



HECKLENBURG AMATEUR
RADIO SOCIETY, INC

MARS News

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Geek is Chic

As CPCC billed it:

THE Geek Fest is an exciting and eclectic annual celebration of the "geek" in all of us; an event designed to educate the hearts and minds of our students and community by highlighting and celebrating the creative and exciting innovations of new technology, media, and industry. Remember, geek is chic.

It was the third annual Geek Fest at CPCC and W4BFB was there. For the second year, MARS put its show on the road and appeared as one of the highlights of the fall season for CPCC students, faculty, and guests.

At 7AM, on a bright September 6th morning, John White, WB2NHQ, Jodie Rowland, KI4CXO and Ben Antanaitis, WB2RHM, arrived at the



Ben Antanaitis (WB2RHM) and John White (WB2NHQ) ready to operate

CPCC Levine Campus in Matthews, NC with the club "RV", antennas, cables, ham radio literature, and complete HF and VHF stations.

In a mini-Field Day fashion, the equipment was quickly set up and MARS presented RTTY and PSK31 digital modes of communication as well as FM, APRS and packet techniques to the event crowd on their technology day.

The fact that 'this isn't your grandfather's ham radio' soon became very apparent to those who stopped by to observe the portable stations we set up. As John was 'talking' via the computer keyboard to stations all over the world via PSK31 and RTTY, the question invariably

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Have You Paid Your Dues?

After examining the W4BFB membership list for 2007, the board found that 34 out of 112 of the 2006 club members had not renewed their 2007 membership.

If your dues are not paid, there are a couple of upcom-

ing events that will be negatively impacted if you dues are not paid.

1. You cannot vote for club officers.
2. You will miss out on the club Holiday Party.

Of course, we want to see everyone at the party. So, get those dues paid!

Note: Annual dues are only \$20 Individual; \$14 Student/ Associate/65+; \$25 Family; \$19

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Jodie Rowland
(KI4CXO)
enjoying Geek Fest

“the question
invariably came up
‘but where’s the
internet
connection?’”

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came up ‘but where’s the internet connection?’, only to be answered by an explanation of how amateur radio needs no infrastructure and solves the connectivity problem with new technology and uses radio waves... ‘the old fashioned way’.

All during the day, while John was ‘text messaging’ QSOs at one station, Jodie was ‘showing and telling’ the college students and guests about ham radio and public service using a 2m station and local 2m repeaters. At a third station, Ben explained the ins and outs of APRS and packet radio and their application in emergency communication situations. Many ARRL leaflets and flyers were distributed to visitors, college officials, and local media

Geek is Chic



MARS Club RV on the CPCC Levine Campus

who stopped by to ask ‘what’s new in ham radio?’.

At noontime, the CPCC ‘welding club’ brought out a huge deep fat fryer they had constructed and cooked ‘hot and hotter wings’ for the crowd and volunteer exhibitors. The afternoon continued to

bring curious visitors to the MARS display and at 4PM the 2006 Geek Fest came to a close.

73 – Ben Antanaitis –
WB2RHM



Ben Antanaitis’
portable
80-10m
vertical

October Meeting (Date Changed)

Please note that this month’s meeting will not be the last Tuesday of the month. The last Tuesday of the month is October 31st which is Halloween this year. We know that we have some members who would have to miss the meeting. So, the meeting has been moved to the prior Tuesday (October 24th).

Ben Antanaitis (WB2RHM), Paul Ponak (AD4IE) and Bill Turner (W4WNT) will be offering

a presentation on homebrew antennas. Antenna building is one of the more interesting and accessible areas within the ham radio hobby.

Ben will be bringing his portable 80-10m vertical antenna.

Paul and Bill will be bringing assorted UHF/VHF antennas including some horizontal loops for side-band.

So, make sure you make it to the meeting. Antennas are always a fun topic.

CarolinaEOS Balloon Presentation



The view from 72,000 feet

Richard Dodd (KG4PBG) and David Strubbe (K8ZK) launched a weather balloon on March 18, 2006. It contained a GPS, a TNC, a small computer and two digital cameras.

Dave and Richard gave a presenta-

tion at the September meeting detailing the entire project from conception through post flight presentations to school children at Olde Providence Elementary.

Dave and Richard had great pictures from all stages of the project.

The pictures from the payload showed beautiful views of the earth taken at altitudes as high as 72,000 feet.

The presentation included data

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UNCC Starts Weather Balloon Program

Also present at the September meeting was Dr. John Chadwick from UNCC. Dr. Chadwick is a professor of Professor of Earth Sciences at the university.

The university is actually offering a weather balloon class and John is heading up the program. Students in the class are responsible for creating payload experiments to be sent up with a weather balloon.

The W4BFB club was contacted by John in August. He expressed his desire to enlist our help with communications. We will be assisting him with the configuration and testing of GIS and communication equipment.

John has participated in three previous balloon launches at a previous university. John was able to share some of his experiences with his

past balloon launches during David and Richard's presentation. It was very clear from his stories that you learn something new every time you launch a balloon. This sentiment is echoed at most web sites hosted by groups launching weather balloons. We wish John and his students the very best.

“Students in the weather balloon class are responsible for creating payload experiments”



CarolinaEOS1
Ready to Launch

CarolinaEOS Balloon Continued

charts showing information such as ascent and descent rates and groundspeed.

This was a great presentation and clearly Dave and Richard had fun giving the presentation.

We look forward to future Carolina EOS launches. They are already working on the next flight which will transmit slow scan television images.



The balloon traveled from Monroe to 9 miles South East of Lumberton

W4BFB VE Testing Session

The W4BFB club will be holding a testing session on Saturday, November 11 at 9:00 AM. The session will be held at the church where we hold our meetings:

East Baptist Church
6850 Monroe Rd.
Charlotte, NC

The church is next door to East Mecklenburg High

School which is near Conference Drive.

If you wish to take a test, make sure you bring the following:

A photo ID.

\$14.00 for the testing fee.

If you have a license and are testing to upgrade bring:

An original copy of your License and any relevant CSCEs.

A photocopy of your license and any relevant CSCEs for the examiners to keep.

The point of contact for the testing session is: Mary Hunt (N4MH)

W4BFB Holiday Party



Menu Choices Follow

Chicken:

Chicken Marsala - a boneless chicken breast sautéed then tossed in a mushroom marsala wine sauce.

Pine Lake Chicken - a boneless breast of chicken topped with spinach roasted red peppers, asiago, proscuitto ham, smoked cheddar cheese, served on a rich Bordelaise sauce.

Seafood:

Drunken Salmon - 8 oz Salmon filet grilled to perfection then topped with a Jack Daniels honey glaze.

Shrimp & Grits - Pine Lakes own unique recipe of this Charleston dish, served on a bed of creamy cheddar cheese grits.

Beef:

Ribeye Steak - 13 oz Angus ribeye hand cut, seasoned with our own steak blend, then grilled to your liking then topped with caramelized onions.

Prime Rib of Beef - slow roasted, herb crusted beef served to your liking topped with Au Jus and a creamy horseradish sauce.

Important:

If you have not yet paid your dues this year, make sure you do as soon as possible. If you wish to attend the holiday party, your dues must be paid.

Contact Greg Onachila KG4IOE (kg4ioe@w4bfb.org) for more information.

The W4BFB Holiday Party will be held on December 2nd at 7:00 pm. The party will be held at:

Pine Lake Country Club
5504 Lebanon Road
Mint Hill, NC

The prices is \$15 for individuals and \$25 for couples.

“The price is \$15 for individuals and \$25 for couples”

Have You Paid Your Dues?

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Family 65+

Please take a just a moment **right now** to **send your 2007 membership renewal** to:

MARS Secretary:
Bill Turner, W4WNT,
4000 Horse Shoe Bend,
Weddington, NC 28104

or

MARS Treasurer:
Greg Onachila, KG4IOE,
8914 Clifton Meadow Dr
Matthews, NC 28105.



Renew Now!



Jamboree On The Air

Jamboree On The Air will be held on the weekend of October 21st and 22nd.

The W4BFB club will be helping local scouts participating in the event on Saturday the 21st from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm local time. Stations will be set up at the Girl Scouts Hornet's Nest Council offices on Idlewild Rd. A second operations site will be assembled at Camp Catawba.

In addition, local Boy Scouts

will be operating from the club station at Discovery place on Saturday. In addition to participating in JOTA, the Boy scouts will be working on their radio merit badge.

This is a wonderful opportunity to get today's youth interested in Ham radio. If you would like help with this event, please contact John White (wb2nhq@w4bfb.org)

October Board Meeting Minutes

MARS Board Meeting Minutes
Oct. 3, 2006

Attendees: Greg Onachila, KG4IOE; Paul Ponak, AD4IE; Bill Turner, W4WNT; Jodie Rowland, KI4CXO; Wilton McAllister, WB4PCS; Irv Hoechner, KF4KFN; Ben Antanaitis, WB2RHM; August Flassig, N6TYE

Absent: Shawn Goodin, K4RSG

Visitor: Jeff Blythe, KA4WYC

The meeting was called to order by Wilton at 7:01PM.

V. Pres. Report: Wilton indicated that there was no program lined up for the Oct. 24 meeting. Also indicated that the October meeting will be moved up to Oct. 24 rather than Oct. 31. Later discussions in the board meeting concerned the topic for October.

Treasurer: Greg reports that the Holiday Party menu has been sent out to the board for approval. The board voted on the menu and the results will be sent out to the membership this month. The dinner will be a plate dinner rather than a buffet. Further details will go out with the menu. Reservations and money will be taken until the November meeting.

Public Service: MS will have a review session and arrange for training of MS staff, volunteers and ham radio volunteers prior to the next MS-150. Elena has established a forum at www.ridemaps.com for ideas to improve the operations during the ride.

JOTA: Boy Scouts will be operating from Discovery Place during JOTA, Oct. 21 while working on their Radio Merit Badges. Girl Scouts will operate from Hornets Nest north of

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W4BFB Board Meeting Minutes

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Charlotte and from Camp Catawba during JOTA from 10AM-4PM.

Geek Fest was held at CCPS South Campus last month; WB2RHM, WB2NHQ and KI4CXO participated.

A nominating committee was appointed for the upcoming election in November, consisting of August Flassig, N6TYE and Jeff Blythe, KA4WYC. Please contact them if you would like to run for the board or for an office in W4BFB. Bill Turner will provide a list of phone numbers to the nominating committee.

BPL: Paul Ponak, AD4IE, is the local ARRL contact for BPL matters. Duke is implementing Ambient Generation 2 equipment in several Charlotte zip codes. Paul has been arranging to notify the 12 club members in those zip codes to monitor HF frequencies to know what normal noise levels are prior to implementation.

Old business: Jeff Blythe proposed to provide \$100 to the PALS Net to support their maintenance of the repeater system that we used during the MS-150. The motion was passed unanimously. The secretary will prepare a letter to Rusty George, WD4HEM, trustee of the PALS Net and send along the check. The MARS club will also look into becoming a member of the PALS Net.

Repeater Committee: No Report

October Club Meeting October 24, 2006:

Possible topics were discussed and an "Antenna Potpourri" will be put together by AD4IE, W4WNT and WB2RHM. Anyone else who would like to bring along unusual antennas are invited to do so.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40PM

Submitted by Bill Turner, W4WNT, Secretary



**Mecklenburg Amateur Radio
Society, Inc**

<http://www.w4bfb.org>

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Club Officers and Board of Directors

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Vice President

Wilton McAllister, WB4PCS, wb4pcs@w4bfb.org

Secretary

Bill Turner, W4WNT, w4wnt@w4bfb.org

Treasurer

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Jodie Rowland, KI4CXO, ki4cxo@w4bfb.org

August Flassig, N6TYE, n6tye@w4bfb.org

Irvin Hoechner, KF4KFN, storm-qrz@stormcrow.org

Additional Club Information

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)

Clubroom

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

Club Repeaters

146.34/146.94 (w/autopatch)
144.63/145.23 (no autopatch)
144.69/145.29 (no autopatch)
449.600/444.600 (no autopatch) PL 100.00 - Currently Down

Mecklenburg 2m Emergency Net

9:00 PM local time, daily on 146.34/146.94 featuring the ARRL Audio News feed on Sunday night.

Alternate frequencies announced