

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



Volume 16

JANUARY 2003

Number 01

Ye Olde RF Output

MEETING NOTICE JANUARY 9, 2003

7:30 PM

INOVA MOUNT VERNON HOSPITAL

2501 PARKERS LANE
ALEXANDRIA, VA

SECOND FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
MVARC MEETS ON THE SECOND
THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH EXCEPT
IN DECEMBER

HAPPENINGS

January 9 - MOUNT VERNON AMATEUR RADIO CLUB monthly meeting. Held at INOVA Mount Vernon Hospital Second Floor Conference Room on Parker's Lane. See you there!

January 7,14,21,28 - 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 25 - 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.

MVARC REPEATER: K4US/R
146.055 MHz INPUT/146.655 MHz
OUTPUT

AUTOPATCH AVAILABLE TO
MEMBERS

MVARC HOME PAGE:
<http://www.mvarc.org>

**NOTICE--VE EXAM LOCATION
THE JANUARY 11, 2003 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 OR TO CONFIRM THE
LOCATION OF THE TEST SESSION.**

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

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VE EXAM LOCATION CHANGED (JANUARY 1, 2003)

Submitted by Frank, K4EC
MVARC VE Coordinator John, WZ4A, reports that because of scheduling conflicts at Lee District Park, all VE exams in 2003 will be given at the First Christian Church, 2723 King Street, Alexandria, VA. When presented with the scheduling conflict, John conducted extensive research to find another site within Fairfax County, but he was unable to find a suitable alternative.

Thanks to Bill, W2BSA, we will be able to use the First Christian Church, which is also the host site for Venturing Crew Post 80 and has been the venue for past VE sessions and examination training activities.

MVARC 2002 HOLIDAY PARTY WORKED FOR US!

By Bob KT4KS

MVARC's 2002 holiday party at the Old Country Buffet was successful, and put all attending members into the proper frame of mind to celebrate through the end of the year.

The night of the event was unusually warm, so all looked encouraging for a fine turnout. The first to arrive at the dining room site included Steve, K3IZ, Mary, N4TCI and Bob, KT4KS. As additional members arrived, all socialized while presents were placed on a single table for the upcoming gift exchange. The highlight of the evening occurred before any gift was open, even before any food was

eaten, as Pat Reiser (John WQ4L's XYL) effortlessly walked into the dining room with a level of health that club members had not seen for some time. About this time, OCB's Santa came in to pay us all a visit, giving special attention to Doug's, WA3WEP's little girl Emily, to whom Santa explained the meaning of holiday bells.

Frank, AA4ZS was the first to start at the food tables, at which point all of the party goers followed close behind. As always, the OCB provided the club with a wide selection of items from which to select, everyone returning food tables with something different to enjoy.

At this time the party was in full swing, as 26 members and guests were all seated, and busy both eating and socializing with one another. At one table, John, WQ4L caused a few quizzical looks when he expressed that he was eating chicken salad, his plates including separate helpings of roast chicken and green salad. At that same table, Beverly (XYL of Frank AA4ZS), Pat and Bob discussed a book written by a woman who lived on Franconia Road during the Civil War. The woman described how Union soldiers would fire cannon balls from Fort Lyon, then located at the top of the Huntington Metro Rail Station, down Franconia Road for target practice. Frank spoke about his new HF radio, and made reference that he heard Bob, KT4KS transmitting QRP from Long Branch, NJ. a few weeks prior. Glenn, W4OCC made the bold statement that XYL Joan was actually studying with her girlfriend to pass her Tech test. Joan was not so confident to provide a date when she would actually come to Lee Park to try her hand. Anna, KG4DEX, being much more confident, expressed that she was anxious to take the Extra Exam despite not having done any studying of late. Paul, AA8O, along with his XYL and daughter, were so much in the spirit that they brought along guests, Roy, WA4MHB and his XYL Bonnie, to the party. At 90

years old, Roy was looking mighty fine. Ruth, KU4WH, who drove all the way from Manassas Park, sat with Bob, K3IO at the KI3O designated "CW" table, no doubt discussing their upcoming articles for the next AUTOCALL edition. Brad, N3BF made a rare club event appearance, and spent some of the evening speaking with both Charlie, AF4NT and Bob, KT4KS. Bob, KT4KS showed photos of a Summer 2002 QRP expedition to Gettysburg, PA, most of the photos being of Ruth operating her K2 Elecraft rig at the exact site where Confederate General Longstreet launched his men toward Little Round Top on the second day's battle of Gettysburg. Leila, WN4PP was very busy taking photographs throughout the event. Leila's Husband, Carol, WA4GFW, was also present. Carol stated that Leila was finally ready to transmit CW, and even went as far to say that Leila now thinks 13 wpm is slow. Sterrett, K4MBE brought an unusual looking HT that he explained was usable for both ham and work related frequencies. Sterrett also spoke of his experience with other local ham organizations. Charlie, KD4YMT was generally speaking with the Bilgers. John, WZ4A arrived a bit after the festivities got started, but quickly caught up. John generally spoke with Ruth KU4WH, and discussed rural VA roads with Bob, KT4KS.

When the first deserts started to reach the tables, Mary initiated the gift exchange. Gifts varied widely, and included such items as: wine, pedometer, flashlights, work tools, coffee assortment package, repeater directories, Christmas ornament, candle and a Hickory Farm product. Immediately thereafter, Steve presented the Doc Hyde Award to our Club Vice President Mary, who does so much for both our club and AUTOCALL.

As the OCB closing time of 9:00 PM approached, the party started to come to an end. At that

time, most of the members seemed to be standing, making final attempts to speak with any remaining individuals with whom they had yet to speak. Tips started to appear on the tables for the OCB employees who served all of us so very well. At 9:10 PM, the last of our members left the building, everyone being placed in the proper spirit for the then upcoming holidays.

Incidentally, for all of you who missed the fun, or even for those of you who were present and would like some more, this type of gathering is repeated the 4th Saturday of every month when club members meet at the same location for the MVARC monthly breakfast. Hope to see you all again soon.

THOSE BADGES AGAIN

Check out Jim's, AF4QG, new business website: www.engravingbyhartselle.com for button's and badges. A few misspelled words need to be corrected, and also a few credit card logo's need to be added. This is still under a bit of construction. December 9th was the first day that this site has been up.

THE RANKS GROW

by John, K2VPR

Please welcome Vic Blanchard to amateur radio and the MVARC. Vic passed his technician test last Saturday, 14 December, and is waiting is call sign. Vic's email address is: z-reignn@hotmail.com and Vic's home address is 2113 Paul Spring Road, Alexandria, VA, 22307.

There is another new member to add. Welcome Dave Whitney, KG4WNG. He is a Technician licensee from 2002. Dave lives at 808 Russel Rd., Alexandria, VA. 22301. His E-mail is dmwhitney@comcast.net.

We hope to meet both these fine hams at the next meeting. Looking forward to seeing you there.

LEILA, WN4PP MAKES FIRST CW CONTACT!

by Bob KT4KS

MVARC Member Leila, WN4PP made her very first CW contact on Saturday, December 14, 2002. This is how it came about.

At last month's Dec. 12 Holiday Party, Leila's husband Carol, WA4GFW expressed that his wife was anxious to make her first CW contact. Carol then suggested to me that I plan a schedule. Thus, I phone called Leila at her home in Lorton on Saturday afternoon, and at 2:30PM we QSOed on 7.035 CW for about 12 minutes. During the exchange, Leila provided the regular signal report, and sent that she was operating an IC-706 with Bencher paddles. Leila sent at about 8 wpm, and her sending was very good. It was obvious that she had practiced with them beforehand. During the QSO, the phone line was left open to avoid any miscommunication, but upon looking back, that was not really necessary.

After the QSO, I expressed to Leila that it was not likely that she would find anyone actually calling "CQ" at a speed that she could confidently copy that station's call sign. She would just have to do the initial calling of CQ with the expectation that anyone responding would properly reply at the same 8 wpm speed. The reason is that most new operators quickly mature to a 15+ wpm sending/receiving speed within 1 month, and there are very few operators out there who have yet to reach that 1 month anniversary. Additionally, we discussed both the popular shorthand notations "and" is sent as "es", "u" is sent for "you" and the manner as to how the frequency is passed back and forth between two CW operators during QSO. Incidentally, Leila's RST was 569, and I was transmitting from Alexandria, VA.

WHAT'S ON THE BEEB?

by Ed, KE4SKY

I thought you might enjoy having this BBC freq list

Letters
Worldservice
[mailto:worldservice.letters@bbc.co.uk]

15190 kHz is in fact one of the frequencies we suggest trying between 1100 and 1700 GMT (6 a.m. to midday EST). In case you do not have the complete current list of suggested frequencies (with transmitter locations), it follows (valid for the period 27th October 2002 to 29th March 2003):

Frequency	Time
5975 kHz (Antigua)	2300-0500 GMT

6135 kHz (Delano, California)	0400-0600 GMT
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9525 kHz (Okeechobee, Florida)	0100-0400 GMT
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9825 kHz (UK)	0000-0300 GMT
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12095 kHz (UK); 2100-2400 GMT (Ascension Is)	0000-0300 GMT
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15190 kHz (Caribbean news 1100-1130 & 1200-1230 GMT Mon-Fri; 'Sportsworld' Saturdays 1405-1700 GMT)	1100-1700
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Regards
Audience Relations
BBC World Service

"X" DOES NOT MARK THE SPOT FOR HAMS

By Bob KT4KS

MVARC member Ruth, KU4WH once expressed to me that hams whose call sign suffixes

begin with the letter "X" get fewer QSL cards than hams whose calls begin with any of the remaining 25 letters. Ruth would know as she is a former QSL Bureau manager, and was once responsible for call signs in Four-Land whose suffixes began with the letter "X".

Anyway, I recently examined my 4 1/2 year old log book that includes over 3,000 CW contacts, and determined that she may indeed be correct, at least when involving CW operators. My log indicated that suffixes that began with the letter "X" included the least number of contacts with only 63, followed by the letters "Q" and "U" with 67 and 84 contacts respectively. In comparison, the most popular beginning suffix letter was the letter "B" with 198, followed by the letters "A" and "L" with 175 and 164 contacts respectively.

I'm not too sure what this means, as the letter "U" is sent much more easily than the letter "L". There must be something less appealing about the letter "X" when it comes to CW hams. Clearly, "X" does not mark the spot for many hams.

SPECIAL EVENT, ARISS CONTACT TO MARK TRANSMISSION CENTENNIAL

Special event station KM1CC will be on the air January 11-19, 2003, to mark the 100th anniversary of Guglielmo Marconi's inaugural wireless transmission between the US and Great Britain January 18, 1903.

Marconi used a 35 kW rotary spark transmitter and a massive antenna system to transmit a 54-word greeting from President Theodore Roosevelt to England's King Edward VII. The monarch promptly acknowledged receipt of the message via land line and cable.

The special event will take place at the former Coast Guard

station at Coast Guard Beach in Eastham, Massachusetts, which is near the original Marconi site. Operation will include several amateur modes, including SSB, CW, FM, digital and satellite. The special event station will open to the public from 9 AM until 5 PM EST(1400-2200z), but operating will take place 24 hours a day.

An Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) school contact is to be scheduled during the weeklong celebration. Selected students from three Cape Cod high schools will speak via KM1CC with a member of the new Expedition 6 ISS crew.

Marconi's daughter, Princess Elettra Marconi, is scheduled to attend the a reenactment of the groundbreaking wireless transmission on January 18, when KM1CC will transmit the text of Roosevelt's original message to King Edward VII. Additional details are on the Marconi Radio Club Web site at <http://personal.tmlp.com/k1vv/w1aa>.

From ARRL Headquarters
Special Bulletin 9

THE INVERSE SQUARE AROUND

by Frank, K4EC

"I recall a QST article by Larsen E. Rapp, WIOU, where he told us that we can increase the strength of our RF output signal levels by using different diameters of coax. Start out with RG-8, then go to RG-58, then RG-141. The electrons will be compressed as they move from the larger diameter cable to the next smaller diameter cable which will make them increase velocity which will make them fly off the antenna much faster!" (Thanks, Chuck K3FT)

(Don't forget to wax your antennas to cut down on the resistance. - ed.)

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

by Jerry Schadle, WA3UTL
(I think)

They have finally found a diagnosis for my condition. Hooray!! I have recently been diagnosed with A.A.A.D.D. - Age Activated Attention Deficit Disorder...This is how it goes:

I decide to wash the car; I start toward the garage and notice the mail on the table. OK, I'm going to wash the car. But first I'm going to go through the mail. I lay the car keys down on the desk, discard the junk mail and I notice the trash can is full. OK, I'll just put the bills on my desk and take the trash can out, but since I'm going to be near the mailbox anyway, I'll pay these few bills first.

Now, where is my checkbook? Oops, there's only one check left. My extra checks are in my desk. Oh, there's the coke I was drinking. I'm going to look for those checks. But first I need to put my coke further away from the computer, or maybe I'll pop it into the fridge to keep it cold for a while. I head toward the kitchen and my flowers catch my eye, they need some water. I set the coke on the counter and uh oh! There are my glasses. I was looking for them all morning! I'd better put them away first.

I fill a container with water and head for the flowerpots. Aaaaaagh! Someone left the TV remote in the kitchen. We will never think to look in the kitchen tonight when we want to watch television so I'd better put it back in the family room where it belongs. I splash some water into the pots and onto the floor, I throw the remote onto a soft cushion on the sofa and I head back down the hall trying to figure out what it was I was going to do?

End of Day: The car isn't washed, the bills are unpaid, the coke is sitting on the kitchen counter, the flowers are half watered, the Checkbook still only has one check in it and I can't seem to find my car

keys! When I try to figure out how come nothing got done today, I'm baffled because I KNOW I WAS BUSY ALL DAY LONG!!!

I realize this is a serious condition and I'll get help, BUT FIRST I think I'll check my e-mail...

WANT TO BECOME AN AMATEUR RADIO OPERATOR?

--Qualify for the entry level Amateur Radio Technician Class License from the FCC

--No Morse Code Required

--Just four weekend classes including the Exam

--Open to the Public.

Sponsor: SCOUTING VENTURE CREW 80 and the MOUNT VERNON AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Location: First Christian Church, 2723 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22302

When: Four Successive Saturdays in January and February 2003:

January 11 - 10:00 AM Noon
(Orientation and Study Materials Distribution)

January 18 - 9:00 AM 3:00 PM
(Instruction)

January 25 - 9:00 AM 3:00 PM
(Instruction)

February 1 - 9:00 AM 4:30 PM
(Instruction, Review and Exam)

Where: First Christian Church - 2723 King Street - Alexandria, VA

Cost: \$20 (Cost of Supplied Materials Only 1 textbook plus CD-ROM Yours to Keep!)

Additional tax-deductible donations to Crew 80 are always welcome!

Age: No Limit (parental accompaniment recommended under age 14)

Instruction Method: Textbook-reading assignments combined with personal and videotape instruction and computer-based practice exam question review. You keep the textbook and CD-ROM. They are great references!

Course Description: ' Everything you need to know to get an Amateur Radio Operators Technician Class license without having to learn the Morse Code. Fundamentals of electricity, electronic circuit theory, electronic components, radio theory and electromagnetic wave propagation, antennas, feed lines, amateur radio operating procedures, practices and equipment, and FCC rules and regulations.

How to Sign Up: Pre-register anytime but no later than January

3, 2003: By email to venturecrew80@yahoo.com, or by phone at 703-971-5477 between 7-9 PM. If you do not pre-register by January, 3, 2003 we cannot guarantee that you will get your materials on January the 11 th.

Provide Name, Address, Phone Number and Email address

The registration fee (cash preferred) will be collected at the first session on January 11.

Questions ?: Email to "venturecrew80@yahoo.com", or call any of the following:

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Dick Harman WA4USB 703-971-5477

COME EXPLORE AMATEUR
RADIO WITH US!

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