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OCTOBER 2001



The Bulletin of the  
Richmond Amateur Telecommunications Society  
P. O. Box 14828 - Richmond, Virginia 23221



## VIRGINIA HAMS ASSIST THE RED CROSS IN DC.

As I sit here trying to determine what to write about the efforts being put forth at the Pentagon disaster site, I'm struggling with trying to make what we do as amateurs sound important in light of the picture of the hole in the wall put there by terrorists.

Please don't get the wrong impression, the amateurs from several areas that are serving the Salvation Army, Red Cross and other efforts are doing exactly what they have been asked to do, provide communications and relieve those other

and my supposition is that it was to decrease the amount of movement at the disaster site.

If you name a local agency, federal agency, state agency, then you would find someone working at the site providing support and/or direct manpower. From the FBI tactical team carrying machineguns to the State Police motorcycle patrol. From three star Generals to Army enlisted personnel, I talked with them all and the one thing they stressed is that they appreciated the outpouring of support and

There were volunteer search and as well as forensic teams searching the rubble that was being dumped on the parking lot in a roped off section of one parking lot.

A crane was holding a platform high above the damaged area, were two men were watching for anything that might be considered human, so the digging could stop and proper recovery be started.

Everywhere we went at the site, people stopped us and thanked us for what we were doing to help the effort. It

organizations of that responsibility. And not one amateur I met during my visit there was anything but at the ready to go where asked and stay as long as possible. "That is what we do".

The situation changed at the incident site almost daily and the volunteer organizations have to change to accommodate the ever-shifting requirements. Security has been significantly tightened and less and less people are being allowed in the incident area proper and security is even being heightened in the staging areas.

ARRL ARES Virginia started providing coverage for the Salvation Army from 5am to Midnight each day. But every day it changed, but the most recent need was for 3 locations 24 hours a day, with shifts from 4 am to Noon, Noon to 8 pm and 8 pm to 4 am. These changes are all made at the request of the DOD

love that was being expressed by their fellow Americans.

I even met an Army Major from California who had the weekend off at her base there and she asked her Commander if she could come to Washington and work as a volunteer over the weekend and report back as soon as she could on Monday.

I sat and ate lunch with a member of the FBI Tactical Squad who was wearing a bulletproof vest, black fatigues and carrying a submachine gun with laser sites. At the next picnic table in the tent was a one star Air Force General. Next to him was a couple of Army Corporals and next to them a three star General. The Salvation Army folks were constantly on the move doing this and that and carrying lunch, clothing, water, snacks, etc to anyone who asked.

embarrassed me a little because compared to what some others were doing, our jobs were a piece of cake. Did and does ham radio play a part where needed? A resounding yes is the answer.

But I further submit to you that we are just one part of a great tide of volunteerism and support that will be around for a long time to come.

We can be proud of what we do as hams and I personally have never been more proud to be an American.

Cameras were not allowed in the incident area, as you can well understand. But I did manage to get many pictures taken by others at the site and have added them to the website here.

There were many hams who I could not capture with my digital camera, but SM Carl Clements, W4CAC; SEC Tom Gregory, N4NW

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League President Jim Haynie, W5JBP; First Vice President Joel Harrison, W5ZN; and Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH from the FCC Enforcement Division were together long enough for me to capture.

W4PW-Patrick Wilson  
ARRL Virginia Section PIC

P.S. - This was written shortly after my trip to the Pentagon site on September 15th and 16th. If you want to read and see more, please visit <http://www.arrlva.org/> or <http://www.aresva.org/>. There is much to see and read at those sites.

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**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

Hi fellow RATS members. We're writing this to ask for your help as we prepare for what we anticipate to be another great Frost Fest. As

Most of our committee chairs are filled with the same dedicated members from year to year, but occasionally we have turnover and we need to address those turnovers as quickly as we can. In the next issue, I hope to publish a list of all the committee chairs so you will know whom to contact if you are interested in volunteering to help in any manner.

If you feel you can fill a committee chair position, please get in touch with Jim Clark, N34JJF or Patrick Wilson, W4PW.

Thanks and 7 3

Jim Clark, N3JJF and Patrick Wilson, W4PW

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**ALWAYS IN OUR HEARTS**

Where have the past two years gone? It seems like only a few short weeks ago

young men, and a visit to Henrico's emergency communications center.

Thank you to all the officers and directors for your dedication and encouragement. Thank you to the members for your support and cooperation with many special projects, and especially to those of you who readily stepped forward to help out with various events. Thank you also to all who offered guidance and those who have helped me learn more about amateur radio.

Congratulations and best wishes to TJ as he assumes the presidency, to Guy as new vice president, and to the incoming board members. We have strong, energetic leadership who will have many exciting things in store. When they ask for your assistance, please help in any way you can.

I hope to see you at the

you know, this is our primary fund raising event for the club and allows us to keep the club dues down, ensure a great operating repeater and numerous other things.

We need a couple of very important positions filled. The first is someone to handle reservations. This job is one of the, if not the most important position we need to fill. WU4U has indicated that this will be his last year as reservations chairman and we need someone to step up and take his place. Hopefully before the 2002 Frost Fest on February 10th, so you can work with Dan this year and get the hang of the job. The second position is the Personnel Chairman position. This position will do a lot of calling and setting up volunteer lists with the other chairmen such as Security, Parking, Hospitality, etc.

If you have visited other ham fests the past few months, you can see the downturn in attendance and some have not survived. Frost Fest is not

that I received a phone call from Seth regarding the club presidency. It has been an honor for me to serve as your president. It has been a time of growth for me. I have enjoyed the challenges and the opportunities.

As I reflect back over the past two years, I feel that we accomplished many things, including: successful Frost Fests and Field Day activities and picnics, JOTA, beginning a youth net, answering phones for the WCVE Public TV fundraising drive, Demonstrating amateur radio at Regal Cinemas for the opening of 'Frequency', a successful Dxpedition to New Point Comfort Lighthouse, and establishing a steering committee. Also, at its September meeting, the Board passed a tuition reimbursement plan for members who attend the RARC School and pass the exam to obtain an entry level license or license upgrade.

We have offered a variety of programs including

meetings and hear you on the bands.

Marie, K4KML

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**NO, NOT BEGGIN' STRIPS!**  
J. T., KF4ONR

The calendar year is soon running out. And with the busy life style most of us live, it will be over before we are prepared for the New Year to come upon us. RATS has so many things going on in the planning for the end of the year and the first of next. There was the installation, last month, of the new officers for the up-coming two-year period. Only 28 people showed up for this spectacular two-year event, and four of them were the new officers! This is one event (strip) that has gone by barely (chewed on) attended by the majority of the club members. Okay!! So much for the pun.

The next event in the making is the Christmas Party. We

in that condition and we want to keep it that way. These positions are very important to our continued success

presentations on packet, PSK 31, ARES/RACES, a high school high altitude balloon project presented by two outstanding

(RATS) have one every year. It is not always at the same location nor done in the same format. We have had a variety of different places and styles of dinners for the Christmas Party.

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We have had a somewhat organized potluck or covered dish, and we have gone to a cafeteria-style restaurant and everyone paid for their own dinner for their family. It is kind of hard to have Christmas karaoke at a restaurant, though. So what is going to be the plan for this year? Christmas is only 14 weeks away, so the party will probably be about 12 weeks away. Are we to get reservations for a building? A restaurant? What? Okay, let's come out to the meeting this month and put in some good ideas and suggestions for the party, and get it's planning under

### **THIS MONTH'S MEETING**

October 19, 2001, at 8:00 PM, at the usual location at the corner of Old 360 and Atlee Road, Mechanicsville.

The program will be "Maritime VHF Communications" by Rick Cook, AB4U.

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### **THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

Tj Johnston, N4UYQ

I've been an amateur radio operator for a little over 23 years. I guess that makes

### **ARRL VE Exam Sessions**

Saturday, October 13th, at 9:00 AM.

Saturday, December 8th, at 9:00 AM.

J. S. Reynolds Community College, 1651 East Parham Road, Building B, Room 201.

Pre-registration is required. Register via the World Wide Web at <http://www.w4pw.org/hamtests.htm>

For additional information, contact Pat Wilson, W4PW at (804) 932-9424 or via email at [w4pw@arrl.net](mailto:w4pw@arrl.net)

way.

Oh yea! That reminds me, too. Frost Fest is only 22 short weeks away. And if you think that is a long time to plan for something, remember all the planning has to be done between now, during the Christmas festivities, and during the short month of January. Frost Fest is going to be February 10th this year. That Saturday before is going to be hectic getting everything set up, the vendors in, and everything ready to go for Sunday morning.

Let's take a lot of the worry off the Frost Fest team leaders by volunteering no later than Thanksgiving so they can know that the setup will go okay with adequate volunteers for security personnel, kitchen help, ticket takers, ushers to help vendors find their spots, etc. We need somewhere around 100 volunteers so no one will have to pull double duty

me an 'Old Timer.' At the same time, I am always interested in playing with the new modes that appear on the horizon from time to time. There have been many changes during my radio career; two of the biggest changes being the implementation of the 'No-code' license and now the dropping of the 20 and 13 WPM code requirements.

During my reign as King of Richmond Amateur Radio... Oops... During my term as President I hope to inspire club members to take that leap and play with the modes, equipment, and experiments that lead to the same enjoyment I have had over the years.

Code or No-code, Novice or Extra - it makes no difference to me. We all started with an interested in radio or electronics. Something peaked our curiosity and we committed ourselves to making the hobby a part of our lives. Let's keep the interest

### W5YI VE Exam Sessions

Monday, November 5th, at 7:30 PM.

Pietro's Restaurant  
Jeff Davis & Osborne Rd - Chester

Those sitting for CW tests, MUST Pre-register. Our team gives CW test using headphones. Solid-copy or 7of 10 correct on fill-in-the-blank. Pre-registration is appreciated, but walk-ins be gladly accepted. Register via the [World Wide Web](#) or via telephone at (804) 768-2255 or via email at [veregister@kr4uq.org](mailto:veregister@kr4uq.org).

When you pre-register, please advise the date of session you wish to attend, your name, and the elements you wish to take.

### HAM FESTS

OCTOBER

13th - Stafford ARA Ham Fest  
Stafford Virginia  
<http://www.n4nw.org/Hamfest.htm>

and not get to do any shopping at all. If everyone will jump in and help on a four-hour shift, everything will go smooth, and no one will spend all their time pulling duty. Remember, this is a RATS club function not the function of the "chosen" few. If we are going to bear the RATS name, we need to share the RATS responsibilities if at all possible. Not beggin you, but take pride in RATS in making this the best, most successful Frost Fest ever!

See you there.

going and spread it to others.

If you are playing with something new, or something old tell us about it. Remember that something 'old' to you may be new to someone else, and vice-versa. This is your medium to express your views, ideas, and activities. Don't let it go to waste. Send your articles in. They don't have to be perfect... we can fix that! But we can't publish them unless we get them.

73 de N4UYQ

## NOVEMBER

18th - Johnston ARS Ham Fest  
Benson, North Carolina  
<http://www.jars.net>

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The board may also be contacted, as a whole, at  
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Please feel free to contact any of us regarding RATS  
business, information, and ideas.

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