



# THE WATT

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CALVERT AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION  
CLUB NEWSLETTER  
JANUARY 2012

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## **CLUB QSO** – New CARA club officers take office

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CARA rings in the New Year with new executive board members. Dave Weaver - W3PQS is club President. Jim Tetlow – K3UGA is club Vice President. Bob Sheskin - N3PPH is the club Secretary and Dick Ratcliffe – W3RBR remains as the club treasurer. Don Kirby – KR3A is the club repeater's trustee. The board has already been hard at work, installing new upgrades and repairs to the clubs repeater on 146.985, Identifying and notifying the source of the interference on the repeater, working with Steve – N3IDX to return EchoLink to the club's repeater, launching the clubs new website with Ron - W4PRR, and starting a logo campaign to design a new club logo. The board is excited about the upcoming year, looking forward to planning events through out Calvert County for amateur radio operators to enjoy. Field Day, A fox hunt, a CQ contest from Cove Point Light House and of course ARES and RACES related events are just a few of the events the executive board members are working on. Given the record club repeater net and club meeting attendance 2012 is shaping up to be a busy year. Be sure to check out the CARA club website at [www.k3cal.org](http://www.k3cal.org) or keep an eye on the newsletter and an ear on the club's repeater for more information. – 73's

## **CQ CQ CQ** – CARA club news and announcements

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- With the New Year, comes the time for membership renewals. Membership renewals/registration forms have been sent out by mail. Please be sure to fill out the forms and send in your club

dues. Don't have the forms ? You can find the membership application forms and more information about a CARA membership on the CARA web site or click on the link provided for you here: [K3CAL Join CARA](#)

- Be sure to join the CARA club net every Monday night @ 7:00 pm on the 146.985 repeater, negative offset with a 156.7 PL.
- Club breakfast meeting are held every third Saturday of the month. This month the breakfast will be at Dream Weavers restaurant in Prince Fredrick on Saturday Jan 21<sup>st</sup> @ 9:00 am.
- The next club meeting will be held February 02, 2012 @ 7:30 pm at The County Services Building 158 Main Street Prince Frederick, Md. 20678.
- Frostfest 2012 will be held Saturday February 4<sup>th</sup> 2012. Sponsored by the Richmond Amateur Telecommunications Society, Frostfest is one of the Mid-Atlantic's largest hamfests. Check out the website [www.frostfest.com](http://www.frostfest.com) for more information.

## **On The Air – PVRC to start chapter in Southern Maryland**

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Do you enjoy DX and Contesting? Then here is an opportunity to join one of the best Contesting clubs in the area. The Potomac Valley Radio Club (PVRC) has a long tradition of club competition success in contests, both domestic and abroad. PVRC was established in the summer of 1947 by local hams from the Pentagon's Army Signal Center.

The club has a long history of dominating contest both local and DX. One of the contest that club participates in is the International Lighthouse Lightship Weekend, an annual amateur radio weekend event to be held this year on August 18-19, 2012. The Lighthouse contest started in Scotland in 1995 by Mike Dalrymple - GM4SUC (SK). The event's purpose is to promote public awareness of the need for the preservation and restoration of world's lighthouses.

While promoting amateur radio and foster international goodwill at the same time.

“The CARA club and or its members could certainly join the event, perhaps operating from either the Drum Point Lighthouse or the Cove Point Lighthouse, both located in Calvert County” suggested Wayne –N1WR, adding “I could assist the club with gaining access to light house properties and setting the club or it’s members up to participate in the contest”. CARA club secretary Bob – N3PPH commented that the lighthouse contest should be brought up in future meetings.

Wayne – N1WR is currently the chairman of the now forming Southern Maryland Chapter of the PRVC. The chapters first meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 3rd, 2012. From 6:30PM until 8:00 PM. At the St. Mary’s County – Charlotte Hall Library - 37600 New Market Road, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622. “Contesting can improve a station operator’s skills and station design” said Wayne – N1WR. For more information on PVRC visit <http://www.pvrc.org/>. For more information about the lighthouse contest visit <http://illw.net/>. Stay tuned to the CARA Monday night nets, the K3CAL website or the newsletter to find out if CARA will be participating in the up coming lighthouse event.

## **ARES REPORT – Dennis - N3QHC**

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The Amateur Radio Emergency Services Coordinator (EC) for Calvert County is: Dennis Bowling - N3QHC.

Dennis filed the following report:

**The year 2011 is over and the New Year is here. Now is the time to start planning for it. We cannot do anything about the past but we can make changes for the future. There are a lot of events that you can get involved with that can be used as practice in case of any real emergency occurs.**

**On January 5, CALV ARES sign a Memorandum of Understanding, MOU, with the Drum Point Property Owners Association, DPPOA. This document encourages open channels of**

**communication; participation in pre-disaster planning and training exercises; shared membership; and liaisons' with each organization.**

Jim Cross/WI3N, MDC SM, has sent this MOU to ARRL HQ for their review. Jim also has plans for local RACES and ARES meeting with local jurisdictions so we can share with one another events that our members can help with communications.

We hope that sponsors of March-of-Babies will ask for our assistance with their upcoming event. The event this year will be held on the first weekend in May in Solomons Island, and that the Cystic Fibrosis Cycle Event will ask us again for communication assistance in October. We will try to give everyone as much heads up as possible so you can plan to be there.

With that said, AARC has just informed me there may be an event next week and they could use our assistance. Sometimes events just pop up but as we do more of these things hopefully we will be better prepared.

The first weekend of October is SET 2012. Local jurisdictions; STMA, CHAS, PRGE, MONT and CALV hope to have practice exercise involving these Region V Hospital Group. PRGE conducts an HF Hospital Net on the third Wednesday following the third Monday monthly at 7:30 PM EST on 3.820 MHz. Jim Montgomery/WN3KAS and his wife Wanda/KA3AHI have done lots of work getting various hospitals in the Region V networked with Amateur Radio. They will be helping CALV get Calvert Memorial Hospital online this year.

Ray Brown/KB3FWW, EC/RO STMA, will be at the next CARA Breakfast on Saturday, January 21, to meet some of us. Ray recently learned about the to-go kits sent via the State to all Health Departments in Maryland about 6 years ago. However, the kits got lost and were never sent to all the counties including Calvert. Jim Cross/WI3N spoke with Gary Goldberg/W3GIG from the Mental Health Department in Baltimore. He recently found 20 of those kits so hopefully Calvert Department of Health will be receiving their to-go kit.

Speaking of to-go kits...do you have a 24-hour or 72-hour kit made up? From experience, you will need to figure out what you can grab real quick in the event you need to deploy. We can discuss some of the things you might want to be able to grab in the next few

months. The best practice however is participating in the sponsored events we have planned for the year.

We have already experience in August and September of 2011 the havoc that an earthquake and a Tropical Storm (Irene) can create. Start planning what gear, clothing, food and other items you might need in a hurry. Be sure your home Station is operational. The best way to insure that your equipment is maintained is to check into the CARA/ARSE Net often. Switch around your gear to test it weekly on the Net.

If you have suggestions concerning radio equipment, antennas, backup power, etc., and you think your idea, or suggestion, will help others, let me know.

Thanks in advance for your suggestions.

73, Dennis/N3QHC

#### Important Dates to remember

- Wednesday, January 18 at 1930-hours the PGRE Hospital Net on 3.820 MHz will be held.
  - Also the MDC - SECTION WIDE ECHOLINK NET is Jan. 20 at 2000-Hours, Node 6154.

All ARES operators are encouraged to check in to both nets.

## **RACES Report**

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A RACES Report was not available at time of press.

## The Amateur Behind The Microphone – Ron W4PRR

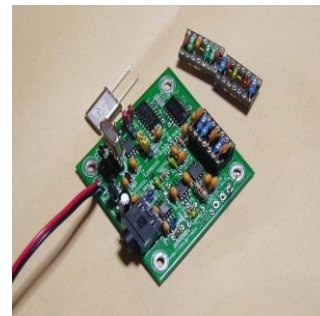
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The Calvert Amateur Radio Association membership is full of some talented station operators and Ron – W4PRR is one of them. Many of you may already know that Ron is responsible for the CARA website. But did you know he has a knack for building his own equipment?



One of Ron's projects currently on the bench is a SDR (Software Defined Radio). Not just any SDR but a receiver that fits in an Altoids mint case. That's right a receiver covering 40 to 6 meters that fits in a metal case measuring only a few square inches. The receiver is a Soft66lite. A kit that comes complete with all the parts needed to build the receiver your self. Once assembled all that is needed is an antenna and a computer running software defined radio program such as Rocky, Winrad or SDRadio. In Ron's case he plans on running his receiver from his I-PAD.

The SDR receiver components are small and require some special considerations when assembling. Static electricity can ruin a project like this, so a static mat or a grounded metal plate to work on is suggested. Also make sure that the soldering iron is the grounded tip style and watch the amount of heat applied to the small components. "The hardest part about working on these small receivers, is getting the chips soldered to the surface mount board" says Ron. He suggested that caffeine be avoided before working on the little boards; a steady hand is a must. Also an unexpected sneeze or cough and you will find yourself searching for tiny components. Ron is assembling this receiver with no particular use in mind. "I'm building it just to see if I can do it" said Ron, "Maybe a SDR transmitter is next, I don't know, we'll see". Ron plans to demo this little receiver at a future club meeting once final assembly and testing is complete. For more information on the Soft66lite SDR receiver visit their website at <http://zao.jp/radio/66lite/>



## **The Blind Side** – Stray RF and White Noise from KB3WV

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Have you ever wonder what 73 means?

We say it just as often as we hear it, but how many of us know what it really means or where it even comes from?

According to several Internet web sites "The National Telegraphic Review and Operators' Guide", defines 73 to mean "love and kisses" or "My love to you".

Don't worry you have not been telling other station operators that you love them.... Or have you?

The meaning of 73 has changed several times over the years. The origin of 73 dates back to the mid1800's. In May of 1844 Samuel Finley Breeze Morse sent the first land telegraph message from Washington to Baltimore. This form of instant communication set off a rapid expansion of pole and wires across the US. Sending messages by telegraph became the fastest and most economical way to send personal and commercial communications. As telegraphs popularity soared so did the need for faster more accurate communication.

One way of speeding the flow of traffic was to operate an agreed set of short codes to replace well-known sentences or phrases.

In 1859 Western Union developed the "92 Code" a numerical list of common phrases for its operators to use. A sending station would speed the transmission of a message by using the 92 code list to shorten the message, The receiving station would copy the encoded message and decode it, then delivering the senders original message to the appropriate recipient. In the "92 code", 73 is listed as meaning "Best Regards". A copy of Western Unions code list can be found here: [Western Union "92 Code"](#)

"The Telegraph Instructor" by G. M. Dodge has a list of Numerical Wire Signals that also shows 73 as "Best Regards" A copy of which can be found here: [The Telegraph Instructor](#)

It seems that different telegraph systems had different numerical code list both in the USA and internationally. This in part explains some of the confusion found when searching for definitions of numerical codes. Even those trying to explain the definition of the codes are misguided. Without a copy of "The National Telegraphic



Review and Operators' Guide” to look at, it cannot be confirm that the definition of 73 was ever known as “love and kisses”.

So the meaning of 73 remains as “Best regards” just a friendly word between operators ... at least for now. – 73 KB3WFV

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**Suggestion or comments for THE WATT**

e-mail us at [newsletter@k3cal.org](mailto:newsletter@k3cal.org)

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January 2012

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