



NOVEMBER 2016

News & Views

N4LNR



Serving Amateur Radio
In Caldwell County

P. O. Box 3276

Lenoir, NC 28645

Next LARC Meeting
Thursday, November 10
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

CERT & 2017 Officers Election On The November LARC Agenda

Shirley Kanode, Volunteer Coordinator of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program will discuss the benefits of CERT. The program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact Caldwell County and trains them in basic disaster response skills such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations.



Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist themselves, their families, and others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in Caldwell County, North Carolina.

A business meeting will follow the program, where 2017 Club Officers will be elected and plans made for the December Eatin' Meetin' will be discussed.





President's Comments

“What happened to HD-DVD?”

What happens when competing standards exist? Many of you may remember the war that was VHS and Betamax. More recently and on a much smaller scale there was two competing formats for High definition video, Blu-Ray and HD-DVD. For several years each struggled to earn market share and both aligned themselves with the large companies in the industry to gain a competitive advantage. After waiting for what seemed like forever, the Blu-Ray standard won out and that's what we see on store shelves when we walk through the

electronics section. Both were perfectly suitable standards but one won because of some minor advantages and eventually because of adoption of the general public.

Now at this point in the column you may be asking yourself; what does 1080P video have to do with ham radio? Well I ask you to keep reading and you will see what I am hinting about. Ham radio has gone through many standard changes throughout the years especially in which modes are the most popular. There was CW then Voice over AM, then SSB, then FM and many more that are too numerous to count.

We are on the verge of another such standard war in ham radio and this time it comes on the FM front. Most of you have heard the buzz in the last few years about Digital FM communication. It has been around for a decent amount of time and now in the last few years, the battles have really started heating up. Digital FM takes what used to be an analog signal and converts that to packets that are sent back and forth. Each radio can decode the packets back to voice and a conversation is born. But in the true nature of ham radio there are always multiple ways to do something.

Several formats have already sprung onto the scene including D Star, DMR, Fusion, and many more. Each offers their own advantages and disadvantages. On top of that many different networks have also been introduced like the NC-PRN, Vol-net, Brandmeister, DMR-MARC and others. This makes the decision for the consumer much harder because now each person has to decide a protocol and a network to be a part of. As it sits, we have a crazy matrix consisting of radios, protocols, and networks with a spider web of lines drawn across to represent which ones work with which.

We are just now in the beginning stages of this standard battle and the early battle lines are just now being drawn. Which one will the popular opinion lean towards and which of the standards will fall by the wayside? It might be truly too early to tell but several of the standards seem to be becoming more popular than others especially in the last year. I predict that this will be drawn out over the next several years but eventually the public will decide which one is the best. My challenge this month is to read up on the different modes and research the pros and cons to each. The more you know the better decision you will be able to make. Personally I have decided that I like the DMR standard the best. Now I leave you with this simple question: After this battle is over where will we see the next standard war?

Until next month, **Tanner KK4SZI**

Looking Back: Thirty Years Ago ~ November 1986

I must note that I smiled when the editor of the LARC Newsletter related his experience while Trick-or-Treating when a little old lady answered the door and commented, "Aren't you sorta old to be trick-or-treating?" But, you're never too old to enjoy amateur radio!

An article in the New York Times, proposed that private users of the communications spectrum should have to pay for the privilege of using the frequencies. Luckily, that idea didn't grow roots.

Western Piedmont Amateur Radio participated in a search and rescue for "little Adam" lost in Morganton. While their radio operators went above and beyond the call of duty to aid in his safe return, their deeds went unnoticed. While local media praised rescue teams, dog handlers, EMS personnel, no mention of radio support. Unsung heroes just the same – no praise needed.

November was officer elections for LARC and James N4NIN was nominated for President and Tom KA4HKK nominated for Secretary. Looking for progressive leaders - ummm, things change but some thing stay the same.

Note: You can read the complete November 1986 Newsletter at <http://n4lnr.org> under the heading Newsletters.

Upcoming Hamfests: Mark Your Calendar

November 20 JARSFest 2016, Johnston Amateur Radio Society, Benson, NC,
<http://www.jars.net>

January 14 Winston-Salem FirstFest, Forsyth Amateur Radio Club,
Winston-Salem, NC, http://www.w4nc.com/ws_classic_hamfest_2016.htm

March 10-11 Charlotte Hamfest, Mecklenburg Amateur Radio
Society, Concord, NC, <https://charlottehamfest.org/>

April 15 Catawba Valley Hamfest, McDowell Amateur Radio
Association, Morganton, NC, <http://cvhamfest.com>

April 15 45th Annual RARSFest/ARRL Roanoke Division Convention,
Raleigh Amateur Radio Society, Raleigh, NC,
<http://www.rars.org/rarsfest/>

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



Caldwell ARES Participates in Disaster Drill

Six members of the Caldwell ARES team participated in the Happy Valley Hazardous Material Transportation Incident Full Scale Exercise on October 28, sponsored by the Caldwell County Emergency Management. The purpose of the exercise was to provide the County's emergency response community the opportunity to evaluate their crisis response plans during a major incident, involving the transportation of hazardous materials. The exercise scenario involved the crash of a loaded propane truck near an elementary school, requiring evacuation of the school and dealing with victims of the accident and school explosion. The exercise involved persons working in 2 fire departments, law enforcement, EMS, 2 hospitals, the elementary school, emergency management, amateur radio, and CERT.

Caldwell ARES was tasked with providing emergency communications with operators located at both ends of the closed county road (Dick KOCAT & Irv W4IWK), incident command (John NC4JA), emergency management (Tom KA4HKK), and the local hospital (Mark K9FWA & Ro K4HRM). Additionally, ARES was tasked with maintaining the ICS Form 214 for all communications for the event (Amateur and VIPER).

The exercise commenced with the crash of a propane truck and the gas leak carried by wind to the elementary school. Fire Depts. responded, assessed the situation, while law enforcement closed the area and began an evacuation of the school (teachers and CERT volunteers playing the role of students). The truck driver was air lifted to a regional medical center (even though he survived the truck crash, Curt Hiller (CERT volunteer) was dropped by EMS personnel during transport to the waiting helicopter -sorry Curt!). Following the school explosion, victims were transported by ambulance to the local hospital where they were treated in the ER.

An evaluation meeting conducted by Specialized Consulting Services LLC personnel that designed and conducted the event followed the exercise. The Caldwell ARES team were pleased with their performance and the effectiveness of the amateur radios (VHF & DMR) and VIPER.





CERT Volunteers Help During Hur. Matthew

By Shirley Kanode



Brevard County, FL

Yes, it has happened before in Caldwell County as well as other disasters. We have many competent first responders, but more help from our residents would be needed in any large scale disaster. That is why Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) exists. Here are some reports of CERT activities in Florida and South Carolina.



Lumberton, NC

Spruce Creek, FL CERT

Long before the hurricane, the Spruce Creek CERT Team was planning and training for a potential disaster situation. On Thursday morning, we invited community volunteers to a briefing at 2:00 PM at Keith Philips Hanger. Bud Harter provided an overview on how to use the handheld radios many of us had and provided us with channel information. Keith briefed Nancy Hoyt and John Ferguson to first aid area to be used if needed. Dick Patierno obtained property owner volunteers to maintain security at the South Gate, as the Security staff would not be on site.

A few hours later, the hurricane hit and by 6:30 Friday morning power went out in our community. When it was safe to leave homes, the team at the South Gate not only manned the entrance, but also received calls from residents needing help and from family members seeking to inquire about their loved ones. These volunteers also helped to clear roads of trees and debris, cleared road drainage grates, checked homes, and assisted homeowners after the storm.

Florence County, SC CERT

Now the CERT trained volunteers are helping Florence County Emergency Management with Hurricane Mathew. They are helping by answering calls from residents and updating the Florence County EMS social media alongside other agencies like the Red Cross and DHEC. Other members of the CERT program will help out in their neighborhood.

CERT Provides Free Training

CERT trains community members to safely do search and rescue when first responders may not be available, remove and carry victims, do triage, and disaster medical first aid. We may be called upon to help our neighbors, assist with communication, staff evacuation centers, and provide rehabilitation support to the first responders. Our mission also includes educating our residents how to prepare for emergencies and increase their ability to safely survive a disaster.

Together LARC and Caldwell County CERT will be here to help. Now, let's hope we aren't needed this winter for a large snow or ice storm!



October Meeting Notes...

Attendees: Tanner KK4SZI, Tom KA4HKK, Ro K4HRM, James N4NIN, Susan N4OJN, Dick K0CAT, Bob Benfield, Phil KG4BCC, Mark K9FWA, Scott KC4SWL, Brian KM4KIS, Jeet KK4CCA.

Trailer Committee: Workday set for 11/5 8:30 am at Tom KA4HKK lot.

Trailer Storage: No report.

Social. Discussed Christmas Eaten' Meetin' to be held December 8. Tanner KK4SZI to check to see if can get reservations for Captain's Galley. Agreed to do Dirty Santa limit \$10 mystery gift.

Officer Nominations: Current Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer agreed to serve for 2017. No nomination for President.

Public Service: Tom KA4HKK discussed upcoming CERT activities and asked members to register their participation on caldwellcountycert@gmail.com

Program: No program.

Clearly, the DXCC, the DX Century Club award, received for working 100 or more countries, is the most coveted award in Amateur Radio, but I would wager to say that the most sought after award is WAS, Worked all States. Most hams, after they have finally attained WAS *multi-bands* and *multi-modes*, will then go on to try to make WAS on individual bands or modes, or with other limitations such as QRP or within a year (And then, of course, there is WAS worked vs. WAS confirmed and WAS LoTW, WAS eQSL, WAS paper QSL, etc.) Many hams struggle just to make WAS once.

I would like to show you how you would have a very good chance of working WAS in one weekend. It is not guaranteed, but if you put in a good effort and the propagation gods are friendly, even *you* may have a very good chance of success.

The Secret!

Most hams in most states have at least one opportunity a year to be a "targeted" ham – one that others are looking for and are even spotting on the DX clusters. That event is known as the state QSO party. Some states not only have the state QSO party, but also participate in one of two regional QSO parties: the New England QSO Party and the 7QP.



Here in Florida, we only have the one QSO party, the **Florida QSO Party**. Sponsored by the Florida Contest Group, it is held on the last weekend in April. So, the next Florida QSO Party takes place on April 29 and April 30 (2017). That means for 10 hours on Saturday and another 10 hours on Sunday, you can be the one that everyone wants to work. You can pick a frequency and sit and call CQ. If propagation is good, you can expect to have a pileup almost all day long with hams calling you from every state in the Union. And there is a very good chance that, out of all those contacts, you will get your WAS!

State QSO Parties The way a state QSO party works is that you get points for working as many stations as possible. Those points are then multiplied by (you guessed it) “multipliers.” For in-state stations, multipliers are the counties (67 in Florida) and the states and DX. Out-of-state (OOS) stations only have the state’s counties as multipliers. Many in-state operators will go mobile to give as many multipliers as they can. Some will sit on county lines to give multiple county multipliers with one contact.

During the event, almost all in-state stations operate in the “run” mode calling CQ, while the OOS ops use “search and pounce” or, more likely, they use DX clusters for “scan and pounce.” So if you are participating in the Florida QSO Party next April, you would just find yourself an open frequency (good luck with that) and start calling “CQ Florida QSO Party.” When someone answers you, your reply is “Kilo Echo 3 Mike George Whiskey, you are five-nine in Leon County, that is Lima Echo Ocean.” KE3MGW will respond with something like, “Kilo 4 Sierra Bravo Zulu, thank you. You are five-nine in Delaware.” To which you will reply, “Kilo Echo 3 Mike George Whiskey, thank you for Delaware. This is Kilo 4 Sierra Bravo Zulu QRZ?” Hopefully, the QRZ? will elicit another call because you have a pileup, so make sure you have KE3MGW logged and are ready for another contact immediately... because... you... have... a... pileup!

If there is a particular state that you still need, you can wait until that state’s QSO party and search for several of that state’s operators calling CQ. I would suggest working more than one, just in case the first one doesn’t QSL. You might even try to win one of that state’s contests for out-of-state participants. You can find a list of all state QSO parties at <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/stateparties.html>.

Be sure to read the rules for each state that you participate in. They don’t all have the same exchange. Some will ask for RST and state, while others will ask for a serial number. It gets confusing on a weekend when there are four QPs active and one of the four wants a serial number and the other three want states. Add in a DX contest with its own separate serial number and you have chaos. (Yes, you can have multiple instances of most contest loggers active at once, but can you keep up with them?)

What’s Next? After you have worked all states in every conceivable way, what is next? Well, refine the physical entity down one size and you have counties. There are 3077 counties in the US. The United States of America Counties (USA-CA) Award is sponsored by CQ Magazine, although that number seems insurmountable; some individuals have accomplished it multiple times. http://www.cq-amateur-radio.com/cq_awards/cq_usa_ca_awards/cq_usa_ca_awards.html

Still Challenges Even with the sunspot cycle in the decline for the next several years, there are still challenges on the HF bands with multiple flavors of WAS and the USA-CA awards. After that, there are many awards for grids, prefixes and other amateur radio activities. Just get on the air and have fun!

Stan Zawrotny, K4SBZ K4SBZ.Stan@Gmail.com

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Get On The Air: The Adventures of Dick & Ro

By Ro Maddox K4HRM & Dick Blumenstein K0CAT

When we last left Dick, erecting the antenna support structure was delayed in the permitting process so he had begun working on building his “station.” At that point, he had a basic design and had built the bottom structure. Well, great progress (albeit slow going) has been made and Dick is now sanding the desktop for sealing and is finishing the shelves where equipment will be located.



Dick had also run into a problem in getting approval from Caldwell County to erect the antenna support structure on his property. The County Attorney had advised the Planning Department to not approve his permit based on his opinion that such structures should not be allowed in residential areas. Following legal intervention on his behalf from the ARRL, the County Attorney reversed his decision and the permit was approved consistent with State and Federal law.

Next steps: Dig the 5'x5'x8' hole, build the support “cage” inside the hole, and pour concrete to begin as soon as the “station” desk is completed.

When we last saw Ro, she had poured concrete for the vertical and 2-meter antennas. However, her progress was slowed when she took on the task of painting the interior of her sister's house



Vertical antenna mounted and radials buried.





The jpole antenna has been mounted, tied into the grounding system, and ON THE AIR. When the first radio check on 2-meters went out, Scott KC4SWL responded with checks on both the Hibriten and LARC repeaters.

Being able to work both local repeaters was a happy moment since Google Earth's topography maps was not encouraging for contact with the Club repeater from our extreme eastern corner of Caldwell County.

Next steps: Tie the Vertical Antenna into the grounding system and tune the 80-10 meter traps. Mount the dipole antenna.

To be continued...

LARC 2016 Officers



Tanner Greer
President
KK4SZI



Josh Edwards
Vice President
N4JDE



Tom Land
Secretary
KA4HKK



Ro Maddox
Treasurer
K4HRM

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