

The Link

Newsletter of the Durham FM Association

April 2020



See Jack's column below for next meeting time and date information



President's Corner

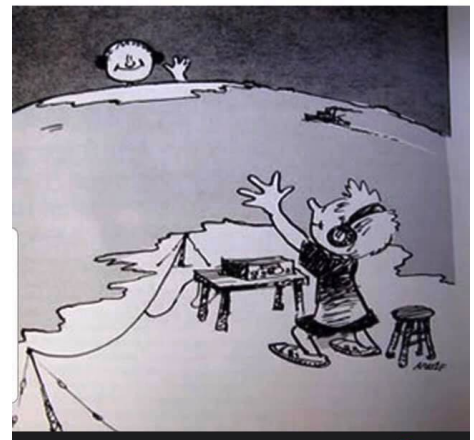
Like many of you, I've read COVID-19 updates from almost every organization in my life. From my workplace and my church to my grocery store and domain name registrar. Some of these communications have provided vital information, while others have served as a way to keep in touch. This column serves those same purposes.

What's going on with DFMA events? Until outbreak conditions improve, the DFMA will not be having in-person meetings. Fortunately, our hobby supports communicating from a distance. Instead of our usual monthly meeting at Bullock's, we'll have a special net. The net will be at 7pm on April 7th, our usual meeting time, on the linked 145.45- and 147.225+ repeaters (both have a PL tone of 82.5). You can also check-in over the Internet via Echolink/SVXLink to the WR4AGC-R node. The format of the net will be check-ins (in place of our usual introductions), officer reports (including a special discussion about DurHamFest), and a rag chew round table discussion. For this net, we invite you to check in multiple times using different radios.

In some ways, this column seems late. I've only left my home once in the last three and a half weeks, so it feels like we are well into life changes because of COVID-19. However, it seems like the outbreak will continue for some time, but it's difficult to predict how long. I know that we've already had to adjust our plans for what we're going to eat and how to work in an ergonomic way at home. I suspect a theme from our time of distancing will be flexibility and planning for the unknown. Therefore, I propose the discussion topic on the net to be: how have you had to change plans on the fly? What clever solutions have you come up with? These can be COVID-19 related, but I'm happy to hear about some non-viral event as well.

Stay safe and 73,
Jack — KM4MBG

Ham Radio - Social Distancing for Over 100 Years



An important message from Dee, KU4GC, your DurHamFest coordinator

Got the following Friday. There is a chance things will be back in operation late in May, but there's no way to predict. I'll leave it up to the Board if they want to cancel now or two wait a few weeks and then decide.

73, Dee, KU4GC

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Michelle Brossette** <Michelle_Brossette@dpsnc.net>

Date: Fri, Mar 13, 2020 at 11:30 AM

Subject: DPS Facility Rentals canceled

To: Anitra McInnis <Anitra_McInnis@dpsnc.net>

Cc: Michelle Brossette <Michelle_Brossette@dpsnc.net>

Hello,

Effective immediately all facility use in Durham Public Schools is canceled. When school is closed, rentals are canceled. Rentals may continue to be canceled even when school reopens and is back in session.

We will work with you to arrange refunds or credit and to schedule access to the buildings to retrieve any equipment.

Please do not contact the school or staff, they are busy managing the students.

All communication should be to Facility Rental and NOT the schools. We do not know the full duration of this cancellation. If and when we allow rentals to continue, and we are still dealing with this pandemic, additional staff fees may be added for custodial services associated with renting a facility.

Please contact Facility Rental, Michelle Brossette, with any questions. We will not have any more information until after 3pm today.

Thank you,

Michelle Brossette
Facility Rental Specialist

DPS Facility Services

2011 Hamlin Rd. Durham, NC 27704

VM 919.560.3696 FAX 919.477-4698

.....
919-560-3827 Ext. 22223 / Michelle.Brossette@dpsnc.net

Efland Baha'i Center closed to all activities due to COVID-19

From: David Snyder

Date: Sun, 15 Mar 2020 20:19:49 EDT

Hi All-

The Efland Baha'i Center, where OCRA holds its monthly meeting has been closed to all activities in compliance with the NC Governor's directives to slow the spread of COVID-19.

The Baha'i Assembly that oversees the Center (of which I am a member) will be monitoring events, and reopen programs and devotional services when it is deemed prudent and safe to do so.

It is unknown at this time if this will still be in effect for the April OCRA meeting, I will keep the membership apprised as we get closer to the date.

If we cannot meet in person, we could hold a net on the repeater that night for club announcements and brief discussions.

Stay safe everyone.

73,

Dave, W4SAR

RARSFest has been officially cancelled

Dayton Hamvention has been cancelled

The following pictures reveal our new Field Day plans!







From: KR4UB, Dan

Date: Wed, 18 Mar 2020 11:18:54 EDT

**Sheltering in Place due to the Coronavirus?
and want to stay in touch with your ham friends?**

Show your friends your latest pride and joy project or any field of interest you would like to share with your ham friends.

Send an email to orange.county.radio.amateurs@gmail.com with attached photos, or a link to the photos you wish to share on your favorite project, or any field of interest to the ham community. Include a brief description and I'll post it on the OCRA website.

Dan, KR4UB

CoronaVirus Guideline for Hams

From: Bob McGraw - K4TAX

Date: Tue, 24 Mar 2020 12:45:35 PDT

GUIDELINES

Amateur Radio operators are requested to adapt to the Coronavirus mitigation guidelines as they apply to amateur radio operating.

All ham radio operators are encouraged to stay at least 6 feet from the microphone in order to maintain proper separation from others.

The distance may be reduced if a mask is put on the microphone.

CW operators should wear appropriate gloves when handling keys.

There should be no more than 10 stations on the same frequency at the same time.

Disinfect your knobs, switches, etc before operating ... especially touch screens and PTT. Shoe covers should be worn when using foot switches.

Use of hands-free VOX is strongly encouraged although from 6 feet away, it will be necessary to shout.

Disinfect all antenna cables coming into the station.

Only mobile stations and walkie-talkie contacts are permitted where sit-down service has been banned.

The 6 ft microphone separation guideline is suspended for these types of operation, but a mask on the microphone is strongly recommended.

Mobile operators are encouraged to remain in their vehicles except to get necessities.

Operators should leave their operating positions only for necessities.

Outdoor antenna work is allowed as long as there is social distancing among all who are present.

Hoarding of batteries, spare tubes, etc. is discouraged and is unfair to others. We are in this together.

New equipment and parts should be ordered online for front porch delivery.

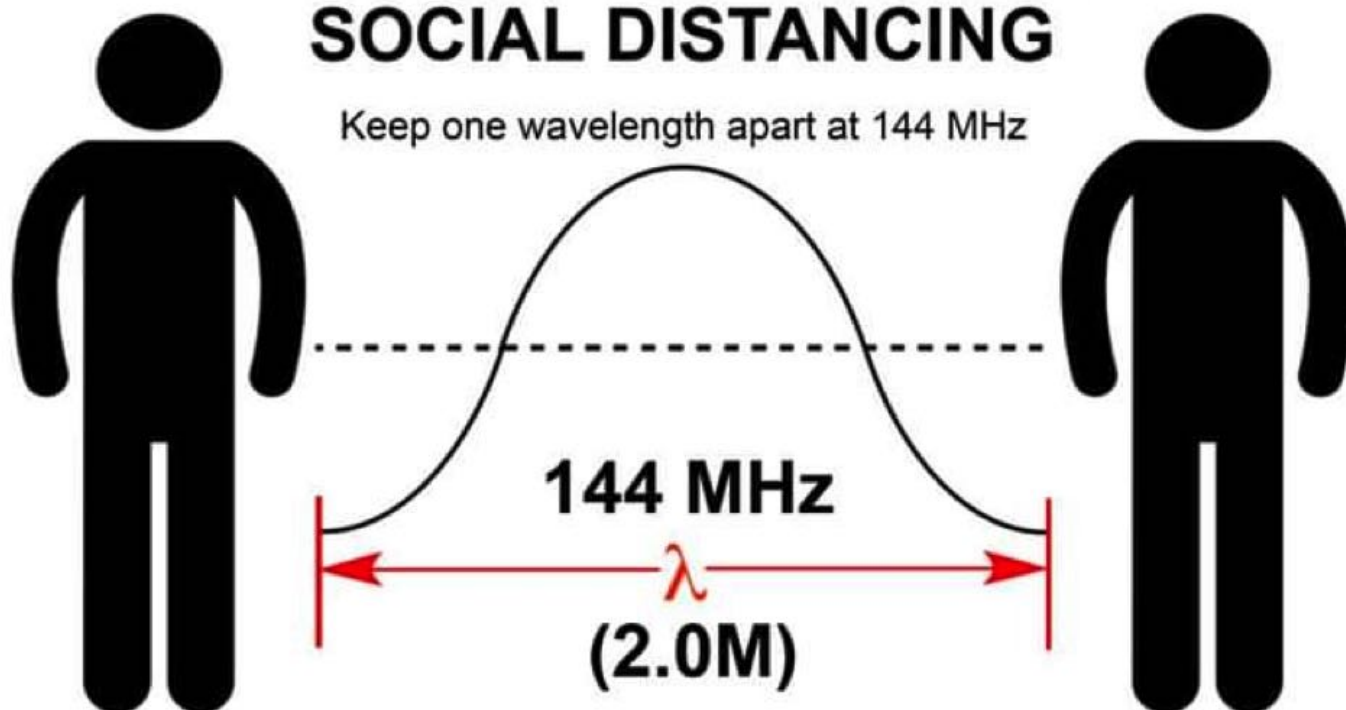
Do not test (tune) your equipment unnecessarily. Testing should be reserved for those who actually need it.

Your understanding and cooperation in this matter will be appreciated

Amateur radio enthusiast guide to

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Keep one wavelength apart at 144 MHz



Space Comms

Dear hams, please obey the 144 MHz physical distancing rule.

Image by Keith, G6NHU.

The Link Classified

If you have items to buy or sell, send your ad to: Martin, KA5JUU

martin@brody1.com 919-260-0632

Minutes of Last Club Meeting

Durham FM Association (DFMA)

DFMA Meeting – 03/03/2020 – Dan, KR4UB, Secretary

Location: Bullock's Bar-B-Cue, Durham

Attending: KR4UB, Dan; WA4UJM, Wally; KA5JUJ, Martin; AJ2X, Mark; KV4ZR, Loren; W4BOH, Wilson; KM4MBG, Jack; KF4PAB, Lenore; KE4HIH, Rhett; WA2ROC, Dick; KU4GC, Dee; NC4CD, Charlie; NA4VY, Dave; WB4ROI, Henry; W4SAR, Dave; KD4YJZ, Karen; KK4BPH, Mike; W4LMW, David; N2XZF, Paul; WA4AHR, Dewey; KW4XL, David & David Jr.; KN4FKH, Felicia; KW4KZ, Chuck; KJ4VWG, Sam; KE4UVJ, Don; John Book, Jr.

A total of 27 attending, with 25 of them currently licensed hams.

President: Jack, KM4MBG opened the membership meeting at 6:55 pm with introductions, followed by announcements.

Announcements:

John, KN4SVO discussed the recent Durham EOC meeting, the new volunteer logo, potential uses of the MCU to raise community awareness and the need for more volunteers.

Jack, KM4MBG reminded all of the Charlotte Hamfest opening Friday, March 10th through March 11th at the Concord Mills Mall. He also reported linking problems between the 147.225 and 145.450 repeaters have been experienced on the Thursday night net. Charlie, NC4CD noted he is aware of the problem and will investigate.

Sam, KJ4VWG reported the APRS I-Gate at the Durham EOC is off the air due to a failure in the Raspberry Pi computer that ran the I-Gate application. He discussed several options that could be used in lieu of the Raspi. Charlie, NC4CD reported he has laptops available that could be used, but replacement should be one based on technology offering the most reliable long term solution.

REPORTS

Vice President – Jimmy, KF4KHU is absent due to illness.

Treasurer – Lenore, KF4PAB provided the treasurer's report. Beginning with the new year, 73 members dues are current.

Secretary – Dan, KR4UB reported he frequently has little to add in the secretarial report portion in the agenda, as all has been said and reported on in the most recent writing board and club meeting minutes included in the DFMA Link published just prior to the club meeting. He would like to use this portion of the

meeting time to solicit and document any membership feedback & comments that he should carry back to the next board meeting for further discussion.

Repeater Manager – Charlie, NC4CD reported the 220 power amplifier continues to intermittently drop off line and is investigating whether to fix or replace. The search and acquisition cost of a suitable sized MCU storage building is ongoing. The 6m antenna has been received and the receiver has been fixed by Paul, N2XZF. The search is on for a suitable duplexer that will meet the necessary performance requirements.

AuxComm EC – Shawn, K4CTD absent.

DurHamFest – Dee, KU4GC distributed flyers and reminded all that the 2020 DurHamFest is on May 30th, the fifth Saturday of May and gave an updated volunteer status report. Joanna KE4QOZ and Rhett, KE4HIH have volunteered to staff the club table. Food & coffee operations will be supported by Wilson W4BOH, David KW4XL, Felicia KN4FKH, Wally WA4UJM & Susan. Dan, KR4UB will bring stored tables, coolers, canopy, ticket drum and signs to be installed. VEs Paul N2XZF, Dan KR4UB and possibly Rodney AE4JW will support the VE test session. Additional volunteers are needed for parking & other operations.

Field Day Coordinator – Dave, W4SAR: No updates tonight; Field Day will be the major discussion topic at the next OCRA meeting. The next VE session will be at the OCRA meeting March 9th, 7pm at the Efland Baha'i Center.

Door Prizes - Door prize winners selected from the attendee sign in sheet by a random number generator program were as follows: Flashlight - John Book; Flashlight - Loren, KV4ZR; Antenna Book - Chuck, KW4KZ

New Business:

Dee, KU4GC reported it is time to order club tables for RARSFest and solicited and encouraged members to bring good, saleable items to the hamfest. A motion was made and approved for the order of 4 tables, 2 for DFMA and 2 authorized by OCRA. Given that the tables cost \$21.00 each, members are asked to donate at least 10% of the proceeds back to the club to cover the cost.

Lenore, KF4PAB club treasurer proposed that the club modify the club dues collection process from the current method to use the same process that OCRA has been using for many years. The proposed process will simplify many aspects of the dues payment process as follows:

- Membership dues will expire and payments are made much like any subscribed magazine or service in that each membership “subscription” will expire on months in the year based on how far the last dues payment carried the subscription.
- The \$12.00 for twelve months (or \$1.00/month) payments can now be made with the amount being whatever convenient currency the member has on hand e.g. 10, 15 or 20 dollar payments accepted.
- The treasurer will no longer have to bring club cash to make change for those not having the exact currency amount.
- New member prorating of memberships will no longer have to be done.
- Memberships will be extended by the same number of months as the number of dollars paid for individual memberships and in accordance with club standing dues rates for family memberships.
- For family memberships, each additional family member will cost \$.50 per month.
- The new process will spread the treasurer’s work load out throughout the year.

- If a member lets their dues lapse, they will continue to be on the membership roll for up to 12 months and drop off the roll on the 13th month. New payments will be used to catch up for the lapsed months and bring the membership current.
- Members who have let their membership expire for some time and then make payment will be starting a new 12 month membership with their \$12.00 payment.
- The monthly reported membership count will now reflect the rise or fall of memberships rather than being masked by the high year end membership counts followed by large drops to a small number at the beginning of the new year.
- Members are requested to make at least \$10 minimum payments rather than smaller multiple payments throughout the year.
- This proposal is not a change in annual dues amount, but rather the process in which dues are collected.

Dan, KR4UB as OCRA treasurer for many years, commented that the process used by OCRA for many years and proposed for DFMA has been very helpful in spreading treasurer workload out throughout the year, a more convenient payment method for members and less disruptive at meetings by not having lines of people all needing to pay their dues at the same time of the year.

Charlie, NC4CD made a motion that the above process be adopted. The motion was seconded and approved by the membership in attendance.

Martin, KA5JUU the DFMA Link editor is always looking for articles. He also needs to have an established submission deadline so the DFMA Link can be published just prior to the next club meeting. Charlie, NC4CD recommended that the OCRA/DFMA groups.io mailing list be used to publish a reminder call for articles and the publishing deadline.

Dan, KR4UB reported that he has contacted Nick, K4NYW regarding a presentation on Nick's extensive collection of Navy radio communications station equipment. Since he had made a presentation some time back to the DFMA club, Nick wondered if members would be interested in another presentation. He did comment that perhaps the presentation could focus on a different aspect of Naval communications. Dan asked for a show of hands of members at the meeting who would like to hear another presentation by Nick. The response was very favorable with many knowing of Nick and the large range of topics he could present. Dan will provide the feedback to Nick regarding a future presentation.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Minutes of Last Board Meeting

Durham FM Association (DFMA)

DFMA Board Minutes – 03/17/2020 – Dan, KR4UB, Secretary

Location: On the Air Meeting on the DFMA 145.450 Repeater

Attending: (y) Jack, KM4MBG - president; (n) Jimmy, KF4KHU - vice president; (y) Lenore, KF4PAB - treasurer; (y) Dan, KR4UB - secretary; (y) Charlie, NC4CD - repeater mgr; (n) Shawn, K4CTD - AuxComm; (y) Dee, KU4GC - DurHamFest chair ; (n) Dave, W4SAR - Field Day; (n) Martin, KA5JUU Link Editor; At-Large Board Members: (y) David, KW4XL; (y) Paul, N2XZF; (y) Chuck, KW4KZ; (n) Karen, KD4YJZ Guests: John, KN4SVO; Bob, K4VO, Michael, KK4EIB.

President – Jack, KM4MBG called the meeting to order at 7 pm with the call for officer reports.

REPORTS:

President - Jack, KM4MBG reported that it is pretty much a given that the April club meeting will be cancelled and likely the May meeting. This began a discussion of what all should be done.

- Jack will draft an email to the membership and notice will be included in the DFMA Link.
- Jack raised the question of an acknowledgement/gratuity to Bullocks and the 2 servers to show our appreciation & support the restaurant gives the club by providing a meeting place. The board concurred for the club to provide a \$100 gratuity in appreciation of the service provided.
- Jack asked for suggestions to use in lieu of an in-person meeting, John, KN4SVO suggested a net check in. Charlie, NC4CD stated the net will provide the opportunity for members who can't make the meetings to join in, and opportunity to test radios they don't normally use. Dan, KR4UB noted the rag chew portion of the DFMA Thursday night net adds a feeling of cohesiveness and suggested the club meeting net follow the same format suggesting all to talk briefly about their activities.

With RARSFest being cancelled, Jack inquired if any further action is required. Dee, KU4GC has reported the tables had not been ordered, so no further action is required.

For DurHamFest, Dee has reported all reservations for DPS have been cancelled up through at least May and given conditions, likely beyond. The DPS rental fee is expected to be returned and the additional event insurance has not been purchased. The board voted to wait and see developments over the next 30 days on whether to issue notice of formal cancellation of DurHamFest.

Vice President – Jimmy, KF4KHU unable to attend.

Treasurer – Lenore, KF4PAB provided the treasurer's report. There are 78 members with dues current.

Secretary – Dan, KR4UB - The minutes from the 03/03/20 Club Meeting were approved with an addition by Lenore KF4PAB treasurer, addressing the cost of family memberships in the new member dues payment process. Paul, N2XZF noted in the discussion that the web site still reflects the old membership dues payment process and needs to be updated. Jack will contact Dee, KU4GC the current web administrator about the change.

Repeater Manager – Charlie, NC4CD reported that the internet locked up at TV Hill Sunday evening preventing Echolink connections. A hardware reset corrected the condition.

The 224.6 repeater 100 watt amplifier frequently goes offline. It is approximately 20 years old, made by a company no longer in business and from parts no longer available. Given that this repeater is the link

for access to many other repeater systems, it is the most active of all DFMA repeaters. Charlie consulted with other 220 repeater owners and received the recommendation to purchase the TE Systems 100 watt power amp which costs approximately \$1100.00 and also contains a bypass feature. Charlie will write the proposal for replacement to be included in the next DFMA Link for member approval as required with purchases exceeding \$500. A motion was approved by the board to take the proposal to the membership. Paul will check the old PA to see if it is fixable to be used as a spare.

Auxcomm – Shawn, K4CTD unable to attend. Charlie, NC4CD reported an email from Shawn, K4CTD reported that the Auxcomm meeting for the month has been cancelled. The Auxcomm group is ready to assist the county if required.

DurhamFest – Dee, KU4GC DurHamFest Chair comments & feedback are included in Jack's opening discussion regarding the numerous cancellations and elsewhere in the minutes. Dave, KW4XL reported he has made the laminated handicapped parking signs.

Field Day Coordinator - Dave, W4SAR was absent; no Field Day discussion.

NEW Business:

Jack asked for feedback from board members & guests regarding "On the air" board meeting. Comments were as follows:

- Paul, N2XZF - Meeting went very well
- Bob, K4VO - Liked it very much as otherwise unable to attend. Recommended using board member roll call when asking for a vote on the various topics.
- Dan, KR4UB - Meeting went very well; the net supports the necessary interactive discussion which email is unable to do as effectively, and we are using the repeater. Audio/video conferencing could be used in addition to the net to become more familiar with that alternative.
- Dee, KU4GC - Thought the meeting went well, giving credit to Jack for very effective leadership of the discussion.
- Lenore, KF4PAB - Meeting went very well. We want more activity on the repeaters and this is a perfect use. The meeting protocol was a bit more formal than usual and that was an asset.
- Charlie, NC4CD - Using the repeater worked very well supporting sheltering in place during the epidemic and enabling attendance by other members who normally can't attend.
- David, KW4XL - Meeting went very well, would like to see more net meetings in the future on the repeater.
-
- The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.