

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



Volume 16

MARCH 2003

Number 03

Ye Olde RF Output

MEETING NOTICE MARCH 13, 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

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

AUTOPATCH AVAILABLE TO
MEMBERS

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

HAPPENINGS

March 13 - MOUNT VERNON AMATEUR RADIO CLUB monthly meeting. Held at INOVA Mount Vernon Hospital Second Floor **Conference Room C & D** on Parker's Lane. See you there!

March 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!

March 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 MARCH 8, 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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MINUTES FEBRUARY 13, 2003 MEETING

The meeting was held at the INOVA Mount Vernon Hospital and was called to order by the President. He then led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Everyone introduced themselves. The minutes of the November 14, 2002 and January 9, 2003 were approved subject to any corrections later. John, K2VPR gave the Treasurer's Report.

Committee/Event Reports

VE EXAM - Mary, N4TCI reported we had 25 people at the test session.

REPEATER - Frank, K4EC said the repeater moved to it's permanent location next week and will be tuned up. They plan to use a six foot rack and different duplexers. Will need help to move.

PROGRAM - Bob, KI3O introduced our speaker, Joe Nunemaker, KD3VR who will speak on Marine Electronics. Our ARRL Section Manager, Carl Clements, W4CAC will be the speaker in March. Please plan to attend.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE - Bob, KI3O said the Nominating Committee is still looking to fill some of the positions. If anyone is interested in filling any of those positions, contact Bob.

Business

John, K2VPR said he contacted Dick, N4YDP about the Domain Name Registration renewal and he's taking care of it.

Frank, K4EC made a motion to reimburse those conducting the Venturing Crew Training in September 2001 for the Technician Class Videos they purchased, and to fund the purchase of the General

Class training. The motion carried. George, N1BV said Tom, N4BV set everything up to hold the George Washington's Birthday Special Event Station at Mount Vernon on the President's Day weekend.

John, K2VPR reminded everyone about the President's Day parade on Monday. He also said the Club will have a table at the Winterfest on February 23 in Annapdale.

Frank, K4EC made a motion to reaffirm the authorization for \$500 for use by the Repeater Committee. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned.

MVARC MEMBERS BATTLE SNOW/RAIN TO ATTEND WINTERFEST 2003

By Bob KT4KS

Last Sunday, many MVARV members attended the area's most local hamfest at the Northern Virginia Community College along the Little River Turnpike. The snow was piled on the ground, and the rain was threatening from the sky, but that did not deter the those of us who sought either bargains or fun.

The doors to the building opened sharply at 8:00AM for the public, vendors being permitted to set up at an earlier time. When I walked up to the building at 8:40AM, I was greeted in the parking lot by John, K2VPR, who immediately escorted both me and my wares to the club table. It was John who organized the club table so that each of us MVARC members could have the opportunity to sell our items.

At the club table I found both George, N1BV and Ruth, KU4WH making attempts to find new homes for their goods, which includes books, super-fancy keyer, Elecraft K1 accessories, socket set, ARRL rotating frequency information display, various electrical

components and even an HF antenna roof tower. I immediately set out my items. As soon as I powered up my electrically lighted Schlitz beer display sign, I received my first offer (\$15) of the day, one of which I could not refuse. During the next hour, several of my other items antenna switch, two dipole center pieces, mobile HF antenna ball mount were sold. Of course I never got what I paid for the items, but that's part of what our wonderful hobby is about.

Taking a few minutes to walk around the fest, I noticed several of our many members, including: Leila, WN4PP who was taking photographs, Carol, WA4GFW, John, KD4REG, Bill, W2BSA and his little girl Erin, KG4RKK, Dwight, N4GSD who expressed his desire to get to the Club's March test session in two weeks, John, WQ4L, and Jim, AF4QG who was operating his own personal table. Jim's table was based upon his business "Engraving By Hartselle", and it was there that I ordered a badge that includes my name, call, and the phrase "Morse Code Operator". I decided upon that phrase in lieu of either the usual Club name or home town, as I figured that the phrase would allow public observers at local parks at least a chance to figure what I might be doing at that picnic table. The badge was a bargain at \$7. I saw many items at the fast, ranging from car mats to radios. I did see a slingshot coupled to a fishing reel which I purchased for \$20. I offered \$17, but he called my bluff. I then returned to the club table to aide in the club's attempt to peddle any remaining items. I think the most popular item on our club table was Ruth's logi-key. It must have been handled by about 25 potential buyers, but of course few knew what it was used for. I did my best to sell it, but failed. I am presently unaware if it ever found a new home. About this time, Howell, KG4CKJ then arrived with several items to sell, including an unusual looking 2

meter dipole constructed of copper tubing that stood about 20 inches tall.

There was tailgating in the parking lot when I first pulled into the lot at about 8:15AM, but it included only about 8 vehicles or so as few tailgaters were willing to set up under the menacing clouds, which did ultimately create a down-pour ending all tailgating for the morning.

I left the hamfest about 10:20PM, and apparently was one of the first to leave. I left both a valuable rusted antenna mount (asking price \$2) and fine pair of roller blades (asking \$2) on the club table. I wonder where they are now?

The next local fest is Manassas ("always the first Sunday in June"). John, is MVARC reserving a table?

CHEERS FOR NEW MEMBERS

by John, K2VPR

Please welcome Rodney M. Jones and his wife Ana to MVARC membership. Rodney prefers to be addressed as Mark (as in his middle initial). Mark is a technician and his call is KB3JAC. His wife, Ana, is not yet licensed but Mark hopes to have Ana join our ranks one day.

Another new member is Joel Harding, KE3YK with an advanced class license getting it in 1996. He lives in Lorton, Va. Welcome, Joel! We'll look for you on the air.

Please welcome Mike Glowaski, N4WTW and his wife Kirsten, KD4GUN to MVARC membership. Mike's email address is n4wtw@arrl.net.

Please welcome our newest club members the McCuiston family Judith, KG4URM, Douglas, KG4ROA and their son Ian, KG4SCG. They all have the technician class license and we welcome them grandly.

Be on hand to welcome all

these fine folks at our next meeting. Come out and show the club your support.

73s TO ALL

by John, K2VPR

I have received the following offer from 73 Magazine:

"The following club members would like to subscribe to 73 Amateur Radio Today at the special club discount rate of \$20 for 12 issues (minimum of three members). Yes, of course you may duplicate this order form."

I don't know if there is a time limit on this offer or not; there is none indicated on the literature I have received. If you are interested, send a check to the MVARC club mail box, 7234, Alexandria, VA 22307 and indicate on the check that is for a subscription. Make the check payable to "MVARC". I will also mention this at the next club meeting. That means I would not mail the form(s) in to 73 magazine until after the March meeting.

P.S. I LOVE YOU

by Frank, K4EC

I just got this from a buddy of mine -----

If anyone needs a 13.8vdc/25 amp switching power supply for ancillary/back-up needs, Radio Shack model 22-510 is on sale for half-price \$59.97. The reviews on eHam have been good. All just FYI....

(Ed. I picked one up at the local RS store and they are really nice. Used it for the special event station and work great.)

WOODBIDGE WOOS MVARC

by Dean, WA4TK

Woodbridge Wireless Inc would like to invite all Amateurs to our Tuesday March 11th (7:30pm)

Meeting where we will Host a Seminar by ICOM "Discover the World of Today's HF & More".

WWI is on the Web:
www.woodbridgewireless.org

Talk in at 147.24 + repeater.

THE SHIRT OFF OUR BACK

by Tom, KA4CSG

Now that we have moved Waaay down South will we be able to supply the MVARC with shirts? Of course we would be interested in continuing to provide shirts for MVARC. Its not that far these days. Here's what been happening

We moved to the Eastern Shore of Alabama, a small town named Spanish Fort. It's very laid back, but they are still breathing. Marilyn is working as the Deputy Public Affairs Officer for the Mobile District of the Army Corps of Engineers.

I have a very part-time job, doing lab assembly on Govt contracts. I spent the first two weeks of December in Duschambe, Tajikistan. Further trips will be decided after the budget is passed.

Please give me a little time, and I will get back to you involving details for shirts. I really miss the MVARC gang, and sorry to have missed helping out on the USMC Marathon. Enjoy winter, buuurrrrrr, I was on Daytona beach Saturday.

MVARC'S OWN SLOTTED FOR OVH PRESIDENT!

by Bob KT4KS

MVARC member Ruth KU4WH has been recently selected as the lone candidate for President of the Ole Virginia Ham Club of Manassas, VA. Ruth originally became interested in ham radio through members of the Fauquier ARC in 1998, and subsequently became a member in OVH

which serves her local community. Presently, Ruth is the Vice President of OVH.

MVARC MEMBER PREPARES TAXES AT "HAM" RATES!

By Bob KT4KS

MVARC member Ruth KU4WH is presently serving hams in the Northern VA in the arena of tax preparation. Ruth carries out electronic filing of Federal, VA, MD and DC returns from her home office, and can file state tax returns for all states that require such. Ruth has been an Enrolled Agent since 1998, and was employed at H&R Block from 1993-1999, during which she obtained the position of supervisor. Ruth is adept at preparing all private returns, has prepared 100's of returns, and specializes in bankruptcy.

Ruth's office is located in Manassas Park, just 1 mile off of Route 28, where she prepares tax returns either while a client waits or for subsequent pick up. Ruth's rates are much less than those of the seasonally ubiquitous H & R Block, as evidenced by her cliental growth within the ham ranks, who as we all know, recognize a bargain when they see one. For a free consultation, call Ruth at 703-331-1234.

VERY INTERESTING HAM WEBSITE

Take a look at Aleks web page of Ham projects and other interesting things. WOW! http://lea.hamradio.si/~s57nan/ham_radio

IS THIS ON?

by Ron, W8RJL

The proper way to use a mobile microphone is to have it very close to your mouth (almost touching) with the microphone gain turned down, as opposed to having the microphone gain turned up and

the microphone a foot from your mouth. Did you have the processor turned on? A processor can bring up the background noise between words. Were you running at high speed with the windows down?

The making and modification of microphones is a science. Doing the extra hole in the baffle modification would probably have little impact on your high road noise situation. If you are operating in a very high noise level environment they do make noise canceling microphones. Basically they are like two microphones in one. The noise picked up by one mic is subtracted from the noise picked up by the one you are speaking directly into and the result is "noise canceling". These mics work great in airplanes, boats etc. but modern vehicles rarely need noise canceling if the radio controls (like mic gain) is set properly and the mic is close talked.

(ed. This advice can be used in more than just mobile situations. These are good ideas for all our phone operations. Good audio is important to good communication.)

FIELD DAY GETS A NEW ENTRY CLASS FOR 2003

Field Day will gain another entry class for the 2003 running of this highly popular operating event June 28-29. "Class F" stations will operate at emergency operations centers or EOCs. The change renews the emphasis of Field Day's 1933 origins as an emergency preparedness exercise as opposed to a routine contest, what former ARRL Communications Manager F. E. Handy, W1BDI, called "a test of the emergency availability of portable stations and equipment." In Handy's view, Field Day would focus attention "on the subject of 'preparedness' for communications emergencies."

ARRL Contest Branch Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND, says the League last year received

a record 2110 Field Day entries from groups and individuals. That represented a total of almost 35,000 participants who joined in what Henderson called "a great tradition."

Given the increased emphasis on emergency communications since September 11, 2001, Henderson says, the ARRL Board's Membership Services Committee asked that the Contest Branch come up with a way to accommodate stations wanting to operate from the local EOC. The new Class F station, operating from an EOC, is the result.

"This is a major change," Henderson said. "Class F has been established to encourage groups to test and further their working relationships with established emergency operations centers." The updated rules and a list of frequently asked questions in the new 2003 Field Day Packet <<http://www.arrl.org/contests/forms>> spell out the details.

A Class F entry station must set up at an "established EOC" activated by a club or non-club group. An EOC is defined as a facility established by a federal, state, county, city or other civil governmental agency or administrative entity or by a chapter of a national or international served agency. The latter could include the American Red Cross or The Salvation Army, with which the Field Day group "has an established operating arrangement." Class F EOC operation must take place in cooperation with the EOC staff. Class F stations are eligible for the same bonus points as Class A stations.

There's also been what Henderson called "some tweaking" in the rules for Field Day 2003. Among the highlights, the rules reduce from 400 to 100 the number of QSOs that the "Get On The Air" (GOTA) station needs to make to claim a 100-point bonus. "GOTA stations still may work up to a maximum of 400 QSOs to go towards the main station's score," Henderson said.

In addition, the 2003 rules enhance the bonus for having an invited official visit the Field Day site. There are now two separate bonus categories--100 points for the elected official and another 100 points for a visit by a representative of a served agency.

Henderson reminds Field Day participants that stations do not get additional bonus points for contacting stations through additional satellites. As of the 2002 event, Field Day opened up to stations throughout the Americas, not just in the US and Canada.

Henderson encourages participants to post their Field Day experiences and photographs to the Field Day Online soapbox <<http://www.arrl.org/contests/soapbox/>>.

FROM THE ARRL CONTEST RATE SHEET

Submitted by Frank, K4EC

The latest QST (Feb) has a product evaluation of several high-power "full legal limit" antenna tuners, very good reading. You may not be aware of how many different settings an antenna tuner may have that match to a load. Some are much more efficient than others.

Rather than burn up your tuner trying figure out which is which, an excellent way of getting some practice off-the-air is W9CF's online T-network tuner simulator, at <http://fermi.la.asu.edu/w9cf/tuner/tuner.html>.

The simulator is faster, you can't damage it, you can give it any load impedance you like, and it also calculates percentage power loss. A general method to match with the lowest loss in a "T"-network tuner is to always start with the output capacitor at maximum capacitance and tune the inductor next. This is all explained in great detail in "Getting the Most Out of Your T-Network Antenna Tuner" by Andy, W4ULD in QST, January 1995.

Frank Witt, AI1H also wrote a two-part classical article on how to evaluate your antenna tuner, especially on loss (April and May 1995 QST).(Thanks, Chuck W1HIS and Joe, W1JR)

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