

**Ye Old Radio Frequency Output  
of the Mt. Vernon Amateur Radio Club  
December 2006**

**IT'S A PARTY!!**

It's Christmas. Or it's Hanukah. Or it just the Holiday Season. Whatever your preference, turn off your radios, unplug the antennas and join the fun at the club's annual December party.

The festivities begin with the annual home cooked meal at the Old Country Buffet's elegant party room at 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 14.

In case the Old Country Buffet has not been on the tour route you give friends visiting the Washington area, it's at 7820 Richmond Highway, which is also known worldwide as Route 1.

There will be door prizes, with this year's top draw a new YAESU VX-150 2-meter HT! You must be present to win!

There will be dancing girls. Oh, scratch that. Frank, AA4ZS, volunteered to step in this year wearing his new silver Speed-0.

But there will be the annual gift exchange. Anyone who brings a gift valued at \$12 or less will take home a similarly fine treasure.

And of course there will be the naming of the MVARC Ham of the Year Award. This year's winner is ... Ha. Come and find out, because it could be YOU.

**Nov. 9 Minutes**

By Bob, KT4KS

The meeting was held at the INOVA Mount Vernon Hospital, and was called to order by President Bob, KI30. Bob led the Pledge of Allegiance, and thereafter commenced with introductions.

The October minutes, as posted on the MVARC web site, were approved.

The ARES report was provided by Steve, K3IZ. Steve stated that communications for the Marine Corp Marathon went well, but unfortunately there were some runner casualties. Also since the news media was monitoring our two meter communications, Steve reported that they were informed not give out injured runner's numbers as to protect their right of privacy. Steve reported that ICOM had loaned 1.2 Gigahertz D-Star radios for the event. For the MCM only, the FCC allowed us to encrypt runner information medical data. NOTE: These D-Star radios sell for approximately \$1000, and are gaining in popularity with various radio clubs throughout the Country.

The Repeater Committee Report was provided Dick WA4USB, and by read by President Bob According to the e-mail the repeater is working fine, with a notation that the repeater would be used by the Venture Crew the forthcoming Saturday from 8AM till 2PM for the annual Thanksgiving Food Collection drive

The Air Force MARS report was provided by Mike, KE4ER. Mike stated that the Air Force HF network is running well; however their two meter repeater is lacking coverage due to apparent cavity damaged.

Bob, KT4KS, gave community Outreach Report. Once again the Old Country Buffet was kind enough to offer us its party room for our December's holiday party. (Guess all those tips left at the Club breakfasts have paid off!)

Bob, KI30, provided the Program Committee Report. Bob stated that tonight's program would involve planning for June 2007 Field Day, and that next January the club should discuss the VA QSO Party that is planned for March.

Mike, KE4ER, provided the Treasurer's Report, and stated that the club is presently financially sound.

Regarding Unfinished Business, members were reminded that Mike was available to accept dues.

President Bob brought up the topic of door prizes for the December Holiday Party. President Bob reminded all that last year the Bilgers were allotted \$100 to provide prizes, and then Bob suggested that the club purchase a Yeasu HT for a prize this year. Some members (like Carol WA4GFW) immediately like the idea, while other members (like Bob KT4KS and Frank AA4ZS) thought that \$100 may be just a bit pricy for a single prize. Pat KG4URP then suggested that a letter and phone call to the manager of HRO Woodbridge might encourage them to provide MVARC with some "goodies" for the party. Pat expressed that it works for another radio club. As a result, President Bob agreed to contact HRO about door prizes. Thereafter the club approved a motion to spend \$100 for Holiday Party door prizes.

Carol WA4GFW stated that his daughter Amy KI4IAL has expressed an interest in formatting the club's YORFO, and that Glenn W4OCC will be contacted regarding technical specifics.

For Show 'n Tell, John WQ4L, displayed his discone antenna during. John purchased an antenna at the Gaithersburg hamfest for \$44, and modified it such that it now attaches to an 8-foot long paint roller pole that telescopically extends to 24 feet. John drilled some holes, and used some screws, so that

he could readily disassemble the antenna from the pole. Bungee cords are used to secure the pole to the side of his vehicle. The antenna is employed on 6M to 1296, works great on 2M, and was utilized during the Marine Corp Marathon.

Door Prizes: John K2VPR won the first door prize, and selected electrical tape from the club's grab bag. Vice President Howell KG4CKJ won the second door prize, selecting a set of files from the grab bag.

Cookie Monster: President Bob was the November Cookie Monster, and his wife Monique's brownies were delicious. Leila WN4PP volunteered to be the January Cookie Monster.

President Bob closed the business section of the meeting.

#### Field Day 2007 Discussion

The program involved planning for Field Day 2007 lead by Field Day Chairman Steve Schneider, K3IZ. In addition to demonstrating emergency communication readiness, Steve K3IZ articulated that the Field Day is in essence a contest, and if the Club intended to participate in Field Day 2007, then operators were needed. Nine club members pledged their participation for Field Day 2007. Former president. Carol, WA4GFW, volunteered to make reservations for 11-12 sites in the "Rustic Camp area" at Pohick Bay Regional Park. It was mentioned that Doug WA3WEP volunteered the use of his Air Conditioned camping trailer, and that Carol's 3K generator might be sufficient for minimal operations. There being no new hams for a GOTA station, the planning for same was deferred.

Additionally there was a further discussion of the George Washington Special Event held at the Mount Vernon estate. Vice-President Howell KG4CKJ volunteered to contact the Mount Vernon Staff

regarding obtaining permission to operate the George Washington Special Event, and Bob KT4KS was directed to post our event in both QST Magazine and QST's web site.

### **Pssst. Wanna Build Something Cool?**

Kit building is an aspect of our hobby that doesn't get talked about much at MVARC. But there probably are some members who would be interested in plugging in a soldiering iron and putting together a small QRP rig - you know, the kind that would do amazing things at a fraction of a watt if you could just get that dad gummed capacitor into the right holes.

The Arlington Amateur Radio Club and a few others are soliciting interest from anyone who would like to get together, probably in February, for a soldier melting session. When we assess the level of interest and experience - don't let inexperience scare you away because this is going to be a learning experience for everyone - we've decided on an appropriate kit or two to assemble, collect orders and make all the other arrangements for the group build. You will need to pay for the kit and bring along the appropriate tools, but we think we'll have a pretty nifty place to do our work.

If interested, please send a note to Frank, AA4ZS, at [lempickifw@verizon.net](mailto:lempickifw@verizon.net) or David, AI4FC, at [dmwhitney@comcast.net](mailto:dmwhitney@comcast.net), and we'll get ya on our wild and crazy kit-building list for further updates in January.

### **Is the YORFO Kaput?**

By David, AI4FC

YORFO editor

That question was recently asked of me by a longtime club member? The answer is no, but it seems it is taking on a new form.

Work commitments kept me on the West Coast during the production periods of October and November, and so what you received by e-mail was an abbreviated version.

But more than that, we have lost our production department. That probably means the end of the print edition, which was the most time consuming and, for the club's treasury, biggest cost drain. Personally, I think that was inevitable. No one has time to spend putting the printed form together each month, and because it is printed in a uniform format, it requires finding enough material each month to fill it. Some months that's easy. Other months there is literally nothing in the drawer, and I hated using canned or republished material.

The e-mail YORFO offers a lot more flexibility. It may even open up the possibility of including photographs at some point. It can be as long, or as short, as the material we have to publish. It's faster to produce. And, of course, it costs nothing.

A downside is that club members who used to get only the print version are now going cold turkey. But there were very few of them, maybe 15 or so. Most of the mailed copies were to other radio clubs, the ARRL and ham publications, like World Radio. This is the third month without a printed version, and I have heard no reaction other than from my friend wondering if the YORFO would arise from the ashes of the fall.

So Yes. The YORFO is alive. It might still have another life in print, but not now. For the time being, YORFO has gone exclusively digital.

**Where Did the CW Roundtable Go?**

This may be the best kept secret in the club's history. Or, maybe not.

Each Saturday and Sunday, and most holidays when we feel like it, a group of brass-pounding MVARC members getws together on 80 meters at 7:30 a.m. for a 30-minute roundtable.

The rule of thumb is that the group sends code at the rate the slowest member can copy. Generally speaking, we start at about 12 wpm - or in that range - and the speed adjusts as check-ins occur.

But if you've been looking for us at the usual spot at 3.677, we're not there anymore. In anticipation of the FCC's new band assignments that take effect Dec. 15, the round table has moved to 3.577.

It's a good spot. It's a friendly spot. It's a great spot to practice cw without risk of missing something important, because rarely is there much important being discussed. It's just for the fun of it.

So join us for 30 minutes of fun. Weekends, 7:30 a.m. before the kids or grandkids are up.

#### **THE REPEATER GURU COLUMN**

Dear Repeater Guru:

I just obtained my technician license. How to I start operating on 2-meter FM? -- A new "Tech".

Dear New Tech:

As the American Radio Relay League's Dave Summer, K1ZZ, observed, most people don't go hunting for the first time by themselves, and don't go fishing for the first time by themselves, so why should amateur radio operators be any different? So try to obtain a local ham to set up your radio and the 141.3 PL (Private Line) tone required to access our repeater. Unless you're operating on the 146.520

simplex channel, do not call CQ. Instead key the transmitter and say for example, "This is KI4NEW monitoring." By the foregoing you are letting other hams monitoring the repeater that you are available for a QSO (conversation). NOTE: With respect to the "This is" introduction, it is important that some type of introduction be used on our repeater. Some hams say good morning, etc. Since the repeater has a slight timer delay to prevent "kurchunking" (activation of the transmitter without identification), your transmission will be truncated. For example saying "KI4NEW monitoring" may be heard through the repeater as "W monitoring". Sometimes even the seasoned operators forget about the timer delay.

If you wish to enter a QSO in progress, then the procedure is just to state your call sign until you are "recognized" by another operator. Don't say "break" unless there is an emergency or other priority communications. On the MVARC repeater it is customary to transmit during your slot of appearance. So you should be informed that after you finish your transmission, then turn it over to a specific station. In this manner you'll only have to remember the station call sign that you have to turn it over to. (This is helpful for mobile rush hour repeater use!)

So please enjoy the use of our repeater!

- 73, The Repeater Guru

### **URLS OF INTEREST**

The New Band Plan Chart as of December 15th, 2006  
[[http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/wt04-140/Hambands3\\_color.pdf](http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/wt04-140/Hambands3_color.pdf)]

LAPTOP EXPLODING BATTERY PROBLEM - SERIOUS STUFF

[<http://www.pcpitstop.com/pcsafety/video.asp>]  
(Thanks - John WZ4A)

Good RFI stuff on dimmers

[<http://www.epanorama.net/documents/lights/lightdimmer.html#rfi>]

and

[<http://www.lutron.com/applicationnotes/360484.pdf>]  
(Thanks - Eric K3NA)

For all you DXers this is one more reason to be using

LOTW: [<http://www.hb9bza.net/lotw/#howtohelp>]

If you don't know what LOTW is then check out:

[<http://www.arrl.org/lotw/>]

(Thanks Ian - N8IK)

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