The Aero Aerial

Newsletter of The Aero Amateur Radio Club Middle River, Maryland

Inside this issue:

Dues Increase Under Consideration

For as long as anyone can remember the club dues has remained at $12 per year. This has seemed adequate to cover the club's annual expenses.

Over the last several years, however operating expenses for Aero have risen. Field Day, probably our largest group effort has become more expensive with the increases of fuel to run the generators, food our haute quisine, and, of course, the upgrade to personal comfort facilities.

A recent additional expense has been the club liability insurance. For too many years Aero didn't have any insurance, a situation that put all our members at risk should an accident occur during one of our activities.

For the past year the club has tried various methods to augment the dues in order to raise funds to cover the expenses mentioned above but we still have not raised enough money to maintain the treasury at a safe level.

At the October 1st meeting, Aero Treasurer, Warren Hartman W3JDF, proposed that we increase the Aero dues. The members present decided to put the matter on the agenda for the October 15th meeting for a vote. If approved, the membership dues for a year would increase to $24 and would go into effect on January 1, 2009.

VE Report by AC3F

The Aero VE team returned from a summer hiatus to White Marsh on September 27th.

There were two applicants a the session. One upgrader from Tech to Extra, the other just missed the Tech.

Congratulation to   Jeff Thompson KB3NAX on his upgrade.

Thanks to WB3FMT, KB3KRV, AI3G, ND3D and AC3P for helping with the session.

The next test session will be held November 22nd at the White March Library.

Using a Mac in the Shack

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

A couple of years ago, I decided to switch to the Mac for business use. (I am a freelance website developer.) I haven't regretted it for a second. The thing just seems to work better.

Last October, I decided to switch to a Mac in the shack and purchased used, iBook G4 Mac laptop. Unfortunately, I can't say that I've never regretted this move. The reason I sometimes regret this choice is that there just aren't as many ham radio programs available for the Mac as there are for the PC, and those that are available are either more expensive than their PC counterparts or don't work as well.

For example, let's take a look at logging programs. When I first started looking, I found one that was kind of expensive (MacLoggerDX -www.dogparksoftware.com/MacLoggerDX.html); one that was free, but didn't want to work so well (RUMLog - http://www.dl2rum.de/rumsoft/RUMLog.html);and one that worked OK and cost somewhere in between the first two (Aether-www.aetherlog.com/). Considering that there are at least a dozen logging programs that run on a PC, this was slim pickings.

I ended up purchasing Aether, but was never very happy with it. For one thing, it took forever to do any kind of sort or look up previous QSOs. Another pain was that it carried over none of the information from the previous contact, so you had to enter all of the information from scratch,even if you didn't change frequencies or bands. It also had an odd way of doing notes about a contact, and I was disappointed to find out that it didn't import the notes from the ADIF file I created from the N3FJP logging program I used previously.

For PSK, It's CocoaModem
I had much the same experience when looking for a PSK31 program. Instead of a the wide variety of PC PSK programs, I only found a couple of Mac programs that decode PSK. Fortunately, I am much happier with my choice here (cocoaModem - homepage.mac.com/chen/index.html). It's a great program,with a polished user interface, and it's free, to boot.

The only problem with cocoaModem is that it doesn't support the wide range of digital modes that some of the PC programs do. One I'm interested in is SSTV. Unfortunately, cocoaModem doesn't do SSTV.

A Happy Ending
Well, a couple of weeks ago, I'd had enough of Aether and decided to start searching for logging software again. Since RUMLog was still free, I decided to give the new version (v 3.0, March 15, 2008) a go. I'm happy to report that this version likes my computer a lot better, and I like using it a lot!

One of the coolest things is that it did import the notes from my N3FJP ADIF file properly. So, now, when I type in a callsign, the program searches the database, finds all the previous contacts I've had with that station, and then displays them in spreadsheet style WITH the notes. If I've taken notes about a previous conversation, I can pick up right where I left off. Very cool.

It also has a very nice way of showing you what countries you've worked, on what bands you've worked them, and whether or not you've QSLed that country or not. Not only that, it shows what type of QSL you have, either a paper QSL or a Logbook of the World (LOTW) QSL. And, after you supply your user ID and password, it will download your LOTW QSLs and update the appropriate QSO records. Very cool!

Still unresolved is what to use for contesting. None of the programs I've seen so far are useful for contesting, and I think that what I will end up doing is using my old PC laptop running N3FJP or N1MM software. I'm not a big contester, so I think I can live with that.

One thing is for sure--I'm not going back to the PC aside from some niche applications like contesting. The Mac's ease of use and ease of setup has won me over. For information on even more ham radio software for the Mac,go to www.machamradio.com.

When not trying to convince his friends and family to convert to the Mac,Dan works a lot of CW and PSK, and even a little SSB, on 20, 30, and 40m. You can read more about his adventures in amateur radio by pointing your Web browser to www.kb6nu.com.

AERO/BARC/BRATS Help with Diabetes Walk

On Saturday October 4th, Aero, BARC and BRATS members teamed up to provide communications support for the American Diabetes Association "Step Out 2008" in downtown Baltimore. The 3km walk started and ended at M&T Bank Stadium winding through the Federal Hill neighborhood. The weather was perfoect for the event and it seemed that there were almost 1000 walkers this year.

A communications net was established on 146.55 Mhz. With a maximum distance between stations being 1.5 miles simplex operation was ideal.

Thanks to Pat AC3F (our NCS), Joe WB3FMT, Eric KB3JDE, Ken KB3JVP, and Frank AC3P from Aero; to Robin AA3SB, Henry KB3NYW, Rob , KC2AEI, Myles K3VTT from BARC and to Ian N3CVA from BRATS for helping make this operation a success.

Frank AC3P and Pat AC3F prepare the net control position .

Rob KC2AEI, Pat AC3F, Frank AC3P, Ian N3CVA, Eric KB3JDE discuss the plans

Rob KC2AEI, Ian N3CVA and Robin AA3SB getting ready.

Net Reports/Station Activities

2 meter Net	10 meter Net
WB3FMT (NCS)	WB3FMT (NCS)
AI3G	AI3G
W3VRD	W3JEH
AC3P	AC3P
KB3JDE	KA3SNY
KA3SNY	W3VRD

W3VRD has his antennas back up.

K3ROJ is on the road.

KB3JDE is looking for a full time medic.

WB3FMT is looking for a few good operators for RACES.

Baltimore Marathon

Probably the biggest sports event in Baltimore, the Baltimore Running Festival, was held on October 11th. The event includes a fun run for kids, a 5k run, a half marathon and a full marathon with world class runners participating.

Of course putiing on an event with a 26 mile course requires a great amount of coordination and amateur radio definitely played a role. Amateurs were needed to coever water stops and medical posts all along the route. Volunteers from all the local clubs including Aero participated . Joe WB3FMT was assigned to Mile 13 of the regular marathon and the start for the half marathon. Frank AC3P took a post at mile 16 in Patter-son Park.

The weather for the event was perfect for the more than 17,000 (yeah that right) runners.

Congratulations to Ian N3CVA of BRATS for coordinating such a major operation.

November 2008

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 ARRL Sweep-stakes CW
2 ARRL Sweep-stakes CW	3	4	5 Meeting Coffmans	6	7	8
9	10	11	12 10 Meter Net	13	14	15 ARRL Sweep-stakes Phone
16 ARRL Sweep-stakes Phone	17	18	19 Meeting Coffmans	20	21	22 VE Testing White Marsh
23	24	25	26 2 Meter Net	27	28	29
30						

ABOUT   **THE AERO AMATUER RADIO CLUB**

Meetings: First and Third Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. at Coffman's Diner
(Middle River and Orem's Rd.)

Nets: See Local Area Net Schedule

Repeaters: W3PGA (147.24 MHz - / 449.575 MHz -)

WEBSITE: http://www.aeroarc.us

Officers			Committees	
Joe Miko	WB3FMT	President	VE Testing	Pat Stone AC3F
Doug Emer	AI3G	Vice-President	Repeater	Phil Hock W3VRD
Frank Stone	AC3P	Recording Secretary	Public Service	Frank Stone AC3P
Pat Stone	AC3F	Corresponding Secretary	ECOMMS	Joe Miko WB3FMT
Warren Hartman	W3JDF	Treasurer	Contests	Doug Emer AI3G
Ron Distler	W3JEH	Property Mgr	Trustee	Frank Stone AC3P
			Field Day	Bob Landis WA3SWA
			Webmaster	Al Alexander K3ROJ
			Archivist	Joe Miko WB3FMT

LOCAL AREA NETS

Day	Time	Frequency (MHz)	NET NAME
Daily	9 – 10 am	147.03	ORIOLE Net
Daily	6 – 6:30 p.m.	3.820	Maryland Emergency Phone Net
Daily	6:30 – 7 p.m.	146.670	Baltimore Traffic Net
Daily	7 p.m. and 10 p.m.	3.643	Maryland/DC/Delaware Traffic Net
2nd Tues	7:30 p.m.	146.670	Baltimore County RACES COMMEX
2nd Wed.	8 p.m.	28.445	AERO ARC Net
4th Wed	8 p.m.	147.240	AERO ARC Net
5th Wed.	8 p.m.	449.575	AERO ARC Net