



THE JUNKBOX



The Official Newsletter of The Albemarle Amateur Radio Society

Post Office Box 1217

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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, April 20th, 2006 7:30 at COA. Our dinner location is the Golden Corral at 6PM

Minutes from March Meeting

Ron, N4WYR called the meeting to order at 7:45 there were 8 members present and 3 guest. Ron explained ARRL Field Day activities to our guest. George reported he is scheduling a Planetarium show at ECSU on April 22nd. All TAARS members and family are welcome to attend. Ron discussed FCC Amateur Radio license structure for our guest. A short program on ARRL Log Book of the World and EQSL was presented by Ron our president follow by a discussion on CW and other modes of operation. Meeting was adjourned at 8:45.

From the President

Here it is, April already. Spring is here, daylight savings time is upon us, and the weather is noticeably warmer. We have several upcoming events, which will be discussed at this month's meeting on Thursday, the 20th. We have a VE exam on the 22nd, regular time and place. The Raleigh hamfest is the 23rd, I've never been to that one before, and hope to attend this time. The Tar Wheel Century bike ride is the 29th, we probably still need more volunteers. And we have Field Day coming up the end of June, we need to start planning for that, as well as the picnic, which is always a fun family affair with plenty of good food.

I recently purchased and installed a new mobile rig, it is the Yaesu FT-8800. It is a dual band 2 meter and 70 cm, and is actually two independent rigs in one, with the display divided into two parts, and a separate set of knobs and controls for each side. It has 50 w on 2m, and 35 w on 70cm, with 3 lower steps for each. Both sides can be set for VHF, or both for UHF, or one of each in either order. There are 500+ memory channels for each side. Receive coverage includes most of the range from 108MHz to 900MHz, with an AM receive mode for the aircraft band. It supports half duplex crossband repeat, and FM satellite operation. There are six "one touch" memory channels, which save settings for both halves of the radio, and 5 other push buttons for each side. The menus are very easy to use, the only time I need the manual (which is easy to read) is to look up what function is on which menu number. But you can scroll through them until you find it. The microphone has the normal set of DTMF buttons, and also UP/DOWN buttons, 4 user programmable buttons, a lock button, and a light button (which

lights up the front of the microphone). My only complaint with this rig is that the buttons on the radio are tiny, and not lit. But I have learned to find the "one touch" memory buttons by feel, without having to look. You just have to be careful not to push more than one button at a time. I purchased mine from HRO, and had it at my door two days later. Mine came with a free separation kit, and I have installed it with the main radio in the rear of my vehicle and the control head up front. I've had great signal reports since I began using it, and fully recommend it to anyone looking for a new rig in this price range.

73,
Ron N4WYR

Upcoming Events

TAARS quarterly testing session takes place Saturday April 22nd 9am at COA room 110 building "C". Walk ins are welcome.

Saturday April 22nd 12pm George, KE4NBR has scheduled a ECSU Planetarium show.

Tarwheel Century bike event will be held April 29th. We are looking for SAG stop operators and rover volunteers.

TAARS officer elections. Elections take place in May and new officers begin terms in June.

TAARS annual membership dues. TAARS membership runs from June through May. Dues are \$30.00 with an additional 2 dollars per family member.

Field Day 2006. June 24th, and 25th. It's time to start planning. Lets make it a great Field Day weekend.

Hamfest Calendar

North Carolina State Convention (Raleigh Hamfest), April 23rd at NC State Fairgrounds, Raleigh NC

Columbia ATV Tower Cam

Recent evening thunderstorm activities gave me the opportunity to observe cloud to cloud and cloud to ground lighting real time from 1200 feet. What a view it was, absolutely breath taking. So often when we have thunderstorm activity in the area the tower cam is socked in and there is no view further than a few hundred feet if that far. As these storms rolled by the cam was completely

in the clear and I'm now looking forward to a daytime event.

Herman, NO4Y

AROUND THE BANDS

Well, I'm finally starting to get back into the "ham" mode. I managed to work the Galapagos Islands, Tonga and The Western Sahara plus worked a few 40 "rag-chew" contacts along the way. Plus I spent some time building a antenna mount to go on the back of my van. This will allow me to go "mobile HF" as well as giving me an excellent support for my newest antenna, the 6-meter X-Beam. With a few sections of TV mast, I can get the X-Beam up to about 15' with no problem.

But the big news is that the long-built pair of 5-element 6 meter yagi's is on top of the tower. Finally, a set of stacked 5's and just in time for the Spring E's. Early tests seem to indicate that receive is probably better based on beacons heard but haven't had a chance to test the transmit side. But band conditions have been really lousy due to some solar weather. Well time will tell. I included a picture of the stack.

Don't for RARSFEST in Raleigh on the 23 and come out on the 29th and help out during the TarWheel Bike race. We need rovers and SAG operators and we need somebody to make sure that Dave, N1DP brings some deviled-eggs to SAG 2. They never seem to make it this far.

So fire up those old boat anchors and hit the air-waves. With summer coming, business is sure to pick up and once again proving that "Man, this stuff is FUN."

Ed/w4rvz



Operating Awards

From time to time we hear talk of operating awards, paper chasers, WAS, DXCC or other "foreign terms". Here is a summary of the two most popular awards.

The [Worked-All-States award](#) is given for submitting confirmations from all [50 states](#). The cost of this award is \$10. Aside from the basic certificate for any combination of bands/modes, specialty certificates are issued for a variety of different bands and modes such as Satellite, 160-meters, SSTV, Digital, Phone, and each VHF band. Available endorsements, for a \$7.50 charge, include CW, Novice, QRP, EME, and any single bands. The Digital and Phone awards are available for the various modes. They will be dated, but not numbered. Cards are checked by a volunteer [ARRL HF Awards Manager](#) affiliated with ARRL Special Service Clubs (although QSL cards can be checked at HQ, absent an awards manager). To encourage increased activity and station improvement throughout the bands, the [5-Band WAS](#) certificate, at a cost of \$12.50, is available for working all states on 5 amateur bands (except 10/18/24 MHz). Cards for 5BWAS can be checked by your local HF Awards Manager or at ARRL HQ.

The premier operating award in all of Amateur Radio is the [DX Century Club](#). The basic certificate (which can be obtained in several categories--Mixed modes, Phone, CW, RTTY, Satellite, 160, 80, 40, 30, 20, 17, 15, 12, 10, 6 and 2 meters) is awarded for working and confirming at least 100 entities on the [ARRL DXCC List](#). Endorsements are available in specific increments beyond the 100-entity level, culminating in the coveted [DXCC Honor Roll](#), for those at or near working them all! DXCC qualifiers are also eligible for a DXCC lapel pin, available at a nominal charge.

For those who enjoy the thrill of the hunt on more than one band, [5-Band DXCC](#) can be earned for working 100 current entities on 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10-meter bands. 5BDXCC is a good test of the DXer's operating abilities, but is well within the reach of all of those willing to work for it. 5BDXCC qualifiers receive a handsome certificate and are eligible for an attractive plaque. The 5BDXCC award is endorsable for the 160, 17, 12, 6 and 2-meter bands.

[#1 Honor Roll](#)--To qualify for a Mixed, Phone, CW or RTTY [#1 Honor Roll plaque](#), you must have worked every entity on the current DXCC List. Write the DXCC Desk for details. #1 Honor Roll qualifiers receive a #1 Honor Roll endorsement sticker for their DXCC certificate and are eligible for a #1 Honor Roll lapel pin and a #1 Honor Roll plaque.

The [DXCC Challenge Award](#) is given for working and confirming at least 1,000 DXCC band-entities on any Amateur bands, 1.8 through 54 MHz. This award is in the form of a plaque. Plaques can be endorsed in increments of 500. Entities for each band are totaled to give the [Challenge standing](#). Deleted entities do not count for this award. QSOs for the 160, 80, 40, 30, 20, 17, 15, 12, 10 and 6 meter bands qualify for this award. Further information on the DXCC program can be found at: <http://www.arrl.org/awards/dxcc>.