

Minutes of the Forsyth Amateur Radio Club – 13 November 2017

By Jim Register (KV4SJ)
Secretary, Forsyth Amateur Radio Club

1. Call to Order: The 13 November 2017 meeting of the Forsyth Amateur Radio Club at the Red Cross Building, 690 Coliseum Drive, was called to order by President David Shoaf, KC4X, at 1948 hours.

2. Repeater Announcement: WXII, who graciously provides us with a home for the 145.470 repeater, has notified us that they will have construction upgrades beginning very soon, and we need to move the repeater. Apparently they have to run a new power line right through where our repeater building is situated. We have a proposed site and are working diligently to make sure the repeater is down for as short a period as possible. David asked all present not to discuss this issue on the air in any manner, or discuss with anyone outside the room. We want to avoid any rumors that the repeater is going away and leaving the frequency available for someone else to set up a repeater on that frequency.

3. Welcome: David welcomed all attendees, approximately 37, for coming out this evening, and invited each to introduce themselves.

4. Treasurers Report: Kent Englebort, K4HKE, gave the treasurer's report.

- The current bank balance: \$ 3,391.68 with nothing outstanding.
- We have received a generous donation tonight which will add a couple hundred dollars to the kitty.
- A more formal report will be presented at the Christmas party.

5. Christmas Party: David Shoaf, KC4X, reminded everyone about the Christmas Party, which will be at Mi Pueblo on Stratford Road on December 11, 2017, starting around 6 pm.

ARES® Report: Harlan Cobert, W1HRC, reported the latest local ARES® news:

- The net is getting 24 check-ins each Thursday night.
- 17 people participated in a Net Control Station Training class on October 14.
- ARES members participated in the DOD COMEX 17-4 exercise simulating a Coronal Mass Ejection. We were number one in participation, being the busiest in the state, and providing the most information for four counties.
<http://www.arrl.org/news/communications-interoperability-training-with-amateur-radio-community-set>
- Robert Reese, of WSFC Emergency Management, taught ICS700 and ICS800 on Friday, November 10, and ICS100, ICS200 on Saturday, November 11, with about 18 people participating.
- We will run the ECOMM net controller class again in the spring, and the ICS classes as needed. Classes and contact info will be announced on the club website: <http://w4nc.com/ARES.htm>

6. K4TBC, Triad Baptist Church Radio Club: Scott Swaim, KJ4IVX, spoke about K4TBC, the newest Amateur Radio Club in Forsyth County. They meet at Triad Baptist Church with about 15 ham members in the church. They ran a class in February, starting out with 23 students; 17 took the test and 14 passed. Mike Atkins, N4VE, helped teach the class. They just got their station set up with a Yaesu FT450D and an

Icom dual-band radio. Scott thanked FARC for our help with the license class and in getting the club started, recognizing John Kippe, K1PPE, Dale Mierisch, WB9SZL, and Harold Richardson, N4HER from the audience.

Wayne Ashworth, W4HG, got Scott's father involved and Scott followed in his footsteps, getting his novice call sign in 1975 at the age of 11. Together they built a Heathkit HW101 for his first radio.

<http://www.tbcnow.org/am>

7. January Hamfest: David Shoaf, KC4X, reminded folks about the January hamfest at the new church location, and called for volunteers to help coordinate getting the volunteer positions filled. Crickets.

8. Membership Survey: Geoff Rudy, KK4MOV, announced we will be doing a survey of the members on how we can improve the club. He passed out file cards for general feedback and input as to what kinds of questions we should ask on the survey. Geoff asked for input on length of the meetings, length of the presentations, what kinds of presentations might be interesting or were most entertaining.

9. Program: Geoff Rudy, KK4MOV, was drawn to the light and announced a change in tonight's program. Our planned speaker had to cancel due to work commitments, so tonight we are having Amateur Night, inviting various members to get up and speak about how a nice person like you got mixed up in all of this.

- John Kippe, K1PPE, told how, while a new Novice in Hannibal Missouri, he met Rick Batte, N4MBI, in Winston Salem. John was listening to a QSO on 10 meters, at a time when the band was not expected to be open for that path. John thanked Rick for giving him his General test after John moved here.
- Doc Holliday, WB4QIZ, told about how, as a ten year old, he responded to an ad in the back of a comic book and sent in a dollar to get a galena crystal. He added a set of headphones and an antenna and was able to listen to WCKY in Cincinnati, as well as closer stations in Southern Pines. Colonel Burkhead, W4GTH, invited him up to his ham shack, and Doc remembers seeing a little card, from President Harry S. Truman, authorizing the Colonel to operate his ham station during WWII. The Colonel would receive messages from overseas and relay them to different people in the community. That was Doc's introduction to ham radio. Doc later built a Heathkit FM radio and an HW-101. Doc reported one time calling CQ and hearing himself coming back on the radio - he figured it may have been a long path echo. Doc also told about his experiences in the Bible Fellowship net, and the one time he converted a man to Christianity over the radio.
- Harlan Cobert, W1HRC, spoke of watching his uncle operating his ham radio. Harlan was interested but had trouble learning the code, life intervened, and he drifted away from ham radio. When his uncle passed away and left his ham station to Harlan, he decided to get his license to honor that gift. Now Harlan is the ARES® Emergency Coordinator. He uses the radio more in the public service bands than on the ham bands, but he applies what he learns as a ham there.
- Bob McClellan, W3AVB, got started by playing with electrical stuff from about first grade on. Some of his experiments caused a bit of excitement around the house... He ended up in the Air Force in Boston in the electronic systems R&D area, and the hams in the shop suggested he get his ham ticket, and he did. He preferred building to talking, and ended up getting out of ham radio for thirty years. His wife Mary, KM4WPO, is responsible for him getting the bug again. He retested and then applied for his old call sign. He got a call from a lady in Gettysburg asking if he had a copy of his original license - their files had been lost in a fire. Mary had the original in a hope chest; he emailed it to Gettysburg and two days later had his old call sign back.

- Steve Patterson, WA3RTC, got into radio from being interested in electronics and building things. In 1969-1970, there were riots happening in Kansas City. Steve was going to a small church school, and they were afraid of the riots in KC reaching to their small town 60 miles away, so Steve and another student were assigned to sit in the physics department on the third floor until late in the evening and keep watch. (You can see a long way in Kansas.) They got bored and strung wires between their watch posts, and began practicing Morse code. They were far enough from an FCC office that their tests could be given by a General class license holder who was than 25 years of age. Since they were both in the physics department, they went to the head of the English department, who also met the requirements.
- Jim Atkins, W4UX, at the age of 13, started listening to AM broadcast at night. His dad built a Heathkit 3-tube regen receiver and Jim started playing with it. One of the magazines had a shortwave program where they would assign you a call sign and you could send QSL cards to stations that you had heard. Jim sent QSL cards to stations all over the world, and got back confirmations thanking him for the report. Then he started hearing people talking to each other and found out they were hams. He decided he could do that, and he came to a FARC meeting and asked if anyone would give him a Novice test. John Huffman, W4IRE, who was into CW traffic handling, gave Jim the test. Jim got interested in traffic handling and, back in the heyday of Vietnam, started handling health and welfare messages, which he found very satisfying. Jim went on to get his General ticket and upgraded every two years until he passed his Extra. Jim allowed that he hadn't been active every year, but kind of regrets not being active. Jim reminded us how wide the hobby is, and that we shouldn't feel stuck in a rut - there's always something else to try, including the new digital modes.
- Harold Richardson, N4HER, is a latecomer to the amateur world, but has been doing electronics since he was probably 10. He started by building a crystal radio with a cat whisker he ordered from Lafayette Radio, based on a schematic he found in *Boy's Life* magazine. He had no trouble hearing a station, as the tower for the closest one would have probably fallen in his back yard if it ever came down. Henry would go to sleep with an earphone stuck in his ear. That never kept him up too late, as the station went off at midnight like all good stations did. One of his dad's friends had an electronic experimenter kit that could make twenty-one different vacuum tube projects, and Harold took advantage of that. His local club was running training sessions, but his downfall was the Morse code. Harold couldn't send or receive code because he was dyslexic, among other things. (They have a name for it now.) That prevented him from getting a license, but he was always interested in electronics, joining the service after high school, working as a radio repairman. He continued listening to shortwave, and bought an old Collins military receiver when he got out of the service. He accumulated a lot of test gear and, to try to get rid of some of the excess, eventually started going to hamfests where he met Mike Atkins. Mike invited Harold to the classes he was running, and took his Tech and General. Having hearing problems, Harold got into digital, starting with RTTY and PSK, and has recently started trying out JT8. Harold has probably made between 250 and 300 contacts from all around the world in the last month and a half. Harold asked for a show of interest on a soldering class, including soldering cable connectors and copper pipe antennas, and another class on the new digital modes, and got enough interest to plan to do both next year.
- Dale Mierisch, WB9SZL, got into radio a couple years ago as a 12 or 13 year old back in the 60s. He drooled over the Allied Radio catalog, and after getting enough lawnmower money saved up, he ordered a Knight Kit super-regenerative receiver called the Band Master(?) - often alluded to as the Band Smasher. It would squeal, and you didn't have to tune it much as it would pick up a station at several places on the band. You could listen to it for about two hours, and then you would start to hear normally about ninety minutes later when your ears recovered from the

squeal. Dale took the radio classes in high school, where they had a club station with HW-101s, and they would drool over that beautiful green color. Dale went to college and got a degree in electrical engineering. Vietnam was going on and they had this thing called the draft. The folks on the other side of the dorm had numbers in the 300 range, they weren't going anywhere. Dale's was 67, and he knew he would be getting a call soon, so he went down and signed up for the Navy. He ended up at a shore base for a while and remembers being asked if he wanted to go to lunch, and one time they said "No, thanks, Jeff and I are going to MARS." The others said "Well, it was good to meet you!" and Dale told them "Don't worry we'll be back at one o'clock." They had a building across the street that had beautiful Drake TR-3 and TR-4 and kilowatt amplifiers. After the Navy, Dale ended up at Piedmont Airlines, who eventually brought them here to this club. Dale had picked up an interest in repeaters, back in the 70's when they were made from the large General Electric and Motorola taxi radios, and has been working with them ever since.

- Mike Scriven, KG4ACR, allowed that his uncle had been a member of the club, and Van Key, KC5WSK, Dale, WB9SZL, and Rick, N4MBI, had helped him get where he is today. What really got him started was when he was riding with his uncle, down in South Carolina. His uncle had two radios in the car, and told Mike "You can play with the CB, but whatever you do, don't touch THIS radio." When his uncle had a heart attack and they were sitting on the side of I-26, Mike grabbed the forbidden microphone, saying that his uncle was sick and they were on the side of the road, and so on. His uncle's friends knew he had a heart condition, and everybody showed up. Later on, his uncle casually picked up the mike and called one of his buddies in Ohio, which also impressed Mike. Mike isn't very active, but he reports he is always listening for that call when someone needs help.
- Ken Melvin, KM4NFQ, is fairly new to FARC and ham radio. He got into it because of hobby electronics, figuring that if he wanted to build shortwave radios he would need a license to test any radios that he built. The first crystal radio he ever built was in shop class when he was 13; he recently built one on a cereal box, exactly 50 years later. Next he built a simple regen receiver for beginners, designed by Charles Kitchen, N1TEV. Ken used Manhattan style construction rather than the circuit board available from Far Circuits. He was able to pick up Radio Havana on 6000 kHz, over 900 miles away, with a 39 inch wire antenna. He has also built an MFJ 8100k 5-band regen kit. All these receivers now connect to a 35 foot piece of wire strung up under the joists in his basement workshop. Ken also built a QRP 80m Michigan Mighty Mite transmitter, a 5 watt CW transceiver kit from QRP Labs and projects found in QST. Ken is interested in learning Morse code and has breadboarded a code tutor and a Morseduino CW decoder kit.
- Henry Smith, W4HHS, got started in electronics as a pre-teen; one of the guys in his neighborhood worked for Brenner Iron and Metals, and took Henry out to clip parts from Western Electric discards. Henry went to Forsyth Tech studying electronics and to work for Channel 8 television in 1964, though he wasn't doing electronics for them at that time. After a stint in the service as an x-ray technician (because of his electronics background), he went back to Channel 8. Henry got involved with ham radio through working on antennas for the Moravian World Mission in Honduras and Nicaragua. The antennas the hams had put up had some installation problems; while Henry was remedying the issues, he was asked just what his credentials were. Henry decided that he should get his Technician license when he got back, then his General Radiotelephone Operator's License (GROL), and is planning to get his radar endorsement in January. Henry didn't do much in ham radio until he broke his foot and was laid up for a while, during which time he upgraded to General and then Extra. Henry enjoys supporting the various ARES® events.

- Matt Taylor, KB1BSR, started with electronics when he was five or six, mainly computers such as the Tandy 1000 and various 8088-based systems. His grandfather and his dad both got licensed when his dad was in his middle-late, N1RAP and N1RAQ. Matt found the radio interesting as well and earned his tech-plus license as a Scout at the age of eleven or twelve. He was not active after high school and in college, but after moving down here, his wife had several craft hobbies and Matt needed his hobby back. He re-tested at the General level (now studying for Extra) got his old call back, and works mainly digital modes like RTTY and FT8.
- Jonathan Sharp, KM4RAD, says we can blame Geoff Rudy for getting him involved in radio. He met Geoff through Scouts and the Radio Scouting program. Jonathan grew up on a farm and wasn't really exposed to radio and electronics, but he enjoys scouts and the outdoors. He doesn't have a station set up at home, but has a LNR Precision LD-5 for scouting and camping trips. He went to Camp Raven Knob and failed miserably at achieving a SOTA activation, not making his 5 contacts. During the attempt, a troop of Scouts comes around the knoll, and the look on their faces when they saw this crazy old guy (in their minds) sitting on the ground with a wire in a tree, trying to talk to somebody, was just incredible. Jonathan probably spent two hours with them explaining what he was doing, and how it would work. They went for a hike and got a lecture, and hopefully kindled some interest.

10. Field Day Results: Kent Englebert, K4HKE, congratulated the FARC for our Field Day Results. On the ARRL website, in the December QST we were #1 in section 9a. We had 3559 contacts for 13,494 points. Then next closest team had 1876 contacts for 7,870 points.

11. Business Meeting Reminder: David Shoaf, KC4X, reminded everyone that the September business meeting will be held at 66 Pizza located at 3440 Frontis St, Winston Salem, NC. This is an open meeting and all club members are welcome to attend. Attendees usually show up for dinner at or a little before 6:30; the official business meeting starts at 7:30.

12. Adjournment of Meeting: Motion to adjourn the meeting was made and seconded by several attendees. Meeting was adjourned at 2103 hours.

13. Partial List of Meeting Attendees: Below are the names of FARC member attendees.

David Shoaf KC4X, Gene Bowman WB4MSG, Jerry Minor K4GW, Kent Englebert K4HKE, Steven Mierisch KG4JWU, Jim Register KV4SJ, Dan O'Leary KG4ECI, Pedro Tomas KN4GKY, Henry Smith W4HHS, Terry Brown AK4D, John Kippe K1PPE, Cathy Melvin KM4OCS, Ken Melvin KM4NFQ, Matthew Thompson KN4TOP, Tim Brown KN4HQN, Matt Taylor KB1BSR, Rick Batte N4MBI, Dale Mierisch WB9SZL, Jonathan Sharp KM4RAD, Jim Atkins W4UX, Sam Poindexter NI4TG, Dave Larson KM4RAB, Steve Patterson WA3RTC, Harold Richardson N4HER, Jim Bielski KJ4FIN, Judson Davis KG4OHQ, David Ramsey W4OIL, Dave Griffith WA4MKK, Harlan Cobert W1HRC, Geoff Rudy KK4MOV, Bob McClellan WA3AVB, Mary McClellan KM4WPO, Ron Gregoire W4UDB, Doc Holliday WB4QIZ, Scott Swaim KJ4IVX, Ronn Dunn KN4RKD, Don Edwards WS4NC, Mike Scriven KG4HTR.