



# THE WATT

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CALVERT AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION  
NEWSLETTER  
September 2012

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## ASSOCIATION QSO

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September 6<sup>th</sup> marked the 9<sup>th</sup> CARA general membership meeting for 2012. Eighteen (18) members attended the meeting and heard the sad news of Jim – K3UGA's resignation from the office of Vice President. Brian – KB3WV was nominated and voted in to become the Vice President for the remainder of the year. Bill – N3XMZ was nominated and voted in to fill the newly created Directors position on the CARA board of Directors. An Audit committee was appointed with Dick – N3VKN, Charlie – AB3LE and Jack – KB3WUM assign the task of reviewing CARA's books. Preparing for election of CARA officers, Shawn – NA3E, Dave – N3TZO and Don – K3RA were appointed as a nominating committee, and have requested that nominations for office be sent to them directly by way of email.

In other news an Association logo and K3CAL QSL card design was discussed with members asked to bring in their design for a logo and a QSL card to the October meeting. The next general membership meeting is scheduled for October 4<sup>th</sup> 2012 at 7:30 pm at the County Services Plaza in Prince Frederick.

Be sure to check out the CARA website at [www.k3cal.org](http://www.k3cal.org) or keep an eye on the newsletter and an ear on the 146.985 repeater for more information.

73 – KB3WV

## CQ CQ CQ – CARA news and announcements

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- Want to become a member of the Calvert Amateur Radio Association? 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 net every Monday night @ 7:00 pm on the 146.985 repeater, negative offset with a 156.7 PL.

- CARA breakfast meetings are held every third Saturday of the month. This month the breakfast will be at Dream Weavers on October 20<sup>th</sup> 9:00AM.
- The next Association meeting will be held October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012 @ 7:30 pm at The County Services Building 158 Main Street Prince Frederick, Md. 20678.
- Ken LaCapria -KA3POX President of the Southern Maryland Amateur Radio Club announces a guest speaker at an upcoming meeting, SMARC meetings are held at the Prince Georges County District 5 police station in Clinton Maryland at 7:00pm.
  - SMARC Presents October 12<sup>th</sup> 2012 SMARC member Mike Martin - K3RFI PEPCO employee and operator of his own company RFI Services. Mike's expertise is locating sources of radio interference caused by power lines and equipment
- 2012 Columbia Amateur Radio Association (CARA- FEST) and ARRL Maryland State Convention Sunday October 7<sup>th</sup> 2012 at the Howard County Fairgrounds in West Friendship Maryland. Gates open for vendors at 6am general public at 8am. Visit <http://www.carafest.org/> for more information.

## • **On The Air – K3CAL Repeater returns**

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The K3CAL repeater has been restored to its normal coverage area and then some. CARA members Dave – W3PQS, Brian – KB3WFV, Bob – N3PPH, Dick – W3RBR, Bill – N3XMZ, Dennis - N3QHC, Wayne – N1WR and two tower climbers from Teltronic Tower



In the photo: Bob – N3PPH. Brian – KB3WFV. Bill – N3XMZ. Dennis – N3QHC. Jake – Teltronic Towers, Will – Teltronic Towers. Dave – W3PQS. Dick – W3RBR

Jake and Will assembled at the Mount Hope repeater site on September 19<sup>th</sup>. Jake and Will spent most of the day working on the 300 plus foot tower performing several tasks. Installation of new 7/8 hardline from the association owned antenna to the association owned repeater was completed. A new 2 meter / 440 dual band antenna was installed on the associations designated lower antenna perch. This antenna was connected to a 300 foot run of donated 7/8 hardline from Teltronic Tower. This antenna was connected to a packet radio station. The association's repeater and the packet radio station were installed in the communications shelter at the base of the tower. The shelter is on the same ground grid as the tower and has back-up generator power.



The installation of the coax, the new antenna and the placement of the repeater and the packet radio in the communication shelter ensure that the K3CAL repeater is available to provide communication even during a power failure. "This is good, really good it is good for CARA, it is good for RACES it is

good for ARES, most importantly it is good for Calvert County residents, if the need ever arises for emergency communications” said Brian – KB3WFV.

The repeater committee chairman Bob – N3PPH was also pleased with the install and upgrade of the repeater. Bob said “everything has been installed correctly from the antenna to the repeater. I anticipate a trouble free repeater for some time to come” Bob also mentioned that 95% of the installation work at Mount Hope has been completed. The remaining work to be done will take the repeater off the air but only for an hour or two.

Wayne – N1WR advises that the packet station is up and running although it seems to be having some interference or noise problems and hopes to correct these issues as final installation work is completed in next few weeks.



The return of the K3CAL repeater stirred excitement among the CARA membership. Members have been checking into the repeater from all over the Baltimore Washington area. Bob – KF3AA mobile from Delaware, Jack – KB3WUM mobile from Sterling Virginia. Steve N3IDX with one watt from his house. Bob – N3PPH mobile from Reston Virginia, Ron – WA4PRR HT mobile from Port Royal Virginia, and Dave – N3TZO the

CARA 2 meter repeater QRP record holder using a half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) of watt to carry on a full quite conversation from the 300 ft roof top of Harbor Court building in the Baltimore Inner Harbor. A 42.5 mile “as the crow flies” trip north of the repeater site.

The CARA Monday night nets have returned to the 146.985 repeater as of Monday September 24<sup>th</sup>. On Tuesday nights at 7:30 pm there will be an ARES net held. Echolink is again being hosted by Steve N3IDX and is on the air for anyone to use.

The repeater had been working in a reduce coverage mode for a long time. A lot of people worked very hard to restore it to normal. CARA and its members are grateful for all of the work that CARA members, Calvert County Officials and Teltronic Tower have done with the repeater. With all of their help CARA now has one of the area’s best repeaters that any association member should be proud to be a part of.

### **REPEATER SITE FUN FACTS**

Ground Elevation	188 Ft
Tower Structure Height	372 Ft
Tower Structure top above sea level	560 Ft
Repeater Output	60 Watts
Calculated ERP	74 Watts

Want to see what went on at the Mt Hope Tower site ? Dave – W3PQS shot and edited some video during the day the coax was installed and uploaded it to YouTube. Click on the link to see it.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUMoPot6nNg>

73 – KB3WFV

## **ARES REPORT – Dennis Bowling - N3QHC**

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***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**

### **Simulated Emergency Test (SET)**

This year SET will be held on October 6<sup>th</sup> from 9 AM until 10 PM, This will be a simple test involving 6 stations to test the 146.985 coverage from Solomons Island to Upper Marlboro and a test of the ability to pass messages using simplex though the same 6 stations. If you are interested in participating in this year's SET contact Brian – KB3WFV at [kb3wfv@yahoo.com](mailto:kb3wfv@yahoo.com)

### **Patuxent River Appreciation Day Parade Communication Support**

The Patuxent River Appreciation Day (PRAD) Parade will be held on Sunday Oct 7<sup>th</sup> in Solomons Island. PRAD parade organizers have asked for communication support to pass messages from the parade staging area to the parade announcers. Currently 3 members from Calvert County and One member from St.Mary's are schedule to support his event. If you would like to assist please contact Brian – KB3WFV at [kb3wfv@yahoo.com](mailto:kb3wfv@yahoo.com)

### **IMPORTANT CALV-ARES NOTES**

- ALL CALV ARES Nets and Meetings will be held on the 146.985 repeater Tuesdays at 1930-Hours (L) per this schedule:



1st Tuesday  
CALV ARES Net at 7:30 P.M. (L)  
Sit-Rep and ICS 214a Forms\*

2nd Tuesday  
COMMEX Drill with CALV ARES/RACES Teams at 7:30-8:30 P.M. (L)  
(September through May)  
Sit Rep, ICS 214a and ICS 213 Forms\*

3rd Tuesday  
CALV ARES Meeting at 7:30 P.M. (L)  
at the Phillips house in Prince Frederick

- 4th Tuesday  
CALV ARES Net at 7:30 P.M. (L)  
Sit-Rep and ICS 214a Forms\*

5th Tuesday  
CALV ARES Net at 7:30 P.M. (L)  
Sit-Rep and ICS 214a Forms\*

\*Suggested to have 3 Sit-Rep Forms and 1 ICS 214a on-hand.  
All Forms can be printed from Calvert\_ARES Yahoo Group site under  
FORMS or stored in Section 8 of CALV OPS Plan Manual.

- Calvert ARES is now holding meetings every third Tuesday at the Phillips House in Prince Frederick @ 19:30 PM (L)
- ARES binders are now available for download from the ARES Yahoo Group calvert\_ares

**73, Dennis Bowling – N3QHC  
ARRL ARES EC CALV MD USA**

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

# RACES Report – Bill Hackett – N3MXZ

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*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 Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service Officer (RO)  
for Calvert County is Bill Hackett N3MXZ**

**The following important information applies to ALL RACES and ALL ARES members or anyone else who is interested in supporting emergency communication in Calvert County.**

If you are interested in joining RACES or ARES, or if you would like to join the Calvert\_ARES yahoo group. Please contact Calvert County ARES EC Dennis Bowling.

## **IMPORTANT RACES / ARES INFORMATION REQUIRING ACTION**

All Calvert RACES and ARES members have been asked by Bobby Fenwick, Division Chief of Public Safety for Calvert County, to complete the Calvert County RACES application form and register as a Calvert R.A.C.E.S. Member as soon as possible. This form should be filled out by ALL RACES and ARES members, new and old even if you have filled one out in the past.  
(See below for form location and instructions)

In order to support regular RACES training, current and new Calvert R.A.C.E.S. members are also asked to register as a Calvert ARES member.

Bill Hackett/N3XMZ, RACES Officer is asking to have the completed forms to him by September 30th, 2012. The county's badge machine is operational and you can be scheduled for a R.A.C.E.S. Badge by contacting Bill Hackett - N3XMZ at [n3xmz.md@gmail.com](mailto:n3xmz.md@gmail.com) .

## **FORM LOCATION AND INSTRUCTIONS**

Calvert R.A.C.E.S Membership forms can be found on the K3CAL website [www.k3cal.org](http://www.k3cal.org) and click on ARES / RACES on the left hand side of the page,

then scroll down the page for the link to the RACES application form. Or click here  
<http://www.k3cal.org/files/RACES%20Registration%204.10.12.pdf>

**Please fill-out the application online, print it out and send it to the RACES Officer Bill Hackett**

**NOTE:** you will not be able to save a completed form you will have to print it, and fax or postal mail it to Bill.

For those of you who can, you can scan your completed form and attach it to an email and send it to Bill at [n3xmz.md@gmail.com](mailto:n3xmz.md@gmail.com).

Please contact Bill Hackett for fax number or mailing address.

ARES membership application forms are also on the ARES / RACES webpage and should be completed by ALL RACES members using the same instructions as above and sent to Dennis Bowling at [n3qhc@verizon.net](mailto:n3qhc@verizon.net).

Thank-you in advance for your cooperation if you have any question or need assistance please contact Bill Hackett.

## SKYWARN

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***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.***

SKYWARN classes may soon be offered to CARA members at a local location. At a recent open house at the National Weather Service facility in Sterling Virginia, Bob – N3PPH had an opportunity to talk with Chris W3CUM an assistant amateur coordinator and other ham radio operators who operate the NWS ham radio station. Chris was excited to hear that Calvert County amateurs want SKYWARN training. Bob is currently asking for those who are interested in taking a SKYWARN class here in Southern Maryland to contact him with their interest. If enough interest is generated Chris will coordinate with Bob a class to be held in Southern Maryland. Contact Bob at [bob@n3pph.com](mailto:bob@n3pph.com)



73 – KB3WFV

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

## **The Amateurs Behind The Microphone –**

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Bob – KF3AA may be an amateur behind the microphone, but he remains very active in the Calvert Amateur Radio Association activities. Bob has said “ I don’t speak FM” and is rarely heard on the air. He can, however often be found in front of his radio working the bands with packet and other digital modes. He has served as CARA President in the past, and recently has been asked to serve as Station Coordinator of the K3CAL Mount Hope HF station. Bob who has donated new storage cabinets to CARA for use in the K3CAL HF station is excited to set up a station that allows other amateurs to get on the air. He will be in charge of setting up and overseeing the use and operating schedules of the radio equipment and Control Operators at Mount Hope.

In preparation of opening the Mt.Hope,K3CAL HF Station. Bob is asking for volunteers to act as Control Operators. A Control Operator would oversee and direct all radio communications and operation of CARA equipment by CARA members or guests who want to get on the air at the Mt Hope HF station.

The station will be set up to allow amateur radio operators to use equipment or bands that they may not have access to. It can also be used by a non-amateurs who may want to check things out before testing for their ham ticket.

The idea is to have enough Control Operators to be able to open the Mt Hope HF station as much as possible. CARA members who wish to act as a Control Operators can volunteer as little or as much time as they want.

Help Bob create the next amateur behind the microphone. Volunteer today.

If you would like to volunteer to be a Control Operator. Please respond to Bob KF3AA directly, at [kf3aa@comcast.net](mailto:kf3aa@comcast.net)  
Please provide your Name, Call, License Class, Email Address and Time preference (weekday) (weekend) (morning) (afternoon) or (evening).

73 – KB3WFV

## **The Blind Side – Stray RF and White Noise from KB3WFV**

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*The following was submitted by Judi Estevez, wife of Jack – KB3WUM.*

My husband is a ham. To my friends this means that he is a cut-up, a truly enjoyable addition to any conversation. To me this means that I will forever be surrounded by wires to trip over, microphones hanging from hooks screwed into walls the never-ending quest to find “the next great radio” and, worst of all, I will be poor...cash poor.

Quite some time ago, we (my husband and I) agreed that the buying and selling of radio equipment would be a self-contained fund. Aside from the “starter fund” all monies would come from sales and trades of radios and radio related equipment. This would be supplemented by the sale of aluminum cans and any and all salvage I could convince him (with extreme giddiness on my part) to remove from his vast collection from our yard. This “arrangement” seemed to sit quite well with us both until I learned the “other” rules, you know....those rules that are not spoken of out loud.

To my dismay, I have learned that radios need many, many things to operate at their best. It would appear that radios and antennas are the only expenses that come from the designated “radio fund”. Guide wires, pulleys, microphones, shipping costs, hotels (for those “fests” which we MUST attend), gas, meals, batteries, cleaning supplies, cables, USB thingies (don’t ask, I didn’t bother with details), shelving, storage space (I now operate the household expenses from a tv tray tucked into the corner), testing, breakfasts, tower building supplies (which must be gathered and kept in the yard for YEARS before being used), more cable, special plugs, connectors, well...you get the picture. NONE of these expenses are strictly radio or antenna expenses so they actually must be covered by the household expenses because they aren’t part of the original agreement.

And somehow, I have accepted this as fact. I do not know at which point I went from wife to XYL but I have been converted and I fear that I may never find my way back. In a world where the letter Q is no longer useless and unimportant.... it actually is a conversation starter, a means of learning and imparting information...., how much further can this go?

Yes, my hubby is a ham. My only regret is that Yaesu, Kenwood, not even I-com makes a radio in a pretty color, you know....something that would actually blend in a little around here.....

Judi. Thank you for your insight  
73 – KB3WFFV

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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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