



SEPTEMBER 2018

# News & Views

N4LNR

P. O. Box 3276  
Lenoir, NC

Serving Amateur Radio  
In Caldwell County  
Since 1986

## Coming Events

### Volunteers Needed

- Sept 8-10 ARRL  
Sept VHF  
Contest
- Oct 6 Zack's Fork  
Trail Run
- Oct 20 Fox Hunt &  
Picnic
- Oct 27 Western  
Branch Area  
12 Meeting

## Collins Collector Rigs ~ September Meeting

Dick Blumenstein K0CAT will give a program at the September meeting about *Arthur Collins, Collins Radio and the 'S-Line'*. He will discuss why he chose to purchase the S-Line for his shack when he came back into ham radio. Why in the world would someone buy ancient vacuum tube "boat anchors"—as some would call them?

Following the program, there will be a brief business meeting to discuss status of Club projects and upcoming events.



## CQ CQ

**Have you made a cool QSO and want to brag a little?** Send an email to the Newsletter Editor with the "callsign, location, and date" and it will be published for all to see!

<b>Next LARC Meeting:</b> Thursday, Sept 13, 7:00 PM, Gamewell Fire Dept. 2806 Morganton Blvd SW, Lenoir	<b>LARC Weekly Net:</b> Friday, 9:00 PM, 146.625 Minus PL 94.8 Alt. 147.330 Plus PL 141.3	<b>Caldwell ARES Net:</b> Sunday, 9:00 PM, 147.330 Plus PL 141.3	<b>DMR Digital Net:</b> Tuesday, 8:00 PM Lenoir Local DMR
<b>Caldwell Severe Weather Net:</b> Saturday, 7:30 PM, 147.330 Plus PL 141.3			

# Ham Bits & Pieces

Received an email from **Todd KI4FVO** saying: "I just wanted to drop you a quick email to let you know that my HF radio is now officially on the air. Tuesday of last week **Gary K3OS and Gene KI4VE** came to my place and installed my Maxcon OCF Sloper. Gene had to invent a home brew solution to make the install suit him. I had some issues with my power supply and coaxial cables that Gary fixed. I spent this weekend making some great contacts on HF. Thanks for connecting me to Gary and Gene -- those guys are great!"

Received an email from **Ivan W4FWL** saying: "Ro, I'd like your feedback and opinion on something. I still tinker around building antennas and have come up with a simple, interesting design for a wire antenna center insulator. I have attached a two-page MS Word document including a basic sketch and some questions and concerns that I would like you to address. Please let me know what you think.

No being an antenna geek, I sent the question to Gary K3OS, who took the time to evaluate the design and forward Ivan comments and recommendations. Thanks, Gary!

Received from **Ted KF4FLY**, forwarding an email from **Mike KJ4FZ** saying: "I would like to trade a used, in good condition, MFJ 993B 300W Tuner for a Nest outdoor camera. I upgraded to a larger tuner to support my amp." If interested, contact Mike at [mike.maynard@alexlee.com](mailto:mike.maynard@alexlee.com)

I don't always get such great results when I farm out requests received for assistance! Recently, I had a question about "whether a dummy load was needed with modern ham radios." Below are some comments received when asking our LARC experts (name and callsign omitted):

"If you want to test a radio without broadcasting on the air, it (dummy load) might be useful. For instance, when you build that home-brew and want to tune it up (you do of course want to build one from scrap found at a hamfest flea market, don't you!), it comes in handy."

"You really do. It will nicely collect dust very quietly under the bench and show that fine patina when you point it out to aspiring hams. It shows that you "are in the know" and at any given moment (if you so choose) you can rip the cover off your transceiver and start adjusting all those itsy bitsy tiny parts and adjustments inside, just to show that you CAN do it!"

"When your furnace breaks down in the winter and you are out of fuel for your fireplace, you can warm up at least 3 cubic feet of air, deftly using your (radio w/dummy load)."

"Carefully wrap the fish into several layers of aluminum foil complete with onions and a little butter, and place on top of dummy load. Hold a long one-sided QSO (maybe an hour or two) until the fish aroma announces it is properly cooked. No, the fish will not answer to your many CQ calls!"

Please send your ham bits & pieces to the Newsletter Editor so we can share.

## Shelby Hamfest ~ August 31-September 2



The 2018 Shelby Hamfest was held in Shelby NC, Labor Day weekend. Gary K3OS and Ro K4HRM had space in the Flea Market to sell donated items for LARC. The items included WWII vintage ham radio units by Collins, ITT/MacKay Marine, Motorola, and EAC as well as three German broadcast radios by Seibt Helefunken, Telefunken, and Siemens/Halske. Many hams refer to these radios as “boat anchors” as they visited the LARC booth at the Shelby Hamfest. Several of these items weighed in at 85 pounds and were beasts with lots of sharp edges.

When all was done, Gary and Ro had sold all by one of the radios—wonder of wonders! All these units were being sold “as is” with working conditions unknown. After having almost given up on the German broadcast radios, a visitor to the booth who collected German and Japanese military radios, commented he knew a collector who might be interested and went and found him and brought him to the LARC booth. The collector purchased all 3 of these radios.

Gary had taken several personal items and sold most. He commented, “I broke even, my sales and purchases at Shelby netted out.” The only unsold LARC radio, a Collins 388, made the lonely trip back to Hickory on a very hop Saturday. The final tally for this Club fundraiser of donated vintage radios was \$1,715. Not a bad couple days’ effort!



# Caldwell County REACT/CERT Updates

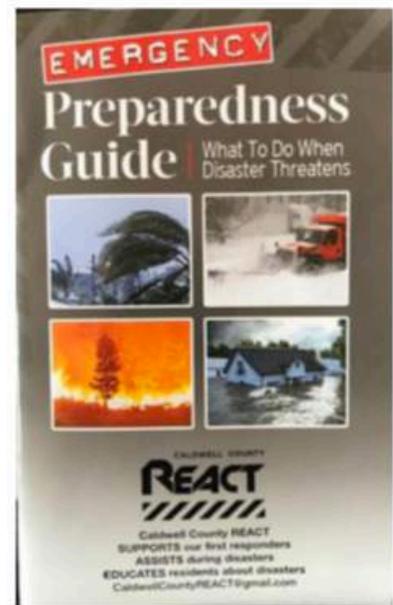
Submitted by Shirley Kanode



## CERT Basic Class October 2018

October 15, 16, 18, 22, 23, 25. These free classes are 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm, and are held at the Caldwell County Health and Human Services Building, 2345 Morganton Blvd SW, Lenoir. One class will be at the North Catawba Fire and Rescue Department on Connelly Springs Road. To register, send an email to [caldwellcountyCERT@gmail.com](mailto:caldwellcountyCERT@gmail.com).

Include your name, email address, cell #, and address.



## Emergency Preparedness Guides

Caldwell County REACT has Emergency Preparedness Guides available for distribution to community members. They are 36 pages covering a wide variety of disaster scenarios. We have them in English and Spanish. These were purchased with the grant from Blue Ridge Energy Foundation.

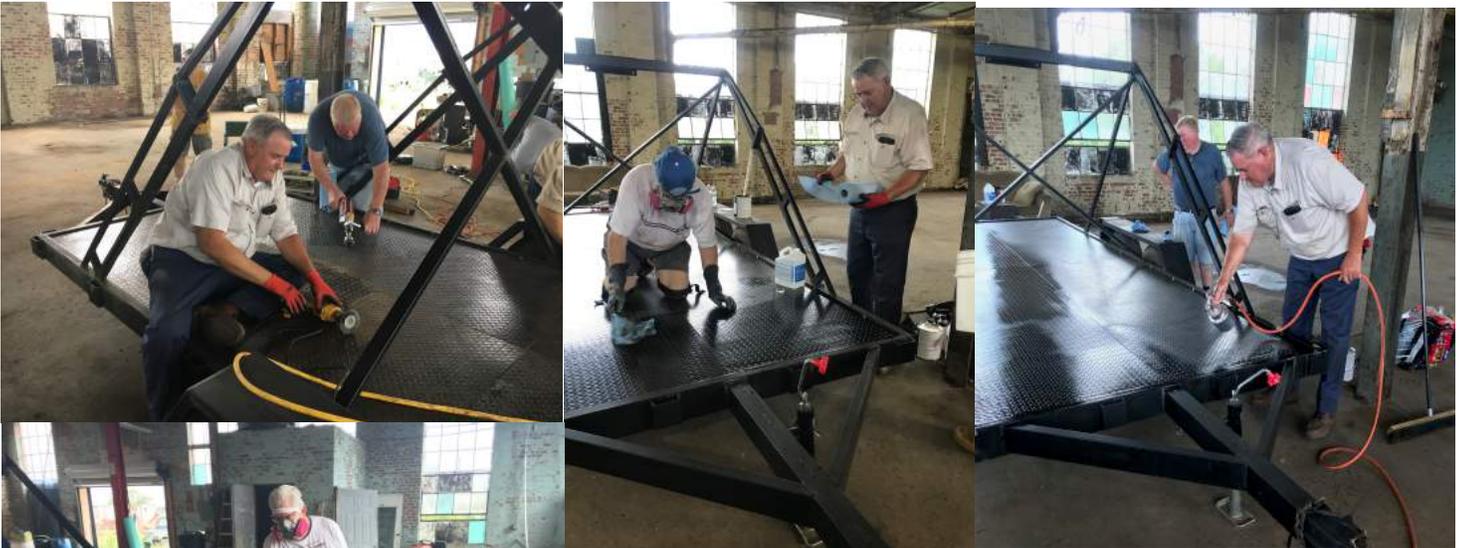
We also have emergency brochures and a CERT Basic Training manual in Braille for the visually-impaired.

## Search and Rescue Support

For two days during the last week of August, Caldwell County REACT assisted with the search of 84-year-old Jimmy "RC" Spears. Two of our members served on search teams. We also aided and supported members of the 20 agencies who assisted with the search with the Red Cross. Mr. Spears was found deceased in a wooded area on an adjoining property near his home, not the results we hoped for.



# Antenna Trailer Upgraded...



The Club's Antenna Trailer got a new steel floor. Over 3 days, the trailer floor was then sanded, cleaned, painted 2 coats, bottom sandblasted, & painted.



Thanks to Frank KN4ACU, Dick K0CAT, James N4NIN, Ro K4HRM, Tom KA4HKK, Irv W4IWK, Mitch KN4AYD. The trailer is now ready for mount the mast and boxes and fabricating steps and a platform. AND, it is now stored undercover!



## New Ham ~ Moving Up

In the past months, we have discussed connectors, coaxial cable, and antennas that you can use to get on the air. Let us assume you have bought an HT to see what ham radio is about, and after being on the air a few times and making some contacts, you want to move up in the world. You want to keep your Baofeng HT, but having a bit more power would be nice. So you begin looking at the ads in QST and talk to other hams about a good mobile rig. By mobile, I mean these radios can be installed in your car and they typically have about 50 watts of output power. Some are strictly 2-meter affairs while others offer 2-meters and 70-centimeters (440 MHz) capacity. The radio can also and is most often, however, used at home.

Scanning the ads one quickly finds that the price of the dual band radios can be in the \$300-\$400 range and higher. The single band radios typically sell for \$150 or more. You can, of course, see what is offered on eBay, and occasionally you can get a good deal for what you are looking for, but you may have to wait and watch the ads.

Before buying any radio, you should go to [www.eham.com](http://www.eham.com). That website has, among other things, a product review section. Virtually every radio, amplifier, power supply, test equipment, or what else has electronics in it, will have a review about it. Most times, there will be many reviews of the radio you are interested in. Reviewers are hams that have bought the particular radio, for example. They give it a rating from one to five stars and then provide a description of the rig and explain why they gave it the particular rating. Individually, the reviews may not sway you one way or the other, but when you read four, five, or more you get a sense of whether the radio is worth spending money on or not.

Recently, I did this with one of those radios that is coming out of China. It was not the Baofeng HT genre. Instead, it came from a company called "QYT" and was labeled a KT 8900. The [www.eham.com](http://www.eham.com) reviews were generally positive, so I bought one. What tilted me in favor of getting it was the price -- \$70. For that money, I got a dual band (2m/440) mobile radio with an output power of 25 watts. I could tell it was from China because the User's Manual title page was "Double Transceiver of the Car."

When the radio came in the mail, I opened up the box and took it out. The first impression I had of it was "cute." I have a Yaesu FT 8900, which is a good compact rig. The KT 8900, however, is about a third the size of the FT 8900, and can fit in the palm of my hand. It has plenty of buttons, some of which are on top of the radio. Another attraction was the power cord, which had a cigarette lighter connector; clearly suggesting it was a "transceiver of the car."

So, hooking up the power cord to 112 volts, I turned on the rig. The blue screen lit up, and after marveling at it for a few minutes, I turned to the instruction manual with a bit of trepidation.



Fortunately, it was generally well written and the instructions regarding programming frequencies were clear and easy to follow. One caveat: the guidance on programming frequencies into the memory is incomplete, and you need to watch a YouTube video by AF5DN <https://youtu.be/9tQxjH-kxmY> to get the extra steps needed to do that.

Another nice feature, the hand mic is large and has a keypad, so you can use it to program frequencies.

The radio is dual band and it displays two frequencies, but it is not a dual band in the sense that you can hear both channels at the same time. It is one or the other, but not both, which can be a problem if you want to simply monitor one frequency while using another.

On air, the radio performs well and with 25 watts it can hit all the local 2-meter and 440 repeaters. I have used it on the Sunday evening ARES nets and no one has complained about my audio. Likewise, the receive audio is crisp and easy to understand. It claims to have a digital capability, but I did not try to use it.

So for \$70 (and shipping was free), I got a decent rig that will easily fit in the glove box of my car (as well as the palm of my hand), and which can readily be used as a “double transceiver of the car.”

**Note: Reprinted with permission, *The Printed Circuit*, newsletter of the Tallahassee Amateur Radio Society.**



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## **Volunteers are needed for upcoming events!**

September VHF Contest - September 9-10

Zack's Fork Trail Run – October 6

LARC Fox Hunt/Picnic – October 20

**Please step up and join in the fun!**

# Upcoming Hamfests: Mark Your Calendar

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

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

## 2019 LARC Officer Nominations – October Meeting

It's that time again! A few good persons will step up and take the reigns of the Club for the following year. Begin now thinking about who should be the Club's next leaders and come to the October meeting prepared to make or support officer nominations. You may even begin not talking to someone you want to nominate to encourage him or her to put his or her name in the hat for 2019.

## 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](mailto:hrmaddox@nettally.com)

Suggestions and articles are appreciated.

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