



THE FEEDBACK

Volume 06 Issue 03

March 2006

THE AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLETTER

Laurel Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

PO Box 146, Laurel, MD 20725-0146

<http://www.larcmd.org>

email: larc@larcmd.org

Upcoming Events:

Day	Date	Time	Freq	Event
Wed	02/22	1930		Monthly Meeting @ Woman's Club of Laurel
Wed	03/01	2030	147.225+	On-the-Air Meeting
Wed	03/08	1900		Social Gathering at Tubby's
Wed	03/15	2030	147.225+	On-the-Air Meeting
Wed	03/22	1930		Monthly Meeting @ Woman's Club of Laurel
Wed	03/29	2030	147.225+	On-the-Air Meeting
All		2100	147.540 simplex	Informal Net / Rag-Chew

Note: 147.225 PL 156.7 tone is usually off during nets.

Repeaters:

VHF: 147.225+ PL 156.7

UHF: 442.500+ PL 156.7

Simplex:

VHF: 147.540

UHF: 445.975

<p>Next Meeting: February 22, 2006 1930 EST</p>

President's Rumbblings

Hi all! Well it seems I just did this! Time is flying! We had an interesting meeting in January. Tom Coats N3IJ gave an interesting presentation on legislation being introduced to the Maryland legislature. The Odenton Hamfest was quite busy this year. I hope you had time to stop by. By the time you get your Feedback, the 45th Annual Washington's Birthday Marathon will be history. I hope all will have gone well. The February business meeting will have a presentation on antennas brought to us by Mona NY7P. If there are topics you would like to see covered at one of the monthly meetings, or if you would like to make a presentation, please let me know! We will also be looking to get the spring schedule of events lined up and organized. I hope that we will be able to report progress on the tower for the club shack and the on 440 repeater.

As I've said before all of the events and other club activities will require participation to make them happen. Please visit the club web site www.larcmd.org and look at the upcoming events. We will need people to help head up these events and some volunteers to help them. We have gained a good reputation for helping and want continue it.

We need articles for the Feedback! Please, pick a topic and jot down a few words and send them to the editor. If you find a web site or piece of equipment you find useful or interesting, please send something in about it! It doesn't have to be long or award winning! The Feedback is only as good as the material submitted!

See you at the February meeting!

73,
Kevin WV3D

ATV Repeater in Laurel

Laurel, Maryland is slated to become a center for amateur radio television (ATV) activity in the near future.

Most people think amateur radio (ham) operators communicate via voice on HF, VHF and UHF frequencies. But, "ham radio operators" also communicate via live television pictures.

Members of the Chesapeake Amateur Television Society (CATS) and the Laurel Amateur Radio Club (LARC) have been working together since late 2005 to establish an amateur television (ATV) repeater in Laurel, Maryland.

The Baltimore Radio Amateur Television Society (BRATS) has an operational ATV repeater located in northeastern Baltimore City. Laurel is on the fringe of its coverage area.

The Metrovision ATV Club in Alexandria, Virginia, used to have an ATV repeater that covered Northern Virginia and Washington, DC, with Laurel on its fringe. But, the Metrovision ATV repeater suddenly went off the air more than five years ago. Hopefully, the Laurel ATV repeater will help to fill in some of the void left by the loss of "Metrovision's" ATV repeater.

The Laurel ATV repeater will allow a low-powered amateur television signal to be rebroadcast over a wide area - 20 miles or more. ATV operates in the ultra high frequency (UHF) portion of the radio spectrum and the range is limited to unobstructed, or "line of sight," distances.

Last summer members of LARC demonstrated the advantages of "point-to-point" ATV to officials of the City of Laurel during a simulated disaster drill and secured the support of local government officials.

CATS member John Watson, amateur radio callsign NY3K, contacted LARC member Allen Brown, amateur radio callsign KZ3AB, and through their efforts, the two clubs joined forces in a mutual effort to establish an ATV repeater in Laurel.

Members of CATS needed a location high enough for their ATV repeater to provide the widest possible coverage area. Members of LARC also needed this type of support to ensure that ATV pictures could be reliably received at the Laurel Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during a local emergency or drill.

In spite of the hospital's financial problems, Don Vann, head of the Dimensions Health organization's facilities, which includes Greater Laurel-Beltsville Hospital, gave his approval for the ATV repeater installation on January 20th in support of this public service venture.

Watson, Brown and members of CATS, including Ken McCue – K3UQQ, Jim Busick – KB3JJW, Rodney Douglas – KD3DV, Stan Novak - K3DRP, Tom Farrell – W3RCJ and Grady Ball – WB3JUV as well as LARC members Jim Cross – WI3N and Joe Craven – N3TZA, are working to construct and install the ATV repeater atop the Greater Laurel-Beltsville Hospital located on Van Dusen Road at the western edge of Laurel.

The antenna height above average terrain (HAAT) at the hospital will be approximately 150 feet. This will allow the ATV repeater coverage area to include the eastern halves of Howard and Montgomery Counties, Baltimore City and the southern half of Baltimore County, Anne Arundel County, most of Prince George's County, Washington, DC, and portions of Northern Virginia.

The Laurel ATV repeater will receive ATV pictures on a frequency of 434.000 MHz and retransmit them on a frequency of 421.250 MHz. Initially, the output power will be 20 watts peak-envelope-power (PEP). Future plans include increasing the transmitter output power to 200 watts PEP.

A ten-pole vestigial sideband (VSB) filter will be used to prevent emissions below the lower limit of the amateur radio allocated frequency band, 420.000 MHz.

Antenna polarization will be horizontal in order to minimize the possibility of interference with commercial or government two-way radio systems and to avoid adjacent channel interference from the vertically polarized BRATS ATV repeater.

The Laurel ATV repeater is expected to be fully operational by the end of February 2006.

Updates will be posted on the:

CATS website: <http://catsatv.home.comcast.net/index.htm>

LARC website: <http://www.larcmd.org/>

ARRL MDC Section Manager website: <http://home.comcast.net/~kz3ab/WI3N/index.htm>



73,
Al Brown KZ3AB

From the MDC Section Manager

LARC gets the first ever article from your newly appointed Section Manager. Unfortunately, LARC doesn't get any prize for having it.

It's been real interesting since being appointed Jan 1 to fill the one and a half year unexpired term of Tom/W3TOM as he assumed his newly elected position as Vice Director of the Atlantic Division. Congratulations to Bill Edgar, N3LLR for being elected to the Atlantic Division Director position. What is really unusual about this is that they were probably the first candidates for those positions to run as a team.

I've been getting my feet wet getting out to visit with some clubs and ARES® groups. I've also been active promoting the House Bill 296 and it's companion bill in the Senate, SB 75 that Tom Coates, N3IJ from the Baltimore Amateur Radio Club Legislative Affairs Team presented at our meeting in January. There were 20 hams at the hearing in the house and 8 hams present for the hearing in the senate. It's been somewhat of a mad scramble trying to get the word out for people to email their delegates. I know that some of the members have from LARC. Serving Laurel we have Del Barbara Frush on the House Environmental Matters Committee and Senator John Gianetti on the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee. If the bills don't make it through this year (only about 4% of bills get enacted) we'll be applying our lessons learned for the 8 months leading up to the next session.

February 17 is the first section-wide Echolink net. Just trying something new to see how it flies. It can be a good way to get out information about upcoming section activities. I'm hoping that we'll be able to get some mystery guests from around the country to drop in and give some commentary on things happening elsewhere. I did a spreadsheet matrix on all the nets and meetings in the state and found that the third Friday is the only night with nothing going on, so I filled the vacuum. Thanks to John/WB3GXX for allowing the use of his Echolink server and repeater and contacting and coordinating the repeater check-ins.

The next day is a meeting of EC/RO's, OES, REACT and Net Managers at the PRGE EOC. Over the next year we're hoping to have several exercises culminating in the yearly ARRL Simulated Emergency Test in October. This is a first for this type of meeting and hopefully, besides providing the emergency communications players a chance to meet each other, we'll be able to get everyone on the same page as far as what to do when the real deal happens.

I've also been spending some time finding and making appointments to various positions. Jeff, KB3EQH has finally been made an official PIO for LARC and PRGE ARES/RACES, formalizing what he's been doing so well for so long. By having a well organized group of PIO's and Local Government Liaisons (LGL), we will be able to keep the information flow going on the local, section and legislative fronts. They will be the contact points for getting information disseminated through our local reflectors, some of which is really time sensitive.

Working on having an all day MD State Convention in Hagerstown July 29. No hamfest, just keynote speakers and various tracks, demos and whatever else we can find to make it interesting.

73,
Jim WI3N MDC Section Manager

FCC Enforcement Letters ...

SUBJECT: WARNING NOTICE—UNLICENSED RADIO OPERATION

Dear Sir:

Information before the Commission indicates that you have been operating radio equipment without a license on frequency 146.00 MHz. This frequency is referred to by your construction employees working on a tunnel project as "Channel 7."

Please be advised that operation of radio transmitting equipment without a license is a violation of Section 301 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. Section 301, and will subject the operator to monetary forfeiture (fine) or imprisonment. **Monetary forfeitures normally range from \$7,500 to \$10,000.**

You are requested to contact me at 717-338-2502 to discuss this matter. We will be able to assist you in obtaining a license in the appropriate radio service.

Sincerely,

W. Riley Hollingsworth
Special Counsel, Spectrum Enforcement Division
Enforcement Bureau

Dear Sir:

The Federal Communications Commission has received complaints that equipment operated by your utility may be causing harmful radio interference to an operator in the Amateur Radio Service. The complainant is:

(Name withheld)

The FCC has the responsibility to require that utility companies rectify such problems within a reasonable time if the interference is caused by faulty power utility equipment. Under FCC rules, most power-line and related equipment is classified as an "incidental radiator." This term is used to describe equipment that does not intentionally generate any radio-frequency energy, but that may create such energy as an incidental part of its intended operation.

To help you better understand your responsibilities under FCC rules, here are the most important rules relating to radio and television interference from incidental radiators:

Title 47, CFR Section 15.5 General conditions of operation.

Title 47, CFR Section 15.13 Incidental radiators.

Title 47, CFR Section 15.15 General technical requirements.

The complainant has attempted unsuccessfully to work through your usual complaint resolution process and as a result the matter has been referred to our office. The FCC prefers that those responsible for the proper operation of power lines assume their responsibilities fairly. This means that your utility company should locate the source of any interference caused by its equipment and make necessary corrections within a reasonable time.

While the FCC has confidence that most utility companies are able to resolve these issues voluntarily, the FCC wants to make your office aware that this unresolved problem may be a violation of FCC rules and could result in a monetary forfeiture for each occurrence. At this stage, the FCC encourages the parties to resolve this problem without FCC intervention, but if necessary to facilitate resolution, the FCC may investigate possible rules violations and address appropriate remedies.

The American Radio Relay League, a national organization of Amateur Radio operators, may be able to offer help and guidance about radio interference that involves Amateur Radio operators.

Please advise the complainant what steps your utility company is taking to correct this reported interference problem. The FCC expects that most cases can be resolved within 60 days of the time they are first reported to the utility company. If you are unable to resolve this February 28, 2006, please advise this office about the nature of the problem, the steps you are taking to resolve it and the estimated time in which those steps can be accomplished.

If you have any questions about this matter, please contact me at 717-338-2502. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

W. Riley Hollingsworth
Special Counsel, Spectrum Enforcement Division
Enforcement Bureau

THE LAUREL AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Officers:	President:	Kevin Craven	WV3D	301-498-2805	kevinc@erols.com
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	Treasurer:	Dennis Fitzgerald	KT3D	301-459-1247	dennis@dkf-naf.com
	VEC Chairman:	Diane Zimmerman	AA3OF	301-937-0394	aa3of@arrl.net
	Member at Large:	Dan Blasberg	KA8YPY	301-345-7381	ka8ypy@arrl.net
	Past President:	Joe Craven	N3TZA	301-776-6398	n3tza@rcn.com

Other LARC Positions and Contacts:

FAR Representative:	Dan Blasberg	KA8YPY	301-345-7381	ka8ypy@arrl.net
PVRC Representative:	Bill Smith	N3XL	301-805-4211	n3xl@arrl.net
LARC VE Testing:	John Creel	WB3GXW	301-572-5124	wb3gxw@arrl.net
T-MARC/D-MARC Rep:	OPEN			
Public Information Officer:	Jeffrey Epstein	KB3EQH	301-317-0650	jeffreye@pobox.com
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Education and Training:	OPEN			
Technical Specialist:	Kevin Arber	W3DAD	301-725-0038	w3dad@amsat.org
ARES/RACES Coordinators:	Jim Cross	WI3N	301-725-6829	jcross3@juno.com
Official Emergency Station:	Pat Gormley	KK3F	301-864-4694	kk3f@arrl.net
Official Relay Station:	Pat Gormley	KK3F	301-864-4694	kk3f@arrl.net

LARC Special Interest Groups and Mentors:

Antennas:	Kevin Arber	W3DAD	301-725-0038	w3dad@amsat.org
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Repeaters:	John Creel	WB3GXW	301-572-5124	wb3gxw@arrl.net

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Editor: Ed Herbrechtsmeier K3QX

Items to be published in *The Feedback* should be submitted by the third Wednesday of the month. Email submissions may be made to k3qx@arrl.net



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