

HARMONICS



THE VOICE OF THE ROWAN AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY
February 2008 -Issue 261



Minutes

December 10, 2007

No minutes were taken. The following is from your editor's memory. Please correct if needed.

Those Present: Rick , **K4PM** & **XYL**; Terrence Wallace; Nona, **KA4NHL**, & mother; Larry, **N4QY**; Derwood, **K4PXU** & **XYL**; Grey, **KI4CKR**; Janet, **KI4CKS**; Christina, **KI4FFT**; Wayne, **W4HG** & **XYL**; Clarence, **K4SHU** & **XYL**; Tommie, **N4YZ** & **XYL**; Frank, **AF4D** & **XYL**; Paul, **KG4UDV**; Wade, **KC4NBW**; Patti, **KI4GUN**; Ralph, **WB4AQK** & **XYL** & **MOTHER**.

After a delicious meal was finished the nominating committee admitted to failing to get anyone to be President for 2008, but did present the names for Vice-president, Secretary and Treasurer. They were: Vice-present - Tommie Wood, **N4YZ**, Secretary - Nona Morris, **KA4NHL**, and Treasurer - Ralph Brown, **WB4AQK**. They were elected by acclimation.

After that President Grey, **KI4CKR** presented the Operator of the Year award to Billy Stewart, **WA4PVI**, in absentia. He was unable to attend because he was playing his violin at a concert?

The only formal discussion was about the Special Event call sign **N4B** which we used at the JOTA Event at Camp Barnhardt this year. I released the call on QRZ so that the Florence, SC ARC can use it on March 7 thru 12, 2008. The event is for the 50th Anniversary of a Nuclear Bomb drop over Mars Hill, SC on March 11, 1958. ---- I know, I didn't know it had happened either. Further information can be found on QRZ.com by looking up Special Event Callsign **N4B**.

That was the whole meeting. We just drank coffee and talked.

Tommie, **N4YZ**

January RARS meeting:

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- Tommie Wood -----**N4YZ**
- Butch Edge -----**W4WEE**
- Frank Waring -----**AF4D**
- Ralph Mowery -----**KU4PT**
- Clarence Beaver -----**K4SHU**
- Rick Wallace -----**K4PM**
- Terence Wallace ----- **Assoc.**
- Derwood Puckett ---**K4PXU**
- Nelson Large -----**W4FQV**

There was no formal meeting. Everyone sat at one table and we had a very nice 30 minute roundtable discussion about more topics than I can recall.

A New Hamfest

A group of Surry County hams who are members of the "Fairview Amateur Radio and Television Society" are sponsoring a hamfest in Dobson on Saturday, February 16. The fest will be held at the Dobson Fire Department beginning at 8 a.m. Talk-in will be on the Green Mtn repeater, 145.43MHz (-600kHz).

Admission of \$5 includes setup space outside, bring your own table. Limited table space is available indoors for an additional \$5/table. At

least two dealers have agreed to attend the hamfest.

Proceeds benefit the Surry County Food Bank and additional donations of canned food will be accepted.

For more information contact Drew, AD4T at AD4T@triad.rr.com.

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NORTH CAROLINA QSO PARTY

The 2008 NC QSO party will start at noon local time on Sunday, February 24 and run until 10 p.m. Sponsored by the Forsyth Amateur Radio Club, W4NC, the event is one of the most exciting state QSO parties and can be especially fun if you're new to contesting. The power limit is 100W, so you don't need a big amp to compete.

The object of the contest is for out of state stations to work as many NC stations in as many NC counties as you possible. Stations within NC try to work as many NC counties, other states, Canadian provinces and DXCC countries. We need as many counties as possible on the air to give folks contest multipliers! Why not make this a special club event? How about working the contest mobile to get more counties on the air? For more information check out www.w4nc.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan 26: Skywarn Spotter Training Class, Shelby -

www.ccarsnc.org

Feb 24: NC QSO Party - www.w4nc.org

March 2-8: Severe Weather Awareness Week

March 8-9: Charlotte Hamfest - www.w4bfb.org

April 6: Down East Hamfest, Kinston -

www.downeasthamfest.org

April 12: Raleigh Hamfest - www.rars.org/hamfest

April 12: State ARES meeting, Raleigh

April 19: Catawba Valley Hamfest, Morganton - cvhamfest.com

May 10: Rockingham County Hamfest, Reidsville - www.rcarc.com

May 24: DurHAMfest, Durham - www.dfma.org

May 25-31: Hurricane Preparedness Week

June 14: Winston-Salem Classic Hamfest - www.w4nc.org

June 28-29: ARRL Field Day

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TRAFFIC HANDLING TRAINING NET STARTS FEB 3

(This is late , but I think we can still get in. Editor)

In early 2007 an ARRL committee released a report on Amateur Radio's response to Hurricane Katrina.

One of the issues raised by this "National Emergency Response Planning Committee" was that too few of us are skilled at traffic handling. The aftermath of a disaster is not the time to learn how to send NTS traffic! The North Carolina section and local nets provide daily opportunities for you to practice your traffic handling skills.

Another opportunity begins this Sunday. Mark Rappaport, W2EAG will lead a traffic handling training course, the "Carolinas Training Net", which

The Rowan Amateur Radio Society P. O. Box 593 Salisbury, NC 28145

The Rowan amateur Radio Society exists to secure for its members the pleasures and benefits of associating with persons commonly interested in amateur radio in any and all its facets. Its purpose is to facilitate the exchange of information, radio knowledge, fraternalism and individual operating efficiency among members. Society programs and activities are intended to advance the general interest and welfare of amateur radio in the general community.

The Society is a nonprofit organization and seeks no payment for services it provides the community's agencies.

Membership

Membership in the Society is open to all applicants who express a willingness to abide by the Society's Constitution and By-laws. Persons may apply at regular meetings and are considered elected when approved by two-thirds of those members present

Meetings

Regular meetings are held on the second Monday night of the month at 7:00 PM at the Rufty-Holmes senior Center at 1120 S. Boundary Street

2008 Officers

President -

Vice-Pres. - Tommie Wood, N4YZ, 704-637-0024
wood@earthlink.net

Secretary - Nona Morris, KA4NHL, 704-278-4960
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Treasurer - Ralph Brown, WB4AQK, 704-636-5902
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Harmonics, the club newsletter is published mostly monthly. Submit articles, complaints, corrections, or comments to the club Editor. Material may be reprinted provided proper credit is given.

Editor - Ralph Brown, WB4AQK

On the web

www.RowanARS.org

will begin Sunday, Feb 3 at 5 PM local time on 3.861 MHz. The net will continue every Sunday thereafter until the course is completed. (ABT 14 Weeks) The course will be a good refresher for experienced operators and offer those new to traffic handling a thorough introduction.

A training manual (32 pg.) for the course has been posted at www.ncarrl.org and certificates will be issued to those who complete the course. Thanks to **W2EAG** for his hard work on this program.

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Nov. SM Reports

2007 - THE YEAR IN REVIEW

2007 was a great year for ham radio in North Carolina!

A state PRB-1 bill was passed unanimously and went into effect in October.

We had a great Field Day and SET with lots of media coverage.

A North Carolina ham was named "Young

Ham of the Year" and we had five NC hams win FAR or QCWA scholarships.

Duke Energy announced they are moving away from using BPL in our state.

ARRL membership is up in the section by 4%, to 3,954.

ARES membership is also higher and our list of ARRL affiliated clubs has grown.

But an old boss of mine used to say "Nothing wilts faster than laurels that are rested on!"

So how can we build on this success in 2008?

2008 - THE YEAR AHEAD

I'm scheduling a January conference call with your section leadership to discuss our priorities for 2008. Please let me know if you have any ideas. I want to see us complete the section digital plan and improve our ability to handle digital traffic.

There are open appointment positions that need to be filled, especially among our emergency coordinators. We also need more public information officers. I want us to develop an ARES mutual aid agreement with our neighboring sections and continue to promote national incident management system training among ARES members. Expect around a dozen ARRL affiliated hamfests in the section next year and these events need your support! What are your priorities for 2008 and how can the ARRL field organization help?

MEDIA HITS

The New Bern Sun Journal featured an article on SKY-WARN appreciation day in their November 30 issue.

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A Message for Fred

By Bob Brown, NM7M

You may recall that I was concerned about Fred, one of the readers of my propagation column. Earlier, Fred wrote me, reciting a list of concerns and complaints about HF radio propagation at the present time. In fact,

Fred saw a sinister pattern in it all, being the result of the down-side of effects from the space program and involving an on-going cover-up. In short, Fred felt that spacecraft were sweeping up our precious ionospheric electrons, slowly but surely taking them out of circulation when it comes to normal ionospheric purposes. And Fred felt there was some sort of silence or gag imposed to hide the negative impact of the space program on ionospheric propagation.

If that were the case, I'd be on Fred's side of this. But I really have doubts about his ideas and need to communicate them to him as soon as I can. First, however, I have to gain his confidence; only then can I try to persuade him to think in another way about the matter. Right now, the problem is I don't have any way to reach Fred except through what I write in my column. But maybe you can help me. I say that as I've a hunch he's a loner, at most "reading the mail" on his 2-meter repeater; but not reading local ham newsletters like this one. In short, I suspect he's passive when it comes to the local scene but one who's more global when it comes to his major interests.

So I've put together an ionospheric "Care Package" for Fred, bits of information that might start to change his thinking to more positive directions. Let me share a few of them with you in the hope that you might meet someone who matches the profile I've outlined; then you could just toss out one of the items below and see what sort of reaction results. It might be a positive one, with some degree of curiosity, or, on the other hand, rather negative and disbelieving. I doubt that Fred, if that's who you've stumbled into, would show any hostility

so that there's no concern in that regard.

So let's get to the "Care Package." First, it could be mentioned to Fred that the current MUF plots in QST still show a lot of potential DX openings on the upper HF bands. Thus, the southern Hemisphere is wide open a good part of the day on 20 meters, all those FKs and FOs as well as ZKs and ZLs in the South Pacific, to say nothing of the CPs and CXs as well as LUs and PYs in South America. And there's all the Africans I hear too; contacts in that direction are "golden" and within reach! But I wouldn't mention the Middle East region or VUs and 4S7s; they seem to be on the DX lists these days and no use in your raising Fred's hopes unnecessarily.

Also, don't tell Fred those contacts would all be made using the equatorial ionosphere, the most robust region of ionization and very last to go when it comes to any downturn in solar activity. And you shouldn't make any mention of the decline in contacts to Europe either; that path uses the high latitude portion of the ionosphere and is the first to go when sunspots decline in number. In short, no use in stirring up any more trouble when we're trying to cure it.

If you can, take a more positive, upbeat approach. As I mentioned earlier, Fred really never got over Cycle 19. That cycle, of course, was not only spectacular from a radio standpoint but also emblazoned across the sky with fabulous aurorae, again and again. I'm sure Fred remembers all of that so if you bump into someone like him, you could casually say something about any recent aurora that's been reported by the 6-meter bunch. If it's Fred, he might respond well to that sort of thing and be drawn out of his

shell. But choose your words carefully, avoiding the idea that you were there during Cycle 19 if you happen to look quite young. Of course, if you were just a kid at the time, try some homebrewing stories on him, 6L6s or 807s and the like.

Another positive item to mention is that low-band DXing is alive and well these days. As you know, the 160 and 80 meter bands really aren't affected adversely themselves by a decline in solar activity so DX is there for the hardy ones who don't like to sleep. With the cares and woes that Fred's carrying, he might just be some sort of insomniac who would warm to the idea of chasing DX down there and he'd sure have plenty of company. That's certainly a lot better than tuning in on all those 24-hour news programs.

Along with the low-band line, you might toss out a statement in praise of the old 80 meter dipole, complete with ladder line; Fred would surely pick up on that topic and perhaps you can hold up that end of the conversation too. But don't make mention of any of the new-fangled antenna systems, the types you see these days in the ham magazines, complete with those computer generated antenna patterns. For someone like Fred who thinks that the ionosphere now works only with a "diminished capacity", I can see where he might look on those antenna patterns like the dangling ends of an uncompleted freeway, connected to nothing but empty space. That might just set him off and I'd get another letter like the first one. Okay?

You know where to get hold of me and I can step in for "Crisis Intervention" if you think that you've really found Fred and a direct, question-and-answer style of therapy would help him over his problem with the ionosphere. Otherwise, if you're unsure of your friend's ID, you might suggest that he send me a s.a.s.e. For a list of books and articles on the ionosphere. It would be helpful if a specific problem or question were mentioned; that way I can determine how to start the discussion and, hopefully get directly to a solution of his problem.

If your friend does not turn out to be Fred, no great loss. If nothing else, the person will be assured from what I send that there's something out there that antennas can radiate into and be used for HF communication. That's more than one can say for the dangling ends of our freeway system.

(Next Month: Fred Sighted?)

Bob Brown, NM7M An authority in ionospheric studies used to write a propagation column for *World radio* and has contributed to *DX Magazine* on propagation subjects