

**Mount Vernon
Amateur Radio Club
K4US**
*"PUBLIC SERVICE WITH
FUN AND FRIENDSHIP"*



Volume 18

JANUARY 2005

Number 01

Ye Olde RF Output

MEETING NOTICE
JANUARY 13, 2005
7:30 PM

MOUNT VERNON
GOVERNMENTAL CENTER
2511 PARKERS LANE
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22306
MVARC MEETS ON THE SECOND
THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH EXCEPT
IN DECEMBER

MVARC REPEATER: K4US/R
146.055 MHz INPUT/146.655 MHz
OUTPUT
PL TONE: 141.3 Hz

AUTOPATCH AVAILABLE TO
MEMBERS

MVARC HOME PAGE:
WWW.MVARC.ORG
WWW.MVARC.COM

HAPPENINGS

January 13 - MOUNT VERNON AMATEUR RADIO CLUB monthly meeting. Held at MOUNT VERNON GOVERNMENTAL CENTER 2511 Parker's Lane, 22306. 7:30 p.m. See you there!

January 4,11,18,25 - MVARC ARES NET- 146.055/146.655-8:30 PM local time. The Ten Meter portion meets immediately following the Two Meter Net on 28.415 MHz. Come and join in!

January 22 - MVARC Breakfast will be held at The Old Country Buffet on Route 1 at 8:30 a.m. Everyone's invited to join MVARC members for breakfast. They meet the 4th Saturday of every month.

NOTICE--VE EXAM LOCATION
THE JANUARY 8, 2005 VE EXAM
WILL BE HELD AT

The FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
2723 KING STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VA
CALL JOHN, WZ4A AT 703-971-3905
FOR MORE INFO.

Ye Olde RF Output is published monthly by the Mount Vernon Amateur Radio Club. Voluntary articles and comments are solicited.

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LOOKING BACK, THEN FORWARD

By Dave, AI4FC
YORFO editor

It's hard to imagine all the work that Steve, K3IZ, has done over the last 20 years as editor of Ye Olde RF Output.

He is the only editor the Club's newsletter has ever had. He babied it through a technological revolution. He was at the helm when it won a national award. His tenure as editor is awesome indeed.

Steve is an Alexandria native who went to Thomas Edison High School before heading to Old Dominion University in Richmond for a teaching degree. After a few years in the classroom, Steve took a job with IBM serving copiers. He was first licensed as a ham radio operator in the 8th grade, and for half his life in the hobby he has been the newsletter editor.

"When I first got into the club, it was in its second or third year," Steve said in a recent interview. "It was the president's job to do the newsletter."

It was produced on a typewriter, which some of us will remember as a mechanical device that would imprint paper with the impression of letters as keys were struck. It was a laborious task.

Jerri Sweeny, N4GHI, was president then, Steve recalled. She would hand-carry the letter to the club's membership. Steve ascended to the president's chair a few years later, and held the job until 1984 or so. And that's when the editorship was born.

"I thought the requiring the president to also produce the

newsletter would prevent people from taking on the job," Steve said. So he volunteered to continue writing and producing the newsletter after his term expired and a new president took over.

It wasn't such a big deal then. The newsletter was a one-page rag that included minutes of the last meeting and previewed the upcoming meeting. Most months Steve was able to run off the newsletter as part of his job aligning IBM copiers.

"In those days, running off 100 copies to test a machine was typical," he said.

About the time that IBM sold its copy business to Kodiak, the Club was able to obtain a pretty good deal on its own copier that Steve managed to keep alive through the rest of his tenure as editor.

"It still makes a copy," he said. "But the feeder doesn't work anymore and it won't copy on both sides of a sheet of paper."

As the club grew, so did newsletter's circulation. In the early 1990s, as Steve recalled, the Ye Olde RF Output won a "superior" award in an ARRL design contest. The newsletter hit peak production numbers when the Club obtained a bulk mailing permit requiring a minimum 250 circulation.

"It got to the point it was really hard to put the newsletter," Steve said. "Eventually e-mail grew in acceptance and we decided to start sending it out that way."

Hams being technologically savvy people, the Club was able to shift three-quarters of its 200 members to e-mail delivery. Today, only about 25 newsletters are still mailed the old fashioned way, and many of those go to members, now scattered throughout the country, who bought lifetime memberships when that was offered as part of a fundraising drive to buy a new 2 meter repeater.

Over the years, Steve rounded up help for the newsletter. Glen, W4OCC, helps assemble the monthly issue and Bob, K13O,

helps in its electronic distribution. Others, including Bob, KT4KS, who reports on the 2004 Christmas Party elsewhere in this issue, contribute. But it's been Steve's responsibility to provide the content and meet the deadlines.

"I've had to scramble for articles sometimes," he said. "It's been fun, but maybe other folks will have some better ideas."

That's not likely. But I will try.

I don't have nearly the background in radio and electronics, so the first thing you'll notice is that technical stories won't be written by me. I was a novice as a kid growing up in California, but never advanced and my ticket expired.

Two years ago, at age 53, I rejoined the hobby as KG4WNG. In April I advanced to Extra Class and my call changed to AI4FC.

My day job is reporting on Congress and the administration for a California newspaper, so writing comes easy for me. But I'll need all the help I can get to make this job interesting for Club members.

As you say thanks to Steve for the outstanding job he's done over the last two decades, feel free to drop me an e-mail with complaints, suggestions and submissions as I takeover the keyboard.

NEW AMONG US

The club's roster grew by three this month. Please welcome Victor Kernus, Brian Treadwell and Jeffrey Wilson.

Victor, K14HRC, has had a mercurial rise in the hobby. Two months ago he received his technician license, and a month later advanced to general. All this without a radio! Victor is still trying to decide what kind of rig he would like, and what kind of antenna he can string up at his Fairfax Station home. A patent attorney with a background as an electrician and a mechanical engineer, neither decision should be too taxing. Victor's second hobby is radio-controlled airplanes. Victor

can be reached at 703-690-3133, or through e-mail at vkernus@cox.net.

Brian, WV4V, is a familiar voice on the MVARC repeater's comin' and goin' home shows. He holds an extra ticket and has been in the hobby a total of 22 years. He was licensed first as a teenager, and then dropped out after six years. After an 18-year hiatus, Brian couldn't take it any longer without an HF radio and so drove up to Baltimore to renew his association with the FCC license bureau. Brian is big into DXing and, though a bit less frequently these days, enjoys checking into HF nets. His day job is in financing American companies investing in emerging overseas nations. One of his more recent endeavors is refreshing his brass-pounding skills via an impromptu club CW roundtable weekends at 7:30 a.m. on 3.675 Mhz. Reach Brian, who lives in Vienna, at 703-255-4744, or e-mail at wv4v@arrl.net.

Jeff, K14HHL, has a cool Department of Defense job working on computer systems that will run a worldwide tactical single air picture, whatever that is. He describes it as being equivalent to APRS in the ham world. In any event, he knows his stuff. Since October, he has passed all the requirements for his extra examine except for - you guessed it - the Morse code requirement. By the time you read this, he may have knocked that off, too. Already he has a TS 2000 and a dipole set up at his Springfield home ready to go. Jeff said he is interested in digital modes, adding that "I'd like to fiddle with a little DXing, too." Reach Jeff at 703-256-4710, or e-mail at wilsonjw@cox.net.

MVARC'S HOLIDAY PARTY PROVED TO BE A FESTIVE OCCASION!

By Bob, KT4KS

The club's 2004 holiday party proved to be yet another MVARC success. Charlie AF4NT and Anna KG4DEX were the first to arrive at the Old Country Buffet; Anna supporting a new hairstyle with a light tint that indicated that she knew she was heading somewhere special. Both were sipping from two coffees, as other members began to arrive. Joan KI4FYN and Glenn W4OCC arrived with the many door prizes that were to be distributed into the affair. Like Anna, Joan too supported a fancy hairstyle, and also wore a holiday-blue glittering blouse that was attractively decorated with a snowflake pin. When Frank AA4ZS and his wife Beverly arrived, it was immediately apparent that Beverly was wearing Christmas tree earrings that added to the decorative party room. Many other MVARCers and their families continued to arrive, along with three guests that included Dave KG4QBK, Dave's 16 year-old son Andrew, and Ed KG6UTS who is from San Diego. It was interesting that Howell KG4CKJ recognized Andrew as a student in one of Howell's classes on boat construction. Of course Howell immediately approached Andrew, and reintroduced himself. As others arrived, everyone socialized in the party room while sipping sodas and coffee. Some members generally sat down in one spot, allowing people to approach them. Others, like Brad K4RT, made an effort to walk all around to wish everyone well. Socializing in this manner continued until about 7:10PM, when it was decided to finally head to the food bar as a group.

The food bar included salad, bean soup, roast beef, spare ribs, baked fish, pasta, pizza, as-

sortment of vegetables, variety of drinks, and desserts. There was something there that everyone would love to eat, and as always, the food was delicious. For the next 40 minutes, people just ate and spoke to one another. As people returned with their second helpings, many sat at different tables in an effort to speak with each of the different people throughout the room.

At about 7:50PM, and with President Carol WA4GFW (and his wife Leila WN4PP) being away on business, Joan and Glenn accepted the responsibility of organizing the club's gift exchange. Twenty-four consecutively numbered tickets were randomly passed out to those who brought a gift to participate. Each ticket holder was then to approach the table that supported the 24 gifts one at a time in the order of the number on his ticket to select a wrapped gift, and then open it in front of everyone in the room. After the first ticket holder made his selection, each subsequent ticket holder then had the option of either taking any previously selected (and of course known, as they were opened) gift or selecting a wrapped gift from the table, with no opened gift being permitted to change hands more than twice. An individual whose gift was taken away from him was then allowed to either take another gift from the table or to take an opened gift from another. Bob KI30 selected one of the first gifts, which was a 1.9 liter coffee thermos with pump. It was observed that Bob immediately placed the thermos out of site under the table, likely an attempt to keep subsequent ticket holders from getting the idea of taking it away from him. Bob was able to keep the thermos, and especially appreciated it, saying that it "appears to be functional". Other gifts that were taken included an extremely large package of AA batteries (selected by Frank), a calendar including 365 of the dumbest comments in the world (which was initially selected by John WQ4L, only to be taken away from him by

MVARC's new YORFO Editor Dave AI4FC), holiday cookies (selected by John's daughter Ann), a bottle of white wine (selected by Brad), a bottle of Bailey's Irish Crème (selected by John's wife Pat, only to have it taken away from her by Mike's KE4ER wife Silvia, only to have it taken away from Silvia by Bob KT4KS), a tiny voltmeter (selected by Frank's wife Beverly), a personal organizer (initially selected by Pat after she lost her Baileys, only to be taken away from her a bit later), the book "Ham Radio for Dummies" (selected by Roy WA4MHB), a large decorative candle (selected by Roy's wife Bonnie, which was quite a step up from the ICOM hat she selected about 6 years ago), a large work holding device with magnifying glass (initially selected by Ole Virginia Hams President, Ruth KU4WH, only to be subsequently taken away from her, Ruth subsequently taking Pat's personal-organizer/game), a home brew "Squalo" 2M antenna (selected by Steve), and a neat combination book-light/alarm-clock (taken by Pat after she lost her personal-organizer/game). Other gifts included a Borders gift card, a Blockbuster gift card, wine, and a very large holiday-decorative cookie jar. Overall, it appeared that the homebrew 2M "Squalo" antenna (brought by Howell) commanded the most attention from ham operators, while the Bailey's Irish Crème drew the most "Ooos & Ahhhs" from non-hams at the party. After the gift exchange, Glenn passed out tickets to everyone to distribute the door prizes. The first and second door prizes were battery driven drink holder with shoulder strap, won by both Mike and Joan. The third prize was a laser/level/tool set, and was won by Pat. The final door prize was a portable CD player, and was won by Steve K3IZ.

After the gift exchange and door prizes were all distributed, Steve announced that it was time to announce the winner of the Doc Hyde Ham of the Year Award. The

award was presented to MVARC repeater committee volunteers Doug WA3WEP, Dick WA4USB, Sterrett K4MBE and Frank K4EC. Both Doug and Dick were present at the party, and immediately received their plaques. Doug received the award in front of his little girl Emily who must have been proud to see her father honored in front of such a large group. Sterrett arrived at the Old Country Buffet 10 minutes after the presentation, and was awarded his plaque by Steve immediately upon his arrival. Sterrett was visibly happy to receive the award, and he too had his little girl Caitlyn KI4DXR present to witness the honor. When asked, well-dressed Caitlyn said that here Dad appeared to be "shocked, surprised" by the award. Of course, it seemed somehow appropriate that the first winner ever of the Doc Hyde Award, Frank K4EC, also be the first member to win it a second time. While Frank K4EC was not physically present to receive the award, he was certainly present in every other manner.

After the award presentation, the party shifted to a general socializing affair for the last 1/2 hour. During that time, Bob KI30 expressed that he has worked 241 countries with 233 confirmed. Steve confessed that he had no idea how many countries he had worked. When asked, Pat expressed that her cat Alexander was well, with husband John interjecting that the cat wakes them up in the middle of the night as he likes his caregivers to watch him eat. Looking for a better deal, Bob KT4KS traded his Bailey's gift for Pat's laser/level/tool set door prize. Based upon Pat's smile, she clearly seemed to think she got the better end of this bargain. While speaking with Bob KT4KS, young Caitlyn said that she has been on the air only a couple of times since obtaining her Technician ticket. Immediately before leaving for home in Manassas Park, Ruth expressed that the event "was very nice". Everyone agreed that Joan did a

wonderful job dealing with the club's door prizes. Others seen at the party included Bill W3HXF (an old time member from 1986-1996), Paul AA8O who was present with his wife Emma and daughter Sherry, Buc K3BUC, John WZ4A, and Bob NX3F (a long-time rush hour MVARC repeater regular).

The party continued till about 8:55PM, about which time the room started to clear. At that time, it was good to see that many dollar bills were left on the various tables, as the Old Country Buffet service crew treated everyone so very well.

RIGHT CONCLUSION, NEW REASON

December 16, 2004 -- Officials of Internet service provider EarthLink told the FCC that broadband over power line (BPL) cannot compete with the dominant cable or DSL technology today or in the near future. EarthLink President and CEO Garry Betty and other company officials met November 16 with FCC Chairman Michael Powell and Commission attorney Aaron Goldberger to deliver an ex parte presentation on several Wireline Competition Bureau and Common Carrier Bureau proceedings. (Source: ARRL)

LARC VEC 2004 - THE YEAR IN REVIEW

by Diane Zimmerman
AA3OF

LARC VEC is the 4th largest VEC, measured in numbers of people tested during the year. Each year, we close the gap between us and number three (West Carolina Amateur Radio Society VEC, or WCARS VEC.) We find out our relative standings at the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators held in July. To give us something to ponder

until then, here is the year in review for LARC VEC, including some statistics of which we can be very proud.

During 2004, fifteen LARC VE teams held 118 sessions. The teams administered 1342 elements to 986 people.

Numbers of people tested and numbers of elements administered have been dropping for all VECs over the past several years. There are different hypotheses for this. Some say that a surge of activity in 2000, with people taking advantage of license class restructuring, led to a decline in later activity. Others say that competing activities such as the Internet and video gaming have led people away from our hobby. LARC VEC testing activity has decreased from 2003.

The most active LARC VE team is the Laurel Amateur Radio Club VE Team under the leadership of John Creel WB3GXW. This team held 16 sessions during the year. Eleven were regular monthly sessions, two were special sessions held for graduating classes, and three were Hamfests. This team administered 174 elements to 142 people.

While the Laurel club team was tops for number of sessions held, the team that tested the most people and administered the most exams during the year was the Mount Vernon Amateur Radio Club VE team, under John Forrest WZ4A, which tested 222 people and administered 389 elements.

The team that made the news is the Harrisburg Radio Amateur Club VE Team under the leadership of George Burkett N3YB. This team was mentioned on the ARRL web site and on Amateur Radio Newline for their role in testing the 65 Trinity School students who tested and passed in November.

Two hundred amateur radio operators worked as LARC VE's during the year. The most active LARC VE by far is Les Jamison WR3X, who worked 18 sessions. Les was a VE with four

different teams during the year.

The most active LARC VE's during the year were, in descending order:

VE
Call
Sessions Worked
Jamison Jr., Les
WR3X
18
Lempicki, Francis
AA4ZS
14
Forrest, John
WZ4A
14
Cimbala, Michele
WK3X
14
Thompson, Ellen
N3EMI
12
Diamond-Rose, Brenda
KB3ATI
12
Creel, John
WB3GXW
12
Anderson, Robert
AF3D
12
Rose, Robert
AA3RR
11
May, Mary Ellen
W3VY
11
Mantich, Matt
N3JMK
11
Corron, George
AF4JH
11

Bevan, Holly
N3MB
11
Zimmerman, Diane
AA3OF
10
Wiles, Dale
KA3SVF
10
Schaefer, Rusty
N3WKE
10
Scarborough, Robert
KC3EV
10
Queen, Ken
K3EQ
10
May, Charles
AA3WC
10
David Jr., C. T.
K3GXF
10
Cutchall Sr., Carol
WA4GFW
10

Two new teams joined the VEC during 2004. They are the Palm Beach Amateur Radio Council, with Team Leader Jeff Beals WA4AW, and the Clearwater Amateur Radio Society, with Team Leader Dan Hawthorne AI4ET. Neither team tested during 2004; I am looking forward to adding their totals to our 2005 activity.

The VEC lost several teams this year due to retirement of a Team Leader with no new leader stepping up to take over the team or due to team inactivity.

John Johnston W3BE, the LARC representative to the NCVEC

Question Pool Committee, resigned. John had seen the question pool revisions through one complete cycle (Technician, General and Extra pools.) We were not able to get a new QPC member. However, the new QPC Chairman instituted a system of formal liaisons from the VEC's. LARC VEC appointed Rol Anders K3RA who tests with the HEMARC team as our liaison.

Bob Rose AA3RR resigned as Webmaster. Bob was responsible for developing and maintaining the VEC's web site. Bob did a great job and will be missed. Ed Herbrechtsmeier K3QX, Webmaster for the Laurel Amateur Club's web site, is the new Webmaster.

Tests were released for the new General Class question pool, which became effective as of July 1. Howard Lenhart K3IOG and Diane Zimmerman AA3OF prepared the tests.

My dream is to become the number three VEC. While I don't expect ever to surpass number one (ARRL VEC, testing 20,242 people in 2003) or number two (W5YI-VEC, testing 6,778 people), I believe it possible and probable that we can surpass WCARS VEC (1,180 people tested in 2003.) LARC's 2003 testing total was 1,056 people. I'll keep you informed about our relative status for 2004. I'm proud of the good work done by everyone associated with the VEC during the year, and am looking forward to many more years of VE testing.

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