

The OVH ARC Newsletter
"OLE VIRGINIA HAMS" AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.
Post Office Box 1255, Manassas, Va. 20108
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Port 2: 440.925Mhz 9600 Baud backbone / N3OH (SYSOP--BILL)
<http://www.w4ovh.net>

OLE VIRGINIA TIMES

*The week of June 23 - 29, 2008
will be Amateur Radio Week in
Prince William County, Virginia
- details on page 9 -*

June 2008

Next Meeting: June 16, 2008

PRESIDENT'S LETTER:

Greetings to All. This has been a very busy June so far as far as ham radio is concerned, and we're still only one half-way through the month.

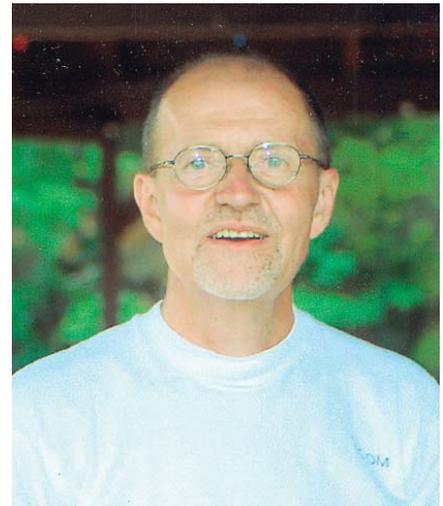
The OVH Manassas Hamfest was held at the Prince William County Fairgrounds on our new date, the second Sunday in June – June 8th this year. Attendance was good; we filled the Commercial building and more than half of Building 2 with vendors, and remainder of Building 2 was used for seminars. The high temperature in the 90's, and the heat index over 100° F, made it difficult for the outdoor vendors, but the inside vendors were very comfortable with the air conditioning running. It's still too early for all of the details of the Hamfest to be compiled, but preliminary results (using the cash in pocket method of accounting) suggest the OVH is well in the black this year. At the Monday, June 16th OVH meeting, we should have more details, including the financial results. Please try to attend.

A special thank you to Chris / KI4POT for his tireless work in co-chairing this event with Bruce / AB8CI. I don't want to forget to thank all the other, many volunteers from the OVH who assisted with this too. The Club received very positive news report in the June 9, 2008 Manassas Journal Messenger. A copy of the Manassas Journal Messenger article follows in this newsletter.

On June 7th many of us attended a special recognition dinner for Mary Lu / KB4EFP and Butch / W4HJL Blasdel who have contributed so much to the Club over 35+ years. Sixty One friends and family gathered at KC's Restaurant in Manassas to honor them. They have been instrumental in insuring the success of OVH through volunteering, inspiring, mentoring, and continued work. Thank you very much Butch and Mary Lu. Some pictures from that dinner appear later in this newsletter.

Later this month, on Saturday / Sunday, June 28th - June 29th, the Annual ARRL / OVH Club Field Day 2008 will take place at Nokesville Park near Nokesville, Virginia. John / KG4NXT is OVH's chairman for 2008 Field Day and final planning for it will be a main topic at the upcoming OVH meeting. The June, 2008 QST contains a lot of general information about Field

Continued on page 3



Ole Virginia Hams Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

Post Office Box 1255
Manassas, Virginia 20108

OFFICERS

President:	George Tarnovsky	K4GVT	791-5956
Vice Pres:	Wayne Kline	AG4ZZ	791-2100
Secretary:	Wayne Phillips	N7QLK	393-8447
Treasurer:	Joe Dobes	KI4OHR	369-2639

DIRECTORS

Don (Butch) Blasdell	W4HJL	369-2877
Art Whittum	W1CRO	791-4330
Charlie Dale	WA4YGI	361-3091

WEEKLY NETS

Thursdays - 8:00 PM	JOHN H	257-3566
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HAMFEST 2008

Chris	KI4POT	361-3257
Bruce	AB8CI	361-8873

FIELD DAY 2008

John H.	KG4NXT	257-3566
Butch.	W4HJL	369-2877

CLUB ROSTER

Blaine	KB4RKL	369-2877
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EDUCATION

Mark	WA4KFZ	818-8033
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CLUB EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

David Meola	KI4AZX	393-6681
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ARES AREA EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

David Lane	KG4GIY	361-3042
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F.A.R. REPS.

Ruth	KU4WH	331-1234
Mary Lu	KB4EFP	369-2877

FINANCE

Mary Lu	KB4EFP	369-2877
Joe	KI4OHR	369-2639
Ruth	KU4WH	331-1234

GENERATORS

Steve	N4OGR	361-0008
Keith	KM4AA	909-1512
Al	KB4BHB	368-4794

HISTORIAN

Theresa	KG4TVM	257-3566
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WEBMASTER — W4OVH.NET

Bill	N3OH	590-9562
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JOTA

John H.	KG4NXT	257-3566
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LEGAL

Pete	KB4RME	369-2436
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MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

Joe Dobes	KI4OHR	369-2639
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NEWSLETTER

Paul	W4ZB	754-0910
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NEWSLINE

John H.	KG4NXT	257-3566
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PACKET

Alan	KD4KBX	330-8844
Bill	N3OH	590-9562

PROGRAMS

TBA

PUBLICITY

Trisha Wells	KI4PCM	335-1096
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QUARTERMASTER

Steve	N4OGR	361-0008
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REPEATER CONTROLLERS

Art	W1CRO	791-4330
Butch	W4HJL	369-2877
Milt	N4SN	369-7265
Steve	N4OGR	361-0008
David	KG4GIY	361-3042
George	K4GVT	791-5956
Alan	KD4KBX	330-8844

W4OVH / W4PVA — TRUSTEE

Art	W1CRO	791-4330
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SCHOLARSHIP

Jim	W4JTP	392-0150
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SUNSHINE

Theresa	KG4TVM	257-3556
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TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Art	W1CRO	791-4330
Alan	KD4KBX	330-8844
Bill	N3OH	590-9562
Butch	W4HJL	369-2877
George	K4GVT	791-5956
Karl	W4KRL	802-1527
David	KG4GIY	361-3042
Bob	K4HJF	335-1939

All telephone numbers listed above are for Area Code 703 unless otherwise noted.

The OVH Times newsletter is the official monthly publication of the Ole Virginia Hams Amateur Radio Club, Inc., a §501(c)(3) organization, dedicated to the promotion and enhancement of Amateur Radio. This edition of the OVH Times is Copyright © 2008 by the Ole Virginia Hams.

The OVH ARC meets at 7:30 p.m. local time every third Monday of the month at the NOVEC Tech Center, 5399 Wellington Branch Road, Gainesville, Virginia 20155. Members, prospective members and all other interested persons are invited to attend. Local information can also always be obtained through the OVH's FM repeaters on 146.97 & 224.660 Mhz. Up to date information about OVH activities and meetings is also available on the OVH web site at <http://www.w4ovh.net>.

Articles and quotations in the OVH Times newsletter may be reprinted if credit is given to the OVH ARC and any other noted source. Proposed materials for publication including pictures, articles, letters to the editor, classified ads, notes about specific errors, complaints or the like are solicited from all readers. Forward such items to the OVH Times Newsletter Editor: PAUL@W4ZB.COM as soon as available at any time, but the cutoff deadline for the OVH Times each month (usually the second Monday of the month) may preclude publication/correction until the following month.

Approx. Circulation - 170.

Last Rev: 03/13/2008

Day for newcomers to ham radio as does the ARRL's website. Last minute details about the OVH Club's Field Day 2008 will be on the OVH website. We are still looking for volunteers to assist in setup, operations, and teardown at Field Day. All are invited to participate in this outstanding event and don't forget to invite family and friends to it and to the potluck dinner on Saturday, June 28th at 6:00 p.m. Bring your favorite dish! Hope to see everyone all there. As proof that we all had a great time at OVH's Field Day last year (2007), you should note that the editors of QST included a picture of the OVH's GOTA station at OVH's 2007 Field Day on the front cover of the current (June 2008) issue of QST!

Hope to see everyone at the meeting, 7:30 pm, Monday, June 16th at NOVEC Technical Center in Gainesville.

73 for now — George / K4GVT

Sunshine Corner:

June Birthdays – Jan / KE4TMW, Steve / N4OGR, Doris / KI4DAL, Rosemary / KI4SND, Wayne / AZ4ZZ, Gene / N4HFW and Bob / K4HJF. Hope it's a great year for you all!

Thanks to Mark WA4KFZ for teaching a General class to four students, class has been completed and hopefully we will have four new General class licensees soon!

Our scholarship winner for 2008 is Benjamin White, who will be attending Virginia Tech in the Fall. Benjamin was presented a club check at the May meeting and his mom, Kirsten, was in attendance. Congratulations Benjamin! (More on this, including a picture, later in the newsletter.)

Some news on previous scholarship winners, Ben Gelb / N1VF (formerly KF4KJQ) has graduated from MIT and is now working on his Master's degree. This summer he is working for Google! Our very own Elizabeth Heartney / KG4NXV has completed her sophomore year at Virginia Tech and has an internship with GE in Houston this summer!

Chuck / W4XP and his wife Tami are celebrating their 40th Wedding Anniversary on June 9th with a trip to New York. Congratulations!

Ruth / KU4WH is a very proud Grandmom for the first time! Alexis Ann was born on April 2nd and weighed 6 pounds 9 ounces. I have seen the pictures and she is a cutie!

Scott / KB8NUM has two reasons to smile this month! His son, Neil is graduating from Stonewall Jackson High School on June 12th and will be attending NOVA in the fall. His son, Quinten, a member of Boy Scout Troop 670, has completed the requirements for Eagle Scout! WOW big month at the Minke household, congrats to everyone!

George, K4GVT has a graduate this year! His son Eric graduated from Christopher Newport on May 18th. Way to go Eric!

Special thank you to everyone who baked for the Hamfest bake sale, you all did a great job!

Field Day - Don't forget Saturday night at Field Day is the covered dish dinner, this is a family and friends event! Just bring your favorite cookout dish to share! More info call John KG4NXT at 703-257-3566.

Last but certainly not least, a HUGE THANK YOU to Bob, K4HJL for organizing the appreciation dinner for Mary Lou / KB4EFP and Butch / W4HJL on June 7th. There was a tremendous turnout, the meal and fellowship was just outstanding. (Some pictures from this later in this newsletter.)

To all the Dads, HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!

Please send me your news, kg4tvm@hotmail.com or (703) 257-3566.

73 Theresa/KG4TVM

Minutes of the Ole Virginia Hams Amateur Radio Club Meeting May 19, 2008:

George / K4GVT called meeting to order at 19:31 Eastern Time.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, all present stated their names and call signs. There were 20 OVH members present and 2 guests.

BUSINESS MEETING

The minutes of the April 2008 meeting were approved.

Treasury report: Balance is in good standing. Report approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Training: General class course completed. According to Mark/WA4KFZ four students attended.

Repeater: There is a jammer present on the 2 meter repeater. Art / W1CRO wants all members to stay tuned and listen. It appears the jammer retransmits recordings of a British comedian. If the jammer is heard try to use direction finding capabilities to fix on his location. Due to this development all three repeaters are unlinked except for nets and emergencies.

Scholarship: The winner of the Harry Vorhauer Memorial Scholarship of \$500 is Benjamin White, a senior at CD Hilton High School. He is planning to attend Virginia Tech and will be majoring in computer engineering.

Membership report: No new membership applications this month.

ARES: Storm season is here. Check generators and have radio batteries charged.

OLD BUSINESS:

August 30th – Second Battle of Manassas commemoration. Details will be on the OVH website. Al / KB4BHB is coordinating this special event. The setup location this year will be at Signal Hill Park. The event will run from 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on August 30th.

NEW BUSINESS:

Hamfest: The 43rd annual OVH Manassas Hamfest will be held on Sunday, June 8th. According to Chris / KI4POT who is this year's Hamfest co chairman, volunteers are still needed as are contributions to the Bake Sale. As of now we have sold 55 paid tables to commercial vendors and we will be providing 11 free tables to those who normally receive them. The door prize budget will be \$1200. The club will provide breakfast on Saturday the 7th at 8:00 a.m. at the McDonald's near the fairgrounds and dinner after the Hamfest on Sunday at Tony's Pizza.

Bob/K4HJF has organized a dinner to honor Butch and MaryLu Blasdell on Saturday June 7th at 6:30 p.m. at KC's Restaurant in Manassas. If you are planning to attend please let Bob / K4HJF know by June 1st. The cost is \$30.00 per person.

The club voted to give the second set of DirecTV raffle ticket to an anonymous donor in exchange for a \$200 contribution.

A raffle for a "junk" box was won by Bob / KC4TNC.

50/50 for \$10: Winner was John / KG4NXT.

Meeting adjourned at 21:10.

Reminders about some upcoming events / calendar dates:

UPCOMING HAMFESTS

Sunday, June 15, 2008. Frederick, Maryland - Father's Day Hamfest put on by the Frederick Amateur Radio Club. Go to <http://www.frederickarc.org/hamfest.htm> for more info.

Friday, June 27 - Sunday, June 29, 2008. Friedrichshafen, Germany - Ham Radio. This is the big "Dayton Hamvention" of Europe with more than 18,000 visitors last year. Worth visiting at least one time if you're in Europe. Go to <http://www.hamradio-friedrichshafen.de/> for more info, English language info available.

Friday, July 4, 2008. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania - Firecracker Hamfest put on by the Harrisburg Radio Amateur Club. Go to <http://hrac.tripod.com/> for more info.

Sunday, August 3, 2008. Berryville, Virginia - Berryville Hamfest put on by the Shenandoah Valley Amateur Radio Club. Go to <http://www.svarc.us/hamfest/> for more info.

OPERATING EVENTS:

June 28 - 29, 2008, OVH Annual Field Day event at the Nokesville Park. Be sure to mark this on your calendar; it is always a major OVH event and will be so again this year. ARRL 2008 Field Rules and early info is online through <http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2008/02/08/101/?nc=1>. John/KG4NXT is chairman. Check out <http://www.arrl.org/contests/announcements/fd/locator.php> and be sure to look at a zoomed in, close up satellite aerial view of the W4OVH Field Day location near Nokesville, Virginia. More information will be posted at <http://w4ovh.net> and further planning / organization for this will be the main topic at the June 16th OVH monthly meeting.

UP-TO-DATE INFO ABOUT OTHER CONTESTS / OPERATING EVENTS

WA7BNM maintains an excellent Contest Calendar website at <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/>. The ARRL's operating events / contest calendar web page is at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/> This includes a link to ARRL's Special Event activities listings at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/spev.html>

The Manassas Journal Messenger had a good article (June 9, 2008) about the 2008 OVH Manassas Hamfest held at the Prince William County Fairgrounds on June, 8, 2008. (See below)

Spelling and other errors are the responsibility of the reporter / newspaper. Subscription info/customer service department for the Manassas Journal Messenger is at tel: 703-369-5556.

Manassas Journal Messenger

By BENNIE SCARTON JR.

June 9, 2008

Enthusiasts ham it up at the fairground

The Prince William County Fairgrounds turned into a massive "yard sale" on Sunday for sellers and buyers of amateur radio, electronics and computer parts.

The event, which featured about 70 vendors indoors and outdoors, was sponsored as a fundraiser by the

"Old Virginia Hams" Amateur Radio Club, Manassas.

Upwards of 2,000 people came to the Fairgrounds for the annual Amateur Radio, Electronics and Computer Show (Hamfest).

Continued to the following page

“The Hamfest provides an opportunity for amateur radio to publicize its capabilities and willingness to assist the community, as well as an opportunity for radio, electronics and computer enthusiasts to see and obtain the latest in communications and computer technology,” said George Tarnousky, president of the club which has 110 members.

The vendors filled three buildings at the fairgrounds and many more operated out of their pickup trucks or the trunk of their cars on the outside grounds.

“We have been doing this for 34 years ... and the fairgrounds provides a wonderful venue for holding such an event,” he said. “They give us the full run of the entire facility.”

Among those taking advantage the Hamfest was Arthur Whittum of Manassas. He had a booth selling used ham radio equipment.

“I’ve been a ham radio operator since 1954 and accumulated far too much equipment, so I decided to clean out my attic, closets and basement and get rid of the stuff I don’t need,” he said.

In the past years, as a member of the Radio Club he has helped set up, clean up and sell tickets.

“It always been fun,” he said.

Eagle I Communications out of Martinsburg, W.Va., had the largest retail selling booth at the event, and it was busy throughout the day selling CB and amateur radio products, ranging from antennas to mobile radios.

“We have 128 feet of display space, selling only new equipment,” said Ronald Roush, owner, who took a moment to talk while onlookers looked over this display.

Theresa Heartney of Manassas, a member of the club, said visitors and vendors to the event come from as far away as Texas and Georgia, plus those from Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and North Carolina.

She said proceeds from the Hamfest are used to maintain the activities of the club. These include the awarding of annual scholarships to local high school

students, contributions to local, county, state and national charities, costs incurred to support emergency and additional communications requirements for the Manassas, Manassas Park and Prince William County activities and maintenance of club-owned equipment.

The non-profit organization provides volunteer emergency and supplemental communications for such things as the Prince William Hospital during telephone outages, regional bicycle tours and races and the upcoming mini triathlon coming up this weekend in Manassas.

In addition to the vendors, there were a lot of curious onlookers and buyers roaming the buildings and grounds.

They included David Maples of Manassas who said he has enjoyed being a ham radio operator for the past 41 years.

“It started out as a hobby but the technical challenges lent me into a career as an engineer,” he said. Maples said he comes out to the Hamfest each year to meet up with other operators “and to buy parts to keep my equipment up to date.”

Stu Miller of Woodbridge said he came to buy some wires and cables for a new radio he recently purchased.

He said he also comes out each year “to see what’s new in the equipment world and to meet up with people of similar interest. You can’t do that sitting at home watching television all the time.”

Bob Curtin of Indian Head, Md. was among those braving the heat to set up an outside booth, operating out of the back of his pickup truck.

“We sell a lot of test equipment ... but most of all we just like to come out and meet people we normally only see at the Hamfest,” he said.

The club, Tarnousky said, also puts on a Field Day the last weekend in June at Nokesville Park when the ham radio operators get a chance to talk to others around the world.

As part of the Hamfest, the club was offering free amateur radio exams to those wanting to become a licensed operator.

Staff writer Bennie Scarton Jr. can be reached at 703-369-6707.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: the OVH email reflector has moved to googlegroups.com

David / KG4GIY, the OVH email reflector administrator, has finally done it: the OVH email reflector has been moved from qth.net to googlegroups.com. The qth.net reflector worked quite well for years, but googlegroups.com has additional features and much better security. The new email reflector address is: W4OVH@googlegroups.com; to use, your originating email address must be pre-registered into the system. Contact David at kg4giy@verizon.net to get yourself registered to originate and to receive email through the new OVH email reflector! It is now possible to send email attachments and email with embedded HTML without difficulties. Thanks David!

OVH's Harry D. Vorhauer W4PVA Scholarship Award for 2008:

The Ole Virginia Hams scored another “first” when it awarded its 2008 Harry D. Vorhauer W4PVA Scholarship (\$500) to Benjamin White, a graduating senior from C.D. Hylton High School in Woodbridge, Virginia during its monthly meeting on May 19, 2008.

Ben ranks first in his class of 533 seniors at CD Hylton High School with a 4.677 GPA. One might assume that adding one “A” after another to his transcript would keep Ben busy outside of class. Somehow, he finds time to do other things—a LOT of other things.

For example, his school activities include the varsity lacrosse, track, cross country, and wrestling teams; membership in the Math League, the National Honor and National Spanish Honor Societies; participation in the Governor’s Early College Scholar Program; and serving on Hylton’s It’s Academic team, the 2007 Cardinal District Champions. (Ben was co-captain of that team, by the way.

When he’s not doing those things, Ben does community work. He’s been an NCAA Y.E.S. clinic volunteer for lacrosse, provided peer tutoring for low-income students, and served nearly 500 hours as a senior volunteer at the Prince Willing County Animal Shelter. He’s also participated in the Virginia State Parks Youth Conservation Corps, and was a Lead Mentor for Youth Ambassadors’ Conference on the Environment.

Oh, did we mention that Ben became an Eagle Scout at age 15? Yep, he did that too.

Somehow, he also finds time to work as a part-time lifeguard/pool operator for the County Park Authority and worked as a counselor at Camp Marriott Scout Camp. In recent summers, he’s participated in Governor’s School for Math, Science, and Technology; graduated from the Police Teen Academy; and attended the Conference on the Chesapeake Bay, and a County Soil and Water Conservation Camp.

Ben also finds time for hobbies, including computers, environmental concerns, and hedgehogs (yes, the furry little critters).

Not surprisingly, Ben impressed a lot of people long before he submitted his scholarship application to OVH. One of his teachers at Hylton, Marilyn McGrath, wrote that Ben “is an all-around phenomenal role model. He exemplifies the type of individual that inspires those around him. He is even-handed in his judgments and perspectives, and tactful enough that one does not mind his suggestions.”



L to R: Ben’s mother (Kristin), Benjamin White, and Jim/W4JTP

The next group of people sure to be impressed by Ben will be his professors and classmates at Virginia Tech. There, Ben plans to major in computer engineering with a long-term career goal of continually improving computers used in industry in everyday life.

Ben expressed his gratitude to the OVH Scholarship committee in a note that read in part, “I feel like all of my hard work is paying off. Please know that I deeply appreciate your support. You have helped me toward my goal of becoming an engineer. Thank you again, and know that I will give 100% effort toward my education.

Given Ben’s track record to date, there should be no doubt of that.

Thanks to MaryLu/KB4EFP and John/N4YOB for serving on the Scholarship Committee. Jim/W4JTP, Chairman.

Some pictures from the June 7, 2008 Appreciation dinner for the Blasdells



Lots of people - 60 total - Blasdell family members, OVH members and other friends plus Mary Lu's mother who drove down from Buffalo, N.Y. To the left are just two views of large room in which the event was held at KC's Restaurant in Manassas..



Left, L to R: Mary Lu KB4EFP with her mother, chatting with mother in law (Oma) and XYL (Ev) of George / K4GVT

To the Right: Four Generations of the extended Blasdell family, Butch/W4HJL at the far right



Butch/W4HJL, Art/W1CRO, Charlie/WA4YGI and Bob/K4HJF



Ruth/KU4WH, George/K4GVT and Chris/KI4POT



Karl/W4KRL, Butch/W4HJL, Bob/N4RL and Bill/WA4FIC



Ken/WB4ZOH, Jan/KE4TMW and Charlotte/KG4QXO

Sorry, if you were there and didn't make it into this set of pictures, a lot more pictures were taken and perhaps more of them can be included next month if space allows. Special thanks to photographers: Theresa/KG4TVM, Walt/N4SW, Ken/WB4ZOH, Ruth/KU4WH and Kelley/(no callsign).



PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA
BOARD OF COUNTY SUPERVISORS
AGENDA

Board Chamber, One County Complex Court
Prince William, Virginia 22192

HON. COREY A. STEWART, CHAIRMAN
HON. JOHN F. STIRBUP, VICE CHAIRMAN
HON. MAUREEN S. CADDIGAN
HON. W.S. WALLY COVINGTON III
HON. JOHN D. JENKINS
HON. MICHAEL C. MAY
HON. MARTIN E. NOHE
HON. FRANK J. PRINCEPI

June 3, 2008

2:00 P.M.

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Invocation
Pastor Jonathan Kelley, Capital Worship Center, Manassas
3. Approval of Minutes
A. RES - Approve - May 20, 2008 Minutes
4. Consent Agenda
A. RES - Proclaim - June 23-29, 2008 as Amateur Radio Week
in Prince William County - Supervisor Jenkins
B. RES - Commend - Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN) of Northern
Virginia on the Celebration of its 20th
Anniversary

4-A

June 3, 2008
Regular Meeting
Res. No. 08-

**RE: PROCLAIM – JUNE 23-29, 2008 AS AMATEUR RADIO WEEK IN
PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY**

ACTION:

WHEREAS, Prince William County has licensed amateur radio operators who have demonstrated their value in public assistance by providing emergency radio communications; and

WHEREAS, these amateur radio operators donate these services free of charge to the County, in the interest of the citizens of the County, as well as the world; and

WHEREAS, these amateur radio operators are on alert for any emergency, local or worldwide, and practice their communication skills during the American Radio Relay League, Inc.'s Field Day Exercise; and

WHEREAS, this year's Amateur Radio Field Days will take place on June 28-29, 2008;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Prince William Board of County Supervisors does hereby proclaim the week of June 23-29, 2008, as Amateur Radio Week and calls upon all citizens to pay appropriate tribute to the amateur radio operators of our County.

An On-Line Tunable HF Radio Receiver in the Netherlands for the 80, 40 and 20 Meter Bands!

This is a follow up with updates for an item which appeared in the May 2008 OVH Newsletter.

A web site sponsored by the ham radio club at Twente University in the Netherlands has an online Internet, automated, 24/7, remotely tunable Software Defined Radio (“SDR”) HF Receiver which can be used to listen on the 80, 40 and (this is new since last month) and 20 meter ham bands. The system is quite sophisticated in that it may be accessed by multiple users, each of which can separately tune, adjust and listen through the SDR receiver to which he is connected. The individuals who got this very effective, novel SDR receiver system working are to be complimented for their ingenuity and achievement. Go to <http://websdr.ewi.utwente.nl:8901/> to try it out! No password or log on is required to use this system. Further, because the system can accommodate multiple users at the same time, no delays have yet been encountered in accessing the system.

The web site provides some limited information about how the system works but almost nothing about who actually developed it and got it working. See, <http://websdr.ewi.utwente.nl:8901/info.html>. A software defined radio web page at the Twente University by PT / PA3FWM suggests PT may be the one behind this. Look at <http://wwwhome.cs.utwente.nl/~ptdeboer/ham/sdr/>. The key to how it works seems to be in the custom JAVA software to allow multiple users to interact with system independently of one another and its integration with a relatively low cost hardware SDR receiver.

What can actually be done with this? Connect to <http://websdr.ewi.utwente.nl:8901/> to find out! You can listen to what is coming in / being received in the Netherlands on the 80, 40 and 20 meter bands any time of the day or night - here or there - so be sure to keep the time zone differences in mind when you listen! The receiver does not tune the entirety of those bands as allocated in the Western Hemisphere, but does cover most of the SSB bands (and parts of the CW and digital mode bands) as used in Europe. It is quite interesting to listen because many of the “DX” stations heard have very strong signals and can be heard much more easily than from here.

Even in a short amount of listening, you will hear SSB QSOs in progress in many languages besides English which, nevertheless, predominates, even for non-native speakers. The other languages heard spoken most frequently are German, Italian, Russian, French and Spanish in approximately that order. You will hear stations all over Europe as well as in Asiatic Russia, the Middle East and North Africa. You will also hear the European side of crossband contacts with stations in North America. Be sure to keep the time zone differences in mind in selecting bands!

What a way to check band conditions! That will become possible if many systems like this are deployed in geographically diverse locations. Will this type of system become widely used in the future? Does anyone in the OVH who has put an SDR receiver together know how to get a system like this working?

Youtube.com!

Most readers of this newsletter have accessed youtube.com which is run by Google; although that site has large amounts of “junk” on it, youtube.com is becoming a unique and valuable resource due to the convenient access it provides to enormous numbers of short video clips containing educational, how-to-do-it and tutorial materials on many topics, including ham radio. One of the big problems is learning how to find out what is available when you are looking for something specific. Google has now made it quite easy for “amateur” produced video clips to be uploaded and shared by almost anyone with some basic [low cost] camera / video equipment and software and a broadband Internet connection. Your editor predicts these developments will result in an upsurge in visually based and low bandwidth video usage in ham radio. The technologies employed and the simplicity of their uses which are becoming familiar to masses of people around the world will affect how many forms of future communication are conducted. And it is not just the English speaking world which is involved: check out <http://xx.youtube.com> where “xx” is a two letter ISA-3166 country code. You’ll find stuff in lots of non-English languages if you substitute de, ru, jp, tw, es, mx, it, hk, br, pl, nl, etc. for “xx.”