVARC Christmas Dinner at Hollins University**
- 9-10 ARRL 10 Meter Contest

JANUARY 2007

- 11 Ham radio classes start at Roanoke Red Cross, be there before 7pm to register. Classes run for 10 weeks.
- 12 Club meeting @ 8pm, Roanoke Red Cross Building Alphabet Soup contest begins following meeting.**
- 26 Club meeting @ 8pm, Roanoke Red Cross Building Meeting Program Software Defined Radios**



The Peaks of Otter operation of the Blue Ridge Bonanza racked up the most contacts of all the stations on the air and probably had the nicest setup for operating. Photos by AB4SK.



page by Stan, K4UK



W4CA

Mabry Mill

Mile Post 176

September 16, 2006



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