

W4CA Log

November—December 2009

The President's Corner - Ron Ramsey, AB4A

Greetings! We're at the end of another year and as you read this we will have had our last official meeting of 2009. I would like to discuss our operating opportunities and social activities for club members plus one important addition to RVARC.

But first I would like to emphasize that our Wednesday night NET is a club function. We are a Special Service Club and there are only 4 of them in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The net is how we receive the most current information about club activities and shared the activities of other hams in the Roanoke Valley and surrounding area. All club members should make every effort to listen to the Net. This last Wednesday night we did not have a net control. In this situation, we need the assistance of all the club members:

- Listen on the Net frequency, you may be at home, in your automobile or portable.
- Open the net and keep it open, sign the net call "W4CA Net" say your call and standby. If another net member answers, ask him to stay on frequency and share the net.
- Assume Net Control until NCS comes on, remember this is a controlled Net.
- Just do the best you can, I feel sure everyone will HELP!

Last year we had a very diverse set of operating opportunities. Some of them were well supported while others need some assistance. These activities are for all of the club members to be able to operate. Without your participation we cannot continue to have such great operating opportunities. At all of these events we have seasoned Elmers to help newer hams feel comfortable operating and have great stations. Festival the Park has been an operating opportunity for the Roanoke Valley Amateur Radio Club for the past 40 years and we have been there every year. The Parks and Recreation Department even added a ring to the flag pole for us to raise our antenna. Last year the bands were wide open but we had to QRT (shutdown) the station to use the restroom or get dinner. The amount of work that the few volunteers did created such a burden that it was not a fun event. Festival in the Park is a special event with people calling us so some of the people calling did not get in the log.

Field Day is our most important operating event. For it to be a success we need all our club members to help set up and tear down and, more importantly, to operate the full 24 hours. This last year we had plenty of help and almost operated the stations the full 24 hours. For myself personally, the last field day was the most fun I've had since attending Field Day in Floyd County on the farm. We were still short on CW operators and could have used more third shift phone operators. These two are our best and worst activities.

The next most important operating activity is the Virginia QSO Party. We have operated the club station W4CA from Douthat State Park because it is located in Bath County. It being a rather rare county everyone in the United States will be calling us. It is a rustic location in the mountains a short hour away. There is nothing in the rules on how close stations have to be, but we had too many stations operating too close to each other this year. The main reason our score was down was that we were without electricity for most of Sunday. I usually operate as a mobile station and won High Mobile Phone for the State. So we had stations operating from Bath as the club station, mobile stations roaming the whole state and people operating from their home stations. All of these combine for our overall club score.

A totally different type of operating activity are our foxhunts. We have had an antenna building party plus there are two of three Doppler units so there are plenty of antennas available. If you don't have access to an antenna you can always ride along and be a map reader. In this activity we hunt the Fox, which is a hidden transmitter, but you have to be able to hear it and locate it. As of yet, I have not been able to even get in the top half.

VE Test Session Results - Ray Pillow, KK4HR

October 18th & September 20th

TECHNICIAN

Christopher Bateson-KJ4PZX Salem, John Glasgow-KJ4PHP Rocky Mount, Brandon Kincer-KJ4PHQ Blue Ridge, Phil Whittemore-KB1SZG Derry, NH

GENERAL

Fred Mahone-KE4RBT, Salem, Jerry Hall-K4NHL Belmont, NC

EXTRA

Clifford Culpepper-WB4ODK Roanoke

My thanks to Bill W4PLS, Ken N4LYO, Phil W4VPI, Sterling KC0JO, Wally W5WMD, Leroy AG4RW, John K4JKA and Karen KI4GOT for their help with these sessions.

Schedule of Events

- Nov – 13 Meeting
- Nov – 15 VE TEST
- Nov – 21 Raleigh Court Parade meet at 10:00am on 985 repeater, starts at 10:30am
- Nov – 21/22 Sweepstakes 1pm
- Dec – 4 Salem Parade 5:30pm
- Dec – 5 Christmas Dinner 6:00pm
- Jan – 8 First Meeting of 2010

November 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Foxhunt - Pat Lewis, N3AYW

10 October 2009 was the last scheduled FOXHUNT for the year, and the results are in. Team K4JKA came in first with only 7 miles of hunting....Followed by Team K4WFO with 28.6 miles and Team N4XE with 32 miles.



The hiding place was not supposed to be very difficult, even though the transmitter was hidden in what looked like an "unmarked" white police car that contained everything except real Peace Officers, weapons, or light bar. Funny, how it looked nicer than most of the "real" police vehicles we parked next to.

The Fox [N3AYW] was "prisonorized" in the backseat cage confined with radios and laptop. Considered of questionable character, he was allowed only 1 donut and soda an hour for the duration of the exercise. Professional custody was maintained by non-ham citizen volunteers, Mr. and Mrs. Shawn Garst of Bent Mountain. Shaun and his Bride Melissa have spent considerable time, effort and money "returning" their 2000 Ford Crown Victoria to accurate Police Cruiser status. It has been displayed on the Internet and in Shows and Parades locally. What a TEAM!!

Despite the supervision, the FOX was able to harass the hunters with verbal and tactical measures. The Dopplerized hunters suffered sweep frequency and barrage jamming, and for the "KISS" folks using very simple but effective equipment...we just accidentally turned off the TRANSMITTER!! No, sorry, it really was an accident...honest.

Turns out that none of those tactics were needed because the LOCATION ITSELF was incredibly distorting of any RADIO SIGNALS that survived leaving the site...so much so, that when the hunters got in visually close...they would not even believe their readings. Several even spoke to Shawn while walking by the "official" Fox vehicle...."Good Morning Sir !"

New Log Editor - Kennie Harris, KJ4GWO

As most of us know, Russ Abbey (KG4MAV) is having some health issues and will not be able to continue as Log Editor. Kennie Harris (KJ4GWO) will carry on as Editor effective as of this issue.

Kennie earned his Technician ticket last Fall and his General this past Summer. He works for the City of Roanoke as a Geographic Information System Analyst. Kennie has also volunteered to be the City's ARES Emergency Coordinator and is tasked with maintaining the amateur radio equipment in the Emergency Operations Center.

Submit articles to Kennie for the Log by e-mail at KJ4GWO@arrl.net, or during club meetings. Please, submit time-sensitive articles as soon as possible. General interest articles may be used in the next Log, or saved for a future Log. The Log is published bi-monthly, and is available in print at club meetings and online at www.w4ca.us. We will mail copies by request only, as this saves postage.

Just a Note - JT, KF4ONR

I was invited to school roundup week. I am embarrassed I had to be invited to help in a club function. I worked the Hidden Valley HS radio room 2 days, and really had a great time watching students making contacts. Computers were mostly used for logging and looking up call signs. Very few turned to the digital station running PSK31, which was not working at its best. But to see how the teens reacted to instructions for making a call, how to properly use the microphone, then listen intently to pick out a response out of all the QRN made a very interesting day. We spent most of our time operating, but did get a chance to talk to the students about ham radio. Their response to the basics of how the radio works was unique. I would like to challenge any ham, whose work schedule does not conflict, to volunteer for the next school roundup. Most of us sit around the house bored anyway, so this will really enlighten your week. I want to offer a special thanks those who dedicated their time and efforts for this event. Thanks again. J.T.

School Club Round-up Daily Dispatch

HIDDEN VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Operating Hours: 18.39, Voice Contacts: 181, Digital Contacts: 29, Current Score: 33,221

34 States Contacted: AL, AZ, AR, CA, CT, DE, FL, GA, IL, IN, IA, LA, MN, MD & DC, MA, MI, MS, MO, MT, NE, NH, NJ, NY, NC, OH, OK, PA, SC, TN, TX, VT, VA, WV, WI

5 Provinces Contacted: ALBERTA & NW, NEW BRUNSWICK, NOVA SCOTIA, ONTARIO, QUEBEC

7 Countries Contacted: CHILE, COSTA RICA, EUROPEAN RUSSIA, FED REP OF GERMANY, MADEIRA IS, NETHERLANDS ANTILLES, CURACAO

9 Radio Clubs Contacted: AC4PD K4ROA KD4LDS KF6GKS KI4GNE KK4TT RZ3AXX W4CA W5CUI

15 School Clubs Contacted: K4WBM K5LSU KB3BRT KG4WJR KI4TEY KJ4PGJ ND8GA W8SH W9GRS W9NAA WA4MLB WA4MLR WB4HS WB4QET WI5ND

WILLIAM BYRD HIGH SCHOOL—WB4HS

Operating Hours: 23.53, Voice Contacts: 407, Digital Contacts: 18, Current Score: 100,561

46 States Contacted: AL, AK, AZ, AR, CA, CO, CT, FL, GA, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, MN, MD & DC, MA, MI, MN, MS, MO, MT, NE, NV, NH, NJ, NM, NY, NC, ND, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, WA, WV, WI, WY

4 Provinces Contacted: ALBERTA & NW, BRITISH COLUMBIA & YK, MANITOBA & NN, ONTARIO

10 Countries Contacted: AZORES, CROATIA, CUBA, FED REP OF GERMANY, MEXICO, NETHERLANDS, PUERTO RICO, SENEGAL, SPAIN, ST KITTS & NEVIS

11 Radio Clubs Contacted:

K3NAL K5BAY KD4LDS KF5CRF KL7AIR NE6JP PI4CC W4CA W6RO W9AA WA2HOM

29 School Clubs Contacted: K0VVY K4KDJ K4RY K4WBM K5CRS K5LBJ K5LSU K9IU K9SOU KD0CVC KI4TEY N0FHN N4GDS N4HVV N6KKS VE3OSC W0ISU W4BUC W5LHS W6RFU W6YX W8SH W9GRS W9NAA WA4MLR WA7JMS WB4QET WD5IAD WI5ND

WILLIAM BYRD MIDDLE SCHOOL—K4WBM

We shut down K4WBM about 12:30 PM today. We really missed Doug and Coy, two founders of this activity. Both had health problems but we hope they will be back with us for the February event. Lots of RVARC club members chipped in to make this a success. We didn't earn the best score we ever had (maybe the worst). Propagation was marginal. I don't think there were many hams on the air.

The bands, especially 20, appeared empty at times.

Murphy also sneaked in but was a minor annoyance.

However, there were several high points: I haven't totaled

the number of students who operated but we had kids in the room every day and every period. Most made one or more contacts. Kudos to Steve Sizemore. (54 students who operated 73 times) On Monday, among the first group of students, was a young lady from Cuba who was just starting to learn English.

One of the members of our fine group of Control Operators, Doc, KC0JO, speaks fluent Spanish. He connected to a Cuban station and the student was able to speak with a ham in her native language over amateur radio. This morning, as we were wrapping up, John, K4JKA, happened on to a DX net on 20 meters. We heard that they were taking a list for VP6DB on Pitcairn Island. He dropped our suffix on the list. Since I am an old timer and know just about everything, I suggested he move off. "You'll never work him, probably won't even hear him."

John chose to wait instead of taking my sage advice. When his turn came, he called VP6DB and exchanged call signs and 22 signal report. We actually heard him and he heard John. I think I got more of a kick out of it than John as I am a Bounty Mutiny fan.

We had a newly retired teacher assigned to us. She was a real asset and a great help. She indicated she will work with us in the February SCR as a volunteer.

Operating Hours: 21.65, Voice Contacts: 147, Digital Contacts: 17, Current Score: 28,055

32 States Contacted: AL, AZ, AR, CA, CO, CT, FL, GA, IL, IN, KS, KY, MN, MA, MI, MN, NJ, NM, NY, ND, OH, OK, OR, PA, SC, SD, TN, TX, VT, VA, WA, WY

1 Province Contacted: ONTARIO

18 Countries Contacted: BALEARIC IS, BELARUS, BELGIUM, BELIZE, BULGARIA, CAYMAN IS, CUBA, FED REP OF GERMANY, FRANCE, ITALY, LIECHTENSTEIN, MEXICO, PITCAIRN IS, POLAND, SAMOA, SERBIA & MONTENEGRO, VENEZUELA, ZIMBABWE

7 Radio Clubs Contacted: KE4RBT KJ4PKP N4PA W4BHS W4CA WA4LR WB4QTT

18 School Clubs Contacted: K0KU K0VVY K4RY K5LBJ KB3BRT KC5ORO KF5CRF N4HVV ND1U ND8GA W6RFU W9GRS W9NAA WA2RNY WA7JMS WB4HS WI5ND YU1GTU

Ron - AB4A, Charlie AB4SK

Hidden Valley High School Club - N4HVH

...just received their "Big Project Radio" grant. They received a Yaesu FT-450AT HF transceiver, Hustler 5-BTV 5 band vertical, Astron RS20-A power supply and a spool of good quality coax with PL 259s. This arrived just in time to use it once and then take it down for the club display in the gym. There are 24 club displays at the first PTA meeting. Students and teachers visited during school then parents and students visited that evening. I discussed ham radio with the adults while the club members explained ham radio to other students. We found a ham parent who did not even know we had a station found 2 new members and our first girl. The club doubled in size from this project (8 new). The only problem was we had 2 weeks before School Club Round-Up. During our only meeting before the contest, we had only enough time to explain what each radio did and make a quick 2m contact.

A new run of coax was installed to a fan dipole(10,20, 40 & 80m). A magmount 2m antenna was installed on the metal door to the roof. Now to explain why this took 2 weeks; just about every day we worked it rained, the threaded rods to mount the PVC pipe to the building were 9/16"(I had hundreds of 3/8 or 1/2 but no 9/16, oh well a trip to Lowe's), the PL 259 on the mag mount was B/O discovered only after we had pulled the Coax through to the room (replace whole antenna assembly). N4HVH radio room is set up and ready to operate with one day to spare. Monday morning student club members hookup a school laptop to score on, while I hookup Gary's Signalink to the FT-901. The Signalink does not work so Gary has to come in Tuesday morning before work (soundcard issues). Start the contest with just Phone, students are having a great time but it's taking a lot of time to teach them to make contacts. Murphy's Law strikes again the laptop dies. No problem, students determine that the power supply is bad. Substitute one of their own, next go to the library to secure a good one. This was our big one, when the laptop was rebooted we had two copies of the program running so at the end of the day we lost 3 1/2 hours of operating time right in the middle of the day. So went the contest all week. Ray came over Tuesday and demonstrated CW for the students. Gary worked all day Friday with the students on PSK31. We worked all five days of School Club Roundup using up 18 1/3 hours out of 24, with a final score of 33,221 by 23 students and 7 control operators. With a raw score of 181 phone and 29 digital with multipliers of 34 states, five provinces, seven countries, nine clubs and most important 15 school stations. Thanks to all the control operators that took time to help the students and especially thanks to all of the hams that made 2 m contacts with them.

Ron - AB4A

President's Corner - cont. from Page 1

Our next type of operating activity is as control operators for the young people. We accomplish this by the ITT Scouts Safety Day and School Club Round-up. At ITT we teach radio merit badge. Last year our numbers were down because we had only one station operating and had to turn away some scouts. We started out at the very first merit badge college with 37 scouts, with as high as 108 in later years. In School Club Roundup, the William Byrd clubs have been first in the nation in their class. The Hidden Valley High School club is a new club but improving each year.

This list only about half of activities, but it show's how diverse the operating activities are. Without the support of the club members they would not happen. Let's move on to our social activities.

We eat twice a year, at the Star City special event at Mill Mountain in July, and the Christmas party and award ceremony at Coach & Four Restaurant. (okay, we usually eat great at every event but these are our social events)

I'm proud to announce a new award from the Roanoke Valley Amateur Radio Club W4CA, the "Bob Anderson Memorial Award". This award recognizes Bob's lifetime achievements through his dedication, leadership, love and advancement of the amateur radio hobby. This award will be presented on uncle Bob's, K4UMK, behalf to other hams who emulate his accomplishments. Hope to see you at all of our activities. 73!



Operation Hazel II

Just a note to show that we folks in Pulaski County have the means to operate on an equal footing as those hams at the Wylam "Ham Mansion" in Christiansburg. Pulaski EOC was operating in equally as "fine digs." (heh, heh)

Len Sutphin and myself were operating from my office in Dublin and had the pleasure of being assisted throughout the six hour SET by Bobby Clark, Emergency Manager for Pulaski County.

We operated four 2m and 440mhz radios to monitor traffic and to facilitate movement of the traffic to a number of nets. With two operators, we were able to maintain one operator on the primary resource net of 146.895 (Wytheville repeater linked system). The second operator could then move to other sub-nets and simplex frequencies to expedite the movement of a wide range of traffic to include simulated messages such as SKYWARN reports, emergency, tactical, and health and welfare.

Our antenna system was comprised of two - 2 meter fiberglass vertical j-poles and one 2m/440 five element beam. One vertical j-pole and the beam were mounted on a 24 foot portable mast located in the parking lot. With the beam antenna, we could access the Lexington, VA repeater that linked to Richmond. Emergency power was provided by a Kipor generator (w/digital inverter) which powered our computers and all ham equipment.

This SET was an excellent communications exercise. My sincere appreciation to all who participated in this SET and for the leadership provided by Glen Sage.

73,
Roger Bell, N4FPA
Dublin, VA
(SET designation - Pulaski EOC and Pulaski Community Hospital)



City of Roanoke EOC - New & Improved

The EOC at the City of Roanoke Municipal Building has been equipped with Amateur Radio equipment for many years now, but it has not been properly maintained and operated. Some of the equipment has needed updating, repairing or replacing and the HF antenna had fallen prey to high winds and has been taken down.

With the assistance of Phil Roark, Dave Potter, Pat Lewis, Dave Kinsey and others, the existing equipment is now functional, new equipment has been purchased and installed, and Dave is putting the tuning fork to our new Hustler 5BTV antenna.

We have in our inventory the following:

ASTRON RS-12A , RS-12A ,RS-35A , RS-50M POWER SUPPLIES, KENWOOD MC-60 DESK MIC, IBM PC COMPUTER, MOTOROLA SPECTRA TRANSCIEVER 2M W/MIC, ALINCO DR-130T TRANSCIEVER 2M, KENWOOD TM-V71A TRANSCIEVER 2M/440, KENWOOD TS-450S TRANSCIEVER HF W/MIC, DAIWA SWR & POWER METER, KANTRONICS KPC-3PLUS TNC, BEARCAT BC796D SCANNER

I am working on my fellow City of Roanoke employees who are, or want to become, hams to get them to come in on certain nights to operate the equipment for fun, and to help keep it in working order. Once we have HF capability I will schedule an open house to showcase our shack and to thank all who have helped make it come to life.

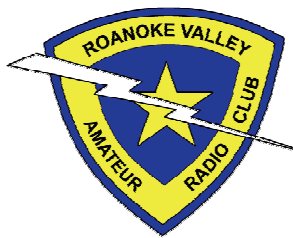
The City of Roanoke EOC Radio Room was activated for the first time in many years during Operation Hazel II, when we passed phone and digital traffic on 2 meters and 440Mhz, and Ray Pillow even acted as Net Control for part of the time while he was there.

My personal thanks to everyone who "Elmered" me during my efforts to get this shack up and running.

73's

Kennie Harris, KJ4GWO





W4CA LOG
P.O. Box 2002
Roanoke, VA 24009-2002

W4CA LOG

November - December 2009

Roanoke Valley Amateur Radio Club W4CA

Officers:

President, Ron Ramsey AB4A
Vice President: Mike Hevener KF4PHW
Secretary: Karen Anderson KI4GOT
Treasurer: Ray Pillow KK4HR

Board of Directors:

Phil Roark K4WFO, David L Kinsey KS4BO, Ray Crampton AB4YZ, Jerry D Haislip K1SO

Appointed Positions:

Net Manager: Russ Abbey KG4MAV
Honorary Chef: Bob Anderson K4UMK
Club Call Trustee: Ray Crampton AB4YZ
Log Editor: Kennie Harris KJ4GWO kj4gwo@arrl.net
Technical Analyst: Charlie Draper AB4SK

The RVARC meets the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month at the Roanoke Red Cross Building at 352 Church Ave at 8pm. In addition, the club sponsors a weekly net every Wednesday at 8 pm on the W4CA repeater, 146.985-, tone 107.2. Check in 5 times and receive a net number and certificate. Everyone is welcome. The W4CA Log is published bi-monthly by the RVARC for its membership. The Club also sponsors a V.E. test session every 3rd Sunday at 2pm at the Red Cross. Contact Ray Pillow KK4HR at kk4hr@arrl.net.

**The RVARC owns and maintains the
following open repeaters:**

146.985- tone 107.2 442.50+ tone 107.2

<http://www.w4ca.us/>