

Columbia Amateur Radio Club-Monthly Meeting Minutes for July 2015

July 6, 2015

- Introductions
 - Ronnie Livingston (W4RWL)-President
 - Individual attendee introductions
- Past Month's Meeting Minutes: Steve (KI4VGA) announced that last month's meeting minutes can be found on the club's website (www.w4cae.com).
- Treasurer's Report: Andy (KK4DSD) announced that the club's bank account balance was \$1601.49 in June. Since that time, the club has debited our account by \$75.27 as a bill from the recent Field Day. That currently leaves a balance of \$1526.22 in the club account. Bruce (KI4VRO) indicated that he will be submitting a bill for \$150.00 (for rental of Port-a-john for CARC tailgate event, I think).
- CARC Net Report: Net Manager, Steve (W4SJD) announced that in June 2015 there were 9 nets held with a total of 183 check-ins. Steve also wanted to remind everyone that there is an on-going Net check-in contest that will result in a drawing at the August CARC meeting for a HT radio.
- Club Picnic: Steve (W4SJD) announced that the CARC will have a club picnic at Sesqui-centennial State Park on August 15, 2015. He has reserved Shelter #3 and they are planning on having a radio fox hunt before we eat. Bruce (KI4VRO) will be the grilling Chef and all are asked to bring a side or a desert and something to drink.
- Kershaw County Amateur Radio Club Update: Lee (K4ELG) reminded us that the KCARC holds their monthly meetings on the 2nd Thursday of the month. All are invited to attend. Details can be found at the Kershaw County Amateur Radio club website www.KC4RC.com. Lee also announced that the Kershaw Club will soon have a 2 Meter repeater in Camden. Stay tuned for details related to frequency, PL tone, etc. Also the Kershaw Club will be hosting a VE session on July 11, 2015, at their clubhouse.
- Amateur Radio Club of Augusta: Visiting club President, Chris Clark (KK4NXA) who was joining us to give a presentation on RTL-SDR, provided an details of their Field Day, to tell us that they conduct daily 2Meter Nets (W4DV) at 8 pm,

and they will be sponsoring a Hamfest on September 12, 2015, at Liberty Park and Community Center in Grovetown, GA. Information on the club can be found at www.W4DV.org.

- Old Business:
 - CARCERT- Club Communication Trailer: Steve (W4SJD) announced that a Rodgers Workshop will be held on June 18, 2015 at SCETV starting at 10 am. All are invited to view a presentation on the use and set up of the CARCERT Trailer. In addition to the presentation, all will be able to tour the CARCERT trailer in person.
 - Elmer's corner: Ronnie (W4RWL) asked if some of the experienced amateur radio operators to stick around after the meeting (front corner of the meeting room) to be available to discuss any question that the newly licensed operators may have.
 - Field Day Discussion: Several of those in attendance (including Earl-KM4JSY, Ron-K1TCB, & Dave-W4DMC) had comments about their experiences from Field Day. From all the stories, it sounds as though everyone not only had a great time, but enjoyed operating radios, making contacts, and eating a fine meal. Also our host (Calhoun County EOC) appreciated everyone doing their part (from the food, to clean up, to professional operation at the radios) to make sure that we had another great Field Day.
- New Business:
 - 2016 Colon Cancer Ride: Tammy (N4TAL) wanted to let the club know that the ride organizers for next year's Colon Cancer ride have already asked us to provide communication support for this event. The ride will take place on April 16, 2016. So mark your calendars and make plans to help out.
 - Run Wild: Tammy (N4TAL) announced that the club has been asked to provide communications for the Run Wild 5K running race at Sesquicentennial State Park on August 22, 2015. Tammy needs 10-15 volunteers to cover this event. We will have a pre-event meeting at 7 am with the run starting at 8 am. Look for e-mails and check the club website for details on this event and how to volunteer...

- Club ID's: Dave (W4DMC) announced that if any club member would like a club ID badge and had not yet received one, that they should see him after this meeting. Dave will take your photo, make the ID badges and bring them to the next CARC meeting.
- Next CARC Board Meeting: All were invited to the next CARC Board meeting. This meeting will be held on August 1, 2015, at Ryan's on Bower Parkway. Eating will begin around 8 am and the meeting will start promptly at 9 am.
- Tom's Hat: Tom (W1TEF) was wearing the latest version of a CARC baseball hat. He indicated that he has a connection who can supply similar hats. So if we can get an order together for more than 36 hats, then the price per hat would be \$11.00. If you are interested, see Tom with your order. He has set an order deadline of the September CARC meeting, so let him know if you want a hat.
- N4TAL Mini Maker Faire T-shirt Give-away: Tammy (N4TAL) had three Mini-Maker Fair T-shirts from this year's event that were given away by raffle. Unfortunately I was distracted and did not get the names of the three winners. Sorry about that, but congratulations to all the winners!
- Camden Bicycle Ride: Lee (K4ELG) announced that the Kershaw Club will be providing communication support for an upcoming Camden Bicycle Ride. The Kershaw Club will be providing sweeps, rest stop personnel, and the Net Control for this event. Lee indicated that the ride coordinators were very appreciative to have their help with this event.
- Meeting Topic: "Getting Started with RTL-SDR" by Chris Clark (KK4NXA).

Chris explained that RTL-SDR is an inexpensive software defined radio that uses a dongle based on the RTL2832U chipset that can be used as a wideband software defined radio when combined with your computer and software programs. The RTL-SDR dongle can be found on the internet for under \$20.00. With this little bit of technology you can use software and your computer to monitor the local 2 Meter repeater, listen to Shortwave radio and HF radio, or any local FM radio stations.

Chris also made a presentation on Creating an APRS i-gate using RTL-SDR. Using a computer (including a Raspberry Pi), RTL-SDR dongle, an internet connection, and your favorite Linux Distribution, you can have yourself a working APRS unit. This presentation quickly surpassed my level of computer understanding, but was very informational and provided an economical option for those wanting to experiment with both RTL-SDR and APRS. Thanks Chris! Both of Chris' PowerPoint presentations can be found on the W4DV website (www.W4dv.org) under the A.R.C.A. past meeting presentations section.

All were reminded that prior to the next CARC meeting the Board will be meeting on August 1, 2015, at Ryan's at 8:00 am. The monthly CARC club meeting will be on August 3, 2015, at SCETV on George Rodgers Boulevard starting at 7:00 pm.