

JUNE 2017



N4LNR

News & Views

P. O. Box 3276

Lenoir, NC 28645



Serving Amateur Radio

In Caldwell County

Next LARC Meeting

Thursday, June 8

7:00 PM

Gamewell Fire Dept.
2806 Morganton Blvd SW
Lenoir

LARC Weekly Net

Friday, 9:00 PM

146.625 Minus 94.8

Alt 147.330

Caldwell ARES Net

Sunday, 9:00 PM

147.330 Plus 141.3

DMR Digital Net

Tuesday 8:00 PM

LARC To Hold ARRL Field Day 2017

Caldwell EOC – June 24-25

Plans for Field Day 2017 will dominate the June 8, LARC meeting. Tom KA4HKK will discuss station setup, logging and rules.

Volunteers are needed to operate as well as assist in setup and takedown of equipment. Members are encouraged to come to the meeting and get involved in what has become a showcase event for the Club.

A brief business meeting will follow the Field Day planning discussion.





President's Comments

John Crowe NC4JA

At the last LARC meeting, I mentioned the possibility of the Club operating a weather net affiliated with Skywarn. I have talked with the Skywarn EC and, while not final, we have an all clear to proceed. Since this net will belong to the Club, it is important that we set up some procedures and protocols for its ongoing operation. I am asking that you give some thought to a weather net and let's begin putting in place the necessary structure to make it happen.

Coming up at the end of the month is amateur radio's stellar event – Field Day. This year we will be operating from the Caldwell EOC and we need operators to keep the radios going continuously for the 24 hours. Consider volunteering to operate!

7 3 John NC4JA

My First LARC Field Day

By Ro Maddox K4HRM

It was a very warm June 2010 afternoon as I drove to “the top of the mountain at Floyd Key's place” with directions given to me by Michelle KD4YTU, then Newsletter editor. When I turned off the highway at Keycraft Place, the road immediately ended. No antennas or life, just a barking dog. I drove to the house at the edge of the woods and a woman came out and told me to head “up the mountain”. I saw only a two-lane path in the direction she pointed. I headed up the path, the incline getting steeper and steeper and the path getting narrow. I looked out my truck window and the drop-off was sheer and straight down – oh, don't let me meet someone or have to back up! I kept heading up that mountain, even though I swear I heard bango music and thoughts of Burt Reynolds flashed in my head. I was in the process of moving to NC and didn't want to miss Field Day.

Reaching the top, I saw an open shed with 2 men sitting at radios – Scott KC4SWL on voice and Tom KA4HKK on CW. This was my first introduction to the Lenoir Amateur Radio Club. Soon Jerry and Floyd arrived on an ATV and Jerry, who was the Caldwell EC, gave me a tour of the antennas located on the mountain. A couple hours later, about a dozen others arrived and soon a grill was fired up and hot dogs and hamburgers were sizzling. All the while, Scott and Tom stayed hard at it on the radios. They offered me to operate but I declined since I was just visiting.

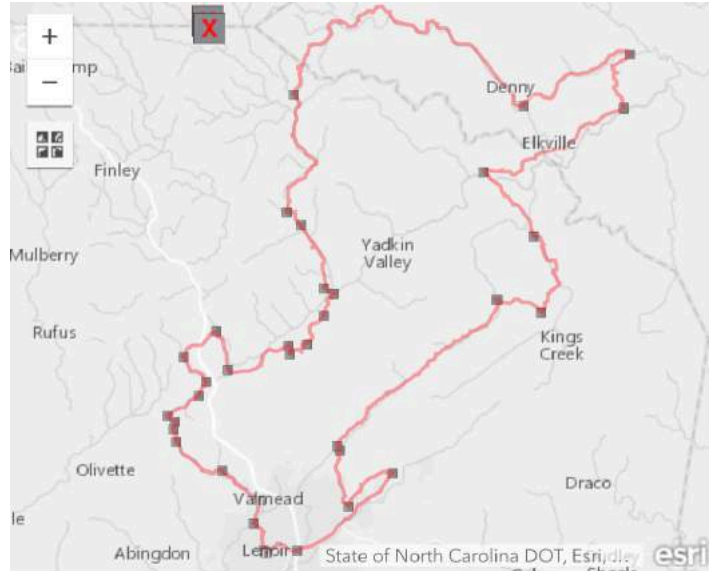
Needless to say, as it started nearing dark, I was not excited about driving back down that “path”, but I didn't miss Field Day 2010.

LARC Supports Rotary Cycle To Serve

Cycle To Serve is an annual bicycle ride to promote health and wellness in Caldwell County and all proceeds from the ride are used for the Lenoir Rotary Club's charitable program. The ride took place on May 13.

Riders could choose from three different courses -- the metric century, the 40-mile and 25 mile routes -- all of which begin and end in downtown Lenoir. In addition to a LARC public service activity, the race served as a practice for the Caldwell ARES members and used FEMA ICS protocols and featured the use of APRS tracking technology.

LARC members participating were: Tom KA4HKK, Ro K4HRM – Net Control; Tanner KK4SZI – Start/Finish Line; Dick K0CAT – Aid 1; James N4NIN – Aid 2; Irv W4IWK – Aid 3; Mark K9FWA – Cycle 1 Greenway; Marty KM4IOU – Sweep 25 mile; Phil KG4BCC – Sweep 40 mile; Josh N4JDE, Brian KM4KIS – Sweep metric century.



Tanner KK4SZI set up a big screen at the Start/Finish Line that displayed the race status on "real time" on Google Earth. The lead vehicle and the "tail end" sweep vehicle used 50-watt APRS units to interface live with Google Earth on the metric century. Mark K9FWA joined the race at the Greenway relaying live video using the Periscope App on his iPhone as well as reports via ham radio.

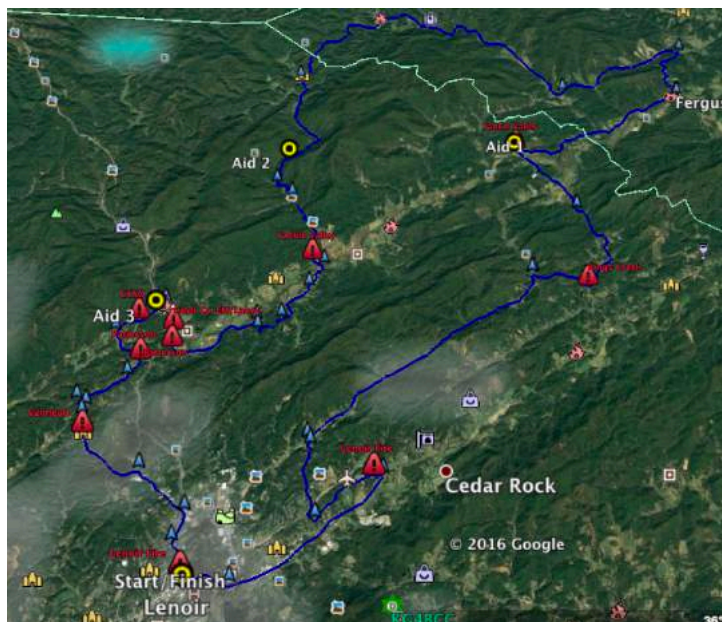


Operators were located at the three Aid Stations and relayed race status as well as provided rider assistance when required.

Communications used VHF, DMR and VIPER frequencies dependent on the rough mountain terrain. Net Control provided coordination for all amateur communications as well as Fire and EMS. Sweep vehicles cleared each section of the route verifying that no riders were left behind and releasing Fire and EMS throughout the route.

Providing communications for the Rotary Cycle To Serve is a LARC Club project each year, however, it also serves as an Caldwell ARES exercise with Net Control operating out of the County EOC and officials from County Emergency Management and law enforcement from the City of Lenoir Police Dept.

After watching the LARC communications capability for the race, the representative from the City of Lenoir Police Dept. asked the Club to provide communications for the City's annual Christmas parade.



The above is a screenshot from Google Earth of the live APRS tracking.

NC CERT Regional Conference Highlights

By Shirley Kanode, CERT/Caldwell County REACT

On May 20 the NC State Program Manager, Samantha Royster, chaired a regional CERT conference in Morganton, NC. It was one of the best CERT events I have attended. The agenda included presentations by 3 CERTs who were deployed in 2016 including Caldwell County (wildfire donations), Hatteras Island, and Carolina Trace. Multiple speakers and attendees commented on the importance of good radio communications, including amateur radio, during disasters. Several people there were licensed ham operators. I will share more information at our next Caldwell County REACT meeting on June 22.

Hatteras Island CERT fielded 30 volunteers working over 1700 hours after Hermine and Hurricane Matthew. Most of them had suffered damage during the storms.



Carolina Trace, a large private community, was isolated due to flooding with no emergency services available. They had to clear fallen trees to deploy.

CAROLINA TRACE HURRICANE MATTHEW RESPONSE



"TAKE AWAYS"

- Volunteer availability
- Murphy's Law
- Community response plans usually need work –
 - Evacuations
 - Emergency responses
 - Recovery operations
 - Disaster assessments
- Good radio communication is key to success
- Stake holders must coordinate
- First responders understanding of CERT do's and don'ts



Other presentations included

- emergency shelter operations,
- animal care and rescue during disasters including large livestock,
- how first responders can communicate with the deaf and hard-of-hearing using American Sign Language,
- National Weather Service programs needing volunteers
- and CERT continuing training ideas.

NWS recruiting volunteers to measure precipitation.



Some people won't evacuate because of their animals.



Tower Building 101: Rebar In-Ground Support

By Dick Blumenstein K0CAT

I've been putting off the work on the tower installation and my ham shack to work on the "honey do" list for the last couple of months. It turns out that one of the items on that list required the use of a backhoe whose operator said that he sure could use the soil extracted from the tower foundation hole! Wow! This put me into hyper-light speed to start construction of the rebar cage that goes into the ground. The eventual hole in the ground will be 5' x 5' x 8.5' deep.

The rebar cage design 4'x4'x8' was specified by US Tower so I had previously bought the rebar (cut and bent) by a local vendor. It has sat outside my house for about 8 months getting the required "patina" of rust that all good foundations must need to have!

Just before this month's newsletter was going to press Ro (K4HRM) and Gary (K3OS) graciously accepted my invitation to come over and spend a good portion of their Friday in my garage, getting iron oxide all over them. They became experts in the art of wire twisting (and then some more wire twisting!)



A great suggestion was made at the beginning, so we spent the first 45 minutes jury rigging up 2 saw horses with some blocks of wood to just the right height to suspend all the bent rebar components and sections so that we would not have to work at floor level all the time.





About 6 hours later (with the requisite 1.5 hour lunch off) we almost finished the rebar frame. A trip to Lowes will get me another 2 rebars (which were not specified in the drawings) to make diagonals to prevent skewing of the finished product.

If I had to do it again, I would have asked the rebar supplier how they cut and bent the rebar. The supplier was not consistent with their measurements so it was obvious that there were some QC issues which caused us some grief.



Also happening simultaneously is that the XYL wanted the tower moved so that it doesn't block some of our view, so back to the drawing boards (and to the County) to see if we can move the tower to a different location from where we initially specified it was going to be.

We have heard back from the County that the tower cannot be within 5 feet of the septic drain (leach) field or the "repair" area. The repair area is an alternate place to put a highly efficient replacement if one's main septic leach field fails in the future.

It is unclear at this time that moving the tower to the spot we want will NOT be in the repair area. We've requested the County to come out (for a fee) to clarify the exact boundaries of the repair area.

To be continued...



The rebar cage will sit on these blocks in the bottom of the hole.

Upcoming Hamfests: Mark Your Calendar

July 8 Firecracker Hamfest, Rowan Amateur Radio Society, Salisbury, NC,
<http://www.rowanars.org/firecracker-hamfest/>

July 15 Mid-Summer SWAPFEST, Cary Amateur Radio Club, Cary, NC,
<http://www.qsl.net/n4nc/>

July 29 WCARS Hamfest, Western Carolina Amateur Radio Society, Waynesville, NC,
<http://wcars.org/>

August 5 Catawba Valley Hamfest, McDowell Amateur Radio Association, Morganton, NC,
<http://cvhamfest.com>

August 12 19th Annual Cape Fear Amateur Radio Society Swapfest, Cape Fear Amateur Radio Society, Fayetteville, NC, <http://www.cfarsnc.org>

September 1-3 61st Annual Shelby Hamfest/ARRL North Carolina State Convention, Shelby Amateur Radio Club, Shelby, NC <http://www.shelbyhamfest.org>

LARC 2017 Officers



John Crowe
President
NC4JA



Josh Edwards
Vice President
N4JDE



Tom Land
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KA4HKK



Ro Maddox
Treasurer
K4HRM

Send comments concerning the Newsletter
to Ro Maddox K4HRM hrmaddox@nettally.com
Suggestions and articles are appreciated.