

Airwaves on the Azalea Coast



Upcoming Events

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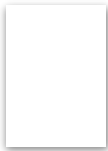
Feb 02	9:00pm	Monday Night Ragchew NET
Feb 06	11:45am	Luncheon - Henry's Restaurant
Feb 09	9:00pm	Monday Night Ragchew NET
Feb 13	11:45am	Luncheon - Jason's Deli
Feb 16	9:00pm	Monday Night Ragchew NET
Feb 17	6:00pm	Elmer Hour - Pine Valley Baptist Church
	7:00pm	Club Meeting
Feb 20	11:45am	Luncheon - Pete's Choice
Feb 21.	10:30am	FCC License Testing (in-person) NHC Library - Pine Valley Branch
Feb 23	9:00pm	Monday Night Ragchew NET
Feb 24	7:00pm	ARES Meeting 230 Government Ctr Dr
Feb 27	11:45am	Luncheon - Cape Fear Seafood (Porters Neck)

More details on these and other scheduled events can be found here: [AC4RC Club Calendar](#)

Club Officers

President	Gene Costa	KD2RRP
Vice President	Mike Hartmann	NI2S
Secretary	Unassigned	
Treasurer	Bill D'Innocenzo	K3WMD

From the President's Desk



If you are anything like me, you too hate to fill out surveys. I usually click out of them quickly. They come by email and text and all claim to take only 5 minutes to complete. Well, you have received a request from the club to fill out a survey and it claims to take only 5 minutes to complete. It may take more than that if it asks you to answer questions that you may not have expected.

Before I took office as you President, a few club members stated they were looking forward to the direction that I would take the club. I will share my answer with all of you. It is not my club or my direction, it is our club and therefore, my job is to lead in the direction that results from the input you provide via the survey.

My office is a two-year term so I will work with the other officers to develop a 2-year plan that is informed by your answers. When the data are analyzed, themes will emerge and the officers will get a picture of our club's future that you help to develop. We will do our best to achieve as much as possible in that timeframe. However, it is only possible with your involvement, as well as your talents, skills, abilities, and knowledge.

I really appreciate that several members have stepped forward to help us complete some tasks even before the survey is completed. It is this "can do" attitude that will lead to our successes. If you want to jump in and get something going, don't wait for the "right time" because there is no right time. Let any of the officers know what you want to do and we will try to make it happen.

An update on youth engagement. The students in the electronics/radio club at St. Mark School are into their third round of kit building. Within a few days, one student had soldered an FM stereo radio receiver and was thrilled that it worked. The first kit was just an assembly project for a separate transmitter and receiver for the students to practice Morse code. The second project was a beginner soldering kit to assemble and solder LEDs on a green Christmas tree. Is there a Heathkit project in their future? Do you know of any other school or individual teacher who may be interested in starting an electronics/radio club? If so, please let me know.

Gene KD2RRP

Out and About in the Azalea Coast



Friday Lunch Bunch at
Cape Fear Seafood



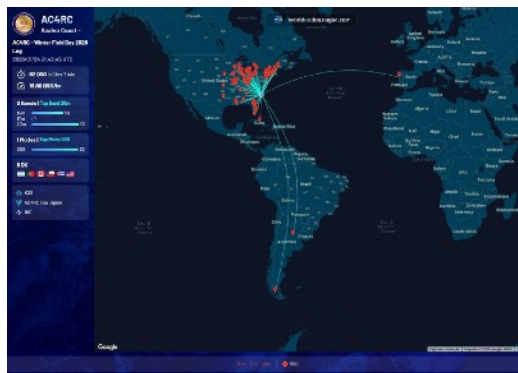
Leaps Tall Fences in a
Single Bound!



Ready, Aim...



CQ, CQ, CQ...



Winter Field Day 2026 Contact
Map



Mamma Mia! That's a
spicy meatball!!!



Battleship Update

The radio restoration team continues its multi-pronged activity on the ship. We've made incremental progress understanding why the TDE transmitter generator isn't working - namely significant errors were made by the outfit that rebuilt this unit. We're peeling back that onion with the help of a couple of subject matter experts we've managed to connect with. Meanwhile, we're also working on our first RCA receiver repair, starting the alignment process, and continuing to rehab the RCA power supplies. The next scheduled operating activity aboard ship is the NC QSO party on March 1st, so mark your calendars!

Mike Hartmann

NI2S

Pictures from Pearl Harbor Day on BB-55



Items of Club Interest

2026 Membership Dues

As we approach the end of 2025, the Azalea Coast Amateur Radio Club reminds members that **2026 dues are now due**. Members planning to renew are encouraged to submit payment as soon as possible and no later than **the end of March**.

ACARC now offers a **two-tier membership structure**:

- **Full Voting Membership**: \$40 per year (individual or family; family includes all licensed members at the same address)
- **Associate (Non-Voting) Membership**: \$20 per year (individual or family)

Renewals may be submitted by mail to the club's Wilmington P.O. Box 4044, given to any officer at a meeting or gathering, or paid electronically via **Venmo** (please include a small amount to help offset transaction fees). Periodic reminders will be sent, including a list of members who have already renewed.

Additional donations are always appreciated—every contribution helps support the club.

Club Member Survey

The club officers would like to hear from you so we can develop a plan based on your interests.

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey by following the link below. Your response will be completely anonymous; however, you can choose to include your name and/or email if you want. Including your name or email is important if you would like any follow up.

This survey will remain active through February 13th, but we encourage you to complete it as soon as possible. The results will be presented for discussion at the February 17th meeting.

Link to survey: <https://forms.gle/tCZoegfYdxEfw9xV9>

Items of Club Interest (continued)

License Testing Session

The next test session is the 21st of February at 1030. All VE's please show up at 1000.
Location - Pine Valley Branch of NHC Library 3802 S. College Rd Wilmington, NC 28412

Monday Night Ragchew Net

I am pleased to say our level of Net participation is wonderful! This past Monday (12th) we had 26 participants, another good program by Wayne, N4HWH, and a Net that lasted 75 minutes.... Thank you All for hanging in there! The level of check-ins, ragchew, program comments by club members and visitors alike, is most welcome. This activity speaks to our involvement in Amateur Radio as a club, alongside interesting and informative programs provided by our members. Given the time our net begins, this is a strong showing. I hope this activity inspires our Net and monthly meeting programs become as diverse as our membership!

Paul KW4GI
Net Control

ACARC Secretary Position

The Azalea Coast ARC needs a Secretary for 2026 to 2028. If you are interested in the position and need information about the responsibilities, reach out to me and I will be very happy to contact you. If someone steps forward, there will be a vote at the next meeting to confirm the appointment.

The club MUST have a Secretary by NC regulations. Every full member other than a current officer becomes eligible for nomination at the next meeting.

Gene Costa, President
KD2RRP

Quieting Your Shack with Common-Mode Chokes

One of the most common (and most misunderstood) sources of noise and interference in an amateur radio station is **common-mode current** on the outside of the coax shield. Even when an antenna is properly matched, RF energy can travel back toward the shack on the coax braid, where it doesn't belong. The result can be a higher noise floor, unstable SWR, distorted radiation patterns, and RF feedback into microphones, computers, and digital interfaces. Fortunately, there is a simple and inexpensive cure: the **common-mode choke**.

What Is Common-Mode Current?

In an ideal system, RF flows only on the inside of the coax – the center conductor and the inside of the shield. In the real world, some RF can also flow on the *outside* of the shield. This turns the feed-line into an unintended part of the antenna system. When that happens, you may notice:

- Increased background noise
- RF in the shack
- Audio distortion or computer interference
- SWR that changes when you touch the coax or radio case
- Unpredictable antenna patterns

Where to Install a Choke

A common-mode choke is simply a high-impedance barrier to RF on the outside of the coax. The most effective locations are:

- At the antenna feed-point (most important)
- Where the coax enters the building
- Behind the radio or tuner

One good choke at the feed-point can often solve most problems, but multiple chokes may be used in difficult installations.

Easy DIY Choke Options

For HF (1.8-30 MHz):

Wind 8-10 turns of coax through a mix-31 ferrite toroid (2.4" or 4" diameter); or
Stack 5-7 mix-31 snap-on ferrite cores tightly together on the coax.

For VHF/UHF:

Use **mix-43** snap-on ferrites; or
Pass the coax through a small ferrite core for several turns.

Commercial chokes are also available and work well, but many effective solutions can be built for just a few dollars.

How to Tell If It's Working

Before installing the choke, note:

- The noise level on an unused frequency
- SWR stability
- Whether touching the coax or radio changes anything

After installing the choke, repeat the checks. A drop in noise, more stable SWR, and the disappearance of RF "hot spots" are good signs that common-mode current has been reduced.

Why Every Station Should Have One

A properly installed common-mode choke can:

- Lower the receive noise floor by several S-units
- Improve antenna pattern symmetry
- Stabilize digital mode performance
- Eliminate RF feedback and RFI in nearby electronics

In many cases, it is the single most effective improvement you can make to a station.

Bottom line: If every amateur station included at least one good common-mode choke, most "mystery RF problems" would simply vanish.

HAMFESTS & CONVENTIONS

02/13/2026 - 02/15/2026

Orlando HamCation, ARRL Southeastern Division Convention

Location: Orlando, FL

Type: ARRL Convention

Sponsor: Orlando Amateur Radio Club

Website: <http://www.hamcation.com>

03/06/2026 - 03/07/2026

Charlotte Hamfest

Location: Concord, NC

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Mecklenburg ARS

Website: <http://charlottehamfest.org>

04/04/2026

RARSfest, The Raleigh Hamfest, ARRL Roanoke Division Convention

Location: Raleigh, NC

Type: ARRL Convention

Sponsor: Raleigh Amateur Radio Society

Website: <http://www.rarsfest.org>

05/15/2026 - 05/17/2026

Dayton Hamvention

Location: Dayton, Oh

Sponsor: Dayton Amateur Radio Association

Website: <https://hamvention.org/>

09/04/2026 - 09/05/2026

Shelby Hamfest, ARRL North Carolina State Convention

Location: Shelby, NC

Type: ARRL Convention

Sponsor: Shelby Amateur Radio Club

Website: <http://shelbyhamfest.com>

Wilmington Area Amateur Radio Repeaters
On-Air Within 40 Mile Radius Of Downtown Wilmington - November, 2025

V1.1 for November , 2025

ANALOG FM

<u>Freq.(MHz)</u>	<u>Call Sign</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>PL Tone</u>	<u>Remote Access</u>	<u>Nets</u>	<u>Club Affiliation</u>	<u>Miscellaneous</u>
145.170	N4JDW	Leland	88.5		Tues. 7:00 PM		Brunswick SKYWARN Primary
145.250	KN4UKU	Leland	88.5				Brunswick SKYWARN secondary
145.370	N4GM	Bolivia	88.5			BSARC	Also C4FM Fusion
145.410	NC4NH	Wilmington	67.0		Mon. 7:00PM	NHC ARES	
146.730	N4ILM	Porters Neck	88.5			WVHFA	Upgrades in progress, 05/2025
146.820 *	N4ILM	Winnabow	88.5		Thurs. 8:00 PM	WVHFA	Use 147.060 as alternate, 05/2025
146.940	N4JDW	Hampstead	88.5		Last Weds. 7:00 PM	HH	Pender SKYWARN
147.060	N4ILM	Malmo	88.5			WVHFA	Upgrades in progress, 05/2025
147.180	AC4RC	Wilmington	88.5		Mon., 9:00 PM	ACARC	Net Linked To 442.500
147.315	N4GM	Bolivia	118.8	EchoLink	Mon. 7:00PM ARES Mon 8:30 AM Ragchew	BSARC	Fulltime link 444.750 EchoLink Node 825587
147.345 *	N4ILM	Winnabow	88.5			WVHFA	
147.375	NC4PC	Burgaw	88.5		Mondays 8:00 PM	HH	Fulltime Link 443.550 except when ir
224.520	WA4DAN	Kelly	91.5				
224.680 *	N4ILM	Winnabow	91.5			WVHFA	
441.850	W4FTK	Shallotte	DPL 315			Fleet Talk Group	Allstar 40040 & Echolink W4FTK-R
442.025	N4JDW	Burgaw	88.5				
442.500	AC4RC	Wilmington	88.5		Mon., 9:00 PM	ACARC	Net Linked to 147.18
442.600	N2MH	Oak Island	141.3				
443.550	NC4PC	Hampstead	100.0		Mondays 8:00 PM	HH	Fulltime Link 147.375 except when ir
444.500	K4FXC	Wilmington	67.0				Relocating repeater, 05/2025
444.750	N4GM	Calabash	118.8			BSARC	Fulltime Link 147.315
444.85 *	N4ILM	Winnabow	88.5		Thurs. 8:00 PM	WVHFA	Swap Net - Thue=rsday Night
444.95 *	N4GM	Bolivia	118.8			BSARC	Also C4FM Fusion
444.175	N4JDW	Winabow	88.5				.

DIGITAL

<u>Freq</u>	<u>Call Sign</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Mode</u>	<u>CC</u>			
144.390	N4ILM-4	Winnabow	APRS			WVHFA	
144.900	K4BLA	Delco	DMR	CC1			2.5 MHz positive offset
145.370	N4GM	Bolivia	C4FM		East Coast WIRES-X	BSARC	PL 88.5 in Analog FM
442.600	N2MH	Oak Island	C4FM		Local Coverage	N2MH	PL 141.3 in Analog FM
444.075	N4JDW	Hampstead	P-25				
444.1875	N4JDW	Winnabow	P-25				
444.2375	N4ILM	Winnabow	DMR	CC1		WVHFA	NC-PRN --Internet intermittent 05/21
444.95 *	N4GM	Bolivia	C4FM			BSARC	PL 118.8 in Analog FM
444.975	NE4SC	Shallotte	DMR	CC1			

NOTES: * Temporarily Off The Air
 # Receiver temporarily offline since 147.06 site being used for 146.82 transmit