

Mecklenburg Amateur Radio Society, Inc



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MARS News

A Letter from the President

News from the President – December 2009

Hello Everyone,



Best wishes during the holiday season. This time of year brings friends and families together to celebrate, reminisce, and rejoice. I personally hope that each one of us, in the MARS family, has many reasons to find happiness and love in our hearts and lives.

On December 5th, MARS' members gathered together in the East Baptist Church fellowship room around 6PM and all had a really great time at the MARS Holiday Party. We had smoked and roasted turkey, fried chicken, honey-glazed ham, and the partygoers brought many very tasty salads, side dishes, and scrumptious desserts. An additional highlight of the evening was the surprise unveiling of a birthday cake for K4GKK. In addition to 'covered-dishes', generous members brought along toys to add to our collection of toys that we donated to the Toys For Tots campaign. Check out a few of the pictures from the event on the next page.

2010 will be another year of challenges for us, as a club. We have been asked to support more public service events than in past years. We will host the 2010 Charlotte Hamfest in March and try to continue growing the attendance and participation of visitors and dealers. We have requests for ham classes, so members and non-members can become new hams or upgrade their licenses. Field Day comes once a year. And there is growing interest in taking part in radiosport (contesting). Throw in a picnic and next year's holiday party and..... Whew! That's a lot of opportunity for everyone to join in and work together. But for now.... just take a rest and enjoy the season, and the reason for the season.

As 2009 comes to a close, I want to send out a special **"Thank You"** to both Jeff Blythe – KA4WYC and Roger Meyers – WA2TKS for their faithful service to the Mecklenburg Amateur Radio Society. Roger and Jeff will be leaving the MARS' Board at the end of the month and we acknowledge them for their work as Board Member and Club Secretary. (Election results appear further down in this issue.)

I want to say Thanks to everyone who supports the club and me by coming to our club meetings and helping with our events and projects. I hope to see our club continue to grow and prosper.

Finally, I want to add my deepest personal thanks to all of you. You have given me your sympathy and support two times this past year, when I lost a parent. I feel like all of you are my family and I appreciate each and every one of you.

73,

Jodie - KI4CXO

President, Mecklenburg Amateur Radio Society

Party pictures



Party Pictures, Cont.



Ok, maybe Santa wasn't really there except in spirit.... But everybody had a great time anyway

Public Service Events

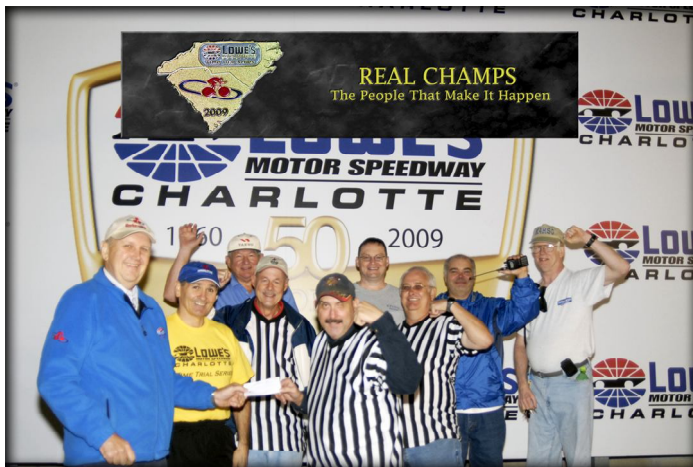
MARS Team Completes Cycling Time Trial Support

September 30th marked the last Carolina Cycling Time Trial Association (CCTTA) event of the year. Like last year, the MARS club provided track marshals to assist in the enforcement of the time trial rules and to improve emergency team response time in the case of an accident.

The CCTTA had 6 events this year, down from 9 of last year due to track commitments to other dates. LMS provides the track to the CCTTA for a very reasonable fee as part of its community support.

The MARS team is trained to watch for violations such as drafting (following too close for too long a time), blocking (preventing a rider from passing another) and passing on the left (slower riders must stay left). CCTTA officials regularly get e-mails from riders indicating the CCTTA time trials are the most professional like amateur events they have ever attended. Much of this is due to the presence of the uniformed marshals from MARS. (Each marshal wears a black/white striped shirt).

Last year, MARS and CCTTA had an agreement to provide the support for a donation of \$100 per event. At the end of last year CCTTA presented a check for \$1000 to MARS for their support of the 9 events. This year, although no formal agreement was signed, however the same relationship was established at the last event, and CCTTA again donated \$1000 to MARS for their support even though there were only six events!



This income is due to the volunteer support of all those who assisted the event coordinators for the year. Mary Hunt – N4MH, Jeff Blythe – KA4WYC and Earl Fortner – K4KAY took turns insuring we had five volunteers show up for each of the events.

Thanks to those for leading our Ham event and the following volunteers who came out and helped our club earn \$1000. Jodie Rowland – KI4CXO, Tom Hunt- KA3VVJ, Brian Mulder – KF4VOO, Auford Neal – KU4PF, David Faircloth – N4DFW, Barry May – KC4SSS, Ray Weeks, N4APR and Shawn Goodin – K4RSG.

Check out the picture of the CCTTA officials awarding the \$1000 check to MARS following the last event and the volunteers who helped on that last night. (From left to right: Bill Heybruck WA2EDN, CCTTA Timing Official, Bill Wiseman CCTTA President, Ray Weeks N4APR, Tom Hunt KA3VVJ, Jeff Blythe KA4WYC, Brian Mulder KF4VOO, Auford Neal KU4PF, Barry May KC4SSS Shawn Goodin K4RSG.) Of course Jeff did not have the check for long with Tom our Treasurer keeping an eye on it!

We expect to be invited to participate again next year so if you would like to be involved with this activity, contact one of the event coordinators to be put on the notification list. You do NOT need a handheld as many work from their mobile unit while on the track!

Respectfully submitted by By Bill WA2EDN & Jeff KA4WYC



Public Service Events, cont.

Let's Go Racing!

On February 6th there is a Rally auto race in Cheraw South Carolina, and we need your help.

Two of the participants of the rally are driver Brad Morris WB4MMG, and his crew chief Mitch Barbato KM4AMB. They are also both new members of MARS.

The National Auto Sports Association (NASA) sanctions rally races, and this race is part of the Atlantic Rally Championship (ARC.) Races in the ARC are held all over the East Coast including South Carolina, Maine, Florida, Tennessee, New York, and West Virginia.

We are expecting 40 to 70 competitors at the rally. Last year this was the largest rally in North America with many former and current national champions in attendance.



Volunteers with Ham radio licenses are the heart of the rally's operations. Volunteers will help coordinate the start and finish of the race stages, work as course marshals, and ensure the safe operation of the rally. In an emergency, the hams will coordinate the safety crews and traffic.

If you would like to volunteer, please go to the Sandblast Rally website at <http://www.Sandblastrally.com> and sign up under the Volunteer section. There is a wealth of information there about the event.

Volunteers are coordinated by John Eskridge KD4VIF.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact Brad Morris WB4MMG at pmgmail@att.net, or (704) 806-5003.

Ed. Note: If you've never seen a rally, you're in for a treat. These guys are driving cars that have to be street legal (licensed and inspected) at unreal speeds over generally terrible roads. Take a look at the photo of Brad's car above, and check to see how many tires are on the ground! Brad promises to bring his car to the January meeting ...as long as he can get it repaired in time from the damage it suffered at the last rally!

Merry Christmas

OK, sure this is corny, but it's Christmas and we're hams. ...and Jeff KA4WYC is the one who found it, so credit goes to him. And with thanks to the author, Gary Pearce KN4AQ, who wrote this in 1996.



Twas the night before Christmas
And all through two meters,
Not a signal was keying up
Any repeaters
The antennas reached up
From the tower, quite high
To catch the weak signals
That bounced from the sky.
The children, Technicians,
Took their HTs to bed,
And dreamed of the day they'd be Extras
instead.
Mom plugged in the key,
And we tuned 40 meters
For that rare ZK3.

When the meter was pegged
By a signal with power.
It smoked a small diode,
And, I swear, shook the tower.

Mom yanked off her phones,
And with all she could muster
Logged a spot of the signal
On the DX packet Cluster,

While I ran to the window
And peered up at the sky,
To see what could generate RF that high.

It was way in the distance,
But the moon made it gleam
A flying sleigh, with an
Eight element beam,

And a little old driver who looked slightly
mean.
So I thought for a moment,
That it might be Wayne Green.

But no, it was Santa
The Santa of Hams.
On a mission, this Christmas
To clean up the bands

He circled the tower
Then stopped in his track,
And he slid down the coax
Right into the shack.

While Mom and I hid
Behind stacks of CQ,
The Santa of hammaing
Knew just what to do.

He cleared off the shack desk
Of paper and parts,
And filled out all my late QSLs
For a start.

He ran copper braid,
Took a steel rod and pounded it into the earth, till
The station was grounded.

He tightened loose fittings,
Resoldered connections,
Cranked down modulation,
Installed lightning protection.

He neutralized tubes
In my linear amp.

Never worked right before
Now it works like a champ.

A new low-pass filter cleaned up the TV,
He corrected the settings in my TNC.

He repaired the computer
That would not compute,
And he backed up the hard drive
And got it to boot.

Then he reached really deep
In the bag that he brought,
And he pulled out a big box,
A new rig? I thought.

Merry Christmas, cont.

A new Kenwood? An Icom?
A Yaesu for me?
If he thought I'd been bad, it might be QRP.

Yes, the Ultimate Station
How could I deserve this?
Could it be all those hours that I worked Public Service?

He hooked it all up and in record time, quickly
Worked 100 countries,
All down on 160.

I should have been happy,
It was my call he sent,
But the cards and the postage
Will cost two month's rent

He made final adjustments,
And left by the key:
To Gary from Santa Claus,
Seventy Three.

Then he grabbed his HT,
Looked me straight in the eye,
Punched a code on the pad,
And was gone, no good —bye.

I ran back to the station
And the pile-up was big,
But a card from St. Nick
Would be worth my new rig.

Oh too late, for his final came over the air
It was copied all over.
It was heard everywhere.
The Ham's Santa exclaimed
What a Ham might expect,
Merry Christmas to all,
And to all good DX!



November Meeting Notes, November 24th

Jodie started the meeting at 7:33, and welcomed Members and guests. She opened the business meeting for the purpose to hold our Elections. Jeff ran the election and went over the rules of our Elections. The Membership present voted and Kevin and Jeff counted the votes.

The results were counted and our slate of Officers and Board Members for 2010 is:

President Jodie Rowland KI4CXO

Vice Pres. Bill Fisher W4GRW

Secretary Andy Hawkins K4GKK

Treasurer Tom Hunt KA3VVJ

Board Member Ben Antanaitis WB2RHM

Board Member Bill Harding K4AHK

Board Member Barry May KC4SSS

Board Member Kevin Keys K4YYD 2nd year term

Board Member Mary Hunt N4MH 2nd year term

We continued with a program on Robotics and Amateur Radio. Henry Burrow W4ECY. (See the picture of Henry and his wife, below, along with one of the two robots they brought along with them.) He had a couple of robots he brought from York Tech. Henry went over a competition on robots, participated in by area High School Teams, and a proposal for a passive reconnoitering type robot for use by police jurisdictions. This brought about some discussion of control of the robot by various members present. It was a very enlightening presentation by an enthusiastic proponent.

Brad Morris WB4MMG and Mitch Barbato KM4AMB are looking for volunteers to help with the National Auto Sports Association (NASA) Atlantic Rally Championship (ARC) Cheraw Auto Rally on February 6th 2010. More details in this newsletter.

Jodie adjourned the meeting at 9:22, and refreshments were served.

Submitted by Jeff Blythe KA4WYC and Andy Hawkins K4GKK.



A Look at Our Newly Elected Officers

As noted, the annual election of Mecklenburg Amateur Radio Society Officers and Directors was held on Nov 24th, during a MARS business meeting held immediately before the regular monthly club meeting.

All MARS officers are elected annually. 3 of the 5 MARS directors were elected to two year terms.

Your 2010 MARS Officers and Directors are:

2010 MARS Officers

President



KI4CXO – Jodie Rowland

Vice President



W4GRW – Bill Fisher

Secretary



K4GKK– Andy Hawkins

Treasurer

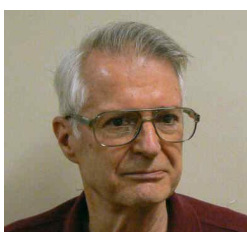


KA3VVJ – Tom Hunt

Mars 2010 Board of Directors



WB2RHM – Ben Antanaitis



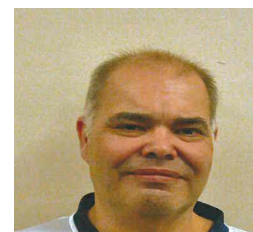
K4AHK – Bill Harding



N4MH-Mary Hunt



K4YYD-Kevin Keyes



KC4SSS – Barry May

One Last Time: MARS Membership Dues Reminder



Your 2010 MARS Membership term begins January 1st. **Your 2010 Dues are due BEFORE January 1st.** This year EVERYONE must fill out a renewal form to provide MARS roster permissions! Go to http://www.w4bfb.org/pdf_files/application-renewal-form.pdf to download the new renewal form. Then either mail in your 2010 dues or see MARS Treasurer Tom Hunt - KA3VVJ at a club meeting before 01/01/10.

December Board Minutes

December Board Meeting Minutes 12/02/2009

The meeting was called to order at 6.49 pm December 2nd 2009

Attendees included: Jodie Rowland- KI4CXO; Ben Antanitis- WB2RHM; Jeff Blythe- Bill Fisher- W4GRW;

Mary Hunt- N4MH; Tom Hunt- KA3VVJ; Kevin Keyes- K4YYD; Roger Meyers- WA2TKS and Andy Hawkins- K4GKK.

The Minutes of the board meeting of November 3rd 2009 were accepted as presented in the November newsletter.

Treasures Report: Tom Presented the financial report for the last month, we again discussed the addition of a line item in the financial report showing CTTC time trial donations. This has apparently hit a glitch and Tom will look into remedying this item. The financial report was accepted by the Board.

Vice Presidents report: Bill has suggested we hold an auction for the January meeting. Mary will not be available to handle the accounts, and has instead nominated Tom to handle the Bids. Andy to assist.

The December club meeting is the Christmas Party held on December 5th at East Baptist Church. Secretary's report: Jeff has nothing to report to the board at this time.

Committee Reports:

Repeater Committee: Earl Fortner K4KAY will remain the Chairman of the Repeater Committee. It is noted that the club is using a spare power supply on the 146.940 repeater. He will wait to the Hamfest 2010 to replace the power supply.

Public Service Committee: Mary Covered the MS Activities for 2010 in the last board meeting. She will keep the membership apprised of the requirements for volunteers as the year progresses. There was a request for volunteers posed at the last club meeting. This is for course marshals at an upcoming Car Rally in SC.

More details to follow. (See this month's Newsletter, Ed.)

Equipment Committee: Andy will follow up with the projects and their progress at the next board meeting.



December Board Minutes, cont.

Donations Committee: Kevin reported that there were no new donations at this time.

Old business: Jodie started with the Christmas party on December 5th. Mary went over a list of items members are bringing. There are approximately 38 as of this date. Ben, who has a key to the church, will check about getting in the kitchen and what time we can set up the party on Saturday. We discussed the ham and chicken and turkey. Plans were made for cleaning. Also the installation of The Board of Directors will take place at the Club Christmas Party.

Having no other business Jodie asked for a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 7:37.

Respectfully Submitted by Jeff Blythe KA4WYC and Andy Hawkins, K4GKK

Editor's Notes

I keep trying to get the page numbers to come out even so that there isn't a blank page left overbut so far I haven't succeeded. Until then, I'll stick in a few things, rather than use the old Government approach of declaring "THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK."Never figured that one out, since it meant the page wasn't blank after all. Anyway, I just read an interesting ham-related article on -line. It's from ComputerWorld, so as expected is aimed at the techie side of things. But reading or scanning it should make us realize what an enormous resource we have in terms of the huge amount of available bandwidth and flexibility to do lots of different things within all that spectrum. So, for what it's worth: http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9139771/Want_to_bone_up_on_wireless_tech_Try_ham_radio

73

John, NV4A

Mecklenburg Amateur Radio Society— <http://www.w4bfb.org>

Club Meetings

The Mecklenburg Amateur Radio Society meets on the last Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM

We meet at:

East Baptist Church
6850 Monroe Rd
Charlotte, NC 28212

(Next to East Mecklenburg High School, near Conference Drive)

Club-room

Red Cross Building
2425 Park Rd, Room 023
Charlotte, NC 28203
(704) 334-3900

Club Repeaters

Receive	Send	Offset (KHz)	Autopatch
146.34	146.94	-600	Yes
144.63	145.29	-600	No
144.69	145.29	-600	No
222.8	224.4	-1600	No
449.6	444.6	5000	No

Mecklenburg 2m Emergency Net
9:00 PM local time, daily on 146.94 (-600) featuring the ARRL
Audio News feed on Sunday night.
Alternate frequencies announced

Club Officers and Board of Directors

President

Jodie Rowland, KI4CXO, ki4cxo@w4bfb.org

Vice President

Bill Fisher, W4GRW, w4grw@w4bfb.org

Secretary

Andy Hawkins, k4gkk@w4bfb.org

Treasurer

Tom Hunt, KA3VVJ, ka3vvj@w4bfb.org

Directors

Ben Antanaitis, WB2RHM, wb2rhm@w4bfb.org

Mary Hunt, N4MH, n4mh@w4bfb.org

Bill Harding, K4AHK, k4ahk@w4bfb.org

Kevin Keyes, K4YYD, k4yyd@w4bfb.org

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