



MARS News

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News from the President, June 2011



Hello Everyone,

I would like to tell everyone I saw my orthopedic doctor this week and he said I was recovering well. But, my heel still has some more healing to do. I did get my pretty shocking-pink cast removed. But, in exchange, I got to return to wearing my black boot on my left foot for another four weeks. At least, he said I can slowly start putting more pressure back on my foot daily, over the next two weeks. Then I can put full pressure on my boot. At least my foot's getting better, that's what counts. Thanks for all your prayers and support. One thing I can hope for is to make it out to Field Day, so I can see everyone supporting our club and the event.

I want to give a big MARS' Thank You to Kevin Keyes— K4YYD our Field Day Chairman for 2011, <mailto:K4YYD@w4bfb.org>. He has really worked hard, trying to make sure we have Field Day. But, as he says, it takes a lot of help to make a Field Day happen. Not just the setting up and taking down part, but we still need to have people come out to help keep our stations on-the-air operating from 2:00 p.m. on Saturday until Sunday at 2:00 p.m. I know the June days have been very warm – HOT- lately. But if you would just look up the MARS Field Day on www.ridemaps.com and pick out a one or two hour time slot to come out and work radio, we would have more than enough volunteers to keep the radios going for all 24 hours. To sign-up for some time slots, or help with set-up/ take-down, please go to Elena's KS4OX web page <http://ridemaps.com/fieldday/operators.php>. You will also have fun by being with your MARS friends. ***I certainly would hate to see us not be able to have our 2011 Field Day, due to lack of participation.*** So, please sign up, or *we may have to cancel this year's event.* I don't know about you? But I look forward to our MARS ARRL Field Day ever June. We always have so much fun. We also will be serving hot dogs, hamburgers, and drinks at about 12:00 noon on Saturday. We ask for you to sign up to bring a dessert or side dish to share at lunch. You can sign up for lunch by emailing Kevin or Mary and letting them know how many will attend in your party and what you would like to bring with you.

Well, I will say to everyone I hope to see you all at Field Day.



73, KI4CXO

Announcements and News

Public Service Committee News from Mary Hunt, N4MH, Chairperson

Our next large public service event will be the MS Bike Tour that will be held on September 24-25, 2011. The event is going to have the same route as last year – with maybe just a few tweaks to the route. We will depart from Monroe and Pageland on Saturday with lunch in Hartsville, SC and then on to Florence, SC for the overnight stop. We will also have a route starting in Columbia, SC that will meet up with the rest of the route in Hartsville, SC.

Sunday morning we will have two starting points – Francis Marion College in Florence and Green Seas. We will end at Sunset Beach. The end point where all the food will be served and the buses depart from is the same as last year. However, the cyclists will have the option to ride over the new bridge to Sunset Beach and there will be a Rest Stop on the beach.

It's not too early to sign up for the event. Go out to Elena's website: www.ridemaps.com and sign up. There will also be a link from Elena's website that will take you over to an MS Web Site. We need you to register on that website also. MS also has hotel information in Florence on their web site with rooms at discounted rates for the event.

We will be doing our CCTA Events again this summer. Our next event will be Saturday, July 23 at Charlotte Motor Speedway. This is a great event and easy to work. We are the track marshals and are stationed around the track at strategic locations. We used handhelds with a simplex frequency. We have to be at the track at 6:00 as the event starts at 6:30.

The June 8 event was just completed with 350 cyclists participating. Thanks to the following radio operators who supported this event:

Mary—N4MH: Tom—KA3VVJ; Jeff—KA4WYC; Auford—KU4PF; Barry—KC4SSS; Brian—KK4BKO; Dave—KC4YPB; Perry—KF4UVL and John—W3SA; .

If you are interested in helping with one of these events, please contact Jeff Blythe, ka4wyc@gmail.com or Mary Hunt, mhuntn4mh@gmail.com

Announcements and News, cont.

Field Day is almost here ...And we still need help!!

As Jodie reminds us, Field Day is June 25th and 26th, and we are still *very* short on volunteers! As of June 13, only 4 people had signed up to operate over the 24 hour period beginning 2PM on Saturday June 25th and ending at 2PM on Sunday June 26th. 3 have signed up to operate a total of 6 hours on the HF station and 1 has signed up to operate a total of 2 hours on the CW/digital station. As long as we can get everything staffed up, Field Day 2011 is returning to the Belk Scout Camp (formerly Clear Creek Scout Camp) located at 9408 Belt Rd. in Midland, NC. We will be set up on the Camporee Field. A map is at: http://www.pack214.com/docs/Belk_Scout_Camp_Map.pdf, and you can get directions at <http://sites.google.com/site/belkscoutcamp/>. For ARRL info about Field Day 2011, see: <http://www.arrl.org/field-day>. Our big problem is lack of volunteers thus far.

Field Day operation begins at 2PM on Saturday June 25th and wraps up 24 hours later. We will once again operate as a Class A station using emergency power.

We still need more volunteers for set up on the afternoon of June 24, and there are plenty of operating and logging positions to be filled. As in the past, we'll have a Get On The Air (GOTA) station, and John White, WB2NHQ, will be our GOTA station coach. We'll also have HF phone and HF digital/CW stations. As at past Field Days, the club will be having a hamburger and hot dog cookout around noon on Saturday. The club will provide the burgers and dogs and we are asking those who attend to bring a side. Please email Kevin Keyes (K4YYD) at k4yyd@arrl.net and let me how many in your party will be attending and what side you will bring. We need to get an accurate head count so we know how many hamburgers and hot dogs to buy.

Thank you to Elena for creating the online Field Day signup. Please go to www.ridemaps.com and click on the "Sign Up Now" icon to signup and participate!

We hope to see everyone out at the Belk Scout Camp on June 25th and 26th for a fun and successful Field Day!

73,

Kevin, K4YYD



MARS Club Meeting 05-31-2011

The meeting was opened by Jodie-KI4CXO at 7:30pm

Jodie introduced visitors and any license upgrades.

Mary Hunt-N4MH talked about the MS Bike Tour to Sunset Beach. This is during the weekend of September 24th and 25th. Plenty of Volunteers for manning Rest Stops and SAG vehicles will be required. This is the largest of our Public events and the club puts on a good show and provides vital support for the MS Society. You can sign up for this event on Elena KS4OX's website at www.ridemaps.com

The Carolina Cycling Time Trials Assoc. (CCTTA) is going very well but is always in need of volunteers to help out on Wednesday evenings. Contact Mary Hunt or Jeff Blythe if you are interested in helping out.

Field day weekend is June 25th and 26th. (As emphasized elsewhere in the newsletter) many Volunteers to help set up and operate are required. Field Day is great fun and great fellowship. The club will be providing a picnic on Saturday 25th. All we ask is that you bring a side dish to share with everyone. This year we will be at the Belk Boy Scout Camp in Mint Hill.

Jeff announced that the repeaters owned and operated by W4BFB will be changed to tone access units. Please change your radios to allow a tone access of 118.80Hz. This is to help reduce interference from neighboring repeaters.

Shelley Eaves – KJ4ATK introduced Tim Slay— N4IB, ably helped by Max Treece—WG4Z. Tim presented a program on Duke Energy's new "Open Sky" radio communications system. Duke has spent a lot of money and energy developing this system for their service personnel in their North and South Carolina operations area. This is a totally Private Radio System from Harris Communications, and tailored to Duke's specifications.

Duke's first radio system was installed by Buck Wortman—W4CYB (SK) back in 1945 (Buck was a member of W4BFB). Since that first installation, radio communication has progressed in leaps and bounds to the systems that are in place now. The advantage that the Private Radio System (PRS) has over a Public system is that back up power is built into the system, there are no phone line connections to go down, and they use Microwave links between repeater sites.

The repeater sites can handle up to 4 conversations at the same time on the same repeater using TDMA (Time Division Multiplexers) which is a most efficient use of the very narrow frequency spectrum they have allocated. The system uses the 800 MHz band and is 95% efficient using all radios and 85% efficient using the handheld portable radios. The demonstration using the handheld radios highlighted the time delay transmission. This was a little disconcerting in the room, but out in the field it probably is not noticeable. In summary, this was an excellent presentation put on at short notice.

The June Meeting Topic will be on the Charlotte Fire Department communications.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:46pm.

Submitted by:

Andy Hawkins-K4GKK

Secretary M.A.R.S.

MARS Board Meeting 06-07-2011

1- Meeting was called to order at 6.45 pm.

Attendees included: Jodie Rowland-KI4CXO, Ben Antanitis-WB2RHM, Tom Hunt- KA3VVJ, Stan Bagwell- AJ4ZL, George Hohas- W4GEH, Barry May -KC4SSS, Andy Hawkins-K4GKK, Shelley Eaves-KJ4ATK, and Kevin Keyes-K4YYD
Guest: Jeff Blythe -KA4WYC.

2- Minutes for the board meeting of May 3rd 2011 were accepted as presented in the May newsletter. Barry proposed the motion, which was seconded by George.

3- Treasurer's Report: Tom presented the accounts report. This was accepted by the board. Ben made a proposal to retire the Key deposit line item in the accounts. Barry motioned, seconded by Tom and accepted by the board. The proposed Budget for 2011/2012 was discussed at length. With a few minor modification, the budget was approved to be presented to the membership at the next meeting. Jeff Blythe KA4WYC, gave the board an update of the proposed improvements to our repeater system on behalf of the Repeater Committee. The first repeater needing major attention is the 145.230 machine on Spencer Mountain. The Board authorized the Repeater Committee to arrange for any required purchases and repairs. While these repairs are being carried out, the repeaters will also be converted to Tone Access units, ALL the W4BFB repeaters will have a Tone Access of 118.80. The reason behind this is to reduce interference from nearby repeaters and unlicensed access to our repeaters. The 146,290 repeater on the Wells Fargo building will have a facelift with 220Mhz and 440Mhz units being upgraded. The Packet Node at the Bethel Vol. Fire Dept in Clover has been taken down temporarily. Many thanks to Jeff, Scott - KA4FAU, Earl - K4KAY, and Bill - AC4ZR for their work on these repeaters.

4- Vice President's report: Shelley Eaves -KJ4ATK. June's meeting will include a brief of the Field Day Activities and a program on Charlotte Fire Department Communications.

5- Secretary's report: The club membership renewals are coming in thick and fast. We are now up to about 127 renewed members.

Committee Reports:

Repeater Committee: See Above.

Public Service Committee Preparations are still under way for our largest public service event of the year, the MS150 Bike to the Beach. Mary Hunt N4MH will have more details in the coming months and Elena will have www.ridemaps.com up and ready for volunteers soon. The CCTA bike trials held at Charlotte Motor Speedway is still looking for volunteer help, please contact Mary Hunt or Jeff Blythe.

Equipment Committee: Andy-K4GKK, with help from Shelley-KJ4ATK and Kevin-K4YYD has started to sort out the Discovery Place equipment, which has now been moved down to the clubroom. This should be the last month we rent the storage unit. On a side note Mitch Barbato-KM4AMB and Brad Morris-WB4MMG are overhauling the club generator in preparation for Field Day in June.

Grants and Resources: A small amount will be rebated to the club accounts if you renew your ARRL membership with a form provided by Tom - KA4VVJ or Andy - K4GKK

Field Day: Kevin -K4YYD, has not had a very welcome response for help in setting up and operating the Field day. This is less than one week away and we need all the help we can get. The set up will start on Friday and we need help to set up the stations and test everything out. We then require volunteers to operate during the 24 hour event. A few have signed up at www.ridemaps.com

Please note that ALL the committees are open for anyone to provide support and ideas that will help this club be successful in all its 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.

MARS Board Meeting 06-07-2011, cont.

Website: Ben- WB2RHM has the website running smoothly.

New Business: Ben-WB2RHM suggested that the club insure the equipment through the ARRL. This was accepted and will be acted upon.

There being no more business for this evening's meeting, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm.

Respectfully submitted by

Andy Hawkins, K4GKK

Secretary M.A.R.S.

Editor's Notes

Other than emphasizing one more time that Field Day help is still needed, the only other thing is my usual request for articles. And thanks to those who have provided some very interesting articles in past issues.

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

Vice President

Shelley Eaves, KJ4ATK, kj4atk@w4bfb.org

Secretary

Andy Hawkins, K4GKK, k4gkk@w4bfb.org

Treasurer

Tom Hunt, KA3VVJ, ka3vvj@w4bfb.org

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