



# THE JUNKBOX



## The Official Newsletter of The Albemarle Amateur Radio Society

Post Office Box 1217

April 2011

Elizabeth City, NC 27906-1217

<http://www.taars.us>

WA4VTX Repeaters 146.655/444.300/147.330 PL 131.8 APRS 144.39

### Next TAARS Meeting

Our next scheduled TAARS meeting is slated for Thursday, April 21, 2011, 7:30 PM at COA building "C" C109. Our dinner location is the Golden Corral at 6PM.

TAARS Meeting March 17, 2011

### Minutes

A brief meeting was called to order, following a NWS SKYWARN training session, at 8:54 pm by Secretary KJ4FIN/JimB. Minutes, as posted on the TAARS website, were approved. The Treasurer's report was read.

**Old Business** – Old business discussions were tabled until the next full meeting due to the SKYWARN training and the need to discuss an important piece of New Business.

**New Business** – NO4Y Herman reported on the TarWheel Century event scheduled for April 30, 2011. This 100 mile cycling event is sponsored by the River City Cycling Club, and TAARS has regularly supported the event by manning SAG stops, dispatching rovers, and providing radio communication through out the event. A sign up sheet was circulated.

KJ4FIN/ JimB reported that the five new SKYWAERN NCS operators noted last month have received access privileges from NWS Wakefield and are operational. Also, tonight's SKYWAEN program completes the scheduled NWS Wakefield, SKYWARN training for this year.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the business portion of the meeting at 9:12 pm.

In Attendance: KJ4FIN JimB, N4QLD Greg, K4VHV Al, KI4BQI Albert, KG4SPP Katina, NO4Y Herman, KG4SPH Cynthia, K2IUN Champ, WB1CZX Tom, W4MUZ Ed, NC1JD JimD, KD4VRI Ronnie, W4UEB Joe, KA2TQY Rod, WB4FXD Terry, KD8BLQ Brad, KB4TOH Mike, KD4CEB Kerry

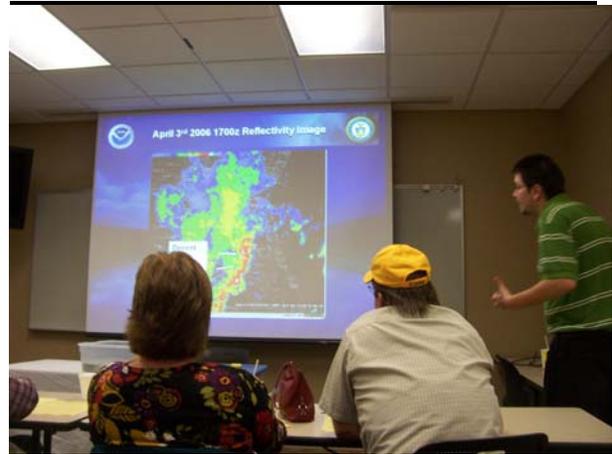
### SKYWARN News

An Advanced SKYWARN class was conducted on March 17 in Edenton. Mike Montefusco, from Wakefield NWS conducted the training. Attendees included TAARS members along with military and emergency management spotters.

This session concludes the current, locally scheduled, SKYWARN offerings. Please check the following links for SKYWARN training scheduled in other nearby areas.

<http://www.erh.noaa.gov/er/akq/spotterinfo/skywarn.htm>

<http://www.erh.noaa.gov/er/mhx/>



## More on the Russian Woodpecker

From: "David W. Perham"  
<nldp@roadrunner.com>  
Subject: Article for the Junkbox

### Remnants of Maine's Woodpecker

I enjoyed reading about the Russian Woodpecker on the TAARS website. I didn't get on HF until after the Woodpecker went away, so I missed all of that fun. Not long after we moved up here to Downeast Maine, I started noticing, as all good hams do, the various antenna sites in the area. About a 40 minute drive from our QTH is Cutler, Maine, home of the Navy's HF and VLF Communication site. One of the local hams works on the HF transmitters and another is an operator at the site. Some local hams were even involved in its construction. All agree, there is enough wire buried in the ground out there to make any ham weep.

One of our two active 18 wheel driver hams, Eric KE1LB-14, makes many deliveries in the area. He mentioned many other sites he has delivered to over the years. One is a domed RADAR antenna originally run by the US Air Force and is now an FAA facility that provides "fill-in" coverage for aircraft and a wee bit-o-early warning. Another interesting site, now mostly dismantled, is a "dinosaur cage" antenna also run by the Navy West of us in Winter Harbor, Maine.



The most interesting, and closest antenna site to us, is the now mothballed Columbia Falls Air Force Station just North of us in Township 19, Maine. It is about a ten minute drive through the woods, across the wild Maine blueberry barrens, and situated near a very large cranberry bog operation operated by the Passamaquoddy Tribe. The three phase power lines up our road are a result of its construction.

The site consists of three separate receiver antennas, part of the East coast's "Over the Horizon Backscatter RADAR" (OTH-B) site. The matching transmitter site is located in (ironically) Moscow, Maine. The RADAR used the entire HF band, and our good friend the ionosphere to track airborne objects over the horizon in three different headings using

three different arrays. All of this was designed and built during the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s. The site was activated in 1990 and was used for a short while for its National Defense mission. It was also used by various agencies involved in drug interdiction efforts in the 1990s. Part of the elaborate software used to provide useful data for the tracking system was an algorithm designed to remove "sea clutter" from the return. A NOAA researcher took advantage of this *useless* artifact to use that data for remotely monitoring sea state.



Rumors abound about the antenna site's fate. The sister sites in Oregon have begun the dismantling process. Some say the lease of the land is soon up and the place will be scrapped and returned to its original condition. We'd like to operate Field Day from the site or maybe a special event station. Might make a good reflector for 80 meters, even if we don't get to plug in! 73, Dave N1DP in tropical Maine.

For more information, here are a few websites:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Over-the-horizon\\_radar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Over-the-horizon_radar)

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/systems/an-fps-118.htm>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wki3zfl1ywI>

West Coast OTH-B

[http://www.interceptradio.com/wiki/index.php/OTHB\\_Radar](http://www.interceptradio.com/wiki/index.php/OTHB_Radar)

Cutler

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/VLF\\_Transmitter\\_Cutler](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/VLF_Transmitter_Cutler)

### Upcoming Events

Raleigh Hamfest April 23<sup>rd</sup> Raleigh NC <http://rars.org/hamfest/>  
TarWheel Bike Event Saturday, April 30, 2011

Columbia Emergency Repeater Association and NC ARES Areas 1 and 2 Meetings, Saturday, 14 May 2011 at 1030, Golden Skillet at 147 US Highway 64 E, in Plymouth, NC

ARRL Field Day 2011 June 25 -26, 2011