

**Mount Vernon
Amateur Radio Club
K4US**
*"PUBLIC SERVICE WITH
FUN AND FRIENDSHIP"*



Volume 18

FEBRUARY 2005

Number 02

Ye Olde RF Output

MEETING NOTICE
FEBRUARY 10, 2005
7:30 PM

MOUNT VERNON
GOVERNMENTAL CENTER
2511 PARKERS LANE
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22306
MVARC MEETS ON THE SECOND
THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH EXCEPT
IN DECEMBER

MVARC REPEATER: K4US/R
146.055 MHz INPUT/146.655 MHz
OUTPUT
PL TONE: 141.3 Hz

AUTOPATCH AVAILABLE TO
MEMBERS

MVARC HOME PAGE:
WWW.MVARC.ORG
WWW.MVARC.COM

HAPPENINGS

February 10 - MOUNT VERNON AMATEUR RADIO CLUB monthly meeting. Held at MOUNT VERNON GOVERNMENTAL CENTER 2511 Parker's Lane, 22306. 7:30 p.m. See you there!

February 1,8,15,22 - MVARC ARES NET- 146.055/146.655-8:30 PM local time. The Ten Meter portion meets immediately following the Two Meter Net on 28.415 MHz. Come and join in!

February 26 - MVARC Breakfast will be held at The Old Country Buffet on Route 1 at 8:30 a.m. Everyone's invited to join MVARC members for breakfast. They meet the 4th Saturday of every month.

NOTICE--VE EXAM LOCATION
THE FEBRUARY 12, 2005 VE EXAM
WILL BE HELD AT

The FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
2723 KING STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VA
CALL JOHN, WZ4A AT 703-971-3905
FOR MORE INFO.

Ye Olde RF Output is published monthly by the Mount Vernon Amateur Radio Club. Voluntary articles and comments are solicited.

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Frank Mackey-K4EC



MINUTES OF JANUARY 13, 2005 MEETING

By George, N1BV
Club Secretary

The meeting was held at the Mount Vernon Governmental Center and was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by the President. He then led the Pledge of Allegiance. Everyone introduced themselves. The November minutes, as posted on the reflector, were approved with the following change: After "...to rectify the problems.", and before, "At this point..." insert, "They changed the parameters to correct the problem prior to the November meeting." John, K2VPR, gave the Treasurer's Report. As of 31 December 2004:

Checking:	\$1,131.35
Savings:	3,341.90
Cash on hand:	116.50
Doc Hyde fund:	\$906.50
TOTAL ASSETS	\$5,496.25

John, WZ4A, provided the Education/ Volunteer Examiner Report and reported that approximately 15 people were tested at the last test session. He also introduced Diane Zimmerman, AA3OF, the Laurel VEC, who was in attendance. He asked if there was club interest in VE support at the Manassas Hamfest. Mary, N4TCI, reported on the FAR. She reported that there would be a FARFEST on 11 and 12 September. Diane, AA3OF, provided a letter and flyer on the FAR Scholarship Program, looking for applicants. She noted that sponsor contributions were coming in. Bob, KT4KS reported on Community Outreach. He noted that we had missed the window for

publishing the annual MVARC Special Event Station at the Mt. Vernon estate. K3IZ, presented the ARES Report. Bob, KI3O, reported that he needed speakers for the upcoming meetings. He thanked John, W4ZA, for arranging for the guest speaker, Robert Zimmerman, KB3IWD. At this point, the President suspended the meeting for the guest's presentation. Robert Zimmerman, KB3IWD, provided a very interesting lecture on space stations and amateur radio. The lecture was followed the usual snacks. Leila, WN4PP, was the Cookie Monster. Next Month, Anna, KG4DEX and Charlie, AF4NT, volunteered for the duty. The president resumed the meeting and Frank, K4EC, began the Repeater Committee Report. He turned it over to Dick, WA4USB, who gave a presentation on the history of our repeater and an update on the present one. He noted that we had Mike Martin, K3RFI, of RFI Services investigate the repeater site. We are getting occasional interference from an identified laptop computer, and that Riley Hollingsworth of the FCC was involved. The signal level from the laptop and associated equipment was so low, that other than coordination with the equipment owner and their electronics contractor, no further action was appropriate. Dick stated that the repeater had been donated to the Venture crew by a donor who would remain anonymous. Venture Crew 80, which MVARC co-sponsors, loaned it on a permanent basis for MVARC use. At the end of its use, it would be returned to the Venture Crew. Brad, K4RT, and Dave, W3GIN, raised questions regarding ownership, written agreements, liability and technical problems. These were addressed by Frank, K4EC, Doug, WA3WEP, Sterrett, K4MBE, Dick and Demi, K4BSA. Dick stated that specifications for CTCSS tone deviation is 750 Hz, with an overall signal deviation of plus and minus 5.0 KHz. Transmitters with a wider deviation could cause the repeater not to be

able to detect the CTCSS tone and drop out. He explained how a non-PL carrier could capture the repeater receiver's 15 KHz bandpass. He offered to provide a deviation test service, preferably at a test session. A motion was made by Brad, K4RT regarding the repeater and Repeater Committee. After much discussion, the Secretary requested that Brad repeat the motion. He moved as follows, "That the Repeater Committee be directed, with assistance from WA3GIN, K7MPP, and WQ4I, to identify reasonable resolutions to the repeater's operational problems, and to report its findings and recommendations to the club membership at the March Meeting". The motion was seconded. The motion failed to pass. The meeting was then adjourned

HAMS R US: JOHN REISER, WQ4L

By Dave, AI4FC
YORFO editor

I met John Reiser, WQ4L, a couple of years ago at one of the first club meetings I attended. The topic turned to HF antennas. To me, then a new no-code tech, it might just as well have been a lecture on brain surgery. During a break, I must have said something that caused John to think I was pretty clueless. He sat me down and, with a piece of paper and pencil, tried to make clear to me what remained completely incomprehensible despite his patient tutoring.

Only later did I learn that John had had a fascinating career with the Federal Communications Commission, starting as a field inspector in Detroit and ending with his retirement in 2000 as a senior broadcast engineer with the FCC's International Bureau.

A few weeks ago, I told John that I'd like to do a profile of him for the newsletter. As the new editor, and still something of a newcomer to the club, I thought profiles

of longtime members would help introduce me and other newbies to the club's seasoned operators.

Why me? John wondered. He wasn't very interesting, he said. And then he went on to disprove his own assertion:

Sometime in the early 1960s, shortly after turning down a job at RCA to go to work for the FCC in its Detroit office, listeners from all of the Detroit area reported weird noise on a commercial FM station that seemed to occur weekdays in the late afternoon. John said it wasn't clear exactly what it was, but it appeared to be interference from a ham radio operator.

John said he was unable to catch any call sign in the interference. One afternoon, the station owner agreed to go silent for 30 seconds or so in the hopes that the source of the interference could be identified. It worked. John was able to catch the ham's call sign.

"We contacted the guy that evening," John said. The ham said that every weekday he drove to a particular location and waited for his wife to get off work. There he operated his 6-meter AM-mobile rig. As it turned out, John said, the guy parked directly under the wires that carried the broadcast station's signal from the studio to the transmitter.

"He was completely shocked that he was causing interference," John said. "We told him to park in a different location and it completely solved the station's problem."

A ham since January 1961, John said his advancement in ham radio is what steered him to the FCC job. He was an engineer working for University of Michigan's station WUOM and studying electrical engineering with the intention of going to work for RCA. On the day he took his exam for his General ticket, he got into a conversation with the FCC examiner who urged him to forego a career with RCA and go to work for his agency, then badly in need of engineers who also knew Morse code.

John sent off an application and two weeks later he had an offer from the FCC's Washington headquarters in his mailbox. After some dickering over terms, John began his four-decade career with the government.

Three years after retiring, the National Association of Broadcasters awarded John its 2003 Engineering Achievement Award at its Las Vegas conference.

"For many years, his extensive knowledge of the FCC rules and hands-on experience and day-to-day contact with broadcast stations made him a critical resource to the industry in helping broadcasters comply with FCC regulations," the association said.

John is not one to rest on his laurels. As many as two or three times a week, John is at work at foreign embassies downtown or at musical halls around the region digitally recording classical music concerts - a hobby gone pro that he picked up when his son was in high school band. In late January, he spent three consecutive nights at the Embassy of Austria recording a series of concerts celebrating the Jan. 27, 1756 birthday of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

But these days what's music to John's ears is CW.

John said he is trying to work at least two CW contacts a day as he gears up for Field Day on June 26-27.

NEW AMONG US

The club's newest member is Mary Yount, KI4HRB, who is new to the hobby even though she was just awarded her Extra class license. And what an adventure she and her family have ahead of them!

Mary received her Tech license in October and her Extra ticket last month. Her primary interest is marine mobile. She wanted to become a licensed ham before fall when she and her husband and 12-year-old daughter leave on a year-long sail to the Bahamas and

environs before holing up in North Carolina. From there they want to embark on a two-year tour of the Western Caribbean Ocean.

Mary's looking for an elmer that can help her with marine mobile.

"I don't even have any equipment yet," Mary said.

Mary said the couple bought a 41-foot sail boat for the trip, and now that she's licensed they will soon equip the vessel with an ICOM 802 for SSB communication with her new ticket.

The Arlington legal secretary said she may be a novice at ham radio but not with sailing. When her young daughter was just 18 months old and her older daughter, a recent Virginia Tech grad now working in Rockville, was 12, the family took off for a year in the Caribbean as well.

Welcome aboard, Mary.

REPORT FROM THE SOUTHLAND: N4YPR

(The following is from an e-mail from Dave, N4YPR, who many know from his presence on the K4US repeater until he moved to North Carolina a year or so ago. The tale Dave tells is a heartening reminder of what ham radio is all about.)

By Dave, N4YPR:

I miss the gang up there, but have had some exciting times down here namely helping a young man that was in a bad accident two or three years ago, and was in a coma for eight months, not expected to live. But live he did. However, he had to learn everything all over again -- walk, talk, everything. The young man is 26yrs old now and is semi-paralyzed on this left side and has a severe memory problem.

I met him at Duke Regional Hospital where my wife Alberta was a patient, (responding to treatment

well) and he expressed an interest to me about Ham Radio when he saw my HT hanging from my belt. I showed him how it worked by making a call on a local repeater, and he got real excited and wanted to know if it was hard to get a license. I told him no, and explained to him the requirements, etc. I told him I would help him if he was really interested.

His parents were against him doing this and were very vocal about it. They didn't think he could study and pass the Tech. exam, and he would be very hurt if he didn't.

To make a long story short, I got him the NOW YOUR TALKING study book, and he was "determined to do this and get his ticket." He would come over to my house and we would go over his lessons. He would call me two or three times a day asking questions and questioning himself as well. He worked hard and even with his short-term memory I slowly started seeing a difference and he did, too. He would take the practice exams on QRZ, and watch his score increase till we felt he could pass.

I found a club that gave exams every two months, and took Keith down to the test site and he took his test. I was more nervous than he was. The VEs at the site were very helpful and patient with him and just a great bunch of hams.

He passed his exam for Tech and then he got nervous so much so that his hand was shaking so bad he had a hard time signing his name. He was grinning from ear to ear and outside gave me a big hug and thanked me for all the help he said I gave him. I tell you, I and a couple of VEs had tears in our eyes to see the joy on Keith's face.

His mother called me a couple of days later and thanked me for working with her son and helping him get his ticket. She told me that that was the first time he had done anything

on his own since the accident, and kept telling me how much she and her husband appreciated all I did for Keith. I explained to her that it was Keith who did it, not me. I just encouraged him, and helped give him the self-confidence he needed to have in order to pass the exam. This happened Dec. 11, 2004 and now he wants to upgrade so he can work CW and is working on his code. Best darn Xmas present I ever received.

You know, I kept thinking as I worked with Keith of all that MVARC gave to me in classes, membership help, teaching me even how to talk, and ever encouraging me on CW. I could finally give a little back to the hobby of what I have received.

I am forever thankful and indebted to Amateur Radio and MVARC for allowing me the opportunity and I have to say, the honor, to lead and help someone new into this great hobby.

Keith is his name and KI4IES is his call. He loves Echolink as well as meeting hams on the repeaters too, so look him up and say HOWDY, HOWDY.

73 my friends, and a belated HAPPY NEW YEAR,

Dave n4ypr

WANNA BONE UP ON YOUR CW? JOIN US...

Little rusty on your CW? No confidence that you can send your dits and dahs in the right order?

Have we got an offer for you! Every Saturday and Sunday morning at 7:30 a.m., a group of MVARC members -- and others on occasion -- meet at 3675 Khz for a 30-minute roundtable. Frequent participants are Brian, WV4V; Dave, AI4FC; Frank, AA4ZS; Brad, K4RT; and Dawn, KD4AWN, who

lives in Stephens, VA.

The roundtable started a couple of months ago as a way for Brian to get some on-air practice as he works to revive his CW skills. Others started joining in, and now it's a regular weekend stop for some of us.

The idea is purely fun. Obviously, there's not enough time to do much serious chatting. But it is a perfect way to hone your copying skills while also getting a bit of time to pound some brass to a very forgiving audience.

There's no set speed for the roundtable, but we try to match our speed to the slowest member of the group. So if you hear us sending faster than you can copy, don't fret. Send your call at a break between contacts and we'll adjust our speed to meet yours. The idea is to give people a place where they can meet CW buddies without the pressure of a random QSO.

Most mornings Frank serves as our net control, and typically sends out a CQ inviting lurkers to join in.

And if the code has you frazzled at the end of the 30-40 minute session, make the switch to SSB by joining some of us MVARCers on the 8:30 a.m. Cherry Tree Net at 3920 Khz.

FAR SCHOLARSHIPS

The Foundation for Amateur Radio, Inc., a non-profit organization plans to administer fifty-five (55) scholarships for the academic year 2005-2006 to assist licensed Radio Amateurs. The Foundation, composed of over seventy-five local area Amateur Radio Clubs, fully funds three of these scholarships. Ten are funded with the income from grants. The remaining forty-two are administered by the Foundation without cost to the various donors. Licensed Radio Amateurs may compete for these awards, if they plan to pursue a full-time

course of studies beyond high school and are enrolled in, or have been accepted for enrollment at an accredited university, college or technical school. The awards range from \$500 to \$2500 with preference given in some cases to residents of specified geographical areas or the pursuit of certain study programs. Additional information and an application form may be requested by letter or QSL card, postmarked prior to April 30, 2005 from:

FAR Scholarships
Post Office Box 831
Riverdale, MD20738

ARRL: AMBITIOUS LEGISLATIVE AGENDA:

From The ARRL Letter, Vol. 24, No. 04:

Frigid New England temperatures and a major snowstorm failed to chill enthusiasm as the ARRL Board of Directors met January 21-22 in Windsor, Connecticut, to tackle a lengthy agenda. ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP, chaired the gathering. Among the highlights of the session was the Board's unanimous adoption of positions on six initiatives for the 109th Congress. Topping the list was a call for "consistent application" of the FCC's limited federal preemption policy--PRB-1--to Amateur Radio antenna systems. The League wants PRB-1 to apply to "all types of land use regulations," public and private. That would include deed covenants, conditions and restrictions (CC&Rs). "The American Radio Relay League seeks congressional instruction to the FCC to extend its limited preemption policy governing residential Amateur Radio antennas, so that private land-use authorities cannot

preclude, but must reasonably accommodate, Amateur Radio communications in subdivisions and communities," the Board resolved. After the FCC declined to include CC&Rs under the PRB-1 umbrella, the League since 2002 has initiated bills in Congress to accomplish the same end.

In addition, the Board expressed support for measures to improve federal management of telecommunications, including beefing up the FCC's ability to regulate transmitter, receiver and antenna issues and resolve electromagnetic interference. The Board also wants public service allocations, including Amateur Radio's, exempted from auction or commercial reallocation, and compensatory spectrum whenever the federal government reallocates existing public service spectrum to another service. The resolution reflected the essence of the "Amateur Radio Spectrum Protection Act of 2004," HR 713. An identical bill will be introduced into the 109th Congress.

Calling amateur frequencies "the technological equivalent of a national park," the Board further resolved to support measures that "preserve and protect" primary Amateur Radio access to existing amateur spectrum "as a natural resource for the enjoyment of all properly licensed individuals, and protect against interference from unlicensed transmitters such as Part 15 devices" operating on amateur frequencies.

Finally, the Board expressed support for requiring the FCC to develop effective, mandatory standards for radio frequency susceptibility of consumer electronic devices. And it expressed general opposition to expansion of current prohibitions against the reception of radio signals beyond those already on the books.

In a related vein, the Board affirmed support for the ARRL Grassroots Legislative Action Plan and called for its immediate implementation. Hudson Division Director Frank Fallon, N2FF, says the Grassroots Legislative Action Plan will function mainly by direct contacts with lawmakers in their members' home districts and by motivating legislative support through letter writing by members.

Working with the new Congress could prove more difficult than in the past, ARRL's congressional consultant John Chwat of Chwat & Co suggested to the Board. He expressed the belief that the 109th Congress is very contentious and advised that every League effort on Capitol Hill focus on Amateur Radio's role in emergency communication.

Following recommendations of the ARRL Executive Committee, the Board adopted changes to the League's pending petition that would propose segmenting bands principally by maximum bandwidth rather than by emission type. Amendments to the plan, still in the draft stage, would call on the FCC to permit non-telephony emis-

sions not exceeding 3 kHz at 10.135 to 10.150 MHz, prohibit "continuous" test transmissions on most frequencies above 51 MHz, and clarify the rules to specify that amateur stations may use any published digital code, as long as other rules are observed.

The Board will consider the amended bandwidth petition at its July meeting. The League is not expected to file the petition with the FCC until later this year.

Turning out for their first meeting of the ARRL Board were new Southwestern Division Director Dick Norton, N6AA, and Vice Director Ned Stearns, AA7A, both elected last fall. New on the "back bench" was Rocky Mountain Division Vice Director Brian Mileshosky, N5ZGT. At 25, Mileshosky is believed to be the youngest vice director in League history. He succeeded Rev Morton, WS7W, who attended for the first time as Rocky Mountain Division Director.

The Board also elected a new ARRL chief operating officer. He's Harold R. Kramer, WJ1B, of Cheshire, Connecticut, now a vice president with Connecticut Public Broadcasting. When he officially joins the ARRL staff February 15, Kramer will succeed former COO Mark Wilson, K1RO, who left the ARRL Headquarters staff last September. Board members got a chance to greet Kramer at the January Board meeting.

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