



THE JUNKBOX



The Official Newsletter of The Albemarle Amateur Radio Society

Post Office Box 1217

December 2006

Elizabeth City, NC 27906-1217

<http://www.taars.us>

WA4VTX Repeaters 146.655/444.300/147.330 PL 131.8 APRS 144.39

December Meeting

Our Annual Christmas dinner will be held on Thursday December 14th at Mamasita's restaurant in Elizabeth City. It begins at 6:30 and is always is a good time. We will have a few door prizes and the Ham of the Year Award will be presented. Please write yourself a note to attend. I hope to see all of you there.

Herman/NO4Y

Next TAARS Meeting

Our next scheduled TAARS meeting is slated for Thursday, January 18, 7:30 at COA building "C" C109. Our dinner location is the Golden Corral at 6PM.

Minutes from November Meeting

The meeting was called to order by our President Ron, N4WYR at 7:45 PM. There were 7 members present and one guest. The minutes for October were approved as published. Herman, NO4Y reported on the amateur radio exam session that was held in October. A discussion took place on NTS traffic handling and it was decided we should do a program on the subject. A discussion was also held on low band listening. Motion made and carried to have a Christmas Party, Herman, NO4Y is to make arrangements.

It was requested that Ed, TAARS Webmaster please update the Cycle to Hertz page to reflect the new date. Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 Meeting adjourned at 8:40pm

Herman/NO4Y

From the President

I hope to see all of you at this year's Christmas party.

Ron/ N4WYR

Upcoming Events

CERA Meeting February 10, 2007

TAARS Testing Session January 20th, 2007

Around The Bands

Well, it's the time of year when we both look back and look ahead. On December 10, I will have been a ham operator for 5 years. As I look back, my only regret is that is isn't 25. As I look back at my log, I see nearly 5400 contacts, at least that's how many I have actually logged. Of those, as you might imagine, 6 meters is by far the leader in contacts with 80 bringing up the rear. On 6 meters I've worked 47 states, 31 countries and nearly 400 grid squares. I've worked all states on 5 HF bands and worked around 150 countries. I've worked Russian cosmonauts on the Space Station and seen lighthouses on the Outer Banks with the ATV camera on the Columbia TV tower.

I don't say this to pat my self on the back but instead to tell you this. I can't imagine doing anything more exciting than this for the relatively small monetary investment and only a slightly larger investment of time, and at the same time, still be able to sit in your own home. The opportunities are amazing and it would seem, the sky is the limit. I have made friends with people all over the country just by taking a few minutes to sit down in front of my radio, turn it on and call CQ. As you and I look forward to 2007, I hope you will join me in spending more time on the air next year.

The last month or so as seen some decent activity, especially in early December as 6 meters has begun it's last hurrah for 2006. Several openings have occurred and there should be more to follow. I've also been doing some digital work (RTTY) on 6 meters and even worked an old friend, Dave, N1DP on RTTY on 20m. The ARRL 10m contest is this weekend and I hope to get my 100th country on 10m. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Ed/w4rvz

Repeater News

Output is down to 10 watts on 146.655 due to another amplifier problem. A repair part is on the way and it should be back up early in the week.

WA4VTX, Hertford is now on the air and reports are very good. The output frequency is 147.330 and input is 147.930 with a pl of 131.8

We did get some publicity from the new repeater. Here is an article that was printed in the Perquimans Weekly Newspaper.

Herman/NO4Y

Radio operators are hams on the air

MARGARET FISHER

When local amateur radio operators installed new communications equipment in the county, they got to try it out during last week's storm.

The Columbia Emergency Repeater Association donated a repeater system to the ham radio club here to make emergency communication services better, said Champion Cox, who has been a ham radio operator since 1957.

The name "ham" came about in the early years of radio communication when amateurs with too much radio power would sometimes jam the frequencies used by the government and sea traffic. Today, the name is used proudly by radio enthusiasts who enjoy communicating across town, around the world, to satellites, astronauts or even the moon.

While licensed amateur radio operators take on the hobby to have fun, they also provide valuable volunteer emergency communications during emergencies, such as weather-related catastrophes.

"The whole purpose of a repeater is to make communication clearer and readable," said Greg Terranova, Hertford repeater manager and 20-year ham radio veteran.

Amateur Radio Emergency Services allows people in different areas to relate potential dangers and disasters as they are happening, Ed Leicester is the ARES emergency coordinator for the county.

During last week's storm, ham radio operators in several states let other operators and emergency coordinators know about wind speed, lightning strikes, rainfall, flood levels, tornado locations and damages to people and property. They assisted in getting help to specific areas.

For example, Terranova found out by radio that winds reached gusts of 45 miles per hour in Perquimans County compared with 25-mile-per-hour gusts at the Elizabeth City Coast Guard Base.

Hertford operators previously talked directly to one another or used the Elizabeth City repeater, Terranova said. But

because of the distance and the number of people using that repeater during emergencies, the communication was choppy and difficult to understand.

"(Hertford's repeater) should make coverage around the county better," said Jarvis Winslow, the county's emergency management coordinator.

After Hurricane Isabel, the county spent about \$4,000 for radios and towers in places such as the Emergency Operations Center on Dobbs Street, Telecommunications and the two shelters -- Perquimans County Middle School and Perquimans County Recreation Center, Winslow said. The latter is replacing the Albemarle Commission building as a shelter.

County fire stations and rescue squad are also equipped with portable cases for out-of-town ham radio operators to use for their equipment during local emergencies when they often show up to assist, Winslow said. The mobile units are battery-powered so they can be carried out in the field.

The equipment was sup-

plied by Homeland Security funds and an Emergency Management Performance Grant.

Terranova has spent some of his own money for a feed line and tower on Don Juan Road where the repeater is located. He originally put the 100-foot tower up for his personal use of wireless Internet. Now, he is using it for radio communication.

"The next step is to tie into the Columbia linking system," he said. ". Columbia is a wide area repeater and covers a huge distance." Being able to link into other major repeaters increases communication quality across the states.

The whole repeater system is valued at about \$3,000 and a \$1,300 tower and feed line, Terranova said.

Ham radios can be used to place phone calls and are more convenient than cell phones because you don't have to know what number to call, he said. To be an operator requires training and licensing by passing an FCC test. Today, Morse code is no longer a requirement.