

The OVH ARC Newsletter
OLE VIRGINIA HAMS™ AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.
Post Office Box 1255, Manassas, Va. 20108
OVH FM Repeaters - 146.970- & 224.660- & 442.200+ & 443.500+
OVH D-STAR Repeaters - W4OVH - 146.865- & 442.5125+ (temporarily - limited functionality)
Web Site at <http://w4ovh.net>

OLE VIRGINIA TIMES

April 2020

Next Meeting: April 21, 2020 online, details below.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER:

Greetings everyone, Though spring is starting to come in and there's a lot of exciting ham radio related things to talk about, it seems as if everything has taken a back-seat to the arrival of the Coronavirus COVID-19. The entire world has been rocked by this pandemic which has a number of characteristics that make it more dangerous than anything we've seen in very long while. In just the last four weeks we've seen practically the entire world "shut down" to various degrees: public gatherings banned, businesses closed, and people ordered to stay at home. This is unlike anything any of us have experienced in our lifetime; and to make it even worse, we don't know how long it will last. All we can do is put our lives in a holding pattern until it's safe again.



In addition, the Coronavirus has also had some direct impact both our ham radio hobby and the OVH. Along with Winterfest and Dayton Hamvention, OVH has decided to cancel the 2020 Manassas Hamfest. Though this news is unhappy decision, there was agreement that it would be the safest choice. Vendors and all others involved need to plan ahead and make financial commitments, but the uncertainties about whether the restrictions on gatherings might be lifted by mid June were too great, requiring cancellation to avoid all of the risks of a large attendance event. OVH's Field Day at the end of June is a much smaller event and is still a GO so barring an extension of current restrictions the club will be out at Nokesville Park on June 27-28 racking up Field Day contacts. That too could change, of course.

We have also had to suspend our regular in-person meetings. Until we are able to safely meet again face to face, the club is going to conduct virtual meetings via the Internet. I've set up an audio/video conferencing server dedicated to do that; based on testing with some members, it should perform well for the task. Though the system is capable of video conferencing, I am recommending that attendees use video sparingly to prevent

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Ole Virginia Hams Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

Post Office Box 1255
Manassas, Virginia 20108

OFFICERS

President:	Jay Moore	NQ4T	571-316-4738
Vice Pres:	Jeff Fuller	WB6UIE	791-5916
Secretary:	John Heartney	KG4NXT	257-3566
Treasurer:	Don Meyerhoff	WA2SWX	597-3211

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 2020 - Chairman

Don	WA2SWX	597-3211
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FIELD DAY 2020

Byron	AK4XR	222-2095
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CLUB ROSTER / DATABASE

Arthur	W1CRO	791-4330
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EDUCATION

Mark	WA4KFZ	818-8033
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CLUB EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

Open

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
Don	WA2SWX	597-3211

GENERATORS

Steve	N4OGR	361-0008
Al	KB4BHB	368-4794

HISTORIAN

Theresa	KG4TVM	257-3566
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WEB COMMITTEE — W4OVH.NET

Kevin	KX4KU	540-445-5183
Andy	KJ4MTP	786-4651
John	KG4NXT	257-3566
Ken	KN4DD	622-2638

EMAIL REFLECTOR — w4ovh@googlegroups.com

David Lane	KG4GIY	628-3868
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JOTA - 2020

John	KG4NXT	257-3566
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LEGAL

Bob	K4HJF	282-2451
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MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

Luther	WA3FMO	361-4885
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NEWSLETTER

Paul	W4ZB	754-0910
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NEWSLINE FOR THE WEEKLY NET

John.	KG4NXT	257-3566
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PROGRAMS

Jeff	WB6UIE	791-5916
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QUARTERMASTER

Steve	N4OGR	361-0008
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REPEATER CONTROLLERS

John	KG4NXT	257-3566
Ken	KE2N	753-8587
George	K4GVT	791-5956
Arthur	W1CRO	791-4330
Butch	W4HJL	369-2877
Steve	N4OGR	361-0008
David	KG4GIY	361-3042

W4OVH — TRUSTEE

Wayne	N7QLK	571-237-0520
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W4PVA — TRUSTEE

Arthur	W1CRO	791-4330
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SCHOLARSHIP

Sandy Knight	KM4JUS	901-4664
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SUNSHINE

Theresa	KG4TVM	257-3566
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TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Ken	KE2N	753-8587
Andy	KJ4MTP	786-4651
George	K4GVT	791-5956
Arthur	W1CRO	791-4330
Butch	W4HJL	369-2877
Bob	K4HJF	335-1939
David	KG4GIY	628-3868

TWITTER & FACEBOOK ACCOUNT MODERATOR

Jeff	KM4FTK	830-4155
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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 © 2020 by the Ole Virginia Hams which holds its regular monthly meeting is at 7:30 p.m. every third Tuesday at the Buckhall Volunteer Fire Department Station, 7190 Yates Ford Road, 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. Up to date information about OVH activities and its meetings is also available during the OVH's nets on its FM Repeater each Thursday night at 8:00 p.m. or through the OVH's web site at <http://w4ovh.net>. Articles in this newsletter may be reprinted if credit is given to the OVH ARC and other source(s) noted. Proposed materials for publication, classified ads, notes about specific errors, complaints or the like are solicited. Forward such items to the Newsletter Editor: PAUL@W4ZB.COM. Approx. Circ.: 170. Last Rev: 20200310

overloading. We are returning to our usual monthly meeting schedule of the Third Tuesday in the month and will hold our first virtual meeting on Tuesday, April 21 at 7:30 pm. Information about how and where to connect is appears later on page 10 in this Newsletter. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at nq4t@arrl.net Because this will be a new way of doing things with new procedures, I urge everyone who attends to be patient until we are sure we have learned the best procedures to use for such online meetings.

Fortunately, the OVH was able to end March with some good things to report. The OVH's VE team held a successful session just before everything began shutting down and got a number of people licensed or upgraded. There was a very good turn out as most other VE sessions in the area had been canceled. A big thank you to the VE team for putting together and running the session. A number of our members also participated in the VAQP, which was unaffected by social distancing orders. I hope everyone remembered to put the club down on their logs when they submitted them. Both of these are reported later in the Newsletter.

Also, as hams, we have an advantage in that our hobby can survive, possibly even thrive, under these conditions of social isolation. Many people are now looking to get into the hobby; and many who haven't had the time to be active in the past, now have time to learn. What better way to spend your time stuck at home than making contacts, or maybe even expanding your knowledge. Try that digital mode you've been wanting to do, practice your CW with others who are just learning, build that antenna you've always wanted to build. If you do decide to play around with some HF modes from your PC; I highly recommend Hellschreiber mode (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellschreiber>). It won't win any awards for speed, but it has a quasi-fax type of operation that is neat and its name is fun to abbreviate. Of course, don't have too much fun with it or forget to stop by our Thursday night FM net on the 146.970-, 443.5+, and 224.66- repeaters.

All things considered, I hope everyone will join or at least attempt to join us for the virtual meeting on the 21st of April at 7:30 PM. It may take a while, but we'll get through this, and hopefully can go back to normal. Stay safe.

73 Jay NQ4T

Sunshine Corner:

Happy birthday to our OVH club members celebrating another year this April: Harry / KC4TXL, Harry / KN4IJY, Brian / KK4CBS, Gil / KM4OZH, Paul / N4PD, Joe / KI4OHR, Lillian / KK4MXY, David / KI4AZX, Paul / W4ZB, and David / KD4DEE

Annemarie, George / K4GVT's, mother in law is also celebrating her 87th birthday this month. We know her as Oma, very sweet lady; we all love having her come to our OVH events. (Note: Oma is an affectionate word of title in German equivalent to grandma or granny in English.) See, photo to the right.

Best wishes to Byron / AK4XR's xyl, Jane, as she continues to recovery from knee surgery.

The Virginia QSO Party is over, but for everyone who participated, I hope you enjoyed the event, there is still a little bit of time to get those logs in – the deadline is April 15th, please remember to put the OVH



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as your club on the contest log submission form.

Byron / AK4XR established a Saturday morning breakfast get together once a month for OVH members at the Yorkshire Restaurant. This has been taking place on the Saturday immediately prior to the regular monthly club meeting. Everyone is welcome, the food is great and the fellowship is wonderful. Some photos from the February 15th breakfast are included later in the newsletter. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has closed the Yorkshire Restaurant for sit down service for now.

The club held a very successful VE session in March, a terrific turnout of VE's and a very nice turnout of test takers / prospective licensees. I didn't get everyone's photo, but some are included later in this newsletter. Thanks to everyone who helped make this VE session a success!

Looks like we will be having the OVH's April Club meeting next week online, I hope you can log in and join in. Check communication on the OVH email reflector system for more information and last minute details.

Stay safe, if anybody needs help, please reach out, we need to stick together! Hope to see everyone in person soon.

Remember to check in at 8 pm on the OVH's Thursday night VHF/UHF repeater net - details are on the OVH's web site: W4OVH.NET That is a great way to stay in touch, especially now when many of us are at home all or much of the time! Continue to send news or other items to me, email at kg4tvm@hotmail.com or telephone: 703-257-3566.

73 Theresa KG4TVM

Minutes of the Ole Virginia Hams Amateur Radio Club Meeting held in March, 2020:

The regular monthly OVH meeting at the Buckhall Fire Station which had been set for Wednesday, March 18, 2020 was cancelled due the Governor of Virginia's Executive Order 51 (since extended) declaring a State of Emergency due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. No meeting was held.

Reminders about some upcoming events / calendar dates:

HAMFESTS:

May 15 - 17, 2020 - Dayton Hamvention (<http://hamvention.org>) at the Greene County Fairground, Ohio near Dayton. The biggest, annual hamfest in the world has CANCELLED FOR 2020 DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. But see info about the May 16, 2020 Hamvention ham radio operating event below.

June 13, 2020 (Saturday) - the OVH Manassas Hamfest - a major annual Hamfest put on by the OVH, this year for the 46th time. CANCELLED FOR 2020 DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. For more info, see <http://manassashamfest.org> or <http://w4ovh.net/welcome-to-manassas-hamfest>.

June 26 - 28, 2029 - The Ham Radio hamfest at the beautiful and very large exhibit halls at the airport in Friedrichshafen, Germany. This is the largest hamfest in Europe which has been held each year since the 1950's. Officially it is still on despite the COVID situation, but it also might still be cancelled, and travel to and from Europe may still be restricted. See info at <http://hamradio-friedrichshafen.com>

HAM RADIO RELATED:

June 27-28, 2020 - ARRL / OVH Field Day event at the Nokesville Virginia Park. Save these dates! This is a major OVH event each year.

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HAM RADIO OPERATING / CONTEST EVENTS:

May 16, 2020. Dayton Hamvention QSO Party - to be held due to the cancellation of the Dayton Hamvention. More details at <https://wwrof.org/hamvention-qso-party/>

The ARRL has a Contest web page at its web site, but a much more comprehensive, up-to-date, and long range planning contesting calendar with links to the rules for the various events is maintained at <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal> by WA7BNM. If you get the radio contesting bug or just want to find out what and how much is going on, that is a good place to look!

PUBLIC SERVICE / ARES EVENTS

Check the online Calendar on the OVH web site, W4OVH.NET for information about upcoming events.

Check the online Calendar by David / KG4GIY at <http://pwcared.org> for the latest PWC ARES 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.

A few images from the February 15, 2020 OVH Breakfast at the Yorkshire Restaurant



VP's Corner

Jeff Fuller
WB6UIE

As we hunker down in isolation during the current health crisis, many of us are finding our hobby a welcome way to connect with others. Not surprisingly, the press has reported increased public interest in amateur radio. And OVH is receiving new membership applications. Looks like some opportunities for online elmering may be on the way.

How about some other activities to distract from cabin fever?

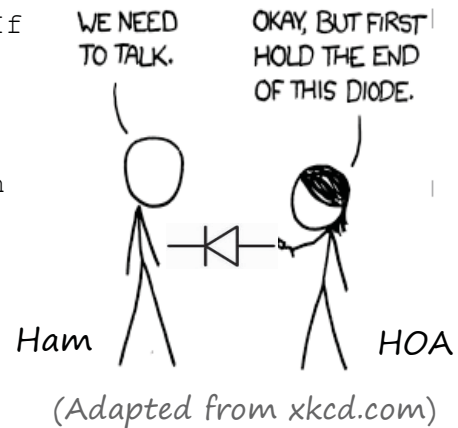
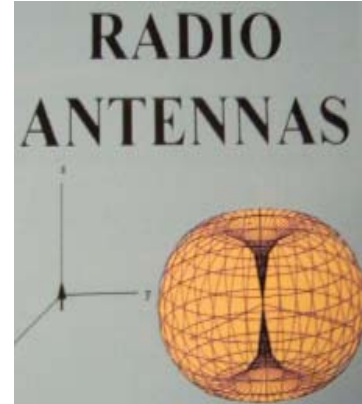
Antennas. A traditional spring sport for hams in keeping with that classic quote "If your antenna stayed up last winter, it wasn't big enough". Tell us about your latest design, how well it worked and how you managed to hide it from your HOA. Or, how about your whackiest encounter with an HOA.

Exploring new bands. Could we maintain comms across the local area without the repeater? Want to try 6 or 10 meters? I still have a bead on that \$16 whip which can be easily modified for 6 meters.[1] Or how about 75 meter NVIS?

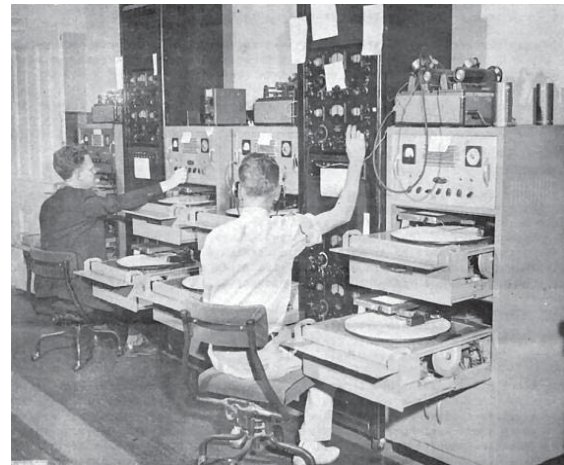
QSL cards. Look through all the ones you've received over the years, scan the most unique ones, and share them.

This month's story from radio history comes from WWII, another dark period when all Americans were pulling together against a common enemy. With war clouds gathering on the horizon, FCC's Radio Intelligence Division (RID) began building a series of intercept sites to track German agents operating in the Americas.

One of RID's larger sites was located on a peak called Chopmist Hill, not far from Scituate, Rhode Island. Before long, it became one of the most productive when its operators discovered they could intercept and DF U-Boat transmissions. Soon afterward, one of its operators recorded what sounded like German military activity on 27 MHz. Astounded military intelligence officers



(Adapted from xkcd.com)



Intercept operators at the Chopmist Hill site.[2]

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listening to the recording linked the transmissions to Afrika Corps units operating in North Africa. Chopmist Hill was getting to be a busy place. By the time it was decommissioned at war's end, it had acres of antennas and its own generating plant. You can read more about RID's contributions to the war in a book written by its Chief, George Sterling W3DF (available as a pdf) [2]

Many thanks to The Other Ken, KN4DD, for keeping us entertained with his quarantine humor notes (right). Lets all hang in there and stay safe. Keep an eye on the reflector for online meeting announcements and join us for the weekly club net on the OVH repeater (146.970 MHz).



Further Reading:

1. Fair Radio Sales

This antenna is about 6 inches short of a quarter wave on 6 meters.
<https://fairradio.com/product/52-whip/>

2. Sterling: **The History of the Radio Intelligence Division Before and During WWII 1940-1945**

<http://www.61thriftpower.com/riradio/pdf/ridhist.pdf>

3. **Chopmist Hill**

Rhode Island Radio web site

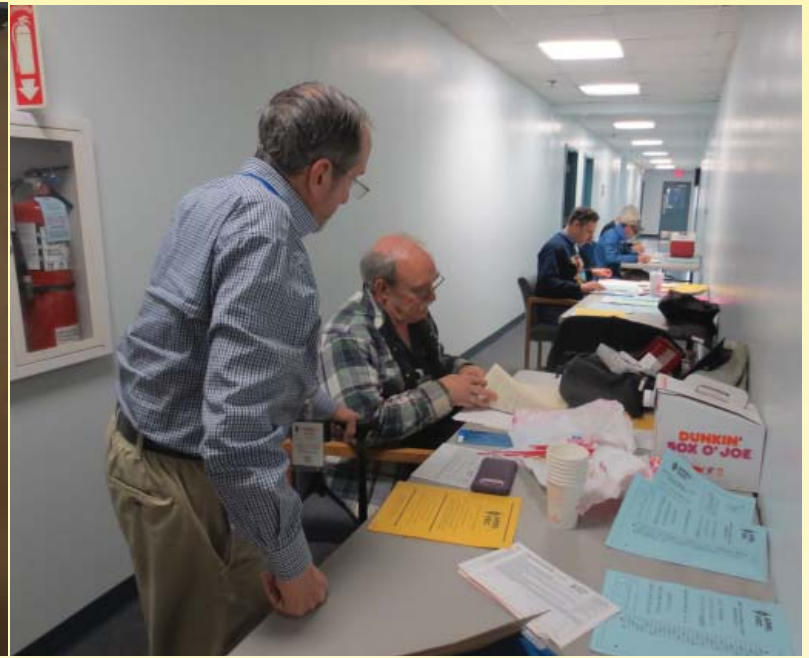
<http://www.61thriftpower.com/riradio/rid.shtml>

Some Notes and Images from the March 14, 2020 OVH VEC Session

On March 14, 2020, the OVH held a VE session. Folks needing FCC VE exams came locally as well as from far away Maryland and Arlington, Virginia because several other area VE sessions had been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 17 candidates appeared, and collectively, they earned: 10 new Technician licenses, 1 new General license and 3 new Amateur Extra Class licenses. One guy went from no license at all to Extra Class in a single sitting. Three candidates were not well enough prepared and failed to get a new license. The OVH VEs assisting were John / KG4NXT, Al / KB4BHB, Chick / KC1PIA, Luther / WA3FMO, Steve / N4OGR, Steve / KB4OF, Mark / WA4KFZ, George / K4GVT, Byron / AK4XR and Ray / KM4EKR. Good show by everyone which tends to disprove any notion that public interest in Ham Radio is fading out.



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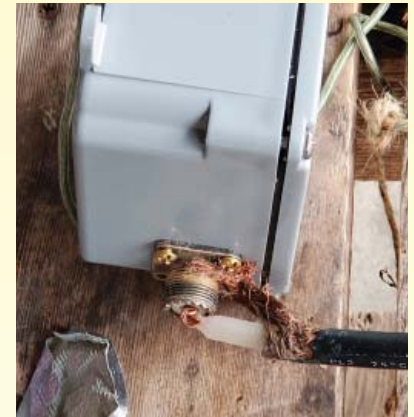


Some Notes and Image about OVH Members Who Participated in the 2020 Virginia QSO Party

This is a short collection of brief stories about a few of the OVH members who participated in the 2020 Virginia QSO Party event in March, with a few pictures. Thanks to John / KG4NXT for compiling these items.

First, the OVH's two oldest members, both born in 1933, operated together, jointly from Al / KB4BHB's home QTH. Chick / KC1PIA came over to keep the rigs and the Al's station working on HF and VHF. Great job by both!

John / KG4NXT and Theresa / KG4TVM operated from a Virginia state park cabin at Lake Anna. Despite diligent preparation efforts, John forget a jumper cable with PL-259 connectors on both ends, but he did have a coax with one PL-259 so he quickly crafted a field expedient, not neat like John's usual work, for the other end of the needed cable as shown in the photo. But it worked and enabled John to operate on the JS8 digital mode during the QSO Party. He has submitted a digital log and notes that last year, no digital logs were submitted.



Cat / KM4PBD operated mobile until her batteries gave out, working from nine separate independent cities



and/or counties in Virginia which is good for 900 bonus points. During part of the event she operated from the top of a parking garage at an undisclosed location: that was not cheating at all, but rather a very clever

way for a moveable mobile station platform to obtain a much greater antenna height to enable much longer distance communications and more QSOs / contacts, especially on VHF and UHF frequencies, than would be possible at ground level. Cat managed to scrape her car top antenna when entering the parking garage, and there is a video of Cat in the parking garage on the OVH's web site: w4ovh.net On the way back home well after sundown, Cat took an artsy photo suitable for entry in a photo contest.



Ron / K3FR worked Gil / KM4OZH on 2 meters and queried where he was operating from; when Gil gave that

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information, a nearby State Park, Ron drove there and took pictures of Gil operating and of Gil's extreme mobile vehicle, a fully decked out and customized for ham radio Mercedes-Benz automobile from Germany. Thanks to Ron for providing the following three great pictures - which otherwise would have been lost to history!



Above, the Mercedes with all antennas deployed

To the Left, the inside of the Mercedes

The third picture is on the next page.

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Above, obviously, is owner / ham radio operator, Gil, who also is a machine shop owner who makes all of his own antennas, antenna mounts and other customizations and who doesn't do things halfway! This is Gil's second year of an "all out" preparation and effort for the Virginia QSO Party. As you can see from this and the previous picture, Gil also created a very impressive mobile shack inside his Mercedes complete with shelves and a logging computer, with room for many radios to connect to the various and many antennas mounted on his Mercedes. Gil planned his mobile route and schedule well in advance, but midnight on Saturday came a few counties too soon. Gil returned to the local area on Sunday and worked many OVH members.

OVH's monthly meeting on April 21, 2020 will be via Jitsi Meet Online

OVH President Jay / NQ4T has set up and done preliminary tests on Jitsi Meet online conferencing system which will be used for the OVH's online monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 21, 2020 beginning at 7:30 pm. Details about how to access via the Internet using an up to date Chrome web browser appear in a 18 page PDF file that Jay created specially for the OVH and which is available for download at: <http://ovh.nq4t.com/ovhjitsi.pdf> Please be sure to download, print and read through all of document very carefully. The Jitsi Meet conference system is an "open source" project and you can find more details about it at <http://jitsi.org> but Jay's PDF file is the best way for you to quickly learn what you actually need to know. To date, Jay has run a series of online tests which indicate the system should work well if all attendees follow the suggested procedures with strict "net" operation type discipline by all participants. Please also check the OVH's closed email reflector for information about another practice session likely to be scheduled later in the week of April 13th where you can participate.

During the tests run so far, it turns out that the Jitsi Meet Linux server running at Jay's QTH can be overloaded if too many of the participants in the meeting attempt to send video to the conference at the same time - around eight to ten at once seems to be able to overload the server - so we ask that you not send video to the conference unless the moderator asks you to do so. You can expect to receive video from the moderator (and others sending video) and hear audio from all participating in the meeting. Similarly, please have your computer microphones on mute unless you are speaking to asking to speak during the meeting. The Jitsi Meet server should be up and running by 7:00 pm or shortly thereafter on April 21st so you may access it before

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the 7:30 pm meeting actually starts. Finally, this will be a completely new system and type of operation for almost everyone participating, and some snag ups or problems are likely to occur - let's all try to work together cooperatively to get this alternative way of meeting online working well for us.

OVH's new President Jay has shown tremendous initiative and done a lot of work to set up the online Jitsi Meet system. There is one problem Jay has, though, perhaps some OVH members with expertise can step forward to help solve rapidly. Jay's QTH is in low spot from which he cannot hit the 2m and 70cm FM repeaters without a J-Pole or a ground plane antenna up at least 50'; he has some tall trees close to his residence, but no easy way to get an antenna up there. Without direct FM repeater access, there will be no simple way for Jay quickly to let everyone else (listening on the repeaters) know what happened should the Internet or the Jitsi Meet system suffer an unexpected failure during an OVH meeting. Other approaches might work too. Ideas and/or helpers will be welcomed! Contact Jay directly.

Some Possibly Useful Observations or Musings

As this April 2020 Newsletter goes to press, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect all of us, our families, friends, businesses, incomes, finances and the economy generally and the entire world in ways that were almost unimaginable in the 21st Century just two months ago. For many years, China has routinely had virus outbreaks each year with lots of internal disruptions there, but this time this one has truly spread worldwide. Let's hope the media frenzies subside and COVID-19 runs its course soon so we can all get back to a more normal life.

The ARRL's new web page at <http://www.arrl.org/arrl-news-coronavirus-covid-19> has useful information about COVID-19 for hams, including several links to various government web sites. .

Despite all of the media and political hype and intrigue, the actual number of increased deaths from COVID-19 in the US is quite small compared to the normal rates of death from routine flu viruses each year, year after year. And even for those, most of the deaths are among those in high risk groups (above age 70) or with impaired systems due to other preexisting ailments and medical problems. The number who have died from COVID-19 is actually very, very small compared to the total population, and also small compared to the number who regularly die from self-inflicted, avoidable causes such as drug dependencies and overdoses and suicides.

Every day now we are confronted with images of the COVID-19 virus (above to the right) in the various media. But don't expect to actually see one! The diameter of a corona virus ranges from 80 nanometers to 120 nanometers. Contrast that to the diameter of a human hair which is in the 50 micron (micrometers) to 100 micron range, about 1,000 times larger. Because the dimensions are smaller than the shortest wavelength of visible light, a corona virus can only be imaged with apparatus which uses still shorter wavelengths such as an electron microscope.

When we go out and about, we see others wearing protective masks and keeping their distances. Is that really doing much good? If one goes to a doctor's office these days for diagnosis or treatment of a non-COVID-19 ailment, he is likely to be greeted by a physician's assistant dressed as in the picture above.

The basic human mind is not very good, and even specially trained individuals do not do particularly well in solving many types of probability and statistical problems, and in making rational or optimal decisions when confronted with uncertainties and unknowns. Look at *Thinking Fast and Slow* by Daniel Kahneman for many examples. I expect that various government forced responses to the COVID-19 situation so far, when analyzed in hindsight after the immediate COVID-19 crisis is over, will be further typical examples of that. Of course, there are great uncertainties about many aspects of the COVID situation. But forced (political) actions with hardly enough time to think things through rationally have been taken that ultimately will have massive, long term, and likely negative, implications for the economy for what? Why? Lots of reasons to be concerned, but at least we still have our Ham Radio interests and hobby - which will most likely continue to be good as long as the electricity stays on.

