



# THE JUNKBOX



## The Official Newsletter of The Albemarle Amateur Radio Society

Post Office Box 1217

March 2006

Elizabeth City, NC 27906-1217

<http://www.taars.us>

WA4VTX Repeaters 146.655/444.300 PL 131.8 APRS 144.39

### Next TAARS Meeting

Our next scheduled TAARS meeting is slated for Thursday, March 16th, 2006 7:30 at COA. Our dinner location is the Golden Corral at 6PM

### Minutes from February Meeting

There was not an official TAARS meeting in February because there were only five members present. We did hold several informal discussions on various topics.

### From the President

I participated in the ARRL Int'l DX SSB Contest last weekend, and had a great time. When I opened up the old log, I was surprised and ashamed to find that it had been since December 2004 since I last operated on HF. I didn't put a serious effort into it, (meaning I didn't stay glued to the radio for 48 hours), but I did make 25 contacts, most of them new band / countries for me. I uploaded them to eQsl, and to LoTW, and got a confirmation on LoTW by PJ2 already. I used the DXLab logging, rig control, and spot collector software. It is nice to double click a spot and have the rig tune to that frequency.

My antenna (3 1/4 waves fed in phase on each side of the dipole for 20 meters) worked ok. I was surprised it was still up and working. In fact, I found out one side had come down partially, so more like an inverted V on that side. I think I'm going to give a shot at the CW contest when it comes up later this month.

About the only business we have coming up is the Tar Wheel Century bike ride, and Field Day.

Hope to see you all at the meeting, and don't forget dinner beforehand.

73, Ron, N4WYR

In other news, I worked Senegal yesterday evening on 20 SSB, and got him on the second try. Also, there was a guy on the band being a real jerk, giving his call while the DX was calling, or while the DX was in QSO with another station. Somebody came up on frequency, who didn't even sound like the DX (Nicaragua with a heavy accent), and repeated the guys call and told him he was 59. The jerk thanked him and went on his way.

Ron

### Upcoming Events

Our next big TAARS sponsored event is our quarterly testing session on April 22<sup>nd</sup> followed by the Tar Wheel bike event to be held April 29th. To top it all off Field Day 2006 is the weekend of the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of June.

### Hamfest Calendar

Down East Hamfest, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at Lenoir County Fairgrounds, Kinston NC

SpringFest, April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2006, at Moose Lodge #898 1400 N. George Washington Hwy, Chesapeake, VA

North Carolina State Convention (Raleigh Hamfest), April 23<sup>rd</sup> at NC State Fairgrounds, Raleigh NC

### Columbia ATV Repeater and Tower Cam Back In Operation

Although still operating at reduced output power the Columbia ATV equipment is back in operation. Mike has determined that faulty cables are the source of the high SWR condition with the transmitter. He will be making the needed repairs as soon as weather and time permit.

### Around the Bands.

Well it's been an exciting month for me. I've added several new countries to my list, most notably Mali and Senegal. But the BIG news is I finally worked Alaska on 80m, and got CW and SSB contact credit. At 0554z on 03/02/2002, I worked KL1V to finish my attempt to do 5-Band WAS. Now all I need is to collect about 9-10 more cards for 80m and it's a done deal. I've already got the wallpaper for 15m and 20m and I have all the cards for 10m and 40m I just need to get them checked. Maybe I'll get the cards for 80m in time to take them all to Raleigh and get them checked at the RARSFEST at the end of April.

The other news is that I've built a set of stacked 5-el 6m yagi's and, for the time being, have side-mounted them to the tower to test them. What I've discovered is that they are about 2 S-units down on TX from the single 5-el at the top. But in doing a little testing with a section of tower from my neighbor Greg, N4QLD, I've found that the tower will indeed affect the performance,

depending on exactly how the antenna is oriented. SO, I guess I'm going to take the plunge and put them on the rotator. Then I can turn them and get an even more accurate test. And by then, who knows, it just may be time for the spring band openings

And finally, I increased my contacts in the NCQP by around 70 And it was great to hear and work NO4Y and WAITSS and always fun to work Kevin and Sally, KA4NWS and KG4NWS as they traveled across eastern NC. There definitely seemed to be more participants this year and 40m held up pretty good. Unfortunately 80m was awfully quiet and I eventually knocked off about 2 hours early.

So, check out the Contest Page at [www.taars.us](http://www.taars.us) and jump in there and "have some fun".

Ed/w4rvz

### **ED W4RVZ Speaker for Columbia Meeting**

Ed, W4RVZ was the guest speaker for the February CERA. Although I was unable to attend, I heard rave reviews of his program. Ed talked about Hurricane Katrina and his involvement with the Baptist Men and Ham Radio. He also brought along some show and tell antenna creations.



Ed W4RVZ showing off equipment with his easy travel dipole in the background.



Ed W4RVZ and Greg N4QLD, watching as Joe W4UEB checks out the equipment.

Photos courtesy of Rod KA2TQY

### **Field Day 2006 Planning**

Sooner than you'll know, Field Day 2006 will be upon us. I just received a letter from the local Red Cross Chapter about this year's Hurricane Awareness Day in Elizabeth City at the Southgate Mall. Unfortunately, their planned date of 24 June is the first day of Field Day. Last year I did not do a table there due to being very busy and a poor turnout the year before. However, this might be just the opportunity to attract the very people we want to be interested in Amateur Radio. The event is from 1000 to 1500 Saturday, June 24<sup>th</sup>. Possibly we could find a volunteer to run a table there and direct interested people to our Field Day site. We could possibly send some ATV back there? Or, even just some repeater ops. The other exhibitors are a good target. I have met some very nice people (Baptist Men for one) that share our same interests in helping out during hurricanes. What do you think? Dave, N1DP/M (moving).