

OLE VIRGINIA TIMES

September 2015

Next Meeting: Monday, September 21, 2015

PRESIDENT'S LETTER:

Hello to all, and hope you're enjoying the remainder of summer. The weather this month so far seems to be much milder than usual.

As we head into autumn, it is fascinating to see that OVH members and committees are as busy as ever! First up, Clarence (K4CNM) has done a superb job spearheading the effort to coordinate OVH's support to the Bankhead Military Vehicle Convoy On-The-Air special event, running from 17 September through 17 October; there are a lot of open blocks of time for the morning folks or early evening.

Another salute to Mark (WA4KFZ) for organizing and arranging another training session which begins in October. Lets support him by finding potential HAMs who needing a little coaxing. Also upcoming on October 17th, a Saturday, will be the Jamboree On-The-Air (JOTA) at the Braemar pavilion which the OVH will support again. It provides a great opportunity to practice those sling-shot skills in putting up temporary antennas and to introduce Boy Scouts to amateur radio.

At the upcoming club meeting, George / K4GVT will be present information from the Blackhat Conference, along with other technical committee discussions. Also, Steve / WB0AOD has recently brought to our attention another method of operation called Fusion and we perhaps will have a quick demo for that during our October meeting??

And a 'thank you' to John DePerro, the Chief Curator from the Cold War Museum at Vint Hill, our guest speaker last month. His presentation of the use of hot air balloons and early telegraph in the civil war was very informative.

A growing support within our membership ranks is anticipated as a number of coordination meetings approach; in a few weeks, Hamfest 2016, the JOTA Station, and applying vinyl to our trailer. I will be touching base with a few individuals who have expressed desire to head some "never before" support to community events next Spring/Summer.



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Ole Virginia Hams Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

Post Office Box 1255
Manassas, Virginia 20108

OFFICERS

President:	Wayne Phillips	N7QLK	393-8447
Vice Pres:	Clarence Meese	K4CNM	791-6424
Secretary:	Byron Dillon	AK4XR	222-2095
Treasurer:	Terry Erlacher	KC4DV	571-292-1490

DIRECTORS

Don (Butch) Blasdell	W4HJL	369-2877
Arthur Whittum	W1CRO	791-4330
Charlie Dale	WA4YGI	361-3091
Bob Zaepfel	K4HJF	282-2451

WEEKLY FM REPEATER NET COORDINATOR

Thurs - 8:00 PM Local Time	JOHN / KG4NXT	257-3566
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HAMFEST 2015 - Chairman

Terry	KC4DV	571-292-1490
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FIELD DAY 2015 - Co-Chairs

John	KG4NXT	257-3566
Ken	KM4ABL	753-7863
Byron	AK4XR	222-2095

CLUB ROSTER / DATABASE

Arthur	W1CRO	791-4330
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EDUCATION

Mark	WA4KFZ	818-8033
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CLUB EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

Clarence Meese	K4CNM	791-6424
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ARES - EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

David Lane	KG4GIY	703-628-3868
email: KG4GIY@ARRL.NET		
Prince William County ARES website	http://pwcares.org	

FINANCE

Arthur	W1CRO	791-4330
Mark	WA4KFZ	818-8033
Terry	KC4DV	571-292-1490

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

Paul	W4ZB	754-0910
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EMAIL REFLECTOR — w4ovh@googlegroups.com

David Lane	KG4GIY	628-3868
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JOTA

Scott	KB8NUM	365-2642
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LEGAL

Bob	K4HJF	282-2451
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MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

Luther	KJ4FDK	361-4885
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NEWSLETTER

Paul	W4ZB	754-0910
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NEWSLINE FOR THE WEEKLY NET

John H.	KG4NXT	257-3566
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PROGRAMS FOR MEETINGS

Terry	KC4DV	571-292-1490
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QUARTERMASTER

Steve	N4OGR	361-0008
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REPEATER CONTROLLERS

George	K4GVT	791-5956
Arthur	W1CRO	791-4330
Butch	W4HJL	369-2877
Steve	N4OGR	361-0008
David	KG4GIY	361-3042
Russ	WB4HHN	368-6435

W4OVH — TRUSTEE

Stu	W4PR	335-5267
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W4PVA — TRUSTEE

John	KG4NXT	257-3566
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SCHOLARSHIP

Jim	W4JTP	392-0150
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SUNSHINE

Theresa	KG4TVM	257-3566
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TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

George	K4GVT	791-5956
Arthur	W1CRO	791-4330
Butch	W4HJL	369-2877
Bill	N4SV	590.9562
Bob	K4HJF	335-1939
David	KG4GIY	628-3868

All telephone numbers listed above are for Area Code 703 unless otherwise noted. This 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. Copyright © 2015 by the Ole Virginia Hams.

The OVH ARC regular monthly meeting is at 7:30 p.m. every third Monday. In July, 2014, and is held in the Main Conference Room in the Manassas Public Works Building, 8500 Public Works Drive, Manassas, Virginia. Members, prospective members and other interested persons are invited to attend without obligation. Local information can also be obtained through the OVH's FM repeaters on 146.970-, 224.660-, 442.200+ and 443.500+ MHz. The OVH's two D-Star repeaters on 146.865- and 442.5125+ MHz are temporarily off the air due to maintenance work beyond the OVH's control. Up to date information about OVH activities and its meetings is also available during the OVH's nets on its FM Repeaters each Thursday night at 8:00 p.m. or on 80 meters (3710 KHz) LSB each Sunday night at 7:00 p.m. (8:00 pm in Summer) or through the OVH's web site at <http://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.

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Keep the thoughts/ideas coming; email me at N7QLK@ARRL.net. See you at the next regular meeting on September 21st at 7:30 pm in the main conference room at Manassas Public Works, 8500 Public Works Drive, Manassas, Virginia. Be safe.

73 Wayne N7QLK

Sunshine Corner:

Happy End of Summer birthday wishes in September to Gus / N4MLE, Al / KB4BHB, Tim / KM4CCI, Maury / W4HYB, Ron / N4RDZ, Gary / WG4ARC, Mark / WA4KFZ, Richard / K4NCX, Steve / WB0AOD, Jim / W4HJH, Windora / KK4UYY, and Floyd / K4ROG.

Congratulations to Ken / KM4ABL on his recent upgrade to the Extra Class License! This hobby can be addicting for those interested in self-learning and learning by experience, but it still takes quite a bit of extra effort to go out for this upgraded license.

Condolences to Terry / KC4DV on the loss of his brother, John, in August. However, Terry recently became a new Grandfather. (See picture to the right.)

Please keep Steve / N4OGR and Jan / KE4TMW in your thoughts as Steve begins preparations for his upcoming heart transplant.

The first planning meeting for Hamfest 2016 will be held on Wednesday, October 7th at a time and place to be announced. The club can use your assistance!

Happy to announce that the Heartney QTH has a new dog. Annie arrived over the Labor Day Holiday and she wants to meet everybody!

Please do check into the Thursday night VHF/UHF FM repeater net which starts at 8:00 pm local time. More details on the W4OVH.NET web site under the "Radio Nets" tab!

73 Theresa KG4TVM email: kg4tvm@hotmail.com

Minutes of the Ole Virginia Hams Amateur Radio Club Meeting August 17, 2015:

President Wayne N7QLK called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm and led the club in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Meeting was held at the Manassas Public Works Building main conference room.

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After the Pledge of Allegiance, all present stated their names and call signs. There were 20 OVH members and 6 guests in attendance.

BUSINESS MEETING

Minutes from the July meeting were reviewed with a correction that Stu / W4PR is the club Trustee for W4OVH and not for W4PVA. Motion to amend by Al / KB4BHB, seconded by Jeff / WB6UIE and approved with the correction.

Treasurer's report – Terry / KC4DV gave the report, motion by Butch / W4HJL, seconded by Stu / W4PR and approved as presented.

Membership – Terry / KC4DV presented an application from Kevin (noCallSign) and presented Jay / KM4JOJ to be voted upon; application for Jay was approved.

ARES – Clarence / K4CNM explained the ARES event that was held the week prior

Repeaters – Butch / W4HJL is still working on the Dstar site, once this work is done then the work on the building will begin, working also on the 97 machine.

Training – Mark / WA4KFZ will start a Tech licensing class in October for 4 weeks and will also schedule a VE Session right after the class is over.

Hamfest – Terry / KC4DV will have the first planning meeting for the 2016 Hamfest on the 1st Wednesday in October

Sunshine Corner – Theresa / KG4TVM announced birthdays for the month and handed out raffle tickets for beer glasses donated by a hamfest vendor, glasses won by Woody N4MQ

Website – Paul / W4ZB everything is working

4-H – Terry / WA5NTI gave a report on the setup during the Prince William County Fair, the event is ongoing and he will need to get a final report on the 4H from Kristin and Linda; the club members that helped at the table gave comments on the event

Break

New Business – Butch / W4HJL presented a motion that the club purchase a Honda 1800 Whisper Generator and sell one of its existing (larger) generators, seconded by Bob / K4HJF, and approved. Butch / W4HJL also let us know that Steve / N4OGR wants to have graphics on the club trailer, Wayne / N7QLK would like to see this completed before the end of the year, Wayne will talk to Steve to get the information he has collected, George / K4GVT had volunteered to work on this. Butch / W4HJL also let us know that George is now the Technical Committee Chairperson

Program – John DePerro, Chief Curator at The Cold War Museum at Vint Hill gave a presentation and invited us to come out for a tour and explained that they are trying to get ham operators out to the museum to show the public a working station

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New Business – Clarence / K4CNM received an email asking for participation in a Transcontinental Special Event Station that runs from September 19th thru October 17th, Clarence asked for club members to commit to working this event and did get several volunteers

Club License – Stu / W4PR explained that he is the Trustee for the club call of W4OVH and per FCC regulations you can be the Trustee for only one call sign, Stu asked if we want to keep the W4PVA call and if so the license will need to be renewed, if we wait until after September 1st the fee will be waived, John / KG4NXT volunteered to be the Trustee for W4PVA

Terry / KC4DV announced that his uncle (in West Virginia) has an ICOM 756 Pro for sale, contact Terry if interested

John / KG4NXT made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Butch / W4HJL, meeting adjourned.

Reminders about some upcoming events / calendar dates:

OVH HAMFEST COMMITTEE MEETING:

October 7, 2015, Wednesday evening in Manassas, time and place to be announced for the First Hamfest Committee meeting for the June 2016 Manassas Hamfest. All are welcome to attend.

SPECIAL HAM RADIO SEMINARS / EVENTS:

September 22 through 27. Amateur radio will be part of the celebration during Pope Francis' visit to the U.S.. Throughout the six day event (September 23 0000Z – September 28 0000Z) there will be six special event amateur radio stations on the air. Call signs for the Washington, DC area are K3P and N4P. For New York and New Jersey the callsign is K2P. W3FRC/WMF will be on the air from southeastern Pennsylvania and W3P will be on the air in Philadelphia. WM3PEN, also of Philadelphia, will join in Thursday evening at 8:00 PM EST (Friday 0000 GMT). Four unique qsl cards will be available along with a certificate to mark this historic event. A web site is being established for QSL and certificate information. Early information and links can be found on the WM3PEN qrz.com web site.

October 9 - 11, 2015 (Columbus Day Weekend), Digital Communications Conference sponsored by the ARRL and TAPR - being put on for the 34th year near Chicago, Illinois this year. For more info, check out <https://www.tapr.org/dcc.html>

October 17, 2015 - Saturday. JOTA Boy Scout activities at the Braemer Center, Bristow, Virginia, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. The OVH will be presenting Ham Radio including an operating ham station. Check with John / KG4NXT [kg4nxt@arrl.net] or Theresa / KG4TVM [kg4tvm@hotmail.com] and the JOTA event flyer on the following page for more information.

Third Thursday evening each month - AMRAD meets in McLean, Virginia - meetings usually consist of high level amateur radio related technical presentations on specific topics. Check the <http://amrad.org> web site for upcoming topics, and exact dates, times and places.

PUBLIC SERVICE / TRAINING / ARES EVENTS

Always check the online Calendar by David / KG4GIY at <http://www.pwcares.org> for the latest updates. David maintains a comprehensive calendar for upcoming events at that web site. Complete direct contact information for David appears on page 2 of this Newsletter.

JOTA

JAMBOREE ON THE AIR

Saturday, October 17th

Braemar Swim Club

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Boy Scout Troop 581 will be set up

Scouts will provide lunch to volunteers

This is a world-wide event
If you can't come out to the swim club
we do need Hams on the air
to answer calls from the scouts

More information – John KG4NXT@arrl.net or
Theresa KG4TVM@hotmail.com



SOME POSSIBLY USEFUL INFORMATION / THOUGHTS

A. HF Radio Propagation / Reverse Beacon Network

1. Mentioned here many times before but still generating a lot of interest for Ham HF (high frequency) radio operators, including now also professional HF radio propagation interest by researchers, is the Reverse Beacon Network. [<http://www.reversebeacon.net>] What is the Reverse Beacon Network (“RBN”) and does the RBN work?

2. Very briefly, and somewhat oversimplified, the RBN network includes an array of volunteer, automated HF receiving points (setup and run by ham radio operators worldwide) which are equipped with CW and RTTY skimmer software and broadband HF radio receivers which monitor the various HF ham radio bands around the clock. Each receiving point automatically collects “heard” signals (by callsigns, etc.) on each HF ham band by means of the Skimmer software, and then, almost immediately, forwards that information for analysis and aggregation via an Internet connection to the central Reverse Beacon Network (“RBN”)

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system. The central RBN accumulates all of the information it receives and makes it available in useful format (including almost real-time HF propagation maps) worldwide via the RBN's web site.

3. What good is the RBN for Hams? The RBN provides a resource from which HF Ham radio operators can immediately determine whether an HF propagation path is available and open to from the operators location to a particular remote area. This is done by presenting graphical map data of near real time measured and "heard" signals. Of course, the absence of measured signals over a particular propagation path does not mean with certainty that the propagation path is not open, although it may be a good indication of that if there are many active signal sources at or near both ends of the propagation path.

4. In addition to allowing assessments of HF band conditions based upon actual signals received ("heard") from Ham HF operators seeking contacts, the RBN network also allows assessment based upon signals from known HF beacon stations.

5. Analysis of the logged and save data accumulated by the RBN system can allow HF propagation researchers - well after the fact - to extract information and new understandings about HF radio propagation mechanisms. Although a reasonable scientific understanding exists already for HF radio propagation based upon the characteristics of the earth's near (and far) atmosphere (including the ionosphere), the earth's magnetic field, and many types of radiation(s) and radiation effects caused by the Sun, a lot is still unknown or not very reliably predictable.

B. CW / RTTY Skimmer Software

1. The current source for all Ham radio Skimmer Software, both CW and RTTY, is Alex / VE3NEA at Afreet Software, Inc. [<http://www.dxatlas.com>]. Check out the dxatlas.com web site which has considerable information about this software and how to use it. As already noted, the Skimmer software (and the related Skimmer server software) is an essential component of the RBN system.

2. Skimmer Software can be used at an individual HF ham station without being connected to the RBN system; in other words, a ham can use the Skimmer software to analyze HF band conditions and openings at his particular station location without contributing his / her Skimmer data to the RBN system for near real-time reporting to others via the RBN web site.

C. The Worldwide HF Beacon System.

1. Years ago Hams established a worldwide HF Beacon transmitter system which enabled HF path openings to be determined even when actual ham activity levels were very low. This works because the beacon transmitters are automated and work on a predefined schedule without any manual input by the operator of a particular beacon. The system worked very simply: if you could hear a particular beacon, you knew that an HF propagation path was open between your location and the area where the beacon was located. It was possible to monitor the HF beacons using a standard narrow band HF receiver. No broadband HF receivers needed as now required for Skimmer and RBN system use.

2. The original NCDXF/IARU Beacon Network is fully described at <http://www.ncdxf.org/beacon/intro.html> which gives the locations of the these beacons and how to monitor them. The improvement advantage of the RBN system is that effectively and potentially everyone on every HF band (calling "CQ" or "TEST" DE CALLSIGN on CW or RTTY modes) is now a remote beacon station which can be used to assess HF band conditions.

W4OVH.NET - WEB SITE IMPROVEMENTS / UPGRADES

Your webmaster is soliciting specific input for web site improvements and upgrades for W4OVH.NET. All content will remain and will continue to be enhanced and expanded. The obsolete but still effective basic web site "frames" structure is still intact and working; however, that needs to be eliminated and replaced with a more modern web site structure which will allow for the site to be better organized for future content growth. We should make sure that the web site is also particularly friendly for smartphone and tablet users. Those with constructive ideas, suggestion, skill sets and applicable experience, please contact the webmaster. If there is enough interest, a web site improvement committee will be set up to meet and consider alternatives.