



# ***THE FEEDBACK***

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Volume 04 Issue 06

June 2004

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*THE AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLETTER*

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Laurel Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

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**Upcoming Events:**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Freq</b>	<b>Event</b>
Sat	06/12	1200	442.500+ PL156.7	Run For Life @ Laurel High School
Wed	06/16	2030	147.225+ PL156.7	On-the-Air Net
Wed	06/23	1930		Monthly Meeting @ Women's Club of Laurel
Sat	06/26			Field Day
Sun	06/27			Field Day
Wed	06/30	2030	147.225+ PL156.7	On-the-Air Net
Wed	07/07	2030	147.225+ PL156.7	On-the-Air Net
Wed	07/14	1900		Social Gathering at Sullivan's Steak & Beverage Co
Wed	07/21	2030	147.225+ PL156.7	On-the-Air Net
Wed	07/28	1930		Monthly Meeting @ Women's Club of Laurel
All		2100	147.540 simplex	Informal Net / Rag-Chew

**Repeaters:**

VHF: 147.225+ PL 156.7  
UHF: 442.500+ PL 156.7

**Simplex:**

VHF: 147.540  
UHF: 445.975

**Next Meeting:  
June 23, 2004 1930 PML  
Be There or Be Square!**

## President's Ramblings

Welcome to the club as we prepare to wrap up another issue of the Feedback, which will bring us up to time on the first part of July.

On last meeting (May) was very interesting, as we listened to Tom Coates as he told us about his effort to show our Senators and Congressmen the need to vote against BPL.

Also it was very good to see Dave Bradley, W4PFB, and his son-in-law Ron Henderson at the meeting, and I think we will see them again at the next meeting.

I am looking forward to more service events and very pleased with the job done at the Pallotti run-walk on Saturday 6-5-04. Thanks to all that helped!

Saturday, June 12 is or was (depending on when you get this) the Run For Life, at Laurel High School. The next June event will be Field Day June 26-27.

Keep in Touch!

73, Joe, N3TZA

## Pallotti 5K Run/Walk

It wasn't the best of times, it wasn't exactly the worst of times, but it surely was wet times. Troopers that we are, rain or shine, the show must go on. And go on it did.

By the start of the race at 0800 we had eight hardy hams appropriately attired in rain gear at their positions on the course. Dennis, KT3D set up as NCS at the usual place on the porch of the wooden building on the athletic field with a dual band radio if it was necessary to use 2M. The event was run entirely on the club's 442.500 repeater. John, WB3GXW, had the 147.225 repeater on standby if needed. Joe, N3TZA went out with one of the race directors to check out the course. Ed, K3QX shadowed Smitty the race director. Jeff, KB3EQH was stationed at the finish line at 8<sup>th</sup> and Montgomery Sts. Winning time of the race was 15 minutes two seconds. Kevin, WV3D was positioned at mile 2 down along the river near 4<sup>th</sup> St. Our procedure is to have the ham shadowing the race director key up his mike just prior to the starting gun (horn) so that other officials on the course can start their time pieces. Bill, N3XL was stationed with race officials at West St and Park Ave which is at the top of the first loop. Ken, KB3IIE stood at the intersection of 4<sup>th</sup> St and Montgomery St where he could keep an eye on a long stretch of the course. I walked the river trail from 9<sup>th</sup> St to past the 7<sup>th</sup> St bridge.

Briefly, the anatomy of this race is as follows: Someone (this year Joe) attends a Thursday evening final briefing at Pallotti and gets maps and written instructions. Friday, someone (Jim) picks up the Lions Club tents and delivers them to the nursery school. Saturday morning, we set up NCS and put folks in place. The suggestion is that we all meet at 0700 to do radio checks. We found that there were a couple problem radios this time. When the race is finished, by around 0930 we pick up our tee shirts and head home. Around noon we pick up the rolled up tents and we're done til next year.

Thanks to all who were able to come out and support another of LARC's highly visible public service events. Coincidentally, nearly all of our participants are ARES members who got another chance to train under adverse field conditions.

73, de Jim, WI3N

## Field Day, June 26-27, 2004

We haven't received word from the WSSC yet about the use of the field by the dam. It's likely we will have to contact them directly to get permission. Time is tight so planning must move ahead so all will be ready. There are several key things to determine. What follows is a list of questions we need to answer before Field Day.

1. Radios – what is available to use, and can we get a back up.
2. Antennas – what kind do we have and what will it take to raise them.
3. Power supplies - Batteries and/or Generators. What do we have available?
4. Shelter - Tents, Trailer, Tarps? Can we get the Lion's Club tents? Etc.
5. Furniture – tables, chairs...
6. Supplies - Logs, Dup charts, rules, scrap paper, pens, pencils, tape
7. Tools - Cutters, pliers, wrenches, wire strippers, hammers, hacksaw etc.
8. Computers?? - Not enough time I think.

I think that one or two HF rigs running on deep cycle batteries should last the weekend, with generators for lights, fans, etc. Antennas can be simple dipoles, though that will require a tuner for each rig. Once the basic communications stuff is taken care of, the tents, furniture and supplies will be needed. There is a lot to do. I will check the club shack and see what we have there. I am open to any suggestions! As I have more details I'll post them to the reflector in hopes of keeping everyone updated.

73, Kevin WV3D

## The 2004 Maryland-DC QSO Party

The 2004 Maryland-DC QSO party will be held from August 14 1600 UTC to August 15 0400 UTC and August 15 1600 to 2359 UTC. That's Saturday, August 14 from noon to midnight EDT and Sunday, August 15 from noon to 1959 EDT. LARC won this event 4 years running from 1996 through 1999 and took second in 2000. Since then we have fallen off a good bit but we intend to make a big turn around this year!

I have volunteered to coordinate the LARC assault on this contest. Many of us, like me, have done little or no contesting. I think the key thing to understand is how our score will be computed. It is actually very simple: Our total score will be our total QSO points multiplied by our total multipliers. QSO points are generated for the Club for each station that contacts the W3LRC station. Points are awarded as follows: another club station – 10 pts; mobile – 5 pts; QRP – 4 pts; CW/digital – 3 pts; all others – 1 pt. Note that contacts must be direct, i.e., contacts cannot be made via repeaters, Echolink, etc. Multipliers are 1 for each Maryland County, Baltimore City, and the District of Columbia (possible of 25). In addition 1 point is available for each other state and DX entity worked.

There is another important rule: Stations may be worked once per band per mode. Stations that change MD counties or state lines may be worked again for QSO points. Thus a mobile operator can work the club station from multiple counties.

Thus we need to maximize QSO's and multipliers. Maximizing our QSO count will depend on you, the members of the Club. My goal is to get every club member to have at least one QSO with the Club station. This could be from your base station, using a handheld, or mobile on any band using any mode. If you can jump into your car and drive a half mile down the road you will be mobile when you make

your contact for a 5 point QSO! If you can make contact from DC or one or more of the surrounding counties these will also be 5 point QSO's. If you have a multibander you could make contact on 2 or more bands and rack up even more points. I think this will be the crucial part of our effort – getting all our members to participate even if it only to make a single 1 point QSO. We hope to have a large multiplier so each QSO has the potential to generate a lot of points.

The other half of our efforts will be focused at the Club shack. We need operators. We need backup operators. We need folks help logging QSO's. We need help with all the odds and ends around the shack. The contest will last for 12 hours on Saturday and 8 hours on Sunday so there will be plenty of opportunities at whatever level they feel comfortable.

We have a few things that need to be done before the contest starts. We have 2 stacked beam antennas that are currently misaligned and need to be squared away. We have at least four 2-meter rigs and 3 HF rigs in the shack. We need to be sure that these are up and running. We don't have a 70 cm (440) rig so we will be looking for someone to bring one in for the contest. We appear to be a bit shy on our computer setup so we will be looking for someone to bring in a computer or two.

We also need to have a bit of a rehearsal to make sure that a number of things are functioning correctly. We need to know that our computers and logging software are working. We will need to be sure that everyone knows what constitutes a contact. We need to be sure that we don't have our radios interfering with each other. We also need to have a few of our mobile stations travel to the far flung corners of the state to find good locations for making contact and pinpoint beam headings so we can move quickly on the weekend of the contest.

The organizers of this contest, The Antietam Radio Association, refer to this contest as “The Fun Contest”. I think it will a very enjoyable event that will give all Club members a chance to participate.

More details on the Maryland-DC QSO party can be found at <http://www.w3cwc.org/funcontest.htm>

73 de K3QX – Ed H.

===== ARRL News =====

==>VIRGINIA CITY, BPL PROVIDER PART WAYS; PEPCO OPTS OUT OF BPL INVESTMENT

The City of Manassas, Virginia, and broadband over power line (BPL) franchisee Prospect Street Broadband have parted company, and the city is seeking a new business partner. The decision to terminate the joint venture was mutual, according to city officials, and the city has acquired Prospect Street's interests. Manassas was planning to open bids from prospective replacement BPL providers June 7.

ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, called the failure of the Prospect Street-Manassas deal just another example of a BPL deployment decision gone awry. He also predicted that BPL would not prove to be the revenue generator the city anticipates. Under the franchise agreement, Manassas receives 10.5 percent of BPL revenue and is responsible only for the relatively small cost of equipment installation. The failure of the franchise agreement leaves the city with obligations that far exceed revenues, however.

The first municipally owned utility to offer citywide BPL, Manassas has changed the name of its project from the Broadband over Powerline Enterprise to the Telecommunications Services Enterprise. City budget documents indicate that Manassas is prepared to loan \$400,000 to the Telecommunications Services Enterprise Fund "to finance operating expenses" in Fiscal Year 2005.

The city's small BPL field trial involved fewer than a dozen homes and businesses in an area with underground utility wiring and no nearby Amateur Radio licensees. "Results of the eighteen-month pilot program were favorable and demonstrated BPL as a viable technology for the delivery of data services," the city's bid invitation declares. The city approved full-scale BPL deployment last October and started offering the service in February. The contract with Prospect Street Broadband apparently was terminated several weeks later.

The city's glowing pro-BPL comments on the FCC's Notice of Proposed Rule Making in ET Docket 04-37, filed May 3, neglect to mention the cancellation of the Prospect Street agreement.

The comments also say the city "remains sensitive" to Amateur Radio's interference fears. Manassas Utilities Director Allen P. Todd, W4VUB, has met with members of the Ole Virginia Hams (OVH) Amateur Radio Club to address their concerns, the comments note, and a BPL connection was set up in the home of OVH member Bob Zaepfel, K4HJF. The city made a letter from Todd describing its efforts to cooperate with local amateurs part of its comments to the FCC. That letter says that during informal tests in early April, OVH members were "unable to identify any interference in the amateur bands being caused by BPL installation." Todd's letter did not provide test details.

The Manassas Journal Messenger reported this week that two neighborhoods now are fully equipped for the service, and, to date, 200 customers are using the service, although the bid proposal says the city's deployment of BPL "passes more than 2000 homes with the fiber infrastructure passing more than 4,000 homes, and fiber construction continuing each day." Manassas charges \$28.95 a month for its BPL service. The city is supposed to complete its citywide BPL rollout by this fall. City officials told the Journal Messenger that the Prospect Street contract termination will not affect BPL delivery.

Elsewhere, Pepco, a utility serving 700,000 Washington, DC, and Maryland customers, and its parent company, Pepco Holdings Inc, have decided to forgo any investment in BPL. Pepco continues to operate a BPL field test in Potomac, Maryland. The utility is continuing discussions with BPL partner Current Technologies and has indicated it's open to proposals to lease access to their power lines to deliver broadband service.

Pepco was said to be less interested in delivering broadband than in finding ways to improve its billing systems. A company spokesperson said the decision not to invest in BPL applies to all Pepco Holdings Inc companies.

Additional information on BPL and video clips from field trial sites are on the ARRL Web site <<http://www.arrl.org/bpl/>>.

==== ARRL News =====

\* FCC seeks assistance in illegal equipment sales: The FCC says it's taking a close look at reports alleging sales of illegal (non-FCC certificated) radio equipment in various venues. "The Federal Communications Commission receives hundreds of complaints about alleged illegal equipment being offered for sale on the Internet or in publications," the FCC's Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau said. "If you have any information about illegal or uncertificated equipment being offered for sale, please forward it to the FCC." The Commission says the sorts of useful information it's looking for would include an original advertisement or Web address where the illegal equipment is being advertised or offered for sale, highlighting the types of equipment about which the allegations are being made, the name of any Web auction site, the exact item number and auction opening and closing dates, and the name and address of the individual or business offering the item(s) for sale. The FCC also asks complainants to specify why they believe the equipment is not in compliance with FCC rules and the number of pieces or types of equipment about which the allegations are being made. Complainants should provide a name and telephone number to follow up, if necessary. The FCC said the information can remain confidential, if requested. E-mail information to the FCC <[fccinfo@fcc.gov](mailto:fccinfo@fcc.gov)> or send it via USPS to the FCC, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, 445 12th St SW, Washington, DC 20554.

## THE LAUREL AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

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