



JULY 2018

N4LNR

News & Views

**P. O. Box 3276
Lenoir, NC**

**Serving Amateur Radio
In Caldwell County
Since 1986**

Coming Events

Volunteers Needed

Aug 25 Grand
Further Mtn
Trail Run

Sept 8-10 ARRL
Sept VHF
Contest

Oct 6 Fox Hunt &
Picnic

Show & Tell – July LARC Meeting

So you've built a better mousetrap! Bring your "ham" creations and give a brief talk about what you made/purchased and what it does that really makes it a great addition to your enjoying the hobby. John AG4ZL has planned a "show and tell" session to encourage a sharing of ham ideas.

A business meeting will follow the "show and tell" program, including planning for several upcoming events. See you there!



Photos from Field Day 2004



Next LARC Meeting:
Thursday, July 12, 7:00 PM,
Gamewell Fire Dept.
2806 Morganton Blvd SW,
Lenoir

LARC Weekly Net:
Friday, 9:00 PM, 146.625
Minus PL 94.8 Alt. 147.330
Plus PL 141.3

Caldwell ARES Net:
Sunday, 9:00 PM,
147.330 Plus PL 141.3

DMR Digital Net:
Tuesday, 8:00 PM
Lenoir Local DMR

Caldwell Severe Weather Net:
Saturday, 7:30 PM, 147.330 Plus PL 141.3



President's Comments

John Crowe AG4ZL

Greetings! I hope each of you had a great 4th of July. LARC has had an exciting month as our members participated as a 2 Alpha station in Field Day 2018. We got off to a great start with setup going like clockwork. And come 2 PM, the bands were wide open and crowded! We started off a little slow, but soon picked up, and we made over 600 contacts. I want to personally say "thank you" to everyone who came out and helped make Field Day 2018 a success.

Our next "big" event is going to be the ARRL September VHF contest. The objective to this contest is to make as many VHF and UHF contacts as possible from your grid. LARC has not participated in this event in the past as a Club and I look forward to making this event a success.

I will be coordinating the event. Volunteers are needed to help operate during the contest. We possibly will be a Rover station, which will allow us to work several grids starting in Burke County and going as far as Wilkes County. Or, if we remain stationary, we may set up in several areas along Hwy 321 or Hwy 181 near Brown Mountain Overlook. If you are interested in participating in the ARRL VHF contest (September 8-10), please contact me at ag4zl@att.net.

Also, I encourage each of you to join us at the Gamewell Fire Department at 7:00 PM on July 12, for our monthly LARC meeting. Our program is going to be a "show & tell" where if you have made or bought something that you want to show off, we want to hear from you. If you are a new ham and wish to discuss a project or something that you're working on, please let us know and we will give you time to talk about it. I hope to see you there.

John AG4ZL



Did You Know? A fun element of the ham hobby is catching satellites. Not only is there the romantic notion of sending messages into outer space, but you have to trace the orbit of the satellite with your antenna while tuning the radio, to compensate for the Doppler effect." [Catching Satellites on Ham Radio](#) provides a quick guide to get you started.

Member Watch



Our thoughts and prayers are with **Jill, wife of Dick KOCAT**, as she struggles with complications from surgery for pancreatic cancer. We missed seeing Jill at Field Day 2018, and her unusual potluck dishes. She remains at Wake Forest Medical Center in Winston-Salem. Jill, all of your friends at LARC send their best wishes for a full recovery and hope you are home soon.

Hams helping hams! When **Ro K4HRM**'s boat dock got slammed by the sudden release of 4' of water in Lake Hickory, she was unable to find a replacement dock guide. After talking to 18 dock builders with no success, Ro called **James N4NIN** for advice. James and his son Mark repaired the damaged dock guide and, they, along with Gary K3OS, mounted it on the dock. Thanks for the "hams" rescue!

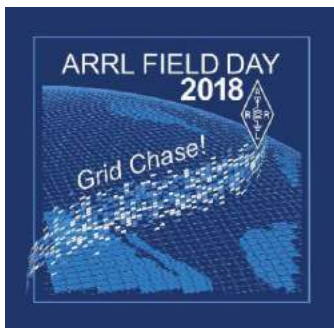


John AG4ZL is a long-time "big catfish" hunter! Recently, he got a 15-pounder on the Johns River. Now, **Ro K4HRM** continues to taunt John after a 58-pounder was caught in the cove where she lives. OK, John, let's get that big one!

Recently, WPAC member **Todd KI4FVO** reached out to LARC for help in figuring out what was wrong with his HF transceiver and vertical antenna. Being new to HF, Todd was concerned that he may have an installation or tuning error. **Gary K3OS**, while vacationing in Los Angeles, stepped in to help. Todd was able to resolve his tuning issues and Gary plans to visit with Todd and fine-tune his vertical antenna when he returns from LA. He also suggested that Todd consider a Maxcom multi-band dipole (like **Ro K4HRM** installed) to augment his HF system. Hams helping hams is what it's all about!



Please send scoop on LARC members to the Newsletter Editor so we can share the news.



Field Day 2018

Field Day is an annual event that many hams look forward to every year. It is a picnic, a campout, a practice for emergencies, an informal radio operating contest and, most of all, FUN! ARRL's Field Day is the single most popular on-the-air event held annually in the US and Canada. On June 23-24, LARC joined more than 40,000 radio amateurs nationwide to celebrate Field Day 2018.

Some groups treat Field Day as a radio contest; others practice their emergency response capabilities. It is an excellent opportunity to test skills and equipment away from the conveniences of home, operating entirely on emergency power with portable equipment. Field Day demonstrates amateur radio skill and readiness that will be used in an emergency.

The radio contest part simply involves contacting as many other stations as possible while learning to operate our radio gear in abnormal situations and less than optimal conditions. LARC setup its encampment in Redwood Park at Hudson, NC.

It's 8:00 AM; we have just arrived at Redwood Park in Hudson. Vehicles loaded with antennas, radio gear, food, etc. What is the first thing on the agenda? Setup – antennas, radio stations, canopies, exhibit booth, generator, and more. The whole encampment is centered around the Club's Communication Trailer.

Next, the Club's Antenna Trailer is located to minimize coax runs. At Winter Field Day 2018, the Club experimented with antenna placement to minimize interference. The decision to use the placement plan speeded up the antenna building process.

Then, the generator and light tower is placed for low noise, yet, bright light all around.





Three canopies were placed end-to-end in the front of the Communications Trailer to provide shade in the blazing summer sun with a fan and chairs added for comfort for those not operating inside the air conditioned trailer. A visitor's display of brochures and handouts was setup under one canopy, along with a visitor sign-in log.

Sodas and water were iced down in coolers under the canopy as well.

LARC operated as N4LNR 2 ALPHA NC. The stations were set up as so that either Phone or CW could be operated on both stations. The stations were tested and declared ready to use and it was only 11 AM – somewhat of a record for setup!

John AG4ZL tested his antenna and radio for making a satellite QSO with success! The satellite contact was prior to the 2 PM start, so it didn't count. Unfortunately, LARC was unable to make a satellite contact during the contest period.

When 2 PM arrived true to Field Day form, some coax cable issues were found. Cables were substituted and all was good. The band conditions were the best seen in recent years. All were open including 6. Sunday, we were operating 10 meters, which was hopping! The "big guns" will have huge scores. It's really nice to operate when conditions are good. Gene K1AVE sent a screenshot of 40-meters shortly after the contest began. You can see from the waterfall that the band was humming!



The coverage map shows a great effort to contact all states and provinces.

The total contact count was 606 (200 CW, 406 phone) with a preliminary score of 1,612 including multiplier and bonus points. Contacts were made on the following bands: 80 (9%), 40 (43%), 20 (32%), 15 (12%) and 10 (4%).



All too soon, 2 PM Sunday arrived and it was time to break camp, pack it all away and say “goodbye” to Field Day 2018.



Volunteers are the mainstay for Field Day! Help is needed to transport the trailers, set up antennas and radio stations, shelters, generators, pick up sodas, water and ice, provide coolers, ladders, coax, order and pickup food, etc. and, of course, tear it all down at the end of the event.

Many thanks to Tom KA4HKK, who coordinated the event, John AG4ZL, Frank KN4ACU, Gary K3OS, Wes KN4JTC, Josh N4JDE, James N4NIN, Ro K4HRM, Bob KM4QAC, Angel N8VRS, Dick K0CAT, and Tanner KK4SZI who together helped make Field Day 2018 a memorable weekend.

Also, thanks to the visitors, both old and new friends of amateur radio, who stopped by to check out this year's Field Day operations and renew friendships.

We missed seeing a lot of our members and radio friends. We certainly could have used more operators -- even for short periods of time. The weather was great, the food plentiful, and the company outstanding. Put the last full weekend in June on your calendar for next year and get involved with Field Day 2019!



Caldwell ARES/AUXCOMM

Updating Member Info



Amateur radio operators, registered as members of the Caldwell Amateur Radio Emergency Services (CARES) and certified in the AUXCOMM database, must remain active in CARES or they will be removed from the AUXCOMM database.

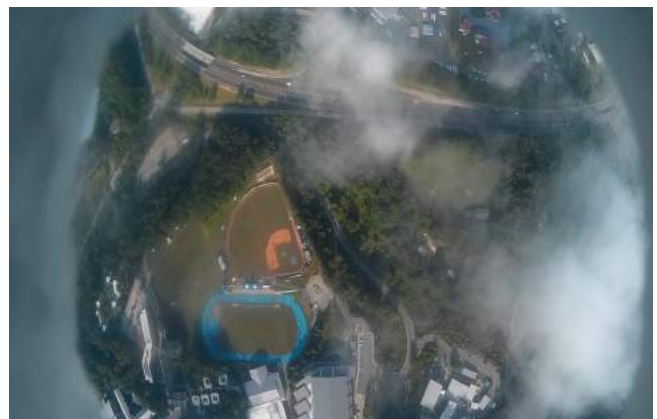
To be considered as “Active,” CARES members must check into the CARES Net at least once a quarter (or 4 times per year). The CARES Net is held each Sunday night on 147.330 at 9:00 p.m. Alternatively, a member is considered active if they participate in at least one CARES incident/event conducted using ICS protocols. Such events include the Hibriten Hill Run, Rotary Cycle to Serve, Field Day, or any activation or exercise conducted by the Caldwell EOC. Incidents/exercises are noticed by the LARC group email, by email from Tom Land (the ARES/AUXCOMM Coordinator), or when the CARES Net is activated.

CARES always needs members to participate in emergency events; however, you need to remain active in CARES events to stay informed of approved procedures.

CARES members who wish to be deployed beyond Caldwell County must be in the AUXCOMM database. To be in the AUXCOMM database, you need to take the ICS courses 100, 200, 700 and 800. If you plan to only serve CARES in Caldwell County, you do not need the ICS courses.

Nick's Great Balloon Adventure!

Several weeks ago, Nick an 8th grader at an Asheville School contacted Ro K4HRM for information on how to track a balloon having learned about LARC tracking a balloon at the NC Gravity Games. He planned to launch a balloon with a camera as his class project and illustrate it with pictures taken from the balloon. Ro gave Nick some information about APRS and some university contacts/resources. Nick's balloon launched June 9 from Asheville and came down near Edneyville NC. See the APRS track. The balloon traveled approximately 90 miles. Nick sent some pictures of his adventure. A ham in the making!





Email from Nick:

Hi Ro,

The Balloon Launch happened at UNC Asheville (near the track and baseball diamond). These pictures are from launch morning and recovery.

The balloon stayed above us for 40 minutes, so you can see the blue track get smaller and smaller. I-26, downtown Asheville, and Grove Park golf course can all be seen.

The balloon ascended for 4 hours, reached an altitude of 85,000+ feet, burst, then descended for 30 minutes. It landed in Edneyville NC.

Recovery was fun. We had to use a slingshot to get it out of a tree.

Thanks for your interest in my project.

Nick



Always Be Weather Aware!

Brian KM4KIS is an active Caldwell County Severe Weather and Skywarn weather spotter. On Field Day weekend, he was on assignment in Alabama and found himself in the middle of a severe weather event. "The scariest 2-minutes I can recall," admits Brian as he observed the damage around him.

Here's the story in his words.

My wife Kylie, daughter Emory, and I were up on a mountaintop riding with a friend. The area has a great view of the surrounding valleys and we had been watching the storm roll in over a couple of hours, planning to be back down in the valley before it reached us.

Well, you know how time gets away from you. We finished our last task and started to head back right as the sky got dark and windy. I saw the radar and realized how strong it was, so we really started rushing to get down off the mountain. It was about a 5-minute drive to get back to where the road goes downhill. Right before we made it back to our car, the storm let loose. It was a significant downburst that brought not only a ton of rain, but broke branches and stirred up a bunch of debris. There were patio furniture and garbage bins tumbling across the road, branches were breaking, and the car was being buffeted by the wind. By the time we reached our car, it was time to seek shelter. And, since we were on a flat field on the mountaintop, the only shelter was either in a bunker or downhill. I asked our friend to go ahead and take Kylie and Emory down while I jumped out to retrieve our car. The rain was coming down sideways and it was difficult to stay standing. I was completely soaked head to toe in the ten seconds I was between vehicles. It's about a 5-minute drive to get off the mountain, and when we started down, we were completely rain-wrapped and in the middle of what felt like a wind tunnel. But as soon as we got to the valley, the wind and rain vanished as the storm moved on.

I had snapped a screenshot of the radar right as we got to our car. The storm's relative motion showed this significant gust front that we were caught in. You can also see from the cluster of lightning at the blue circle near the cell center (our location) that we were in the most turbulent part of the storm.



Our car took some damage during the storm, presumably from flying/falling debris.

Although it was short-lived, it was a great reminder lesson to stay weather aware and to watch out for warning signs of severe weather. A Severe

Thunderstorm Warning doesn't mean it's "not bad enough." Downbursts, flash flooding, flying debris, and hail are still plenty dangerous and shouldn't be taken lightly.



Upcoming Hamfests: Mark Your Calendar

July 21, 2018 **Mid-Summer Swapfest**, Cary Amateur Radio Club, Cary,
<http://www.qsl.net/n4nc/>

July 28: **WCARS Hamfest**, Western Carolina Amateur Radio Club, Waynesville,
<http://wcars.org>

August 11: **20th Annual Cape Fear ARS Swapfest**, Cape Fear Amateur Radio Society,
Fayetteville, <http://www.cfarsnc.org>

August 31-Sept 2: **Shelby Hamfest/ARRL Roanoke Division Convention**, Shelby Amateur
Radio Club, Shelby <http://shelbyhamfest.org>

October 14: **Maysville Hamfest**, Maysville Hamfest Association, Maysville, NC, for further
information, contact bhigland at nc dot rr dot com.

November 18: **JARSFest**, Johnston Amateur Radio Society, Benson, NC, <http://www.jars.net>

LARC 2018 Officers



John Crowe
President
AG4ZL



Tom Land
Vice President
KA4HKK



Frank Gordon
Secretary
KN4ACU



Dick Blumenstein
Treasurer
KOCAT

Send comments concerning the LARC NEWSLETTER to Ro K4HRM hrmaddox@nettally.com

Suggestions and articles are appreciated.

To unsubscribe from the Newsletter, send an email to the above address.