

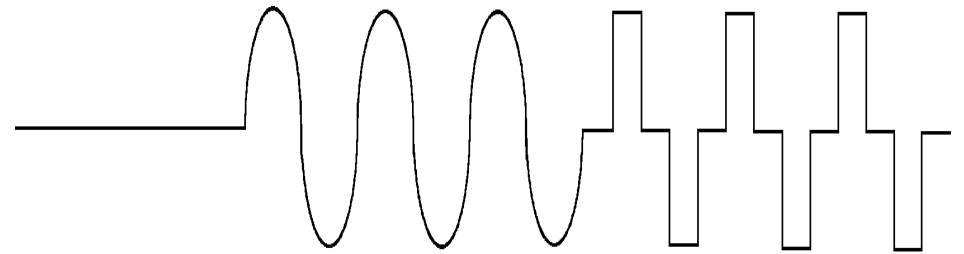


March 2008 Vol 62 No 03

The

Modulator

Newsletter of The Baltimore Amateur Radio Club, Inc



Greater Baltimore Hamboree and **Computerfest**

March 29-30

Introduction to Ham Radio, Page 7

Baltimore Amateur Radio Club
PO Box 120
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The Modulator

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Items for *The Modulator* should be sent by the 5th of the previous month, to:

The Modulator, 3607 Klausmier Rd

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or email to *modulator at baltarc.com*.

EMAIL is preferred for submissions

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VE REPORT

From <http://n3wke-ve.home.comcast.net/>

A Laurel ARC Volunteer Examiner Coordinator (LARC VEC) affiliated testing session was held at the BARC Meeting and Training Facility in Reisterstown, MD, on Saturday, February 2. Ten people took exams for either their initial ham license or to upgrade their license.

The examinees achieved the following:

Became new Technician Class licensee

Joshua Sullivan **KB3QIB**

Bonnie Whitney **KB3QIC**

Vickie Moore **KB3QID**

Phillip Moore **KB3QIE**

Diane Wimsatt **KB3QIG**

Upgraded to Technician Class licensee

Doug Wolf KA3YMI

Became new General Class licensee

Bill Stuart **KB3QIF**

Upgraded to General Class licensee

Harold Sheppard KB2TLP

Gordon Weatherbee KB3PZW

Walter Kloker N2AMK

Overall, eleven tests were passed out of seventeen administered:

Element 2 (Technician Written): 100%

Element 3 (General Written): 50%

Element 4 (Extra Written): 0%

Thanks to the Volunteer Examiners who made the session possible:

Tom Hendricks KB3CSV, Russ Kaufman N3YI, Ed Kriston K3CAV, Jerry Matthews N3XWT, Doug Sanders W3FYA, Rusty Schaefer N3WKE, Joe Tracey KB3LNM, Doug Wittich N3VEJ.

Next testing session at the BARC facility is Saturday, March 1, 2008. Registration opens at 1:30 PM and testing starts at 2:00 PM. For information about the next exam session, please send email to [n3wke-ve at comcast.net](mailto:n3wke-ve@comcast.net) (or call Rusty at 410-227-4703).

73, *Rusty* N3WKE

VE Team Leader

GBHC IMPROVES SERVICE

Visitors asked, and we listened. "It's too far from the parking lots", "I had to park all the way down at Timonium Rd". "I bought a tailgate ticket so I could park closer".

This year, we've opened the "Midway" area, the big central lot for visitor parking. This is the area that was formerly home to the outdoor tailgating. In the last several years, online auctions have taken a bite out of tailgating, so we have not sold out that area in a while. We counted, and the number of spaces in the south parking lot is about the same as the number of tailgate tickets we've sold lately. Another advantage for us is that is already has lines. As have most volunteer organizations, we're having more trouble getting help as our pool of amateurs ages.



We think these changes are good for the show and for our visitors and tailgaters. It only adds an extra walk of about 200 feet for those who are coming from the light rail stop, but giving us 500 parking spaces closer than before is a major help for a lot of people.

We also are hosting an art show this year. Since it's new, we have not been able to generate a lot of interest, so you will find these exhibits fit in to the exhibition hall along with our commercial vendors.

PRICE INCREASED

Due to rising fairgrounds rent and other expenses, we've cut out all of our luxuries, such as golf carts for show managers, the ARRL banquet, and we closed the home arts building to save money. It's still not enough, so we raised ticket prices after TEN years at the same price. But to make it a little less painful, we have also allowed for all the tickets to be good for both days. The advanced sale option via the web page and mail was very popular this year, offering a \$2 savings for each ticket. Several buying tickets together saved postage.

CLUB MEETINGS

The club meets at 7:30 pm. the first and third Wednesday of every month in the club facility at 12360 Owings Mills Blvd., 3/10 mile south of Bond Ave. See ADC map page 16-D8.

Complete directions web page <http://www.baltarc.com/directions.htm> or call the Club Facility at 410-526-4263.

UPCOMING AGENDAS

The meeting during the first week of the month is generally a business meeting. The meeting on the third Wednesday of the month is generally a program meeting.

April 2, 2008 Post-Hamboree Celebration

April 16, 2008 Program Meeting—Dayton Hamfest is Coming

May 7, 2008 Business Meeting—Hamboree Results

May 21, 2008 Field Day Planning

EDITORIAL POLICY

It is our policy to use original works as much as possible. We prefer not to reprint material that is readily available in other sources, unless it is critical to have the widest dissemination possible.

We will be happy to print a link along with your comments to help make people aware of other readings you have found.

We will edit your submission to correct spelling and significant grammar errors that affect the readability of your submission.

FOR SALES are accepted free, for publication for two months at a time.

BARC REPEATERS AND NETS

The Baltimore Amateur Radio Club Repeater System **W3FT**

Frequency(In/Out) PL

146.07/146.67 107.2

222.64/224.24 107.2

44.625/449.625 107.2

simplex: 146.55

Nets:

NTS Net (Baltimore Traffic Net) W3FT at 6:30 PM Daily
Skywarn hosted on BRATS 147.03+ As Needed

PRESIDENT'S QSO

It's spring time, and so it must be Hambo-ree! We are most grateful to the amateur radio and computer communities for their support of our only fundraiser. BARC uses the proceeds from this event to fund several scholarships as well as support a public repeater system (a radio system that helps individual hams be heard further than their personally-owned equipment can normally reach). We also maintain a meeting and training facility. Our membership dues from our 200 members does not come close to covering the cost of these activities that serve so many more amateurs, as well as the general public.



As you can see from the fairgrounds map online or from your own visit, our tailgating has been moved. The committee explains this decision well in a later page, but we feel that it was most correct to take care of the many requests we had to create a closer parking area.

We have a wide range of merchandise in the Cow Palace for the casual amateur operator, computer techie or even things to take home for the family. The Exhibit Hall has our commercial dealers with all new merchandise. New this year, we have an art show in the Home Arts building, up toward York Rd, next to the parking lot. This is an opportunity for young people to show and sell their art. While it's not directly related to our main purpose, we think that promoting these young people is the correct thing to do.

Again, thank you for your support of our event. If you are interested in joining the Baltimore Amateur Radio Club or in becoming a ham, please call us at 443-794-0735 and talk to Doug.

Marty Pittinger, KB3MXM
President

mous of the contests is "Field Day", held the fourth full weekend of June. Hams that do no other contest usually participate in Field Day.

Paper Chasing. When making contacts, one can collect QSL cards. These cards confirm the contact. They are colorful memories of the contacts. Certificates are awarded for collecting certain sets, such as one from every state or one from each of 100 countries. Another form of paper is from "Special Event" stations. These are operations of short duration, usually a day, to commemorate a location or event. They are often at historical places. There is also a "lighthouse weekend". Clubs set up at many lighthouses around the country. Contact them, and get a certificate for each contact, often including a picture of the lighthouse.

Rag Chewing. That's what we call "Chewing the fat", or simply making friends and chatting with someone over the air. For some, they have regular schedules with friends across the country or around the world. For others, it's a search for new friends around town or around the world.

Equipment. With your first license, most of your privileges are in the "VHF" range and higher. These are short-range communications, around town or around the state. The most common band here is "2 meters". You will find many hand held or mobile radios for this band, costing from \$100 to \$1000. An antenna for the car is another \$20 to \$100. Be sure to install with proper fuses! A handheld radio is not as powerful as a mobile, but we make up for that by operating a club "repeater" system. The repeater listens for your signal, then retransmits it with much more power from a lot higher antenna, so it can be heard over five counties.

About Morse Code. Yes, the requirement for Morse Code is gone. There are still many hams that enjoy this mode, and we can help you learn it if you are interested.

More Info: See <http://www.hello-radio.org/>

PM. In all cases, registration begins at 1. You can come in the room early and study or ask questions of the volunteers present. At 2 PM, we provide some instructions on filling in the test answer sheet, and you're good to go. It usually takes about fifteen minutes to take the test. Upon passing, you are a HAM! We actually have three levels of license you can earn, each is one more test. So if you want to go on, you can take the second test right away. In any event, when you are done taking tests, you are presented with a certificate of successful completion. This is your proof you passed. Our volunteers then update the FCC computer and your callsign (your unique identifier) is issued. It will be the letters KB and a 3, and three random letters, something like KB3VTU. You can use this on the air as soon as you see it on the FCC database. Our volunteer team lead also phones to let you know what it is.

WHAT TO DO WITH AMATEUR RADIO

Once licensed, one needs to determine what they want to do. One of the very best things to do is to join a **local club**. BARC often gets new members. You can find other clubs from www.arrl.org, and click on Clubs in the top left corner. A club offers you a place where you can ask questions or just sit back and listen. There are usually presentations that may open new vistas for you. Best of all, clubs give you a contact so that you can get involved, so you can join public service or contesting activities. BARC also has an operating shack, where we have a few rigs that you can use. Some of the other things you can do with a ham license:

Join ARES or RACES, our emergency service groups. These teams provide communications support to the state, the county and emergency agencies such as the Red Cross and Salvation Army, in times of emergency. They also hold training and practice sessions regularly so that you can be ready for the real thing.

Contesting: Contests usually involve operation of the radio, making as many contacts as you can in a limited time. The most fa-

SO YOU WANT TO BECOME A “HAM”, AMATEUR RADIO OPERATOR?

The Amateur Radio Service is regulated by the FCC (Federal Communications Commission). To use the airwaves reserved for hams (amateur radio operators), a license is required. To get a license, a multiple choice test with 35 questions must be passed. The license is FREE and is good for 10 years. The tests are free at BARC (Baltimore Amateur Radio Club), but other groups may charge a small fee (about \$14).

PREPARATION

The easiest way to prepare is to use the book published by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). [*The ARRL Ham Radio License Manual*](#). All you need to become an Amateur Radio Operator. 1st edition © 2006. #9639--\$24.95. This book has good descriptions of amateur radio, and covers the material that is on the first test. The book also contains all the possible test questions that may be on your test. The book covers three areas: the rules, practices & technical stuff.. It normally takes 10 to 30 hours of study to pass the test. Practice tests can be taken at www.aa9pw.com or www.qrz.com. Try both to see the format you like!

TAKING THE TEST

The test is administered at the hamfest on Sunday morning at 9 AM. The first test is 35 multiple choice questions. Testing sessions are offered at amateur radio clubs and other locations, such as libraries. To find a test session near you, go to www.arrl.org and click on Exams. BARC offers the test the first weekend of every month. In April, July and October, we give the tests on Sunday at 2 PM. The other months have tests on Saturday at 2

(Continued on page 8)

April 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Club Meeting	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 Raleigh RARSFEST
13	14	15	16 Club Meeting	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			