

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



Volume 18

JULY 2005

Number 07

# Ye Olde RF Output

## FIELD TRIP NOTICE

**JULY 14, 2005**

7:30 PM

### **XM RADIO SITE**

1500 Eckington Place, NE  
Washington, DC

MVARC MEETS ON THE SECOND  
THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH EXCEPT  
IN DECEMBER AND JULY

**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](http://WWW.MVARC.ORG)  
[WWW.MVARC.COM](http://WWW.MVARC.COM)

## HAPPENINGS

**July 14** - MOUNT VERNON AMATEUR RADIO CLUB field trip. Held at XM Radio Site, 1500 Eckington Place, NE, Washington, DC. 7:30 p.m. See you there!

**July 5,12,19,26** - 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!

**July 23** - MVARC Breakfast will be held at The Old Country Buffet on Route 1. Everyone's invited to join MVARC members for breakfast. They meet the 4th Saturday of every month.

**NOTICE--VE EXAM LOCATION**  
**THE JULY 9, 2005 VE EXAM WILL BE HELD AT**

**The FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH**  
**2723 KING STREET**  
**ALEXANDRIA, VA**  
**CALL JOHN, WZ4A AT 703-971-3905**

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

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### **CREW SPONSORSHIP**

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### **LIAISON**

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703-256-3568

### **MVARC WEBSITE**

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Glenn Bilger-W4OCC  
Leila Cutchall-WN4PP

Carol Cutchall-WA4GFW  
Frank Mackey-K4EC



## **JULY MEETING IS XM RADIO FIELD TRIP**

The July Club meeting July 14 will be a field trip to tour XM Radio's facilities. XM Radio is one of two companies that offer subscription access to more than a 200 radio stations, many of which are commercial free. Because signals are bounced off of satellites, customers can receive signals virtually anywhere within the satellites' sweep. That means steady, uninterrupted and high quality listening almost anywhere in the United States, whether in your own home, driving around the country in a car, or hiking in the wilderness.

The tour begins at 7:30 p.m. Thursday.

Meet at the XM Radio offices at 1500 Eckington Place NW in Washington, D.C. This is one block away from the intersection of New York & Florida Avenues, N.E. And two blocks away from the new New York Avenue Red Line Metro Station. Car pooling will be at 6:30 p.m. at the Starbucks in Beacon Mall. Talk-in will be on 146.655- PL 141.3 repeater.

See you there!

# JUNE 9, 2005 MEETING MINUTES

By George, N1BV  
Club secretary

The meeting was held at the Mount Vernon Governmental Center and was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by the President, Carol, WA4GFW. He then led the Pledge of Allegiance. Next, everyone introduced themselves.

The May minutes, as posted on the reflector, were approved. John, K2VPR, gave the Treasurer's Report. As of 31 May 2005:

Checking:	\$1,240.82
Savings:	3,343.56
Cash on hand:	121.50
Doc Hyde fund:	906.50
TOTAL ASSETS:	\$4,705.88

Because of an error of adding the "Doc Hyde Fund" to the total in the treasury, the total amounts in the February, March, and April Minutes should be \$4,589.75, \$4,520.57, and \$4,576.14. A motion was made and approved to change the minutes.

There was no ARES report. John, WZ4A, provided the Education/Volunteer Examiner Report and reported that at the Manassas Ham Fest twenty four tests were administered. He also noted that there would be a regular test session this Saturday.

Doug, WA4WEP, gave the Repeater Committee report and said the repeater was operating. He would be looking into new antennas for the repeater.

Keith, N6JWN, gave the Coast Guard Station report. The Henry amplifier was down because of either a tube or relay problem. The 850 was repaired, and they are waiting for a new power supply. The 922 Kenwood is operating. The Coast Guard is going to repair

the log periodic antenna and the cubic. He asked for volunteers to man the SHARES packet on weekends for a designated time. It appears it would amount to one or two hours a month. A motion was made and passed that the MVARC would purchase mounts for the equipment, if the Coast Guard cannot.

Mike, KE4ER, reported that USAF MARS is having a problem, as there is no longer a mission for MARS.

Bob, KT4KS provided the Outreach report and reported that he had sent articles on the MVARC Field Day to the Washington Post, Times, and the Mt. Vernon Voice. It was recommended from the floor that he contact I.J. Hudson, K9ITS, for possible television coverage.

Bob, KI3O, reported that the INOVA Mt. Vernon Hospital meeting rooms would be available for MVARC meetings for every month except December. A motion was made and passed to change the meeting place from the Mt. Vernon Government Center to the hospital.

Old Business George, N1BV, reported that he had drafted a new set of By-Laws. These merged the present By-Laws and Constitution, made them compatible with the Articles of Incorporation, and incorporated sections addressing non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations from the Woodbridge Wireless and the ECARS By-Laws. He has provided copies to the officers and W4ZA for initial review and comment.

New Business KI3O made a motion regarding an individual award. After discussion, the motion was tabled. John, W4ZA requested the MVARC buy a copier for use at the test sessions for the convenience of the VECs. A motion was made and passed for him to purchase a copier with a price not to exceed \$125. Paul, AA8O, will look into

putting a map to the test location on the MVARC website.

A club breakfast will be held on the last Saturday of the month, and Field Day is the 25th and 26th. Doug, WA4WEP, was the Cookie Monster, and Keith, N6JWN, volunteered for the next meeting. KO1D, the guest speaker, and also put out a request for presentation recommendations.

There was no presentation.

## REMEMBRANCES: W6AM

(ed. note: Donald C. Wallace is regarded as a DX pioneer who wrote frequently - and was frequently written about - our hobby that he enriched. There are many websites that recount stories about Wallace, often described as the Grand Old Man of amateur radio. One -- <http://home.swipnet.se/dx/porthole/w6am.htm> -- also includes a photograph of Don at the Palos Verdes, California, shack that MVARC club member Tom Lally writes about below. Wallace died May 25, 1985)

By Tom, W1NSS

I had never met Don Wallace in person until I parked behind his car one day in 1955. I recognized him as he approached, since I'd seen him copy 40 words a minute on a rickety card table at a hamfest. I informed him that I was a ham, and we exchanged pleasantries, and he asked me if I'd like to go up and see his shack. He waited until I finished my errand; then I tailed him up to Palos Verdes Estates, where he owned 240 acres - and enough copperweld, I'm sure, to reach Catalina.

A guard, who was packing a big .45, let us through the gate, and after navigating through a forest of power poles, we pulled up to his shack. Was I impressed! It was 30 feet wide, and at least 100 feet long, and

the open wire feeders for his rhombic antennas came in through the walls all the way down the room. He had purchased it from the Press Wireless Company, antennas and all, when they ceased operations there.

First thing I noticed was the transmitter. It was NOT A HAM RIG. More like a broadcast station. The name on it wasn't "Ten Tec." More like "Gates," as I recall, or "Westinghouse." In a world of desktops, it was a refrigerator. Those gigantic bottles were glowing cherry red, and I asked him how much power he was running. He said, "800 watts." He was DISSIPATING 800 WATTS right under my nose.

Even when younger, Don Wallace was a QRO guy. When others discovered air-cooling, Don preferred flowing tap water to carry away the heat of his finals. Now I understand the reason for the armed guard. He was Don's FCC shield.

Now, the rhombic is the acknowledged king of all antennas, but its one drawback is the difficulty in rotating it. With separate antennas pointed in all directions of the compass, it becomes the serious DX-er's choice. I asked Don if he got a lot of S9 signals on those whopping antennas, and he said, "I rarely give anybody an S9 report unless he is obviously local." Then he showed me how he selects an antenna to favor a DX station. He had a small rotary switch up above his receiver, and when he turned it, you could hear the relays going "clickedy, clickedy, click" down the room until he got maximum signal to his receiver.

Besides being an ardent ham, Don was a down-to-earth businessman. He didn't let his acreage go to waste. He planted garbanzo beans - a little cash crop to help pay his electric bill. Palos Verdes was an attractive area for new home construction, and as the developers

moved in all around him, the land values increased apace, and when his tax bill reached \$7,000 a year, he sold out and moved to Arizona where he could hang some more copperweld.

Very 73 to him, wherever he may be today.

## **MVARCers CELEBRATE FIELD DAY**

By Bob, KT4KS

It was 8AM when Dave AI4FC arrived at Pohick Park to drop off a barbeque grill and two dozen of Krispy-Kreme's finest doughnuts, officially starting MVARC's Field Day. Mary N4TCI pulled into the lot with a quantity of food, drink, spices, chips, utensils and paper products that evidenced a high level of planning and effort on her part. Station operators and set-up personal then started to arrive, and the site quickly began to take on the look of a genuine Ham Radio Club Field Day site.

George N1BV used his proven bow and arrow to set his dipole well into the trees, and by 10AM he had an operational 10M/15M phone station in his neat little tent. Pat KB8PYM and his son James KC8WLJ set up a 2M/440 station using the TS2000 that Pat purchased after he obtained his Extra Class ticket. Pat's station employed a 5 element Yagi on 20-foot mast.

Carol WA4GFW set up a "GOTA" station in a tent whose set-up was coordinated by his daughter Amy KI4IAL, who seems to have inherited her father's take-charge talent, as well as her mother's profile. Keith N6JWN set up an 80M-phone station employing his IC746, tent and dipole.

Doug WA3WEP employed his air-

conditioned trailer as a 40M CW station, which would generally be used to house John WQ4L who brought his fancy magnetic Hex Bencher paddles to work the contest.

The Venture Crew segment of the club set up a 5th station that employed a very tall mast with fancy inverted type antenna sloping downward from its two sides, a system of which must certainly have taken many hands to set up. The antenna was coupled to Demi's. K4BSA, tent that housed an IC746. These station owners had lots of help, as remaining set-up volunteers included: "Buc" K3BUC, Dick WA4USB, Lisa WE4BSA, John KG4YED, Erin ("Krispie Kreme") KG4RKK, Paul (Call sign from 6-Land), Carol's grandson Nicolas KI4BDY, Leila WN4PP, Bill W2BSA, Bill KDCNS, Emalee and Bob KT4KS.

About 11:30AM, after initial setup, people started to take both lunch and much needed drinks on this 90-degree day. During this lull, other members arrived for a visit. Tom W1NSS, who was supporting a new beard, stopped by and was wearing his MVARC shirt. Relatively new member Sean KG6BHR arrived in a vehicle that supported 6 antennas. Sean's two young twin sons did not seem to be impressed with the setup, but were happy with containers of water supplied by the club. Jeanie N4ZGI came with a supply of great tasting apples, nectarines and cherries, especially appreciated food for the more health conscious members. Mark and Austin came with their three golden retrievers.

Repeater Volunteer Sterret K4MBE drove up with his "Chief Ramsey" looking car, supporting tinted windows and antenna. Julie KD4WSZ arrived with a large container of good tasting cupcakes and pickles. The site has several visitors, including John G4TZD from England, two of John's family members, and

local ham radio operator Matt AI4KT. Matt was interested in observing someone use paddles to transmit CW, subsequently getting fascinating demonstration from John WQ4L.

The contest seemed to begin without special notice, as the 2PM time came and passed without an alarm or shout of any type. Regardless, at that moment there were five operating stations at our site, and they were all running. As MVARC is based on more than some store bought radios, socialization continued during the afternoon.

After Frank AA4ZS and his wife Beverly arrived, and both Beverly and Leila took a walk to the Potomac River located just a few hundred yards from the site. Leila had the misfortune of falling and spraining her ankle, one of three incidents of MVARCers falling to the ground in the line of duty. Leila was especially fortunate, as park employee Ranger Steve picked her up in his golf-cart type vehicle, and drove her back to the site.

Both Amy and Nicolas had expensive looking trail bicycles at the site, and went on several rides around the park. Both were generous in permitting others to ride their bikes, which bikes were so good that they made 10 speed bicycles of the 70's feel like trucks. During mid afternoon, Doug's XYL Ann released 6 young opossums into the wild of the park. Many members took the time to actually walk out into the woods to view the actual release.

During the afternoon, the level of station success varied dramatically from station to station. While Keith obtained a very high number of contacts at his 80M-phone station, John was suffering from an exceedingly high level of noise on 20M CW. Pat's 2M/440 station included a lot of expensive equipment, but lacked a compass to determine exactly how to reposition their directional antenna to make clear

contact with an operator in Maryland.

As 4:30PM came around, additional members began to arrive for the picnic. George's XYL Jean arrived with their well trained little dog "Bo". Bill W2BSA's XYL Debbie KI4IPR arrived, and later during the evening mentioned that she has yet to actually get on the air. Mike KE4ER arrived, and discussed his earlier afternoon meeting involving upcoming soccer rule changes. Even Phil KFAJZ, Judy KGURM, Mike AA4MC, and John K4KXK were present for the barbeque, John of which brought along his wife of 10 months, Veronica (no call yet). The remainder of Pat's family arrived, and included his wife and two daughters. As in passed MVARC Field Days, there was a wide variety of food for the picnic, and lots of it. Doug single-handedly cooked the hot dogs, hamburgers and chicken. The buns were especially noticed, as Mary brought the expensive potato-bread type buns to the affair. Other foods included potato salad, chips, dips, vegetables and a neat tasting lemon type cake. Drinks included bottled water, Diet Coke, Sprite, Mountain Dews and Nestle Ice teas.

During dinner, topics of discussion were as numerous as the number of attendees. Mike AA4MC spoke about his Civil War relic hunting with one of his many metal detectors. George and his wife discussed their little dog, who certainly seemed to enjoy all the attention and ice cubes that he was getting. There was some discussion regarding other members who were anticipated as coming later in the evening to operate. As the sun started to descend and night approached, the event slowly transformed itself from a social event into a more focused ham radio competition, as socializers headed home to the comfort of those homes, while real radio operators headed back to their stations.

As I headed home with the

comfort-seekers, that ended my Field Day.

## WZ4A COORDINATES RADIO TESTING

By Bob, KT4KS

Earlier this year, John WZ4A was contacted by OVHer David Lane KG4GIY. Dave inquired if John could provide ham radio testing at the Manassas hamfest. In response, John personally organized 19 VEs and put together all the pre-test paperwork, resulting in all team personnel heading out to Manassas by 6:30AM on the 1st Sunday in June.

The first VEs to arrive at the Prince William County Fairgrounds included Leila WN4PP, Carol WA4GFW and Bob KT4KS. This trio arrived at 7:30PM, and immediately started to set up tables and chairs both inside the test building and outside under two large canopies graciously provided by the fest sponsors, OVH.

The test building was located at the north end of the County Fairgrounds, separate from the actual hamfest, permitting for non-hamfest attending applicants to be tested without being required to pay a hamfest entrance fee. (Unlike most American advertisements, when OVH uses the term "free", they mean it.)

During the next 45 minutes, all of the remaining VEs arrived, and by 8:30 PM the team had two check-in stations, two grading stations, one CW test station, three runners, and one Quality Control Leader (i.e. John) ready to start testing. During the morning, 24 applicants arrived to take tests. In addition to those who already looked like hams, applicants included a 10-year old boy, a teenage YL, and a few other YLs.

## INTERNATIONAL LIGHTHOUSE/LIGHTSHIP WEEKEND

Testing went very smoothly, and without incident. During the morning many success stories went around, while the less-successful stories generally circulated as "I-have-to-study-a-bit-more" type stories. At precisely 9:30AM, the registration closed down, and an announcement was made over the Fairground loudspeakers that no more applicants would be registered on this hamfest morning.

About 10:45AM, the testing quickly came to a close as the last few applicants turned in their test papers. By 11:10, all the tables and chairs were put back where they were found, all of the test materials were packed up and placed into VE Mary's N4TCI's white SUV to provide John with more work during his Sunday afternoon, and all the VEs were prepared to head their separate ways.

As at past monthly test sessions in Alexandria, a group of seven of the Ves went to lunch. As per Glenn's W4OCC recommendation, the lunch group drove to the Old Country Buffet on Rt. 234 in Manassas.

Today is Tuesday 14 June 2005 and already 154 stations in 31 countries have confirmed their participation in the International Lighthouse/Lightship Weekend 20/21 August 2005. A list of the stations with QTH and QSL information can be found at [http://illw.net/2005\\_list.htm](http://illw.net/2005_list.htm)

If you are joining us in the fun of the weekend please listen out for other lighthouse or lightship station. We wish to remind non-US CW stations to operate above 14.225 to allow access by Advanced Class US amateurs. Operations below 14.225 just eliminate the potential for some US hams to work the LH stations.

Last year there were 376 lighthouse/lightship stations QRV during the weekend. So come and join us in the fun of the weekend and make a total of over 400 lighthouse/ship stations. An entry form can be found on the web page [illw.net](http://illw.net)

73 Mike GM4SUC  
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