



THE FEEDBACK

Volume 04 Issue 09

September 2004

THE AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLETTER

Laurel Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

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Upcoming Events:

Day	Date	Time	Freq	Event
Wed	09/01	2030	147.225+ PL156.7	On-the-Air Net
Wed	09/08	1900		Social Gathering at Sullivan's Steak & Beverage
Wed	09/15	2030	147.225+ PL156.7	On-the-Air Net
Wed	09/22	1930		Monthly Meeting @ Woman'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

Upcoming Meetings:
September 22, 2004 1930 EDT
October 27, 2004 1930 EDT

President's Ramblings

Well, the MDC QSO Party came off very well, and the club contacted every county in Maryland and the District of Columbia on VHF, UHF, and HF plus several foreign countries. The FAR will need a lot of help when the FARfest comes up in September, as well as the VEC which is conducting license exams both Saturday and Sunday, so please make the effort to help in one of these events.

We are thinking of having another foxhunt in September.

73,
Joe, N3TZA

Annual NC-VEC meeting on July 23, 2004



NC-VEC Chairman Tom Fuszard KF9PU addresses the conference. The LARC Team is at the far end of the table. From the outside edge of the table, working inward toward the Chairman, are John Johnston W3BE, Les Jamison WR3X, Diane Zimmerman AA3OF, John Creel WB3GXW and Michelle Cimbala WK3X. Photo by Bob Zimmerman KB3IWD

Members of the Laurel VEC attended the annual meeting of the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators (NC-VEC) in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania on July 23, 2004.

The following table shows the number of people tested by each of the VEC's during the 2003 calendar year. The data was provided by the FCC.

VEC	Exams
ARRL/VEC	20,242
W5YI VEC	6,778
W Carolina AR Soc VEC	1,180
Laurel AR Club	1,056
Central America VEC	793
Sandarc VEC	497
Greater LA AR Group	441
W4VEC	427
Sunnyvale VEC ARC	352
Anchorage AR Club	248
Milwaukee RA Club VEC	107
MO-LAN VE Coordinator	49
Golden Empire AR Society	13
Jefferson AR Club	11

The LARC VEC is still number 4, but we're rapidly catching up to the current number 3, WCARS (pronounced WesCars). All it will take for us to surpass them this year is for a couple of LARC Teams to test at hamfests.

As you can see, in the VEC world, there are two 800 pound gorillas, and then there is everybody else, including a couple of VECs that are so small that LARC Teams sometimes test more people at one session than these VEC's test all year. Each of these various VEC's has one Vote at NC-VEC.

John Johnston W3BE resigned from the Question Pool Committee (QPC). He has recently accepted the position of Quarter Century Wireless Association (QCWA) President. I was not able to place a new LARC representative on the QPC. However, there was a shake-up on the QPC. Jim Wiley KL7CC from Anchorage VEC is the new QPC Chairman. Jim was not previously on the Committee. Scotty Neustadter W4WW from Central America VEC is no longer the QPC Chairman, although he remains on the committee. The W5YI representative to the QPC has changed - Fred Maia W5YI has left the committee and Larry Pollock, NB5X (who is Chairman of W5YI VEC) is the new W5YI rep.

73 Diane AA3OF

Foxhunt!!

Saturday, July 24, 2004 was a perfect day for a hunt! The day was cloudy but no rain with temperatures in the mid 70's. The boundaries for the hunt were to be a 6-mile radius from the starting point at Bennigan's in Laurel. The foxhunt got off to a slow start as we waited for more teams to arrive at Bennigan's. Team Fox K3IVO, consisting of Bill N3DCI, Robby WG3R and Craig WA3TID, were up and running right on time. Hunting the Fox was, sadly, only one team: Joe N3TZA, Jim WI3N, and Kevin WV3D. At about 10:20 EDT we began. Checking the null of our loop gave us a reading running nearly north – south. We plotted the line on our state map and moved out! After a stop at Jim's house for a termination we would need when we got in close to the fox we headed out Steven's road and whiskey bottom road to take another reading. At this point we began to experience a foxhunters nemesis - multiple nulls! Taking several readings, we decided on one that seemed to occur more often than the others. I think if we had better maps and plotting tools we may have been closer to the finish - maybe next time! Off we went to the Target parking lot in Laurel to take more readings. Did I mention that traffic in this area slows down all progress? We hit every possible stoplight in the city! And weekend drivers... sorry! Anyway, after some new readings, a hint or two from the fox, and re-bending the loop antenna (it kind of fell over...) we were off to the area around Savage Mill. Stopping at one local park we jumped out to take readings and managed to raise great concern in some guys eating lunch in the parking lot. After that we went to one of the entrances of Savage park for a few more readings, and managed to scare off the father and kids riding there bikes in the parking lot. We seem to be doing that "scare off" thing a lot! From there we raced (we had about ten minutes left) to the other part of Savage Park, went straight to the back of the parking lot. There, we meet two of the three foxes. But alas, they were decoys! The real transmitter was still hidden! Fortunately we knew of another picnic spot perfect for hiding. There we found the last fox! But where was the antenna? (That was part of this contest!) After a bit of careful observing, a 2-meter beam was spotted up in a tree supported by a bamboo pole. Great camouflage! After breaking down the equipment, we retired to the Bagel Bin in the Savage Mill to discuss the day's events. After a short Historic tour of the Mill (thanks to N3DCI's research), we called it a day!

Thank you *Team Fox K3IVO*, Bill N3DCI, Robby WG3R, and Craig WA3TID! You made the foxhunt both fun and challenging!

Look for a foxhunt in the latter part of September!!

73,
Kevin
WV3D

The 2004 Maryland DC QSO Party

1. Setup and Preparations

A bunch of work was needed at the shack if we were to be successful in the 2004 QSO party. Fortunately, a crew of self starting LARC members jumped in to take care of the things that were needed.

Dennis, KT3D donated and brought to the shack a good computer with a 19" monitor. He also installed the required logging software on the computers. Additionally, Dennis put in an interface with the Icom 706 and one of the computers so that the computer could read the frequency from the radio and log it automatically - very handy indeed!

During the week preceding the MDC QSO Party Joe N3TZA, Kevin WV3D, Matt N3JMK, Dan KA8YPY, and Jim WI3N did the following:

1. Installed some plywood and the base for the tower section on the roof.
2. Installed the tower section with a rotator and controller that work, with a mast holding a 2m 3 element beam, 440 5-6 element beam, and a 220 Ringo on top.
3. Installed a tripod with a 6m Ringo vertical antenna.
4. Aligned the stacked 2m beam and HF beam on the tower .
5. Aligned the HF beam so it actually points where the controller says its pointing and changed the control boxes.
6. Attached Alinco radios and coax to the 3 el 2m beam, the 440 beam and the 220 Ringo.
7. Attached our Icom 2m radio and an Alinco 440 thru a duplexer to the dual band vertical on the roof for our local communications on 147.54 and the club repeater with roving LARCers.
8. The Icom 706 that was donated by Ed KB3DVC was attached to the 6m Ringo and also to the stacked 13 element beams on the big tower.
9. Moved the HF TenTec rig closer to the door and put all the VHF/UHF rigs by the window by the tower (partly dictated by the fact that the control cable from the rotator on the tower section only came thru the window 4 feet).
10. Set up the computer and 19" screen that Dennis donated in the HF operating area and set up the computer that we've been using in the VHF/UHF operating area for logging.
11. Attached grounds to the HF rig, power supply, and MFJ tuner.
12. Checked out the sloper/tower antenna on the 80m & 40m bands.

Hats off to this crew! These were all critical elements in making our Club's participation in the Maryland DC QSO Party a success.

2. First Contest Day, August 14

The contest ran from noon until midnight on Saturday so folks started to gather at the shack around 11:00 a.m. All the rigs and computers were switched on and we fooled around with them a bit to verify that everything was in working order.

Our rovers scattered near and far in hopes of covering all of the counties in Maryland and the District of Columbia. The Club had come within an eyelash of doing this in previous years so our number one goal (after winning of course) was to make a “clean sweep” of Maryland and DC. The twin goals worked hand in hand as each new county added a multiplier for scoring.

The first QSO of the contest was with Joe N3TZA on 2 meters who was quickly followed by Al KZ3AB and Matt N3JMK. Within 20 minutes we had made HF contacts with South Dakota and Wisconsin as well.

An hour and a half had gone by and we still had not made our first contact with Jim WI3N who was trying to contact us from Garrett and Allegany counties in the extreme western part of the state. We finally heard from Jim about 1:40 and before long we had the two toughest counties “in the bag.” It was a real confidence booster to make contact with these two distant counties. Jim continued making contacts all over the western half of the state and showed up back at the shack about 10:00 p.m. Jim figured he needed an amplifier for his 2m rig. HD K3HDM, had two of them in the trunk of a car at a remote QTH. Jim got the key from HD and picked up the amps for his Sunday run.

Our other rovers were doing excellent jobs as well. Kevin WV3D worked all the way up to Harford County and then went to the home QTH and made several HF contacts with the shack as well. Matt N3JMK had been busy all day as well working the area from Prince George’s to Frederick to Harford and Baltimore. Dan KA8YPY and Sue N3QYX were busy working multiple bands from the not so distant counties but getting in lots of QSO’s. A number of other folks stopped by the shack and picked up HT’s to work 6 m, 1.25 m, and 70 cm in the 4 local counties to up our QSO count.

The VHF/UHF tapered off by about 8:00 p.m. although we continued to pick off a few. The main action in the evening was on HF where HD K3HDM along with Joe and Sarah manned the HF station and made a number of contacts.

By the end of the first day we had worked all of the counties west of the Bay and DC and figured that we had scored about 25,000 points.

3. Second Contest Day, August 15

The first order of business was breakfast. A number of us met at the Tastee Diner in Laurel to build up our energy for a hard day’s contesting.

The contest ran from noon until 7:59 p.m. on Sunday. We made contact with Jim WI3N in Worcester county about 12:40 and by about 3:00 p.m. he had contacted us from Wicomico county, Somerset county, and Delaware. Finally, just before 6:00 p.m. we made contact with Jim in Cecil County completing the clean sweep – a first for the Club!

As on Saturday, members dropped by and picked up HT’s and made contacts on various bands in the local area. This really helped us get our QSO count up.

Dennis KT3D got another HF rig up and running which helped us make some more HF contacts. HD K3HDM was hard at it all day on the TenTec making HF contacts from the shack. HD and Dennis accounted for more than half of our multipliers in the contest by making HF contacts. The HF bands

were really jammed so it took a lot of perseverance by HD and Dennis to make the HF contacts – thanks for the hard work guys! At the end of the day Dennis jumped in his car and made our last contact on 1.25 m from Anne Arundel county.

Jim WI3N and Laurel showed up at the shack about dark. We all decided that we should celebrate just a little so we went to Don Pablo’s for dinner and a libation.

4. Adding Up the Score

QSO Type	Number	Points	Total
Clubs	12	10	120
Mobile	254	5	1270
Standard	64	1	64
Total QSO Points			1454

Multipliers	Number
MDC Counties	25
Other States	21
DX Countries	9
Total Multipliers	55

Final Score

$$\text{QSO Points} \times \text{Multipliers} = \text{Total Score}$$

$$1,454 \times 55 = 79,970$$

So how did we do? We reached our first goal of making a clean sweep of DC and the Maryland counties which we have not done before. We also achieved a very respectable point total – a number that would have won in many of the past years’ contests. Our log has been sent in but logs are not due until mid September so it will be a while before we know how we stacked up against other clubs in terms of points but I’m sure nobody beat us in terms of having a good time!

Finally, thanks to Charles AA3WC, HD K3HDM, Ed K3QX, Dan KA8YPY, Toby KB3BWR, Jeff KB3EQH, Evonne KB3KBC, Cynthia KB3KFZ, Dennis KT3D, Al KZ3AB, Dick N3IZU, Matt N3JMK, Sue N3QYX, Joe N3TZA, Jerry N3WSG, Pud W3YD, Chip W4PBG, Jim WI3N, and Kevin WV3D for all your help and participation. Congratulations on a great team effort!

Ed K3QX

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