



THE WATT



CALVERT AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION
CLUB NEWSLETTER
FEBRUARY 2012

CLUB QSO –

The past month has been very productive for CARA. There are now Forty-eight (48) club members on the roster, a club record! The club meetings have grown also! Twenty-six (26) members attended the February 2nd 2012 meeting. Meanwhile the Monday night club nets on the K3CAL repeater are averaging eighteen (18) check ins per week, including several check-ins through the echo link. All this activity is keeping the club executive board members and net control happily busy.

The primary topic of the February meeting was to focus the clubs attention on Incorporating the Calvert Amateur Radio Association, registering CARA as a non-profit organization and obtaining liability insurance for the club. Club President Dave Weaver – W3PQS said, “ These are important steps that need to be taken so that a club of this size can move forward”. Bob Sheskin – N3PPH, club secretary agreed adding “The non-profit organization, allows the club to receive donations and raise monies to fund future club activities and equipment”. [John McCall KB3SXC](#) of the Drumpoint EOC has offered to meet with Bob N3PPH to draw up the required paper work and layout the necessary steps to achieve these goals. Dave – W3PQS cautioned that this may take some time to accomplish but remained hopeful that some items maybe ready for a club vote by the March meeting.

In other news Dave Moore N3TZO has been appointed Field Day Coordinator. Field day an annual event is held on the fourth full weekend in June, this year the event falls on June 23-24. Dave – N3TZO looks forward to working with club members to set up the

upcoming field day. During a recent club net on the 146.985 repeater, Dave – N3TZO requested that club members submit to him suggestions for a location to hold field day at. Suggestions should be submitted to Dave – N3TZO via his email at nutzo488@comcast.net .

The club continued the meeting with an informative presentation on contesting from Dan Zeitlin, K2YWE. Dan covered several topics related to contesting including station configuration, antenna design and contest logging software. Dan's web site <http://danzee.org> has some very good information on contesting and other ham radio related items. Dan, a member of PVRC (a respected contesting club), reminded the club meeting attendee's of the now forming Southern Maryland Chapter of the PRVC, and the Chapter's upcoming meeting 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. For more information on contesting or the PVRC chapter meeting visit <http://www.pvrc.org/> or contact Dan through his web site <http://danzee.org> .

The club topped the meeting off with thanking the cookie monster Dennis N3QHC for providing the cookies and the Beverage Bandit Dick – W3RBR for the coffee and tea. Jim K3UGA volunteered to be the cookie monster for the March meeting.

Be sure to check out the CARA club website at www.k3cal.org or keep an eye on the newsletter and an ear on the club's repeater for more information.

73 – KB3WFFV

Club Founder Vince – KB3FS remembered

From the Shack of Dennis Bowling – N3QHC:

On January 19, CARA lost its last active founding member, Vince Thrasher/KB3FS. Many of us in CARA enjoyed talking to and seeing Vince. He was quite the gentleman. He stuck with the club through its peaks and valleys giving us his support year after year. We are quite sure he was very happy seeing the little radio club that he and his friends started. Mature into an active Amateur Radio club that is highly respected throughout the M-DC Section. We are happy knowing he saw our transformation in the past year. To think he

started a club with just four members that has reach 48 members today.

Many of us always remember seeing Vince and his wife Alice. One never saw one without the other. Never. Vince and Alice attended club meetings, breakfasts and other events with one another. When Vince stopped to see our Field Day setup, he always brought Alice. And she could make some extremely good cookies when Vince was the 'cookie monster'. Not many people can say they know too many people that were always together like Vince and Alice. They were inseparable and it was always so pleasant seeing him accompanying her everywhere they went.

Vince never spoke ill of anyone. He was always glad to answer technical questions or offer the best method to remedy an issue someone might have with their station.

We will miss Vince. But let's not forget what a gentleman and friend he was in each of our lives. Quite sure Alice and he are looking down on us smiling as they walk arm-in-arm.

God bless you, Vince.

73 – Dennis N3QHC

From the Shack of Dave Moore – N3TZO:

In Memorium: Vince Thrasher / KB3FS <SK>

Vince Thrasher, KB3FS passed away at the Charlotte Hall Veteran's home on January 19, 2012. Vince was one of the charter members of the Calvert Amateur Radio Association, and just last summer was presented with a plaque of appreciation for service to CARA by its members. Vince was an Extra class operator who held a previous call sign of WA3ZXD.

Vince was born January 27, 1923 in rural Lewis County, MO to the late Anna Thrasher, and raised on a farm in Missouri where he became the head of the household at the age of fourteen. He was drafted into the US Army and served in Germany where he was captured on December 24, 1944 during the Battle of the Bulge, and held as a POW until April 4th of 1945.

While stationed at Fort Meade, MD prior to shipping out to Germany, Vince met Alice Elizabeth Parks of Broomes Island, MD and upon his return, married Alice and moved to Broomes Island. He later moved the family to St. Leonard in 1952 where he lived for the next fifty two years. He secured employment with the US Navy at Solomon's Island after the war and then worked for 35+ years at Patuxent River Naval Air Station as an aircraft lighting technician.

Vince almost single handedly rebuilt his St. Leonard home from the ground up, raised four sons and became the neighborhood repair shop always helping family and friends with automotive, lawnmower repair and other projects. One could count on having Vince's generator in the Field Day lineup. Vince spent many summer vacations providing much needed assistance to his mother in Missouri. In addition to his amateur radio activities, he was a lifetime member of The Southern Maryland DAV, and a member of the Calvary Bible Church in Lusby, Maryland.

Vince was preceded in death by his loving wife Alice of 62 years, his mother Anna, sisters; Elsie Marie and Virginia. Vince is survived by two sisters, Erma Dee Jones of Lewistown, MO, Betty Barron of Hoopeston, IL, four sons, Orval and wife Sandy of North Beach, MD, Larry and wife Kaye of Annapolis, MD, Terry and wife Sara of Sinking Springs, PA and Lloyd and wife Cathy of St. Leonard, MD, grand children, Todd, Brian, Quillan, Corbin, Michelle, Colin and Harrison, and three great grand children, Taylor, Connor and Trystan.

Vince will be missed by all who had the opportunity to have known him.

Vincent Lee Thrasher / KB3FS
1/271923 – 1/19/2012

CQ CQ CQ – CARA club news and announcements

- Time is running out for those 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 on February 19TH @ 9:00 am.
- The next club meeting will be held March 01, 2012 @ 7:30 pm at The County Services Building 158 Main Street Prince Frederick, Md. 20678.
- On Saturday March 10th, 2012 at 5am GMT the server for [K3CAL.org](#) will be replaced. The website will be down between 6 to 12 hours at this time.
- March 15th thru 17th The American Legion Amateur Radio Club station, K9TAL will operate as a special event station to commemorate the 93rd birthday of The American Legion. Visit <http://www.legion.org/> for more information.
- Field Day 2012 will be held June 23rd and 24th. Field Day Coordinator Dave Moore N3TZO is now taking suggestion on where to hold this year's event. Submit your suggest to nutzo488@comcast.net
- The Greater Baltimore Hamboree & computer show will be held on March 31 2012, in Timonium Maryland. **Note** that there have been major changes to this show. This year's show will be held entirely indoor and only for one day. Be sure to visit the show web page at <http://www.gbhc.org/> for more details.
- Jack KB3WUM has paid for a spot at Hamboree in Timonium. Jack as offered some space on his tables for any club member with items to sell. The space will be provided to members at no charge. For more information or to arrange for an item to be

sold at Jack's tables contact him by E-mail at KB3WUM@[gmail.com](mailto:KB3WUM@gmail.com) or call him at 240-419-1924.

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On The Air – Frostfest: Organize, Prepare, Success

The Richmond Amateur Telecommunications Society (RATS) and the Frostfest Committee held a record setting Frostfest! More than **2,400** people attended the hamfest held this year on February 4th 2012 in Richmond VA.

Wow 2,400 people! That number makes this year show a successful event for the treasury of RATS. Just counting general public admission fees alone should have produced a gross income of \$21,000.00 to \$24,000.00 dollars. Add in the fees charged to the manufacturer representatives, the equipment dealers and flea market vendors for show table space and the gross income grows even larger.

\$24,000 dollars plus in gross income from one event! Less the expense of the building and advertising etc,etc still leaves a nice chunk of money in the ole club checkbook. A chunk of money that could buy a really nice repeater or host an awesome party or perhaps even pay the rent on a clubhouse.

Amazing what a club can do when it is organized correctly and it's members remain actively dedicated to what is good for the club as a whole.

RATS was indeed organized, 2,400 people went through 2 buildings in 7-1/2 hours, and it felt like it. I had the pleasure of attending this years crowded Frostfest with my wife Lisa, my fellow club member Jack KB3WUM and his wife Judi. I enjoyed the show and learned a few things that I would like to share.

First, if you plan to attend a show of this size, be prepared to bump into everyone. This show was the definition of standing room only. After about an hour of bumping into people, I gave up saying, excuse me, sorry and my apologizes. It seems that most other attendee's felt the same way. Most were perfectly content herding like cattle from table to table with out being disrespected by others bumping into them. Something that takes some getting use to,

Second, just because you are at a show doesn't mean that the equipment dealers have the best prices. I found that the handful of equipment dealers that attended this show, were well stocked and very helpful. However, I also found that they were more expensive than my normal sources for equipment, at least more expensive on the items I was interested in. Perhaps there was not enough competition. Possibly due to the low number of equipment dealers attending the show.

Third, The flea market vendors on the other hand were plentiful. Good deals could be found everywhere. The trick with the flea market vendors is to know what you are looking for and what it should cost. Armed with this information you can act quickly. Hesitating or walking away from an item to "think about it" may enable someone else to purchase it before you can make up your mind.

My visit to the Frostfest was a successful trip. I was able to place my hands on lots of different items that are otherwise only seen in catalogs or online. The opportunity to ask questions of a dealer or manufacturer representative about the product you are interested in, is very helpful. This interaction is perhaps worth the few extra dollars spent.

The flea market vendors are a great source for parts and pieces and an occasional great deal on some good equipment. The key to success at a hamfest is organization and preparation. Organize a list of the things you want to see. Be prepared to bump into everyone. Be prepared, by knowing what you want and what you should pay for it. Be prepared to have fun. A little organization and some preparation will ensure that your next hamfest will be just as successful as the club hosting the show.

73 - KB3WV

ARES REPORT — Dennis Bowling - N3QHC



The Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES) consists of licensed amateurs who have voluntarily registered their qualifications and equipment, with their local ARES leadership, for communications duty in the public service when disaster strikes.

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

Dennis reports:

ARSE + 73 + Costa Concordia

The first edition of the WATT contained a typo of ARES and a great article on 73.

Our local news reported on the sinking of the cruise ship Costa Concordia on January 13. A very horrific tragedy off the coast of a small Italian island that could happen with a cruise line or ship off of our own shore of the Chesapeake Bay.

Are you prepared to send and receive Health & Welfare traffic messages? What would you do if someone comes to one of the Monday CARA/ARES Nets or to some other net and there was an ARRL RADIOGRAM message going in your direction? Would you know what to do with it?

Emergencies can happen in a blink of an eye. What happens thousands of miles away can affect us here. We know from the earthquake here last year that structure communications can become overloaded and then stop working. We also know,

That When All Else Fails...Amateur Radio

I realize that most of us have not had training on the use of the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) RADIOGRAM. And those that have most likely do not remember what to do. The ARRL RADIOGRAM is the standard that all Amateur Radio operators use to pass traffic throughout the nation and around the world.

The message form contains three main parts; a heading, a text and a signature.

The heading of the message gives a message number so you can keep track of the messages you originate. It has a precedence, which is used to tell how important the message is. It has handling instructions to tell the station who relay the message, what to do with the message. The heading has a check sum, which is the amount of

words in the message. If the check sum and amount of words in the message do not match, there is something wrong and needs to be corrected before you accept the message. The heading tells where the message is coming from, who originated it and gives a date and time of the message.

The text of the message is just what it says; it's the message being sent. The text of the message should be kept as short as possible, 25-words or less. It doesn't contain any punctuation. The letter X is inserted between thoughts or sentences and counts as a word. As communicators we do waste words with long salutation but use 73 instead. As communicators we never change the message. If the message says for example, ARSE then the message is passed as ARSE without any correction or errors fixes in the message. All we do as professional communicators is pass traffic exactly as received.

The signature is just what it says, who the message is coming from and it may or may not be the same person who originates it. An Amateur Radio operator may be originating the message for an Amateur or non-Amateur official at a disaster site or an EOC. They may be originating it for an Amateur, non-Amateur friend or relative. In any case the signature is the person who is waiting on the message to be sent.

Copies of the ARRL RADIOGRAM, Figure 1, can be found on the CALV ARES Quick Reference Guide, purchased at [ARRL Store](#) or Amateur Radio retailers such as Universal Radio or HRO.



Figure 1: An ARRL RADIOGRAM

As professional communicators and ARES/RACES personell it is highly advisable to keep a stack of the ARRL RADIOGRAM next to your station. Also, one should keep writing instruments and paper at their station.

The Maryland-DC Section has traffic nets daily:
Baltimore Traffic Net (BTN) 1830-Hours(L) on
146.67MHz.Maryland Emergency Phone Net (MEPN)
1800-Hours (L) on 3.820 MHz.

More MDC Net information can be found at the [ARRL MDC SEC page](#)

We will seek time at our CARA/ARES General Meetings this year to do traffic training.

ARES DATES TO REMEMBER

- Baltimore Traffic Net (BTN)
Daily 1830-Hours(L) on 146.67MHz.
- Maryland Emergency Phone Net (MEPN)
Daily 1800-Hours (L) on 3.820 MHz.
- Wednesday, February 22nd at 1930-hours the PGRE HOSPITAL NET on 3.820 MHz will be held.
- February 17th at 2000-Hours the MDC - SECTION WIDE ECHOLINK NET, Node 6154.

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

For more information about ARES contact Dennis Bowling at <mailto:n3qhc@verizon.net> or visit <http://www.arrl.org/ares>

RACES Report – Bill Hacket – N3MXZ



The Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) is a standby radio service provided for in Part 97.407 of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules and regulations. It consists of only those amateur radio operators who have previously registered with State and local governments to provide or supplement

communications during emergencies where normal communication systems have sustained damage.

The RACES Officer (RO) for Calvert County is Bill Hacket N3MXZ

A note from Dennis – N3QHC

Please welcome Bill Hackett / N3XMZ as Calvert County R.A.C.E.S. Officer. Bill was appointed February 1st to his new position. Bill as you may know is an on-hands person that does not accept “NO” for an answer and is not shy about opening closed doors. CALV ARES will be supporting Bill and his R.A.C.E.S organization with classroom training; tabletop, field exercises and more to best prepare everyone for EmComms.

We also thank Les Dickey / N3YR for his years of service being our R.A.C.E.S. Officer. Many of us have experienced several training sessions and activations under Les’ leadership. His wisdom and knowledge with emergency situations has brought Calvert R.A.C.E.S. as one of the most respectable R.A.C.E.S. organizations in the ARRL MDC Section.

ARES is the training arm for R.A.C.E.S. so Bill will be an Assistant Emergency Coordinator (AEC) to our ARES team replacing Les.

*Congratulations, Bill!
73, Dennis / N3QHC
ARRL EC CALV MD USA*

From Bill Hacket N3MXZ

- The Property Owners Association Chesapeake Ranch Estate (POACRE) held their second Community Emergency plan meeting on February 1, 2012. I will continue to meet with them in the future to assist them with establishing a communication plan. Future meeting time and date to be deterred.
- RACES Badges should be available soon. It seems that there is new software and we should be in line to receive them. Date to be announced.
- COMMEX Communications Exercise will be held on February the 14th @ 1930 hrs and end @2030 hrs on147.105.

73 – Bill N3MXZ

For more information about RACES contact Bill Hackett at n3xmz.md@gmail.com or visit <http://www.usraces.org/>

SKYWARN



Many Americans feel the effects of severe weather every year. To obtain critical weather information, NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS), part of the U.S. Department of Commerce, established SKYWARN

SKYWARN is a volunteer program with nearly 290,000 trained severe weather spotters. These volunteers help keep their local communities safe by providing timely and accurate reports of severe weather to the National Weather Service.

In the near future CARA Club President Dave Weaver – W3PQS hopes to bring SKYWARN Basic Spotter classes to Calvert County. Dave has been in contact with the National Weather Service (NWS) “We need spotters in Calvert County” said SKYWARN spokesperson Nikole Winstead- Listemaa.

SKYWARN would be more than happy to provide classes in Calvert County, asking Dave to first work locally with Calvert County's Emergency Management Office Assistant Kim Gott to arrange SKYWARN classes. Mrs. Gott welcomed the clubs interest in SKYWARN and will work toward arranging classes to be held in the future.

Mrs. Winstead- Listemaa added that if local classes could not be provided, then contact NWS again and classes would be arranged directly through SKYWARN. Dave was optimistic that Mrs. Gott would be able to arrange the SKYWARN Classes locally.

Stay tuned more information to come on this exciting opportunity.

In the meantime:

Dennis N3QHC passes this information along for those who may be interested. SKYWARN classes are being held on March 3, 2012 at the University of Maryland for more information visit <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/er/lwx/skywarn/classes.html>

*For more information about SKYWARN visit
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/skywarn/or> <http://skywarn.org/>*

The Amateur Behind The Microphone – Partners

Behind each microphone is an amateur. Along side that amateur is a spouse, a significant other, a YL or XYL (I hate this term, unless it is used in the context of me X(by) her, not X young lady).

He or She is unknowingly a supporting amateur with out a ticket or license. The supporting amateur plays an important role in any amateur radio operator's station. They put up with yards littered with wild contraptions that we call antennas and the endless stream of wires used to connect them. They accept the fact that the room or corner in the house, garage, shed or basement will never win any Better Homes and Garden awards for outstanding decor. They may never understand what a bunch of guys can possibly talk about until midnight at a Thursday night club meeting. But they know that these guys, who need a license to talk, are most certainly worse than the ladies gossiping at the beauty parlor on a Saturday afternoon with no license at all. Yet, the supporting amateur does not complain.

They will quietly listen to all the mumbo jumbo techno speak about radio's, antenna's tuners', coax towers yada yada yada with out fail, even when they have no interest. The squawk of the radio and the incessant chatter they ignore, all the while wishing for some silence, but will never ask for it. They will not object to attending a radio related functions, perhaps in part to see who or what infatuates their partner's attention so much.

All of this pales in comparison to their most important role in an amateur station, They provide someone else to talk to when there is no one to talk to on the radio !

So on Tuesday February 14th, put down the microphone, turn off the radios and remember that your station has a silent partner. That's right a partner. A partner that is supportive of what you do. So go! spend some time with your spouse, significant other, YL or XYL. Stifle the radio talk for a while and wish them a happy Valentine's Day.

The Blind Side – Stray RF and White Noise from KB3WFFV

I can be such an ARSE!

Last months newsletter arrived to rave reviews. I thank everyone for the praise. It is easy to produce something when there has not been much to compare it to. Along with the praise came the spell checkers.

Some people say there is a woman to blame, but I know it my own dumb fault. Due to an oversight completely of my own doing there were some spelling errors, which triggered the comedic talent of some of our club members.

Touché, my fellow amateurs, I hear by issue a challenge!

Somewhere in each newsletter will be a misspelled word, the word itself may not be spelled correctly or it's spelling may be correct but wrong in syntax. I challenge you to find the error and identify it to the club by use of the e-mail reflector. The first amateur that correctly identifies the error will receive a free printed color copy of THE WATT with the winning word highlighted in hot dog red.

(see complete contest rules below)

Be careful I may not put an error in, then again I may. Of course there is always the possibility (and in reality more likely) that I simply miss something and you will find it, I am sure of that.

Regardless of how, what, or why, if you are the amateur that is first to tell the club, You Are The Wiener! If nothing else at least I can rest comfortably knowing that the newsletters are being read very carefully. – Good luck and May the best amateur spellers win!

-- 73 KB3WFFV

Contest Rules

- Only one entry per Amateur
- Entries with miss-spellings in them will be disqualified

- Not valid with any other offer
 - Participants must use English as their primary language,
 - English teachers, Speech therapist and any other teacher whose class I have taken are excluded including my parents.
 - Winners will be announced on the CARA net immediately following the release of the newsletter
 - One freshly printed color copy of THE WATT will be awarded to the winner at the next club meeting.
 - Winner must be present to win
- And most important of them all ,,,
- Entries who are not laughing right now need not apply

Suggestion or comments for THE WATT
e-mail us at newsletter@k3cal.org

THE WATT
February 2012
