



HE JUNKBOX



The Official Newsletter of The Albemarle Amateur Radio Society

Post Office Box 1217

May 2007

Elizabeth City, NC 27906-1217

<http://www.taars.us>

WA4VTX Repeaters 146.655/444.300/147.330 PL 131.8 APRS 144.39

Next TAARS Meeting

Our next scheduled TAARS meeting is slated for Thursday, May, 17th, 7:30 at COA building "C" C109. Our dinner location is the Golden Corral at 6PM.

Minutes from April Meeting

April's meeting was called to order by Ron, N4WYR at 7:30 PM. There were 10 members present and two guest. The March minutes were approved as printed. The Treasurers report was presented and accepted.

A discussion was held on the upcoming Tarwheel Century Bike event.

Zeb K4ZVM, Herman NO4Y, and Ron N4WYR volunteered for the VE testing session to be held on Saturday April 21st.

Champ informed us that a Hurricane Hunter P3 aircraft would be visiting Elizabeth City on May 3rd and encouraged everyone to attend.

Albert, K4VHV and Herman, NO4Y were appointed as nominating committee for club officers.

Zeb K4ZVM reported that Northeastern High School athletic complex will be available for Field Day activities once again .

Gene, WB4KZI gave a short talk and passed around some photos of a Dxpedition he participated in during 1972 while he was stationed in Ethiopia. He also discussed a few of his Navy achievements and talked about working phone patches while on active duty.

Cynthia discussed some preparations made at the state level concerning the possibility of a Bird Flu epidemic.

A motion was made and passed to obtain a new club call. Ron, N4WYR is to be the trustee.

Herman/NO4Y

Upcoming Events

May 17th TAARS Officers Elections
May 19th Williamston Swapfest
June 23rd and 24th ARRL Field Day
July 21st TAARS quarterly testing session

Repeater News

I'm pleased to report that the repeaters functioned just fine for the bike event. Reports received indicated that the addition of the 147.330 Hertford repeater was a big help with communications

Herman/NO4Y

VE Testing Session Report

Saturday April 21st was the most successful testing session TAARS has experienced. Examiners present were KD4CEB, NO4Y, N4WYR and K4ZVM. Here are a few statistics from our session.

Total candidates served was 12

New License earned total of 10, and here is the breakdown

Technician 7

General 2

Extra 1

Congratulations to everyone that earned an upgrade or new license.

Herman/NO4Y

Rusty on CW?

One of the things I like to do is play video games. I suppose since the days of Pong I have always liked a good game. Always trying to beat my last score or beat someone else's. Another thing I enjoy is Ham radio. What if I could do both? Enter a program for the PC called Morse Runner by VE3NEA, Alex Shovkoplyas at <http://www.dxatlas.com/>. For me this CW Contest Simulator is almost an obsession. While I am not that good at CW due to various breaks in my short time as a Ham I consider this program a gem. I have only used it a short time but it is just plain fun. What he has done with this is nothing short of amazing.

The set up is a snap. Just enter your call and a few options and off you go. The program is made to look like a contest logger with entry blocks for Call, RST, and Number. It uses function keys made for common calls and reports. Hit "Run" and it starts. You will hear the sound of HF complete with the occasional static crash. This is a timed run so it depends on what you set for how long this will last.

Press "F1" and you hear "CQ TEST N4OB TEST" and now the fun begins. It appears to be a random amount of "CQ" calls

before you receive an answer and depending on what options you selected, it can be all out MAYHEM!!!! If your lucky you will get one station calling and you work him just like you would on a real radio sending RST and Number to him and he will send his information back for your log. What still amazes me is the way this program handles the contact. Unlike some CW programs that spits out calls for you to practice, this is a totally interactive experience. Call him by the wrong call and he will repeat his call, miss his number then send a “?” and he will repeat the information. Not only that but he can miss your info as well and will send “NR ?” While one station calling you back is nice. Try 5 at once. Pick out a call or partial and start working them just as if you were really a popular fellow. The program will keep a log of your contacts and show you any mistakes. Miss a call, see “NIL”. Miss report and “RST” appears in log. The same for contact number. The program will keep a running tally of your score and also keeps track of your QSO's per hour. So if you want to improve your skills and have fun doing it then this program is for you. The best part is it is free.

Kevin/N4OB

Bottom of the Cycle

For being at the bottom of the solar cycle, I've had a ball on 10 meters for the past week or so. It's almost like an addiction. I slip in the house, ease in the shack rotate the dial looking for signals on 10 meters. If I hear any activity at all I look for an unused frequency near 28.400 and start calling CQ. Some of those calls have been answered by pile ups reminiscent of a field day afternoon on 20 meters or during the middle of the night on 75 meters with our wire antenna at 75 feet dominating the band. I actually had to cut the rig off one evening to meet an obligation with 10 or 15 stations calling me, damn it was hard. Although I don't work much 6 meters I hear that band has been in much the same condition. The 10 meter band has been very short lots of the time. One afternoon I worked a station in Mooresville NC and he was 10db over S9. That same afternoon I worked several stations in western Virginia and several in and around Greenville SC. One evening I worked stations starting in Maine, then around Michigan, down to Kansas, Texas, and Florida. It's just so interesting to listen as the band changes and rotates from north to south. If you have a little bit of time give it a try it's lots of fun.

Herman/NO4Y

Letter to the Editor

Dear Bob,
Staff writer for the The Daily Advance,

Nice article on Riding for a Cause, the annual Tarwheel ride which was in the Sunday April 29th edition.

As I read on I realized that an interesting part of the Tarwheel day was missing from the article. No mention was made of the TAARS intervention. TAARS. The Albermarle Amateur Radio Society, which is a communication club is based and hold their monthly meetings in Elizabeth City.

The TAARS group, with their own equipment, manned each point of travel for the bikers. We started the net control, NC4EC, at the Roanoke Bible College, RBC at 7:30 a.m. and

had amateur operators at SAG 1 Okisko Rd, SAG 2 Missing Mill, Hertford, SAG 3 Waterfront, Edenton. In addition four radio ROVERS, roving vehicles, went from point to point to insure the safety of each rider. They did this all day. We called in under the call of NC4EC, (the club call) to alert each SAG when a group was riding on to the next rest stop. The Rovers are there to give assistance and transportation if necessary, to the bikers. If a tire need changing, or a riders need or want help in any way we are there for there safety.

We don't leave our post until the last rider is back to RBC. The volunteers are there at each SAG and set up their radio equipment from 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM or until the last rider is identified by their tag number and has passed thru our station.

The community may find this of interest as this is the rest of the story.

Cynthia V. Cox, KG4SPH
ARES Amateur Radio Emergency Service
Assistant Emergency Coordinator,
AEC for Perquimans County

Last News Letter

It's been a real pleasure serving as TAARS secretary for the past 2 years. I hope you found the monthly newsletter enjoyable. I have to admit there were times when I really struggled to find something I thought might be interesting to include. If it were not for some of you giving me a hand with articles I'm not sure I would have ever found enough material of interest. Thanks to everyone who has contributed those articles and I hope you will continue to send them to the new secretary.

I made a New Year's resolution to be a better Ham this year. I realized that I had become lazy and wasn't putting as much effort into the hobby as it deserved. After all, over the years it has entertained me for countless hours, provided a special hiding place for all my spare money, kept me out bars, off the streets, provided exercise climbing up and down towers what a wonderful hobby. So what if repeater controllers and packet radio caused my hair to fall out. Big deal if ATV made me over eat and gain 20 pounds. What a small price to pay for the rewards.

Seriously, I have tried to put a little more effort into the hobby this year. I've rediscovered HF, I had forgotten how much fun HF digital modes could be. I've worked a few contest and QSO parties. what a great way to pass some spare time on the weekends. I've managed to get our echolink node up and going, a project that I had been wanting to do and kept putting off for one reason or another. The rewards of that which include being able to stay in touch with N1DP. I even managed to give Greg a hand with the Hertford repeater and enjoyed every minute of it.

There are so many rewards to our hobby, at the top of the heap is the pleasure of meeting all the wonderful people that make up Amateur Radio and especially the TAARS membership.

Herman/NO4Y