

ZERO BEAT

Official Newsletter
Kingsport Amateur Radio Club/Bays Mountain Radio Club

December 2009

Club Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President Jeff Pierce, WD4NMQ at 7:00 PM. The opening prayer was led by Phil Alley, KE4FFO. Phil made a motion to accept the minutes as printed in the Zero Beat. Earl Oaks, N4ZFA, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The Treasurer Report was given by Dave Stevens, WB2SIN. All accounts are in good standing. A copy was given to the President and KARC Secretary.

Don Mullins, AE4IA, made a motion to buy coax for the club with the funds that were allocated for building materials for a cabinet at the shack. A motion was voted on last month to remove the locks so a cabinet is not needed. Billy Taylor, KI4TNS, seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Allen Lark, N4TBI, made a motion to place members as nominated in the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Club License Trustee positions. Don Mullins seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

KARC President – Billy Taylor, KI4TNS
KARC Vice-President – Mike Jackson, KI4OJO
KARC Secretary – Phyllis Maness, KG4DTX
Club License Trustee – Jeff Pierce, WD4NMQ

Nominees for Treasurer, Dave Stevens, WB2SIN and Robin Oaks, KJ4NAW, were voted by secret ballots. The club elected Robin Oaks for the position of KARC Treasurer.

Jeff Pierce encouraged the people in the club to do things and continue to support the club officers by bringing ideas for meetings or activities the club could participate in. He would like to see mountain top operations continue as they always had fun.

Earl Oaks made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jason McCord, KJQAB, seconded the motion. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM.

2009 KARC/BMRC Club Officers

President Jeff Pierce, WD4NMQ
BMRC Vice President Rick Light, KG4WZG
KARC Vice President Denni Feagins, KI4YYV
BMRC Secretary Treasurer Phil Alley, KE4FFO
KARC Secretary Phyllis Maness, KG4DTX
KARC Treasurer David Stevens, WB2SIN
Club License Trustee Jeff Pierce, WD4NMQ
Chaplain Tom Jayne, KF4RLG
Field Day Captain Denni Feagins, KI4YYV
Activities Manager David Gulley, KI4AAU
Zero Beat Editor Phyllis Maness, KG4DTX
Station Manager Don Mullins, AE4IA
Net Manager David Stevens, WB2SIN
Club Photographer Jennifer Taylor, KI4TNT
W4TRC Webmaster Earl Oaks, N4ZFA

Website
w4trc.org

Important Dates

Every Sunday
2 Meter Net on 146.970 at 8:30 PM
(Backup Repeater is Gate City 146.820)

January 14
KARC/BMRC Club Meeting
Toy F. Reid Employee Center
Room 115
7:00 PM

January 16
Breakfast Get-Together at Golden Corral, Eastman Road
8:30 AM

Every Monday
KARC/BMRC Club Shack Get-Together
6:00 PM

Club Dues

Individual - \$10

Family - \$15

19th Annual Morristown Hamfest

Saturday, January 2, 2010

8:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Lakeway Amateur Radio Club

Great Smoky Mountains Expo Center

1615 Pavilion Drive

White Pine, TN

Talk in Frequency – 147.030+

W4PA Buys Vibroplex from W4OA

Well-known ham Scott Robbins, W4PA, has purchased the Vibroplex Company and is moving the code key maker's manufacturing facilities from Alabama to Tennessee. Robbins, who is best known as Ten-Tec's amateur radio product manager, left that company in mid-December to devote full time to his new venture. He bought Vibroplex from Felton "Mitch" Mitchell, W4OA, who had owned the company since 1994, and wanted to retire.

Vibroplex is the oldest continually-operating business in the amateur radio industry, serving Morse code enthusiasts since Horace Martin invented the semi-automatic "Bug" key in 1904. The company's website, www.vibroplex.com, and its toll-free phone number, (800) 840-8873, will remain unchanged in the move.

-Posted: Dec 21, 2009, CQ News

AMATEUR RADIO

iStudy

The ARRL has teamed up with a software company to produce electronic license exam "flash cards" for use on Apple's iPhone and iPod Touch. According to the ARRL Letter, the "apps" (applications) cover all three amateur radio license exams. They are produced and sold by McSnyder Software and are available at the iTunes "App Store" for \$1.99 each.

-Posted: Dec 21, 2009, CQ News

FCC Proposes Clarifications to Vanity Rules

The FCC has issued a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) intended primarily to codify existing policies regarding the issuance of amateur radio "vanity" callsigns. These policies have been issued in various Public Notices but until now, have not been formally included in the Part 97 rules. One proposed change would implement a 30-day freeze on reissuing the cancelled callsign of a deceased amateur in order to provide adequate notice of its availability.

-Posted: Dec 21, 2009, CQ News

Another Satellite Returns from the Dead

If you've been following ham radio news over the past several years, you may be aware of OSCAR-7, the long-dead amateur satellite that mysteriously returned to the air and has been operating ever since. Now, OSCAR-11 (UO-11), which had gone silent just before its 25th anniversary in orbit last year, has come back on the air as well, the AMSAT News Service reports. It appears that its batteries can no longer hold a charge but everything else works as long as the solar panels are receiving enough sunlight. More information is available at www.users.zetnet.co.uk/clivew.

-Posted: Dec 21, 2009. CQ News

Senate Passes Ham Radio Bill

A bill to force a federal government study of amateur radio's importance as an emergency communications tool has been passed by the U.S. Senate and sent to the House of Representatives. S. 1755, the Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Enhancement Act of 2009, is co-sponsored by Senators Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut and Susan Collins of Maine, the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, respectively, of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. According to the ARRL, the bill was approved by the committee on December 10 and passed by the full Senate by unanimous consent on December 14. It calls on the Department of Homeland Security to perform a study on "the uses and capabilities of Amateur Radio Service communications in emergencies and disaster relief," and to report back to Congress within six months with recommendations for action to clear what it identifies as "impediments" to ham radio, including unreasonable private land use regulations. The bill now awaits action in the House, where a companion measure, H.R. 2160, remains stuck in committee.

Posted: Dec 21, 2009, CQ News

W5BIG Patents New Impedance Measuring Technique

Bob Clunn, W5BIG, an engineer for Array Solutions, Inc., has received a patent for a new way of measuring antenna system impedance. Array Solutions owner Jay Terleski, WX0B, explains that the system uses digital circuits to generate an RF test signal and a local oscillator in a manner similar to a direct conversion receiver. The measurements for current, voltage and phase are then heterodyned down to a baseband of 2 kHz, where the data are then sent through a bandpass filter, like the IF of a radio. The signals are then digitized and sent to a personal computer, which can display a wide variety of graphical information and save data for later recall. Those interested in the technical details may do a web search on U.S. Patent number 7,629,795.

-Posted: Dec 21, 2009. CQ News

Major Computer Publication Devotes January 2010 Issue to Amateur Radio

By ARRL Media and Public Relations Manager Allen Pitts, W1AGP, and ARRL News Editor S. Khrystyne Keane, K1SFA

December 09, 2009



(Major Computer Publication Continued)

Hams indeed are technical and creative people, consummate MacGyvers. In the past few months alone, George Smith, AA2EJ, won the Nobel Prize for Physics. *Computerworld* published John Edwards' article titled "Want to Bone Up on Wireless Tech? Try Ham Radio." Diana Eng, KC2UHB, has had her articles published in *Make Magazine*. Computer giant Hewlett-Packard published a Real Life article "Behind the Voices of Ham Radio." Steven Sande, KCoEZH, wrote "5 Mac Applications for Ham Radio Fans" for TUAW -- a Web site that calls itself "the unofficial Apple Weblog." APRS systems were the theme of Joe Murphy's, N4PAT, video podcast. *Popular Mechanics'* Glenn Reynolds endorsed Amateur Radio in crises, referring people to the ARRL for information.

Now 2010 is just about here. To kick off the new year, computer magazine *Linux Journal* has come out with an entire issue dedicated to Amateur Radio and the creative uses of open source computer programs. This 80 page issue features Tux, the Linux mascot on its cover wearing a pair of headphones, holding a microphone -- and even sporting an Emergency Coordinator badge around his neck -- hooked up to an HF transceiver. The issue has headlines on the cover such as "Amateur Radio and Linux -- Open Source for the New Generation," and "Get Started with Amateur Radio," and includes articles like "When All Else Fails -- Amateur Radio, the Original Open-Source Project" by David Lane, KG4GIY.

You might wonder, "What is the connection between Amateur Radio and Linux?" The editors at *Linux Journal* answer that question, saying that "Linux may be the only O/S out there with an AX.25 packet radio protocol driver, and it's had it since forever. So blow the dust off your license and start reading."

Lane -- who blogs for *Linux Journal* on open source issues -- told the ARRL that the same day he posted "Open Source Ham -- Is That Like Free Range Chicken?" on his blog, he was chatting on Internet Relay Chat (IRC) with *Linux Journal* publisher Carlie Fairchild: "She said they were thinking of doing an Amateur Radio-focused issue -- what did I think? I said something to the effect of 'Did you see my post this morning?'"

Shortly thereafter, Lane posted on the ARRL's PR e-mail reflector to see if there was any interest in such an issue. "I was buried in positive responses," he said. "This was near the end of October and any articles we were going to run with had to be in hand the first week of November. But the Amateur Radio community came through -- I forget now how many articles we received, but it was enough that we had some options, eventually choosing three articles to run in the issue. Within two weeks, we put a magazine together with a focus on Amateur Radio!"

Lane said that there is now a "virtual ham shack" on the *Linux Journal* Web site, as well as a forum where radio amateurs can get together and discuss the "hot topics" of Amateur Radio. "The folks at the *Journal* have tasked me with keeping the focus on them and keeping them 'lively,' so any help is appreciated," Lane told the ARRL. "In recognition of *Linux Journal's* efforts, I have awarded them the Prince William County (Virginia) ARES®/RACES Challenge Coin. This recognition is a way of rewarding members of Prince William County ARES®/RACES who have gone above and beyond the call of duty or for those that have aided the cause of Amateur Radio." Lane is the Emergency Coordinator for Prince William County.

Linux Journal can be found on newsstands now.

-ARRL Website

AMATEUR RADIO

Member Showcase

N4ZFA
Earl Oaks, Jr.

Earl was first licensed in January 1990. His original call was KC4PLD. He upgraded to Technician at the Spruce Pine Hamfest in February 1990. He is an Extra Class – since upgrading at the 2008 Gray Hamfest.

His equipment includes six 2 meter radios, two dual band radios, a Yaesu VX-7r and a Radioshack DX-394 general coverage receiver. He also has two backup generators and a massive 12 volt battery backup in his ham shack.



Interested in placing information in the newsletter?

Contact Phyllis Maness, KG4DTX

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This monthly newsletter is published as a service to members of the Bays Mountain Radio Club and the Kingsport Amateur Radio Club.