



# MARS News

## Inside this issue:

A Letter from the President	1
Public Service Events	2
Field Day 2010	4
June Club Meeting	7
Board Meeting Notes	8
VE Testing Session	10
Notes from the Editor	11

## A Letter from the President

News from the President – July 2010

Hey Everyone,

I hope everyone has been doing well this summer. We sure have had a lot of hot weather and some really rough weather. It just makes you want to stay inside, under a cool air conditioner. First, how am I doing? Right now, I am coming along, slowly. I say that because I am getting a little better every day, like I said last month. BUT that's still just *not fast enough* for me. I feel like it's been forever. And I miss being at a lot of the ham radio events that I have always gone to, or helped out with. But, I still don't have just enough strength or endurance in my legs and feet to stand or walk for too long without lots of pain. But I will get there. I will survive. I will return. I need to say Thank you for all the continued support and prayers from all of you.



We spent the last weekend of June at our ARRL Field Day effort. This year we had a great turn-out for our set-up and take-down operations, and that made the effort much easier for the whole club. Our picnic was a success and there was plenty for everyone who attended. Thank you all. A Field Day report from Kevin – K4YYD our Field Day Chairman appears further down in this newsletter.

I want to say a big thank you to all the ham's who helped John -WB2NHQ with the RED CROSS Event on July 17th up at Lake Norman. I could only listen, and really missed being a part of the team, that's for sure.

We don't have too many 'official' MARS things going on in the months of July or August. I hope that gives everyone a chance to sit around and stay out of the heat. It is also a good time to check out your antennas and cables and radio equipment. Maybe even get to spend some time to relax with family and friends. But when we get closer to the fall season, I am looking forward to a lot of the many events coming up in those next few months, so make sure you plan to take part in them to show your support for MARS.

I hope everyone comes out to our regular monthly club meeting on July 27th. We are starting to have more hams from all over coming out to visit us at our meetings. Please say 'hello' to any new faces you see, give them a warm MARS handshake, and show them they are welcome to come and be a part of our club.

Look forward to seeing everyone on the 27th.

73,

Jodie Rowland - KI4CXO

President – Mecklenburg Amateur Radio Society

## Public Service Events

### Public Service Committee News from Mary Hunt-N4MH, Chairperson

As I am writing this article we had several hams participate this weekend in the Red Cross Cycling Event up at Lake Norman. This is the first time the Red Cross has used our communication services. We had ham radio operators at each rest stop and a Net Control at the Start/Finish Line. John White- WB2NHQ spearheaded this Public Service Event and was Net Control. I don't have the list of everyone who volunteered for the event but a special thank you to everyone who helped out. We will list the names in the next newsletter.

### September 25-26, 2010

It is BREAK AWAY TO THE BEACH cycling event. For 2010 we are returning to a two day destination ride to the beach. Our final destination is Sunset Beach – not a high school near the beach BUT THE BEACH. Currently we have 1400 cyclists registered for the event and MS expects that number to increase.

I am a member of the MS Bike Tour Committee and meet monthly with the other members at the Multiple Sclerosis Society. The route committee has pretty much finalized the route and is now working on rest stops.

### On Day #1 we will have three start sites:

Start Site #1 – Monroe, NC for the Century Route

Start Site #2 – Pageland, SC for the 75 mile route

Start Site #3 – Camden, SC

The Monroe route will join the Pageland route and they become one at that point. The Camden, SC route will join up in Hartsville, SC at the lunch rest stop. From Hartsville to Florence, SC everyone will be on the same route.

I am excited to announce that the Columbia Amateur Radio Club is going to support the route from Camden to Hartsville. We will use linked repeaters for this route that are part of the SC Heart group. From Monroe to Hartsville we will use linked repeaters that are part of the PALS Network.

## Public Service Events, Cont.

**On Day #2 we will have two start sites:**

Start Site #1 – Francis Marion College in Florence, SC for 75 mile route

Start Site #2 – Lunch Rest Stop for 50 mile route

From Hartsville to Florence and on Sunday to Sunset Beach we will use the SC Heart linked repeaters.

We have determined the positions needed for the event and Elena has updated the [www.ridemaps.com](http://www.ridemaps.com) website so you can sign up for the event. All of the repeaters that will be used for the event are also on the web site. Thank you Elena!!!!

Gene Ribas-N4UMI has agreed to be Net Control on the Monroe/Pageland portion on Saturday and for the rest of the week-end. The Camden route will have their own Net Control and a separate frequency until all cyclists are in to the lunch rest stop. We will then all be on the same repeater for the rest of Saturday and all day Sunday.

To book your hotel room for Saturday night, go out to the MS Website: <http://www.nationalmssociety.org/chapters/NCP/fundraising-events/bike-ms/event-details/accommodations/index.aspx> to see all the hotels that are offering special rates for the Bike Tour. There is no overnight at Francis Marion College so even the cyclists will be staying at the hotels. I suggest making your reservations early and MS has negotiated some great rates!!!

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR: THE 2011 MS CHALLENGE WALK!!!**

The 2011 MS Challenge Walk will be held the first weekend in March 2011 and will be in Charleston, SC.

## Field Day 2010, A Recap

Field Day 2010 was once again held at Wilgrove Park located on Jim Harper Rd. in Mint Hill. The size of the park provided plenty of room to spread out the HF phone, GOTA and CW stations. We had about 25 people participating as operators, loggers or in equipment set-up and take-down. Operators began making contacts at 1400 Saturday and continued until 1400 Sunday. All stations operated on emergency power supplied by two gasoline generators. We logged 410 QSOs at the Phone + CW stations. We contacted 4 countries outside of the US. We worked 47 states; 3 on 80m, 27 on 40m, 46 on 20m, and 25 on 15m. There were 84 CW QSOs and 326 Phone QSOs. Also, a total of 23 contacts were made on the GOTA stations.

Speaking of generators, the club's trusty 5Kw generator which has seen quite a few Field Days and other events, proved to be problematic during Friday afternoon's set-up. However, thanks to the generosity of Don-KJ4ATJ and Shelley Eaves-KJ4ATK who allowed the club to use their personal generator, we were able to set-up and operate the HF phone station while Ben Antanaitis - WB2RHM and Mitch Barbato -KM4AMB rebuilt the carburetor of the club's generator. Thank you Ben and Mitch for your hours of hard work...the generator runs great now!

Gremlins also made an appearance at the digital station. Thanks again to Ben who spent a lot of time trying to get the station operational and to Shawn Goodin -K4RSG for the use of his laptop.

All in all it was a very successful Field Day. Our site was visited by Greg Hauser -W3FIE with Charlotte Fire Department Field Communications who brought out the city's communications vehicle to show off. Paul Robinette-KD4OZI with NC ARES Western Branch and Tim Slay-N4IB, former ARRL Section Manager, also stopped by. We once again had a well attended cookout with burgers and hot dogs Saturday prior to operating.

Following are some pictures from the big event, compliments of Jimmy-KJ4CIW)...Thanks Jimmy! There's also a picture of the now operational 5kw gennie from Ben.

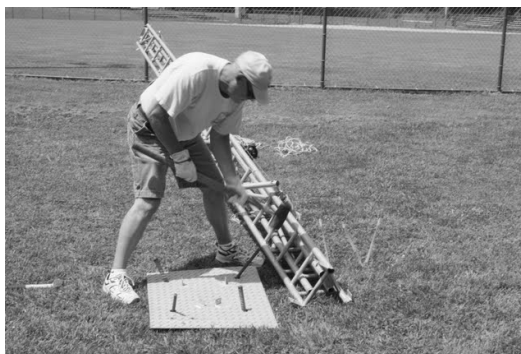
73,

Kevin Keyes-K4YYD



Our Power Sources, with the big 5KW unit on the left and Don and Shelly's unit on the right

## Field Day 2010, cont.



Hauling in and setting up the masts and antennas are a lot of work! Tom Hunt, Don Eaves, Ray Weeks, John White and Chris Price are all lending a hand.



## Field Day 2010, cont.



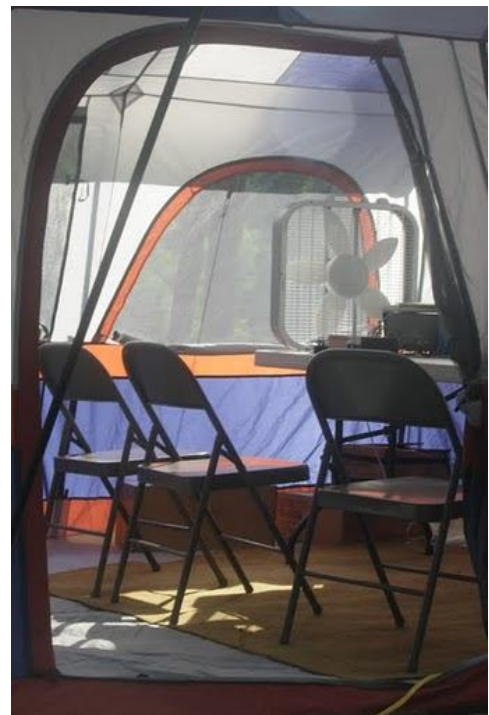
Making sure the A3S is ready to go up.



The A3S on the top of the tower



Taking a break in the shade are (L-R) Barry May, Jodie ,  
Shelley Eaves, Cliff Green, Ben. and Jeff.



Now all we need are an operator and a logger!

## MARS Club Meeting 6-29-2010

Bill Fisher –W4GRW brought the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Bill welcomed all members and visitors to the meeting and announced the evenings agenda.

Tom Hunt –KA3VVJ presented the 2010/2011 proposed club budget and opened up the floor for discussion. There being none, Jeff-KA4WYC proposed that the Budget be accepted as presented, Barry-KC4SSS seconded ,and the budget was voted in by the members present.

John White-WA2NHQ gave a brief synopsis of the Field Day operations and thanked all who attended. John brought up a couple of other items of interest to the members, #1 being a RADO Training class being held at the Charlotte Police and Fire Training Academy located on Shopton Road. The Date for this is July 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. #2 being the Lake Norman Excursion Bike ride on July 17<sup>th</sup>.

Bill Fisher –W4GRW introduced Tony Sturey from the National Weather Service, Greer office, who presented a very informative and updated Advanced Skywarn Class. This class covered the advanced concepts of spotting and reporting on the weather likely to be experienced in this area of the country. The class was well attended and Tony was presented with a lot of questions to which he had all the answers.

Next month's meeting will be on Railroad Communications.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at around 9:00 pm.

Submitted by Andy Hawkins K4GKK

MARS secretary.

## Board Meeting Notes, 07/06/2010

Mecklenburg Amateur Radio Society Minutes for Board Meeting of July 6th, 2010.

1- Meeting was called to order at 7.30 pm.

Attendees included: Jodie Rowland-KI4CXO, Ben Antanitis-WB2RHM, Tom Hunt- KA3VVJ, Bill Fisher-W4GRW, Kevin Keyes-K4YYD, Bill Harding-K4AHK, and Andy Hawkins-K4GKK.

Absent: Mary Hunt-N4MH, Barry May KC4SSS

2- Minutes for the Board Meeting of June 1st, 2010 were accepted as presented in the June newsletter.

3- Treasurer's Report: Tom presented the accounts report. This was accepted by the Board. Tom has also closed our CD and moved all monies into a savings account.

4- Vice Presidents report: Bill Fisher-W4GRW. July program will be on Railroad Communications. The August meeting will be headlined by the folks from the MS Society, discussing the upcoming September Bike Ride.

5- Secretary's report: Nothing to report membership-wise this month. The roster and club Data have been updated and set up in the club's laptop computer. We are receiving a slow but steady flow of renewals. We are currently at 143 members for 2010.

### Committee Reports:

Membership Committee: Please see secretary's report above.

Repeater Committee: W4BFB BBS upgrade is still in process. The 146.535 Skywarn repeater is temporarily off the air, The W4BFB 146.523 repeater is acting as back-up.

Public Service Committee: Mary Hunt-N4MH is again heading this committee, and she is publishing a calendar of events in each newsletter, to help prospective volunteers plan ahead. Mary will act as the main liaison between the club and the MS society. The MS Bike Ride on Sept. 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> will be our next major public service event. The new route has been decided with starts at Pageland, Camden and Monroe. Sign Up will be handled at "Ride-Maps.com". The club also helps with the Lungstrong event in October.

### Equipment Committee:

A discussion was presented on the use of the ex-Discovery place equipment and fittings. We are currently spending a monthly storage fee to keep the equipment safe. This is whittling away at the discovery place account. A thought is to purchase a Cargo style trailer and equip it as a communications trailer, this could be used for various activities, i.e. disaster communications, teaching aide for Geek fest at CPCC, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts etc. The unit could be used at field day and on our public service events. These are just a few of the ideas we have. Any ideas or comments from the membership would be welcome. This idea is still being developed.



## Board Meeting Notes, 07/06/2010, Cont.

Grants and Resources: Kevin –K4YYD. The club will benefit from members who join or renew their membership with ARRL. A small amount will be donated to the club accounts if you renew your ARRL membership with a form provided by Tom, KA4VVJ or Andy, K4GKK.

Field Day Committee: We are already needing volunteers for next year's event. We had a brief critique of this year's events and came up with some Proposals that will hopefully make next year's event run like a well oiled watch. A suggestion was made to pretest some of the equipment well before Field Day, i.e. the generators need to be serviced. Radios need testing paired a with their respective accessories in large "Go" Boxes. etc.

Entertainment Committee: Jodie-KI4CXO and Mary-N4MH are heading this committee. The Christmas Party Venue will be arranged earlier this year. The Board is looking into having a catered event this year. More details to follow.

Website: We are currently experiencing some intermittent problems with the W4BFB reflector. This is being addressed, meanwhile keep your eyes on the website

Please note that ALL the committee's are open for anyone to provide support and ideas that will help this club be successful in all it's endeavors. If you see or hear anything that you have an opinion on or feel you can improve upon, Please do not hesitate to contact any of the committee members and discuss accordingly.

Hamfest Committee: This Committee is about to crank back up for next years Huge event held at the Cabarrus Arena in Concord NC. We require lots of help and ideas with this endeavor. This is our only major source of income to support this club and its activities. Please contact a board member if you are interested.

The club room door combination has been changed, so if you have renewed your membership and require use of the room , please call a board member for the new code.

There being no more business for this evening's meeting, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm

Respectfully submitted by

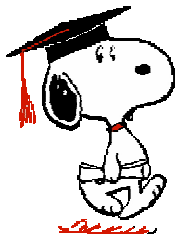
Andy Hawkins, K4GKK

Secretary M.A.R.S.

## WCARS/VEC Test Session August 21st.

### New Technician (element 2) exams to be used.

The **Mecklenburg VE Team** will be conducting an Exam Session for all classes of FCC Amateur Radio License on Saturday August 21st beginning at 9AM at the East Baptist church 6850 Monroe Road Charlotte, NC (East Baptist Church is located next to East Mecklenburg HS, near the intersection of Monroe Rd and Conference Drive)



**Notice:** As of July 1st, 2010, a new Element 2 (Technician Class) question pool is in effect. The questions and answers are different from the prior pool and there are now Diagram (schematic) based questions in the new pool. If you have been studying the old element 2 pool questions, be prepared see different questions and answers.

*All applicants are requested to arrive by 8:30AM, to complete the registration process before testing begins at 9:00AM. They must bring a photo ID (drivers license OK), their current original amateur license, **ONE COPY** of their current amateur license, to be submitted along with their exam, an original and a copy of any current CSCEs, plus the 2010 WCARS/VEC testing fee of \$10.00.*

Walk-ins examinees are welcome, but we would appreciate it if you register in advance by sending an email to [MecklenburgVETeam@W4BFB.org](mailto:MecklenburgVETeam@W4BFB.org) Call 704-948-7373 if you need additional information.

**Any special testing needs, ie verbal exams, translators, etc. must be pre-requested at least two full weeks before the testing date.** (NOTE: While it will try to accommodate the needs of any applicant, the **Mecklenburg VE Team**, as an all-volunteer staffed VE Team, *cannot guarantee* that special need requests can be honored at all testing sessions.)

Thanks, 73, WB2RHM

**Mecklenburg VE Team now affiliated with WCARS/VEC and ARRL/VEC**

## Notes from the Editor

...Actually, it's just my usual plea for articles, pictures, or anything interesting to fill the pages of our Newsletter. Any input would be very much appreciated.

Also, in case anybody wondered why I haven't been to a meeting in several months bugging you in person about this, it's just that I'm on some new meds that seem to put me to sleep by about 9 ...which would make it hard to do the hour drive home after the meeting.

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**

Send	Receive	Offset (KHz)	Autopatch
146.34	146.94	-600	Yes
144.69	145.29	-600	No
144.63	145.23	-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](mailto:ki4cxo@w4bfb.org)

**Vice President**

Bill Fisher, W4GRW, [w4grw@w4bfb.org](mailto:w4grw@w4bfb.org)

**Secretary**

Andy Hawkins, k4gkk@w4bfb.org

**Treasurer**

Tom Hunt, KA3VVJ, [ka3vvj@w4bfb.org](mailto:ka3vvj@w4bfb.org)

**Directors**

Ben Antanaitis, WB2RHM, [wb2rhm@w4bfb.org](mailto:wb2rhm@w4bfb.org)

Mary Hunt, N4MH, [n4mh@w4bfb.org](mailto:n4mh@w4bfb.org)

Bill Harding, K4AHK, [k4ahk@w4bfb.org](mailto:k4ahk@w4bfb.org)

Kevin Keyes, K4YYD, [k4yyd@w4bfb.org](mailto:k4yyd@w4bfb.org)

Barry May KC4SSS, [kc4sss@w4bfb.org](mailto:kc4sss@w4bfb.org)

**Newsletter Editor**

John Forbus, NV4A, [W4bfbeditor@w4bfb.org](mailto:W4bfbeditor@w4bfb.org)



**Mecklenburg Amateur  
Radio Society, Inc**

Newsletter Editor:  
John Forbus, NV4A  
4586 Lynwood Rd.  
Sherrills Ford, NC 28673

[w4bfbeditor@w4bfb.org](mailto:w4bfbeditor@w4bfb.org)