



*Rockingham County
Amateur Radio Club, Inc.*



N4IV

President
Bill Schwiegeraht
N8KSG

Vice-President
Roger Joyner
W4AYO

Treasurer
Paul Patterson
N4CE

Secretary
Trey Belton
W4SH

The RockingHAMmer News

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President's Corner

Happy New Year to all you folks in the RCARC community. I trust that each of you had a wonderful holiday season celebrating with family and friends. This was one of the most relaxing Christmas and New Year seasons that I've ever had, with nearly two full weeks off from work and very little in terms of demand on my time. Not many places that I had to go, not much in the way of firm time commitments, I was able to relax and rejuvenate, ready for another new year to arrive!

As a reminder, our new officer slate takes effect now, and here they are once again,

Treasurer – Paul Patterson, N4CE

Secretary – Trey Belton, W4SH

Vice President – Roger Joyner, W4AYO

President – Bill Schwiegeraht, N8KSG

Some may be excited about this next tidbit of information, but this will be the last newsletter that I prepare personally. While I will still be writing my President's Message each month, the preparation and editing will now be done by "The Professor", Ralph, N4RFX and his willingness to volunteer to meet the needs of the club. Please send your thanks, appreciation, and moreover... your encouragement for his efforts as he begins to "jazz up" this old format up a bit over time!

Speaking of participation, I'd like to thank Jamey, K4RVJ, for sending in a couple of short stories that he has put together to share with all of us, and this is the first news piece I have received unsolicited in my four years as club president! I am including one this month, but I'll be saving the other for use sometime down the road. My hope is that when you read his contribution that you will realize that all of us have something to contribute now and then. I've

said it before and I'll say it again: RCARC is what each of us make of it - this is really not difficult, nor time consuming.

One area that I've noticed increased participation is with our net check-ins. The holiday season was a bit sparse, but the first two nets of 2019 have shown strong participation on both the formal Monday evening FM net as well as the Thursday evening C4FM (digital) rag chew. Personally, I find this very encouraging and exciting. We have had a number of check-ins from amateurs as far away as Thomasville NC, Davidson County, and up to Roanoke VA! I myself, and I've heard some of you have had QSOs with these folks during the week and extend a sincere invitation to join us on the regular net times, and they have responded. Let's all make a concentrated effort to answer unfamiliar calls on the repeater, and to serve as an ambassador for the RCARC community. There is no need to make it a "sales job", but it surely helps to promote our net times and club website and meetings. This is exactly what has happened that have brought a number of numbers of over the last several years. Activity on the air is by far our BEST tool to recruit amateurs into our community, and each of you can help make that happen.

Another other way that we can all participate is by supporting the club financially, and our primary way of doing that is through our paid memberships. Over the last four years, I have seen the number of paid memberships remain constant though we have added at least 6 or 7 new hams to the fold in the last year alone. The main reason as far as I can tell that some fail to renew is simply the fact that they don't think about it. It is not necessary to come to a meeting to renew – you can send a \$25 check to the PO box at the top of the newsletter. Of course, we welcome you to come to the meeting and renew, but work, family, and other commitments can make that difficult. Please understand however, that we need and desire your support, and early renewal helps us execute our plans in a timely fashion, so please don't delay – renew today!

Finally, it is almost time for our first meeting of 2019. Paul, N4CE, is preparing an excellent presentation that I am positive will be of great interest. I'm not going to spoil by revealing what it is, but let's just say that an interesting modern technology will be explained, something new and affordable for virtually everyone to experiment with. I hope that you will make every effort to attend at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, January 15th.

73, Bill, N8KSG

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About the Newsletter: This newsletter is published monthly by and for the members of the Rockingham County Amateur Radio Club. Computer/internet users should be able to click on the website links that are usually underlined. Please advise me of any change of address or mail preference. Please have all articles to me by the 2nd Tuesday of each month.

73, The Editor.

****** 2019 Membership Drive ******

It is time for all members to renew their membership for 2019. At only \$25, RCARC membership is a bargain, and your renewal is CRITICAL to maintaining the activities and club repeater. We have been averaging about 35 paid memberships the last couple years, and many active hams just simply forget to renew, and this creates a strain on predicting how our needs will be met. Please bring a check to the January meeting to renew, or better yet - put your renewal in the mail to the PO box listed at the top of the newsletter today. Thanks!

Events

Breakfasts

Henry Pollock Memorial Breakfast - Tuesday – 7:00 am, The Farmer's Table, Reidsville
Thursday – 7:00 am, Sanitary Cafe, Reidsville

RCARC Meeting

The RCARC usually meets on the 3rd Tuesday night of the month. The January 15th, 2019 meeting will be 7 p.m. at the Salvation Army facility at 708 Barnes Street in Reidsville, NC.

Club Socials

RCARC holds a social once per quarter. For 2019 we will gather at Ruby Tuesday in Eden at 6:00 p.m., enjoying dinner together after a few brief announcements. Planned dates for 2010 are March 9, June 8, Sept. 14, December 14, all being Saturdays. Please remember that there is no regular 3rd Tuesday club meeting during these month.

Upcoming Hamfests

03/08/2019 | North Carolina Section Convention (Charlotte Hamfest)

Location: Concord, NC

Type: ARRL Convention

Sponsor: Mecklenburg Amateur Radio Society

Website: <http://charlottehamfest.org>

04/20/2019 | North Carolina State Convention (Raleigh Hamfest)

Location: Raleigh, NC

Type: ARRL Convention

Sponsor: Raleigh Amateur Radio Society

Website: <http://rarsfest.org>

08/10/2019 | 21st Annual Cape Fear Amateur Radio Society Swapfest

Location: Fayetteville, NC

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Cape Fear Amateur Radio Society

Website: <http://cfarsnc.org>

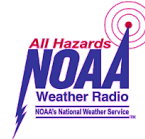


Skywarn Weather Spotters (and all amateur radio operators) encountering severe weather, are encouraged to monitor and make reports. The Skywarn website is: skywarn.org .

Blacksburg SKYWARN conducts a weekly net one Wednesday evenings at 9pm on 146.745 as well as numerous other linked repeaters in SW VA, Northern NC and SE WV. The net is available on Echolink via KF4YLM-R. All stations, regardless of prior SKYWARN training or experience, are welcome. The net provides SKYWARN spotters with information on training events, spotting tools, and severe weather potentials in the Blacksburg County Warning Area.

The full list of FM repeaters on which this net runs is:

- 146.745 T107.2 K1GG/R Roanoke/Poor Mtn
- 147.225 T100.0 KF4YLM/R Lewisburg, WV
- 145.130 T103.5 N4VL/R Galax/Mt. Airy
- 145.410 T103.5 N4VL/R Roanoke/Poor Mtn
- 444.600 T103.5 N4VL/R Pulaski
- 147.420 T103.5 N4VL/L (simplex) Big Walker Mtn / Wythe Co.



NOAA WEATHER RADIO BANDS - CHANNELS-FREQUENCIES - S.A.M.E. Codes

162.400 MHz WXL42 WINSTON-SALEM NWS PIEDMONT AREA
Rockingham County, N.C. SAME code: 037157

162.475 MHz WXL60 BLACKSBURG NWS ROCKINGHAM COUNTY
Rockingham County, N.C. SAME code: 037157

All stations listed for travel (in MHz):

162.400	162.425	162.450	162.475	162.500	162.525	162.550
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A nation-wide network of radio stations broadcast continuous weather information from nearby National Weather Service (NWS) offices. You can get weather 24 hours a day. NOAA weather radios are the best way to receive warnings from the NWS. It is best to have a battery back-up and Specific Area Message Encoder (SAME) that will alert you when a watch or warning is issued for Rockingham County, N.C. (037157). Complete information is at NOAA's website: nws.noaa.gov/nwr . For current weather forecasts on the internet, go to NOAA's National Weather Service website: weather.gov . Weather forecast on a mobile device: mobile.weather.gov or cell.weather.gov

RCARC Club Nets

Monday 8:30PM RCARC 2-meter FM net 147.345 MHz 103.5

This club net is a weekly meeting for announcements, business, and comments. Check-ins will be taken in analog (FM) mode. Please make it a priority to check into our net.

Thursday 8:00 PM RCARC System Fusion Ragchew, 147.345 MHz, C4FM mode

This is a weekly informal net conducted in Yaesu C4FM digital mode to promote its use. Please put your radio in fixed C4FM "VW" Mode.

AREA NETS

Sunday 8:00pm	Sherrills Ford, NC	50.150, no tone
Sunday 8:30pm	Southern Alamance Net	146.670, no tone
Sunday 9:00pm	Greensboro News & Info Net	145.150, 100 Hz
Sunday 9:00pm	Southeastern D-Star Weather Net	REF002A
Sunday 9:30pm	Central NC Traffic Net	146.820, no tone
Monday 8:00pm	Randolph County Net	147.255, 82.5 Hz
Monday 9:00pm	Lynchburg, VA	50.400, no tone
Tuesday 8:00pm	Sandlappers, Lexington, SC	50.250, no tone
Tuesday 8:00pm	Burlington ARES Net	146.670, no tone
Tuesday 8:30pm	Triad Skywarn Net	147.255, 82.5 Hz
Tuesday 9:00pm	N.C. D-Star Net (W4GSO) REF054C	442.86250
Wednesday 8:00pm	Roanoke Amateur Club Net	146.985,107.5Hz
Wednesday 8:30pm	Forsyth County ARES Net	145.470, 100 Hz
Wednesday 8:45pm	Greensboro Amateur Society Net	145.250, 88.5 Hz
Thursday 8:00pm	Pink Hill, NC	50.200, no tone
Thursday 9:00pm	Guilford County ARES Net	145.150, 100 Hz
Saturday 8:00am	Wake Forest, NC	50.200, no tone

Daily Nets

5:30am	Possum Trot Net	147.225, 82.5 Hz
8:00am	Richmond 6 Meter Net	50.215, no tone
2:30pm	Vag-A-Bon Net	145.470, 100 Hz
7:30pm	Tarheel Emergency Net (ARES)	3.923 LSB
7:30pm	Piedmont Triad Traffic Net	145.250, 88.5 Hz

WORLD OF DX

In the world of DX, listen for Mike, OE6MBG, using the call sign S79AA from Mahe (Mah-reh) Island starting on the 5th of January. He will be operating until February the 2nd. He will be on the air on 160/80/40/20/15/10 meters and possibly 6m using CW and SSB. QSL via ClubLog's OQRS or LoTW.

In South Sudan, Diya, YI1DZ, is active for the next six months as Z81D. He will be on 80 through 10 meters using SSB and some Digital modes. QSL via OM3JW. He will also use ClubLog and LoTW.

In Antarctica, Alex, RD1AV can be heard as RI1ANV operating from the Vostok Station. He will be at the base station until February 2019. QSL via RN1ON, direct, by the Bureau or ClubLog's OQRS.

Meanwhile, an update: Members of the Bouvet Island 3Y0I (three why zero eye) DXPedition are awaiting the completion of upgrades to and final certification of the ship they will use to travel to Bouvet - the "Atlantic Tuna," a rugged vessel built in Iceland. At the moment no firm date can be given for when the radio operators and crew will set sail. For up to date information visit the web page www.rebeldxgroup.com.

OHIO PENN DX NEWSLETTER, REBEL DX GROUP WEBSITE

Amateur Radio Applications in Limbo as Partial Federal Government Shutdown Continues

The FCC is not processing any Amateur Radio applications as the partial government shutdown approaches its fourth week. The FCC suspended "most operations" at mid-day on Thursday, January 3, although an appearance of activity continues. For radio amateurs, the shutdown means that while the Universal Licensing System (**ULS**) continues to accept applications for all valid purposes, the FCC will not review or act upon them until the funding stalemate is resolved. This includes Volunteer Examiner Coordinator test session batch files as well as modification, renewal, and vanity call sign applications filed by individual licensees. Amateur Radio newcomers who have passed the required examinations will have to wait until the shutdown concludes to receive a call sign and authorization to operate. License upgrades are also on hold.

"Due to a lapse in funding, the operations of the Federal Communications Commission will be limited with no system support. We regret any inconvenience," the FCC says on the ULS home page. This means very limited human intervention while the shutdown continues, and if a system breaks down, it may not be repaired until after employees back on the payroll. At this point, 262 of 1,437 FCC employees (excepting contractors) remain on the job, as are FCC Commissioners.

The **Antideficiency Act** prohibits FCC and other federal employees from working until funds are available to pay them; they may not even volunteer, check their email, or attend meetings. While the law doesn't directly affect FCC automated filing databases, some of these cannot operate without regular human intervention.

The Commission has emphasized that it will undertake any activities necessary for the protection of life and property during the funding lapse. That includes the High Frequency Direction Finding (HFDF) Center in Maryland, considered essential.

The FCC website remains up, and the FCC *Daily Digest* of its activity continues to be posted, but the website is not being updated, and the only items in the *Daily Digest* are those related to spectrum auctions, activity that is funded through auction proceeds, not government funds. The Electronic Comment Filing System (**ECFS**) also will accept posts, but filings will not be reviewed or processed until after normal operations return.

The FCC spelled out the overall impact of the funding lapse in a January 2 **Public Notice**. Using available funds, the agency was able to maintain a business-as-usual posture until that date. The FCC released an updated **Plan for Orderly Shutdown Due to Lapse of Congressional Appropriations** on January 9. The resumption of normal operations will also be announced on the FCC's website.

ARRL Website

RTTY and FT8 Successfully Coexist in 2019 ARRL RTTY Roundup

Based on informal polling and log-submission trends, it appears that RTTY and FT8 successfully shared spectrum during the ARRL RTTY Roundup over the January 5 – 6 weekend. The event is seeing a dramatic uptick from last year in the number of logs submitted, with more than 2,400 and counting received by midweek, as opposed to 1,622 in the 2018 running. ARRL Contest Branch Manager Bart Jahnke, W9JJ, is urging everyone who participated in the 2019 RTTY Roundup to turn in a log — no matter the number of contacts made. Logs for the 2019 RTTY Roundup are due by Sunday, January 13, at 2359 UTC, and may be **uploaded via the ARRL website** (or see **mailing instructions** for paper logs).

“The 30th running of the ARRL RTTY Roundup is now in the books,” Jahnke said. “All indications are that the event — in both RTTY and other digital categories — gained significant additional attention and increased popularity with the inclusion of FT8 in the digital line up.” Jahnke said the digital operating experience gained through the RTTY Roundup should benefit participants in the upcoming **ARRL January VHF Contest** and in future VHF contests, where *WSJT-X* protocols such as JTx, MSK144, and FT8 continue to gain popularity as a means to work hard-to-reach grids beyond the usual 400-mile tropo-scatter range, and for slower activity periods.

Jahnke reminds those submitting RTTY Roundup logs to make sure they’re entering in the correct category. All entries that made contacts in FT8 or PSKxx (with their multi-channel decoder technology) must enter in one of the Unlimited categories, unless they’re Multioperator entries. **Contact** the ARRL Contest Branch with any questions.

The inclusion of FT8 for the first time in the RTTY Roundup had generated considerable pre-contest debate, but when all was said and done, most stations tended to operate one mode or the other, although a few utilized both (and perhaps other digital modes), judging from logs posted on the **3830scores** website. The RTTY Roundup came close on the heels of the inaugural **FT8 Roundup** over the first weekend in December, which was deemed a success (it was the first-ever contest for the winner — only licensed for 2 years — and for one other Top 10 finisher).

Alex Panoiu, YO9HP, in Romania, initially was hesitant about the idea of mixing RTTY and FT8, but set up for both modes anyway. “Definitely in the first hours, the rates were three times higher in RTTY compared to FT8,” he said in his 3830scores comments. “But later, when less ‘fresh meat’ was available in RTTY and propagation became marginal, FT8 became interesting. I noticed that most of the calls worked in FT8 never appeared in my RTTY log.” He logged 369 digital contacts and 639 RTTY contacts.

The WW4LL Multi-Single, High Power team made about one-third of its contacts using digital modes. J42L, operating Multi-Single, Low Power from SV2DCD, avoided RTTY altogether, logging 535 contacts.

FT8 co-developer Joe Taylor, K1JT, operating Single Operator Unlimited, Low Power use only FT8, logging 585 contacts. He noted “close to zero” inter-mode interference between RTTY and FT8 signals.

NCJ Digital Contesting Editor Ed Muns, W0YK, said he was very impressed with how the first RTTY Roundup to permit FT8 worked out. “FT8 has significant advantages for a much larger group of contest participants who are constrained by geography, housing limitations, solar conditions, power, and noise,” Muns said. “The amazing explosive growth of FT8 activity since its introduction in mid-2017 also means that there are many more participants for all of us to work in contests.”

Muns said he initially didn’t believe that RTTY and FT8 could coexist in the same contest. “Of course, like many things we can debate *ad infinitum*, a little bit of actual experience goes a long way to inform our [preconceived notions],” he added. “I’m very impressed with how it all worked out.”

ARRL Website