

Davie County ARC

February Meeting

Volume 3, Issue 1

Speakers for February Meeting

At the February meeting we will have Luann Angell from the Davie County Health Department and Jessica Perry, Environmental Health Specialist as speakers.

Ms Angell will give an informal brief overview of Public Health Preparedness as it pertains to mass clinics, pandemic influenza and current com-

munication capabilities.

This is an excellent opportunity to learn what to expect in case of a large public health event. If you have questions this would be a good time to ask them.

This is also the time to find out how we may be able to assist in case of a public health emergency.

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ARRL Announces New Award

Beginning 1 January 2009 there is a new award available from the ARRL. The new award is called the Triple Play and is issued for working all the US states on three different modes, CW, Phone, and Digital. To be used as credit toward the Triple Play award the contacts have to be confirmed using the ARRL's LoTW system.

LoTW is Log book of The Word and is available free to ARRL members. When you apply credits to an award there is a small charge for each QSL, but it is much less than the cost of stamps for sending physical cards back and forth.

This is an excellent opportunity to get the WAS award. For new HF operators this is a great time to get your feet wet and get on the HF bands. There are many people chasing this award and a group meets on 3618 in the evenings just for the purpose of working each other with contacts to



be confirmed through LoTW. For LoTW information go to <http://www.arrl.org/lotw/>

Special points of interest:

- Contact John at n4qvm@n4qvm.com

January Meeting Minutes

Meeting 1/6/2009

Agenda

1. Election of officers
2. Club dues are due
3. Ben's Weather Underground <http://www.wunderground.com/weatherstation/WXDailyHistory.asp?ID=KNCHUNTS1>
4. My weather <http://home.earthlink.net/~jdwiggins/weather.htm>
5. Club goals for 2009, eg do we do Field Day as a group or maybe do it as individuals using battery/emergency power.
6. Do a radio survey of the county using HF, 2m, and 440
7. Offer a license class
8. Meeting with Luann Angell from Public Health

Minutes

Members present: Don Cassidy, Jack Davidson, John Dwiggins, Buddy Eaton, Bob Kassel, Barry Norman, Lauren Norman, David Pinnix, Les Pinnix, Ben Wasilauskas, Joe Scott. (Joe Scott applied, needs to be voted on at the next meeting)

We had an update on the 440 repeater, Les has requested space on the new hospital tower.

Jack will work on finding a 2m pair for us. We need to make it a goal to get all the repeater materials together.

Barry Norman has a repeater he will sell to the club for \$600, which is half price.

Les will check on the club getting funds from Homeland Security.

Barry's repeater is 442.025, PL 100 Club members should start monitoring it.

Elections were held, 2008 officers will remain. President - Don Cassidy, Vice-President - Jack Davidson, Secretary/Treasurer - John Dwiggins.

There was some discussion of projects for the club. Aside from the repeater we may offer a license class through DCCC. Jack will contact DCCC.

Luanne Angell wants to attend a club meeting and discuss how the club may work with the Dept. of Public Health, if needed. Les will contact her to see if she can attend the next meeting.

We will have access to the new hospital when it is built, and should maintain access to the old hospital.

We need to know where the shelters are, Les will check on that.

We need to do a radio survey of Davie County to find trouble spots for communications.

John gave the treasury report, no income and no expenses for the preceding month, balance is \$119.66.

All members in attendance paid their 2009 dues, except Barry Norman who is paid through 2010.

We had a white elephant gift exchange.

February Agenda

1. Speakers from the Davie County Health Department
2. Discuss the 2 meter repeater Bob Kassel has found
3. Treasury report
4. Club projects and goals

North Carolina Hams Coordinate Governors Inauguration Parade

By Gary Pearce, KN4AQ, ARRL NC PIO

On one of the last days of 2008, Kelly Andrews KD4EWG got a call from some people he knows who were working on Governor-elect Bev Perdue's inauguration in Raleigh. "Could you get some of your ham buddies to help us out with logistics?" Uh, that would be in less than two weeks, on Saturday, January 10, with the New Year holiday about to happen. Kelly wasn't able to help, but he passed them on to Tom Brown N4TAB. Tom is Wake County ARES EC (and Central Branch AEC). And he wasn't so sure. Yes, the hams could do it, even on short notice. But did they want to? Hams had been called out for Governor Mike Easley's second inauguration four years earlier, and ended up not doing much. We'll do it, Tom replied, if you give us a real job.

We got four: handle seating for the inauguration; coordinate the staging for the parade (66 units, 2200 participants); relay the actual order of parade participants to the TV network broadcasting the parade so they could set up their graphics and scripts; and coordinate the busses that were to pick up the parade participants once they finished. And we wouldn't be just shadowing and communicating for the people doing these jobs – we'd be doing them ourselves.



Time to recruit some volunteers. Tom put out the word on ARES mailing lists and Triangle area nets, and got help from Bill Cole, KG4CXY. Bill ran an independent public service group, Carolina Helping Hams (www.hampublicservice.org), and had his own list of volunteers. Between them, they filled the twenty slots they needed and had to turn a few others down.

Tom and Bill met with the Inauguration staff, but got only sketchy information about how things were planned. That's because, with little time to spare, planning hadn't progressed very far. They explained what they could do to the ham volunteers on two nets held on the Raleigh 148.88 repeater, but when the hams reported for duty early Saturday morning, they knew where to gather, what frequency to use, and not much else.

VIP seating for the inauguration was the first task. Tom dispatched Bill KG4CXY, Karl K4LNX and Charles WA3UTC to handle that. Virginia NC4VA went along to shadow the parade coordinator. They found that 700 seats had been set up, but 2000 tickets had been sent out. Seating had been divided by group, but there were no maps. Somehow they handled it.

Then Bill, Karl and Charles went to see about the parking lot where the busses would wait to pick up the parade participants as they finished. I monitored the radio traffic on that, and it was trouble! The lot they were told to use had been taken over by the Capital Police. The next lot they were pointed to was filling up with cars from arriving spectators. They closed the lot and saved what space was left, and got ready to direct parade units to their busses. Tom warned that the first parade participants would likely stall and mill around as they exited the route, causing a backup into the active parade, so Karl and Charles would have to hustle them along. And that's what they did. They kept the parade marching and extra two blocks, right up to the busses. Bill left them to their task and became the parade marshal/traffic cop at the starting line.



The rest of the hams were helping at the parade staging area, and things were no better organized there. The plan was for the police department to cordon off several blocks at the south end of downtown Raleigh where the 65 parade units would wait to be lined up. As those groups arrived, the streets were still full of traffic, and the small volunteer parking lot where the parade units checked in was filling up fast. It would never hold the whole parade.

Fortunately, Tom and Bill had identified "Plan B" – two large parking lots adjacent to the check-in area – the day before. Those lots were privately owned, but they were still empty Saturday morning, so Tom sent

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Phil, AE4PC, John AI4RT and Dick KM4SX over to direct parade traffic into them. Some of the other hams pointed the early arrivals out of the little volunteer lot and over to “Plan B.” Alanna K4AAC was the traffic cop at the check-in area. Her toughest task was convincing Girl Scout moms to park in a designated lot three blocks away when they wanted to park *here*.

So now we had two parking lots full of floats, high-school bands, military units, Girl Scouts, clowns and other groups, but they were not lined up in any particular order. Tom asked me to coordinate getting them out of the lots and up to the Wilmington Street starting line, and he gave me a list that showed what order they needed to be in. This was going to be interesting.



I got on the air and called for all available hams to just spread themselves out into the parking lots and adjacent streets. I would call for the parade units in order. The hams would look around, and whoever identified the units I called for would approach them and point them to the exit. KJ4BYN, KI4YXM, K4NGJ, WA2YBM, K4TIF, WD4KSE, KI4FUD and KI4PAE joined AE4PC, AI4RT and KM4SX in the staging area (John AI4RT described it as the cavalry arriving just in time as he was about to give up). The improvised system worked, though the hams had to unsnarl some traffic jams. Everyone was thinking on their feet and solving problems as they arose. It was working.

Almost. The first two units on my list were the Inter-Service Color Guard and the 2nd Division Marine Band from Camp Lejune, and nobody could find either of them. Tom had a brilliant thought – they were probably participating in the Inauguration, which was going on a few blocks away. Virginia confirmed that, and they were soon on their way to the starting line.

The parade began on time, at 12:30. Wilmington Street was full from the staging area to the starting line, and about half the parade units were still in the parking lots. I was about to call out more units when our next two crises hit. First, Governor Perdue hadn’t arrived at the reviewing stand yet. Could we stop the parade, or at least slow it down? We didn’t see how. Fortunately, she appeared before the parade had progressed very far.

Second, there was a separate parade “insertion point” for the politicians and other VIP who would be riding in antique cars. Bob K4RLC was manning that spot, and he reported that the VIPs were arriving way out of order. There was no way to stick to the prepared script. Some of the other parade units were out-of-order, too, because they arrived late.

That scenario was covered. David KF4VXJ was positioned strategically near the start of the parade, and would relay the actual order of participants to Alanna K4AAC, who was now in the TV truck near the finish line. The problem was that with all the stray RF from the computers in the TV truck, Alanna couldn’t hear David, or almost anyone else. As the panic level from the producers was rising, Virginia was moved to the truck, and Alanna stood outside, where she could hear David and relay his reports to Virginia.



But now *my* anxiety level was rising. Half the parade was still in the parking lot, but the TV-support hams were dominating our radio channel getting their problem solved and reporting parade progress, and I couldn’t call for more units. Our truncated planning hadn’t left time to identify a second frequency and make sure everyone had it programmed and ready for QSY in the event of channel congestion. We were doing everything on a single two-meter simplex frequency. Steve K4WEB was doing his best to keep things moving as Net Control, but I had to plead to get *someone* moved to another channel before the parade developed a big gap in the middle.

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David solved the problem by moving the TV crew to a nearby repeater. I was able to resume calling out the parade units, and the parade proceeded, gap-free.

Another part of Tom’s plan called for having several hams stationed along the active parade route to look for any trouble. That job went to the Freeze family, father Mark WD4KSE, and twins Clara KI4PAE and Sam KI4FUD. Sam saw a horse throw a shoe, which landed nails-up in the middle of the street, right in front of a marching band (earlier in the day, a band leader had complained about being behind horses, but this wasn’t what he had in mind). Sam ran out and picked up the shoe. Meanwhile, Mark received a radio call that some VIPs arrived at the “insertion point” late, and we needed to have one of the antique cars circle back to pick them up. He ran the length of the parade route to catch up with the cars and redirect them. Clara’s first public-service outing went a little more smoothly, but she said she enjoyed it.

Another ham stationed on the route, Liz KF4UQZ, discovered that a radio and orange vest made you a target for everyone with a problem – public, parade official, police. She barely got one question answered or problem solved before another one appeared. “That is what these events are good for, to test your ability to do that under extreme duress. We can all use a lot more of that,” she said.

Remember that parking lot that Tom commandeered? Our action didn’t go unnoticed (it’s hard to hide a couple thousand people, many of them blaring instruments and beating drums, in a lot that wasn’t supposed to be used). A lot representative approached Phil AE4PC and asked when they’d get their lot back, as they had an event that evening. Phil explained that we’d be long gone by then, and all was well.

Our group of 20 included four women - Virginia, Alanna, Liz and Tiff. Virginia noted that that seemed appropriate, considering that the Inauguration was for the state’s first female Governor. Then someone asked her why we didn’t have *more* women hams there.

The parking lot emptied; the last officials were “inserted”; the TV broadcast identified almost everyone correctly; the Governor left a little early to join the crew of costumed sports mascots as they cavorted before the reviewing stand (with didn’t please the some of the participants who didn’t get her attention); and a police car brought up the rear of the parade. Bob, K4RLC, and David, KF4VXJ followed that car up the parade route, and Bob reported, “Some groups of parade watchers clapped loudly and laughingly said, ‘Hooray for the guys with the radios.’”



The guys (and girls) with the radios were treated to a barbecue lunch before heading home. As far as anyone on Fayetteville Street or watching on TV knew, everything was flawless. They pulled it off.

Repeater Project

As many of you know, Bob Kassel has located a bargain deal on a 2m repeater that the club can buy for \$600.00. Several of you have already committed to contributions of \$50.00 toward the purchase of this repeater. If you have not made a contribution already please consider doing so now. You may mail your contribution to Bob or bring it to the meeting Tuesday and I will pass the money on to Bob. This is a great opportunity for the club to get a repeater at a very good price.

Hopefully we will soon have a repeater up and running that we can call home. I look forward to talking to all of you there.

February Meeting

Davie County Amateur Radio Club
PO Box 970
Cooleemee, NC 27014

Next meeting is 3 February at 7:00 pm
at the Davie County Hospital

We're on the web at
www.ki4orw.org

Monthly meetings are the first
Tuesday of every month.



The Davie County Amateur Radio Club was formed on August 16, 2005. DCARC was formed for two reasons. First, there was no amateur radio club in Davie County, and second, there was a need and desire to form an ARES group in Davie County.

We would like to welcome any amateurs in Davie County or surrounding counties to attend meetings, and if you are interested, become a member.

Club officers for 2009 are:
President Don Cassidy KG4IUC
Vice President Jack Davidson NW4O
Sec/Treasurer John Diggins N4QVM

Odds and Ends

A couple of reminders here. For those of you that have not paid your 2009 club dues, they are now due.

I would also like to remind everyone that has a 10 meter capable radio that we have an informal schedule on 28.410 every Thursday at 7:00 pm. Ben and I (John) are there nearly every Thursday evening, and lately we have been the only ones there. If the frequency is in use when it is time for our schedule we will move up frequency in 5 kHz steps, such as 28.415, 28.420, etc. At times in the past we have had to move up to nearly 28.460, but that doesn't happen often.