

THE LISTENING POST

Azalea Coast Amateur Radio Club

P. O. Box 4044

Wilmington, NC 28406

<http://www.ac4rc.org>

147.18 - - 88.5 tone

442.50 - - 88.5 tone

July 2010

We had great attendance at the June meeting and one more Whiz Bang of a Field Day at Ogden Park. With regard to Field Day a great big thanks to the large group of people who showed up on Saturday morning to help set-up and also to the large group that came Sunday afternoon to help take things down. That was a great step forward in taking care of field day. The Spaghetti dinner on Saturday night was fantastic. Julian Brad Berry and Linda Hutchison did a great job organizing the event and a number of the wives chipped in and brought some great sweet stuff to top things off. Not all the club members were there for this one and I can assure you that you missed one great meal and a great time. We had a great kick off for FD too with Mayor Saffo and County Commission Chairman Jason Thompson cutting the big red ribbon after presenting the ACARC with a very nice Proclamation of Appreciation for the services the ham radio operators in the area provide.

So performance wise how did we do? Well **we doubled our QSO score from last year** and compared to the year before that even much better. Our final score will be determined once the ARRL adds all of our bonus points to the QSO score. We had **514 CW QSOs** and **282 SSB QSOs**. Interesting that ARRL and the FCC has dropped the CW requirement from licensing – the CW station certainly out performs the SSB mode of operation. We had planned to try some digital communications, however, we were challenged enough keeping the CW, SSB and GOTA stations going that we really never got the chance to relax and try some digital work. Maybe next year if we can encourage some club members to develop the skills to operate some of the digital modes under tough conditions.

So having done so well and improved so much is there any room for further improvement? You bet there is and we learned a lot that will help us in the future if we follow through. We were not real good at executing our plan. While we had lots of help for the set-up, not many of the set-up crew had studied the FD plan and knew what all had to be done to get things going. We were an hour and a half late getting everything operational. We missed some easy bonus opportunities because we did not do some upfront work effectively. Operating efficiency needs a boost especially with computer based logging experience and proficiency and with SSB operating skills. There is just much, much more to FD than 2A NC. But our performance trend is in the right direction. We just need to work on some things and get better at them. Club programs and club activities can go a long way toward improvement provided members support the effort.

In the Activity Calendar I have listed a lot of upcoming State QSO Parties. I strongly encourage you to think about getting set up and operate in them and see what you can do. They are real low key events that are great for learning some new skills without all the pressure of big contests and they are fun too. You can even qualify for awards in most of them. Look on the ARRL page or Google the QSO Party name to get a link to the rules and all the information you need to plan your operations. Take an initiative to improve your operating skills beginning now.

The summer doldrums are here and band conditions normally take a bit of a slump during the summer months. There are plenty of State QSO Parties in August and these provide great opportunities to learn operating skills without a lot of pressure. People are also off on vacations and all kinds of other activities. But don't forget we do have a July meeting and Jack Jacobs, WD4OIN is planning a very interesting program on County Hunting. County hunting is quite challenging and represents another of those activity niches which can provide many hours of fun and entertainment on HF radio. Make our plans to attend the July meeting.

Mark your calendars for Tuesday, July 20 at 7 PM at the Cape Fear Community College North Campus! And don't forget your Parking Pass

<http://ac4rc.org/parkingpass.doc>

73, Charlie Vaughan K4UWH

ACARC Club Meeting Minutes

The minutes for the May and June club meetings have been published on the club website and are available there for you to read. Follows is the link directly to them: <http://ac4rc.org/Club%20Meeting/meeting%20report2010.html>. If you have any questions regarding them please bring them to the meeting on July 20.

AC4RC Website Addition

Keep an eye on the club web site. Jack Jacobs, WD4OIN, keeps adding little things that should be useful to a good percentage of the club membership. It pays to check the site regularly. We owe Jack a bit Thanks for helping us get the web site straightened out and current.

Bayshore Weather Station

Hutch, NK0S has his weather station up and online. The URL is <http://www.weatherlink.com/user/nk0s>.

Solar Update

The lack of good solar activity as this cycle should be progressing is becoming worrisome to many. There is some good propagation from time to time but things are unpredictable at best. We are seeing some Sporadic 'E' openings that are affecting 10 and 6 meters – June/July is the time of year for this I caught EA8, US Virgins and Dominican Republic recently. **I announced all of these openings on the 147.18 Repeater and no one took advantage of the information.** The daytime heating and night time cooling is producing some ducting that is particularly interesting on 2-meters and above – late evening through early morning is the time to look for this. So in spite of the crazy sun there is some interesting activity on the bands.

2010 ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Each Monday Evening – 9 PM local – 146.18 Repeater - - ACARC Local Net

HAM FEAST – Typically Saturday Mornings 8AM College Diner, College Rd.

Friday Noon Lunch Bunch – As announced – Contact W3NZ for current week

July

- 17th CQ Worldwide VHF Contest
- 17th North American RTTY QSO Party
- 17th Mid-Summer Swapfest, Cary, NC
- 20th Club Meeting – County Hunting by Jack Jacobs, WD4OIN

August

- 7th 10-10 International Summer SSB Contest
- 7th North American CW QSO Party
- 7th CFARS Swapfest, Fayetteville, NC
- 14th Maryland-DC QSO Party
- 15th ARRL RTTY Rodeo Roundup
- 17th Club Meeting -
- 21st North American SSB QSO Party
- 21st New Jersey QSO Party
- 28th Hawaii QSO Party
- 28th Kansas QSO Party
- 28th Ohio QSO Party

September

- 4th Colorado QSO Party
- 5th Tennessee QSO Party
- 4th & 5th Shelby Hamfest, Dallas, NC
- 18th South Carolina QSO Party
- 21st Club Meeting – Feed Lines and Antennas – Some Interesting Information
- 25th Texas QSO Party

CLUB VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We desperately need a Newsletter Editor for the club. Is there anyone who would like to volunteer to get a newsletter out each and every month before the club meetings? This is very important!

Also elections will be here before you know it. Hutch has asked to be relieved as Treasurer and that is only fair as he has served the club well for a long time. Also I know that Ed has indicated he would like to be relieved of the Secretary duties. We need to be thinking about replacements now.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

We welcome anyone who would like to become a member of the Azalea Coast Amateur Radio Club. We also try to maintain an e-mail mailing list for anyone that would like to keep track of our activities. Keep your e-mail address up-to-date.

CLUB MEETING

The next club meeting is July 20, 2010 at the Cape Fear Community College North Campus – 7 PM. The room is typically on the 3rd floor but ask security. ***BE SURE TO PRINT A PARKING PASS FOR YOUR CAR, FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS AND PLACE IT IN CLEAR VIEW ON YOUR DASHBOARD.*** Just As we did at the last meeting, we will have introductions and while we want to know your Name and Call Sign, please come prepared to mention something about your ham radio activities in the last month. The monthly meetings are becoming a place where “Ham Radio is Spoken”. So this is the place to let people know what you are doing and get your questions answered. No one gets a free pass so come prepared. **Looking forward to seeing all of you there.**

73,

Charlie K4UWH