Forsyth Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

Newsletter

SPECIAL SERVICE CLUB

OUR 79TH YEAR!

Founded December 30, 1930

August & September, 2009

August Meeting

By Terry KN4BA

The August FARC club meeting featured Darrell Jeter with the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County office of Emergency Management. His presentation on volunteer Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) was very informative, energetic and produced interest from attendees.

For FARC members that did not attend the meeting, CERT team members are trained to take care of themselves and also to help others in their community for a short period of time following a local emergency or wider scale disaster. CERT teams are critical in situations where normal local emergency responders cannot get to a disaster area, most likely an area where the CERT team members live. CERT teams are also critical where normal local emergency responders are overwhelmed by large scale emergency situations. In large scale emergency situations, a CERT team can be the first primary responder until normal local emergency responders can arrive. Normally, CERT teams in each community have a wide range of missions and expertise, but typically individual CERT teams have a specific expertise.

CERT teams are trained in several emergency response areas including emergency medical situations, search and rescue, team organization, disaster psychology, fire safety, terrorism and emergency preparedness. Training is typically done over several meetings, perhaps one to two hours per week, for a total of 21 hours of training by local experts and emergency responders including fire fighters, medical and law enforcement and emergency responders.

The first and major requirement for training is for groups to have at least 15, but typically no more than 25 interested individuals. The group will decide what their response interest is, receive the training, and then formalize and document their interest and mission. Trained CERT teams will then be ready to respond to situations in the local community when an emergency happens or when that CERT teams specific expertise and mission is needed and is activated by local emergency offices.

Several August meeting attendees approached Phil Nunn after the presentation and expressed interest in having the Forsyth Amateur Radio Club get CERT training. Logically, a FARC CERT team mission would most likely be radio communication oriented. An example of where our radio and communication skills could be used would be in a tornado disaster, perhaps where normal local communications may be disabled or overwhelmed. But we would be trained to provide much more than organized communications if needed such as emergency medical response to a family member or to a neighbor.

The following web link has more information on CERT teams.

http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/

If you are interested in learning more, have some ideas and want to help the Forsyth Amateur Radio Club get CERT team training, get in touch with Phil Nunn (KD4JZZ) or any other FARC officer and let's get organized.

July Meeting

In July President Phil KD4JZZ made an outstanding presentation on the Maunder Minimum in the sunspot cycle. The Maunder Minimum was the period from about 1645 to 1715 when sunspots were almost nonexistent. It was also a time of below average temperatures. Some have speculated that we may be about to experience another minimum in the sunspots cycle because of the delay in the upswing of sunspots this time. Thanks Phil!

Our next club meeting will be held as usual at the NW NC Red Cross building on 610 Coliseum Dr. The meeting starts at 7:30 PM but arrive early, say 7-ish, to hobnob with your fellow members.

Monday Nights

The FARC main Club meeting is always on the second Monday of the month at the Red Cross. The FARC business meeting is open to all and is on the third Monday of the month and is (usually) held at Mellow Mushroom on Fourth St. The contesting group meets on the fourth Monday of the month and that is also (usually) held at the "Shroom". That leaves the first Monday of the month. Several of us have started (usually) meeting again at Mellow Mushroom on the first Monday allegedly to talk about QRP and maybe build up some interest in QRP projects. The real reason is to have victuals and talk ham radio. All are welcome at any of the Monday night meetings. If we are NOT at Mellow Mushroom then we have moved West on Fourth St. about 1 ½ blocks and we should be at Foothills Brewery. We have done that several times due to bands/parties or other crowded, noisy or just plain aggravating conditions.

Ham Radio License Testing

Amateur radio testing for new applicants as well as upgrades will be given the 2nd Monday of every month, except December, prior to the FARC regular meeting. The time is 6:30 PM and the place is the Red Cross building on Coliseum Drive in Winston-Salem. Pre-registration is required via e-mail, listing the elements you wish to

Forsyth Amateur Radio Club, Inc is a non-profit (IRS 501(c)3) North Carolina corporation for the promotion of Amateur Radio, and for the education and training of hams and the general public primarily in Forsyth County, North Carolina.

FARC was originally incorporated as the Winston-Salem Radio Club on December 31, 1930 and has been in operation ever since. We currently maintain a state-of-the-art ham station in the basement of the Red Cross, 690 Coliseum Dr., Winston-Salem, NC and also maintain two 2-meter repeaters, 146.64 (100 Hz tone) and 145.47 (100 Hz tone).

FARC has a general membership meeting with a program on the 2nd Monday of every month at the Red Cross building, 690 Coliseum Drive in Winston-Salem. The club conducts its main business meeting (sometimes called the Board Meeting) on the 3rd Monday generally at the same location. This is where most of the club's business is conducted and all attending members have a vote. All club members are strongly encouraged to attend the business meeting. For more information about FARC mail us at FARC, Inc., PO Box 11361, Winston-Salem, NC, 27116; call 336-245-5740; or visit out web site at www.w4nc.com . Club email is to info -at w4nc.org .

Officers for 2008/2009 are:

President: Phil Nunn, KD4JZZ

Vice-President: Dan O'Leary, KG4ECI

Secretary: Don Edwards, WS4NC

Treasurer: Henry Heidtmann, W2DZO

Newsletter Editor: Don Edwards, WS4NC

To join our list server send a blank email to w4nc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

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We trade newsletters with other clubs, and many local clubs are on our mailing list. If your club has a newsletter and would like to trade please send us a copy.

take and your phone number. You may pre-register or get additional information via e-mail to info -at- w4nc.org, attention Bob Gates KJ4IC. Replace -at- with the usual symbol.

Here is our exam schedule as it stands now for 2009: September 14, October 12, November 9. None in December. I will publish any other dates/times to you as we schedule them.

All sessions start at 6:30 PM at the Red Cross building in Winston-Salem. Pre-registration is required at info <at> w4nc.org , Att: Bob Gates KJ4IC. This is just before the FARC regular club meeting. All test participants are invited to attend the meeting.

Bob Gates KJ4IC
Session Manager
Forsyth Amateur Radio Club

ARES Reports

By Carl, N4PAA

July 9, 2009 - Forsyth County ARES Net Report

Net Started - 8:30 PM. Net Control - KJ4DLS Eric.
Check ins - 10. Stations were KD4EQY Jason, KJ4IC Bob, KN4BA Terry, NA4P Fred, N4PAA Carl, KC4WSK Van, KC8OEX Terry, KI4NTH Ray (mobile), KF4PLQ Woody and KJ4DLS Eric.
There was no traffic this evening. The net was held on the 146.64 repeater due to problems with the 145.47 repeater.
NA4P Fred announced that the WF4DD net will start at 9 PM or at the conclusion of this net tonight.
Our EC - KJ4DLS Eric held the formal ARES meeting. Current local weather was discussed. Eric plans on covering various nets and associated traffic handling in more detail on upcoming nets.
Formal Session - 13 minutes. Informal Session - 9. Total time - 22 minutes.

July 16, 2009 - Forsyth County ARES Net Report

Net Started - 8:30 PM. Net Control - KC8OEX Terry.
Check ins - 10. Stations were KN4BA Terry, KG4ECI Dan, KE4MOY Mike, KJ4IC Bob, KF4HHG Tim, N4PAA Carl, WA8IHW Jack, KG4FGC Ken, WF4DD WFU Club, and KC8OEX Terry.
There was no traffic this evening.
KG4FGC Ken announced that the WF4DD net will start at 9 PM or at the conclusion of this net tonight.
Our EC - KJ4DLS Eric was not available for the formal meeting this evening. The weather with very localized storms was discussed.
Formal Session - 14 minutes. Informal Session - 9. Total time - 23 minutes.

July 23,, 2009 - Forsyth County ARES Net Report

Net Started - 8:30 PM. Net Control - KJ4DLS Eric.
Check ins - 16. Stations were KE4MOY Mike, KD4EQY Jason, WA8IHW Jack, KJ4IC Bob, KG4JWU Steven, KN4BA Terry, N4PAA Carl, KF4EOD Mike, KG4FGC Ken, WF4DD WFU Club, KC4WSK Van, KC8OEX Terry, KG4ECI Dan, NA4P Fred, KB6MTH Raja, and KJ4DLS Eric.
There was no traffic this evening.
KG4FGC Ken announced that the WF4DD net will start at 9 PM or at the conclusion of

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this net tonight.
Our EC - KJ4DLS Eric briefly discussed local weather and all being quiet on the tropical front. He then started on the first of his series on nets and traffic handling procedures. He covered checking into the various types of nets, what can be expected according to the type of net and what each type of net expects from participants.
Formal Session - 17 minutes. Informal Session - 15. Total time - 32 minutes.

July 30, 2009 - Forsyth County ARES Net Report

Net Started - 8:30 PM. Net Control - KJ4DLS Eric.
Check ins - 11. Stations were KD4EQY Jason, KG4FGC Ken, KF4EOD Mike, KJ4IC Bob, KN4BA Terry, WB9SZL Dale, NA4P Fred, N4PAA Carl, KC8OEX Terry, KC4WSK Van and KJ4DLS Eric..
There was no traffic this evening.
NA4P Fred announced that the WF4DD net will start at 9 PM or at the conclusion of this net tonight.
Our EC - KJ4DLS Eric briefly discussed local weather and that all was still quiet on the tropical front - probably because of the El Nina weather conditions that suppress tropical storm development. Eric then continued his coverage on nets and net procedures. The main topic was passing traffic during formal nets. The old ARRL Radiogram form is slowly being replaced by a new form used for mainly for voice traffic. Form numbers and where to find them were also discussed.
Formal Session - 20 minutes. Informal Session - 11. Total time - 31 minutes.

Aug. 6, 2009 - Forsyth County ARES Net Report

Net Started - 8:30 PM. Net Control - KG4ECI Dan.
Check ins - 11. Stations were WA8IHW Jack, KN4BA Terry, N4PAA Carl, KC8OEX Terry, KJ4DLS Eric, N4IOZ Tom, WB9SZL Dale, NA4P Fred, KE4MOY Mike, KF4EOD Mike and KG4ECI Dan.
There was no traffic this evening.
NA4P Fred announced that the WF4DD net will start at 9 PM or at the conclusion of this net tonight.
In what could be considered an announcement, N4IOZ Tom updated the net on the recent events concerning the Mt. Mitchell repeaters. It was an interesting discussion.
Our EC - KJ4DLS Eric held the ARES meeting with a brief discussion on the lack of tropical activity so far this year and the isolated heavy thunderstorms occurring in this area. He also covered the Tour to Tanglewood coming up on Sept. 26 and 27 and that volunteers are needed both days. Contact Eric on the repeaters or via e-mail at kj4dls@arrl.net to volunteer.
Formal Session - 11 minutes. Informal Session - 22. Total time - 33 minutes.

Aug. 13, 2009 - Forsyth County ARES Net Report

Net Started - 8:30 PM. Net Control - N4PAA Carl.
Check ins - 11. Stations were KJ4ODQ Jason, KG4ECI Dan, KJ4DLS Eric, KF4EOD Mike, KJ4IC Bob, WA4NOT JIM, KN4BA Terry, KC8OEX Terry, KC4WSK Van, NA4P Fred, WF4DD WFU Club, and N4PAA Carl.
There was one message this evening from KJ4DLS to KC8OEX.
NA4P Fred announced that the WF4DD net will start at 9 PM or at the conclusion of this net tonight.
Our EC - KJ4DLS Eric discussed the CERT presentation held at the FARC meeting this past Monday evening. He was interested to see if enough ARES members would be interested to get enough for the CERT training classes. He also covered the coming Tour to Tanglewood event which will be Sept. 26 and 27. If you are interested in CERT training or are volunteering for the Tour to Tanglewood, contact Eric on the repeaters or via e-mail at kj4dls@arrl.net. Remember, you don't need to spent the entire day or both days with the Tour to Tanglewood. Rest stops are part day jobs and you will be useful regardless of the amount of time you can devote to the event.

Formal Session - 23 minutes. Informal Session - 9. Total time - 32 minutes.

Aug. 20, 2009 - Forsyth County ARES Net Report

Net Started - 8:30 PM. Net Control - N4PAA Carl.
Check ins - 11. Stations were WA8IHW Jack, W4EH Bill, KF4EOD Mike, KF4EOD, KE4MOY Mike, KJ4IC Bob, KN4BA Terry, WB9SZL Dale, KE4TES Sparky, KG4FGC Ken, W4KG Steve and N4PAA Carl.
There was no traffic or announcements this evening.
Our EC - KJ4DLS Eric was not available for the ARES meeting. N4PAA covered the recent increase in tropical activity and Hurricane Bob fortunately staying well off shore. He also covered the Tour to Tanglewood event coming up on Sept. 26 and 27. Volunteers are needed for both days and for whatever time you have available if you can't help all day. Many activities like rest stops are site specific and are over in several hours. Contact Eric on the local repeaters or at kj4dls@arrl.net to volunteer. Formal Session - 12 minutes. Informal Session - 8. Total time - 20 minutes.

Aug. 27, 2009 - Forsyth County ARES Net Report

Net Started - 8:30 PM. Net Control - KG4ECI Dan.
Check ins - 11. Stations were KJ4IC Bob, N4IOZ Tom, WA4NOT Jim, KN4BA Terry, NA4P Fred, N4PAA Carl, KE4TES Sparky, KE4MOY Mike, W4KG Steve, KJ4ODQ Jason and KG4ECI Dan.
There was no traffic this evening.
NA4P Fred announced that the WF4DD net will convene this evening at 9 PM or after this net is over.
Our EC - KJ4DLS Eric was not available for the ARES meeting. KG4ECI Dan substituted for Eric and mentioned that Eric wants to know if members are interested in signing up for CERT training this coming winter. He also covered the Tour to Tanglewood event coming up on Sept. 26 and 27. Volunteers are needed for both days and for whatever time you have available if you can't help all day. Contact Eric on the local repeaters or at kj4dls@arrl.net to volunteer for the Tour or to sign up as interested in CERT training.
Formal Session - 12 minutes. Informal Session - 7. Total time - 19 minutes.

ARES Announcements

Eric KJ4DLS

At our last club meeting, Darrell Jeter from the Forsyth County Office of Emergency Management gave a very informative presentation on CERT, which is the acronym for the Community Emergency Response Team. CERT was formed in 2003 under the US Department of Homeland Security's Citizen Corps program, with it's target audiences being private citizens, businesses and schools that want the skills and the knowledge required to prepare for and respond to disasters. The program covers basic skills that are important to know in a disaster when emergency services are not available. CERT is a 21 hour course taught by local emergency responders including law enforcement, fire and EMS personnel. The course includes eight units covering everything from fire safety and EMS operations to light search and rescue and disaster psychology. The courses can beheld on Saturday to accommodate working peoples schedules.

There are requirements to enter the program, with the main one being a committed group of 15-25 people, that are willing to put in the time for the training. For example, if the course was held on Saturdays, with training for three hours every weekend, the course would be completed in seven weeks. That group would then have the knowhow to sustain themselves and their community for the first 72 hours of a disaster in case emergency workers are overwhelmed or unable to access the affected area.

CERT and how it applies to Amateur Radio (ARES)-As Hams, we often provide communication when it is needed most- during disasters. We also help out during non-emergency events such as walk-a-thons, bike races and so forth. The skills that can be learned in CERT can be applied to both. For example, sometimes the disaster comes to us. It may be our own neighborhoods that are flooded or ravaged by strong winds from severe storms or land-falling hurricanes. In that case, we just wouldn't be communicators trying to relay messages but also helping out our neighbors and fellow citizens with any help they may need as well, aside from communications. During bike races and walk-a-thons, we have been fortunate recently but there is always the chance someone may get injured during these events and especially since they are usually held during warmer months, there is the chance of heat related sickness.

We are not in emergency communications to take the place of first responders. But wouldn't we be more helpful to ourselves, our group and our community to acquire basic knowledge that one day could help save someone's life when first responders may not be immediately available. And as a group, that's how we can apply CERT to Amateur Radio.

If anyone has any questions you can reach me via e-mail at kj4dls <at> arrl.net or landline at 336-231-4182. Thanks everyone for your participation in our ARES group.

Ham Calendar

Some dates are courtesy of the South East Repeater Journal.

September
7 QRP meeting at Mellow Mushroom
14 FARC Club Meeting at Red Cross
19 20 Blue Ridge Bonanza
19 Dallas, GA Hamfest
21 FARC Board Meeting at Mellow Mushroom
26 27 Tour-to-Tanglewood
28 Contestors Meeting at Mellow Mushroom

October
5 QRP meeting at Mellow Mushroom
10 Pfafftown Hamfest
12 FARC Club Meeting at Red Cross
19 FARC Board Meeting at Mellow Mushroom
26 Contestors Meeting at Mellow Mushroom

November
2 QRP meeting at Mellow Mushroom
9 FARC Club Meeting at Red Cross
16 FARC Board Meeting at Mellow Mushroom
23 Contestors Meeting at Mellow Mushroom
30 Fifth Monday!

December
7 QRP meeting at Mellow Mushroom
14 FARC Club Dinner Meeting TBD
21 FARC Board Meeting at Mellow Mushroom
28 Contestors Meeting at Mellow Mushroom

Stalking the Wild Ham in its Native Habitat

Don WS4NC

Years ago I would go every year to the "rookery" on Labor Day in Shelby where wild hams would gather and I would enjoy watching the flocks. A group of us would set up our blind (a 30 X 20 foot tarp) and surround it with goodies known to attract the more tame hams. Having gotten old and tired and many years having little help erecting and on at least one occasion no help taking down the "blind" I stopped doing that. But I missed it. This year, just as Marlin Perkins had Jim in the later years of "The Wild Kingdom" (here we watch Jim wrestle the alligator, here we watch Jim lasso the hippopotamus, here we watch Jim run in front of the stampeding horde of wildebeests, etc) I had a helper. Young master Eric KJ4DLS had never experienced the thrill of observing the wild ham up close, although he had been to one Shelby Hamfest.

We spent a week getting ready our bait. I have three giant storage areas that are more like three giant horizontal trash compactors. We took two full truckloads to the dump, the bait having spoiled from long storage. In the end we have two big truckloads of bait, also known as crap, that while it too good to take to the dump, it was just ripe enough to attract hams.

Our "blind" for observing the more tame hams.

We signed on Scott WB4YZA, who had met us years before at the Shelby feeding grounds. And we were joined by longtime ham-hunter John Kippe N0KTY. So our expedition was fully staffed. I drove down on the Sunday previous to claim our space at the Great Land Rush (GLR). The GLR was scheduled for 2PM Sunday October 30 and I naively arrived at about 2:05 PM. I was last in line. The organizers assigned numbers to each ham as they arrived and, regardless of when they arrived, like say 6 AM (not kidding!), only released about 10 at one time, in order, to allow them to stampede toward their desired roosting grounds.

A number of people came out just to watch. I was told it was hilarious to see a 52-point ham (hams are rated by waist sizes) racing as fast as his short and chubby little legs could carry him to his highly desired roosting location. When the next to the last group was released, there was only one ticket holder in the last group, me. Feeling sorry for such a clueless latecomer the Shelby Staffer in charge of the cage (I'm not kidding) told me to go ahead rather the waiting the prescribed time. Most of the better spaces were taken but I found something very acceptable and near the center where many wild hams would stroll by.

We left Friday to set up our blind and get prepared for the arrival of the giant flock on Saturday. It was difficult to keep the early arrivals from scrounging through the bait on Friday. The bolder ones would march right into our blind and dig through the boxes without a word.

A gorgeous Saturday dawned and hundreds of hams flocked to our blind. Many just looked but frequently one of the tamer hams would hold up a prize piece of bait, like say a 50-year old HP cabinet or an old chassis with one sad disconnected tube socket remaining, and he would then squawk "How much yer want for this?". My reply was always the same, "What'll you give me?" Regardless of the amount offered I accepted. Kippe chastised me for not waiting longer before I accepted, as it allowed the tame ham to think that he at least bargained for the choice morsel. Only in one shameless case did the ham offer less than one dollar. In a few cases I forced the ham just to take what he had picked up, many did. By Saturday night the crap pile, I mean, the bait pile was significantly reduced.

Sunday morning was another great day and it passed much as the previous Saturday, though there were far fewer hams left in the roosting grounds. As I surveyed the rather large (but much smaller than Saturday's) pile of remaining cr . . . er, bait, I realized that soon I would have the job of packing all this up. In previous years I had occasionally used the tactic of reverse stealing, that is, walking around to another ham's blind with a large, but essentially useless item in my hands. I would sit that item down in an inconspicuous spot while I picked up some trinket or other to admire, like I was interested in it, then I would replace the trinket and walk away. Later the unsuspecting ham would find an unlabeled military transformer or similar item and wonder where the hell that came from. The older and brighter hams were often too smart for this trick and would make me take my stuff away.

The first bait trap. Notice the two drills in the circle at the lower right.

Soon the idea dawned that many hams were too shy to actually approach the blind and make an offer, but they just couldn't resist a choice piece of bait left out for the trash collector (actually where much of my bait stash had come from originally). I took a rather large, heavy, sharp fan blade that looked like it had been made in a torture chamber along with same aluminum panels removed from WWII B-17 tuning units and set them next to the bait trap, AKA the trash can. I couldn't get back to my camera fast enough before wild hams had swooped in and taken the bait. After a few minutes I freshened the bait with an old box of wire (always a tasty ham item). It too was taken before I could get back to the camera. I realized I had found the right system. I put two nice, but old, battery-powered drills out. They had bad batteries (duh!) which cost more to replace than a new drill. One was placed in a Naugahyde® tool belt (it was as cheap as it sounds) but it made a beautiful presentation. Again the bait was quickly retrieved.

In order to be less conspicuous I chose another bait location and put out some old paging terminals, the kind used for signaling pagers with no audio. When is the last time you saw someone with a pager? This time the bait sat there for quite some time. A few hams walked by and looked but apparently weren't that hungry. I decided that I needed fresher bait. Ahhhhh! A box of tools. Few hams can resist tools. There was an old rusted ¼-20 tap with the handle, some really nice big tool handles and calibrated doo-hickies that went to only Gawd-knows-what. They had been very often handled by the tame hams but no one had a clue as to what they were for. There was a 1-inch micrometer that was rusted. I

took the tools and set them next to the other bait, but I left Kippe with the camera in case a ham came by before I could get back. Sadly I had to take the camera away from Kippe; he missed the best fleshy butt shot of at least a 60-point ham filling his pockets (again hams are rated by waist size).

Some of the activity around the bait traps.

At one point a ham came by, picked out many of the tools, but after a while recovered his dignity and dropped them in disgust. A rare sighting, a juvenile ham, perhaps 13, drove up on a golf cart and spent considerable time picking out goodies. One was nice desk mic from an old commercial paging terminal, good taste. Eventually he drove away and later brought his dad back to look at the goodies. Dad picked out an item or two. On one occasional an older ham came by with his mate and admired the goodies. But his mate started yelling and flinging her arms wildly about and the ham went sadly on his way without picking up any of the choice items. He maintained a dignified gait, as though he didn't care, but we could tell it hurt him.

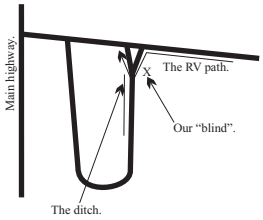
Amazingly ***all*** the bait, even most of the empty boxes, disappeared from the bait sites. I started to go leave an old piece of test equipment but Scott convinced me that I would get attacked before I could even get to the bait area. So it was getting late and we decided to strike the blind, but the best part was yet to come. After we had pulled the tarp, but before the poles were taken down one ham in a Texas-sized RV, pulling a trailer carrying a golf cart decided that rather than drive out the direct way, he would drive backwards through the Y-intersection in front of us. Then he would turn and go the wrong way again through the Y-intersection to get back to the road he was on before he started this wild maneuver. Obviously the RV alone couldn't make the turn much less with the trailer attached. I said aloud that I should go get my camera. Anyway the RV driver decides that instead of making a 345-degree turn in 20 feet, he will just drive across the five-foot deep and ten-foot wide ditch in front of him. With much scraping noise and to my great amusement he succeeded in getting his wheels completely off the ground in the middle of the ditch.

Old paging terminals.

Mysterious "tools".

A wild ham with his mate stops to admire the bait.

She shoos him away.



The RV path, not to scale.

RV #1.

Kip to the rescue!

Mr. Omaha.

This attracts another species of ham - the helper ham, one of which was Kip N0KTY. He was so anxious to help that he started to drive over without even putting the hood down on his "duelie". But before he could assist another helper-ham in a truck with muddy tires the size of Omaha drove right up in front of Kip and blocked his progress. A most earnest discussion ensued with cries of "I'm going to pull him out!" and "That's what I'm going to do!" repeated about ten times by both helper hams. Sadly Kip was outclassed by the Omaha tires and had to settle for helping removing the golf cart and disconnecting the trailer. Mr Omaha attaches a very heavy nylon strap to the trailer hitch and pulls Mr. Texas RV out. After all this they re-attached the trailer and Mr. RV continues (!?) to try make the turn. He could simply drive out the large loop, but no, he still has to do this the hard way. There are many cries of "You're going to jack-knife!" which he nearly does several times - but to my and probably everyone's amazement he makes the turn.

It has not been 3 minutes after Mr. RV has cleared the area then another Texas-sized RV pulling a dangerously overloaded trailer nearly down on its shocks does the exact same thing! The second RV was much more fun. In addition to getting more elevation on his wheels his XYL jumps out and begins offering some sound, and by sound, I mean *loud*, advice such as "Why did you do that?" and "Are you a complete idiot?!"

Again another earnest discussion between the two helper hams, Mr. Omaha and Kip, with Kippy losing (again). This time it looks like Mr. Omaha is going to attach the strap to the axle of the trailer. This, I think is going to be very good, since the axle will obviously be yanked out from under the trailer just like the police car in *American Graffiti*. I ready the motor drive on my camera. Sadly he rethought the process and wisely moved the strap up to the trailer hitch on the RV. This time much more effort and wailing of tires were required to rescue the RV. Afterward the trailer was sticking dangerously up in the air.

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Stalking the Wild Ham, continued from page 5

Enter stage right, another species of wild ham - the supervisor ham. Oblivious to the danger of pulling behind an overloaded trailer that is audibly moaning and groaning and at any moment could pop off the trailer hitch, he slowly winds his way up to where he can offer advice. There are always two issues with supervisor hams - like a blister they don't show up until the work is done and they can't be bothered to even get out of their golf cart. But their calls are usually loud and compelling and we were not disappointed. Again Mr. RV2 insists on driving out the hard way rather than following the circle.

I highly recommend the Shelby Hamfest. In some ways I miss the original Cedar Park location and its most excellent food, and even the dusty Shelby Fairgrounds. The Hamfest is now in Dallas, NC. But for sheer fun this beats even going to the boat launch on a holiday weekend and watching various novice boaters try to back their boats, launch their boats while on still on the trailer or, even better, put the boat in the water while leaving the plug out.

This has been the most fun I have had at a hamfest in years. I laughed, I cried, I nearly wet myself. Plus I have lightened my storage of two trucks loads of cra, . . er, bait and nearly paid for the trip, including the space, gas, meals, tickets and even beer. Over $400.

In the interest of full disclosure even I succumbed to the allure of the bait and picked up one small item. Plus Gene WB4MSG and Tim AG4RZ lightened their truck as they left on Saturday by unloading some good stuff into my truck. Gene's XYL Kathy KB4TKO even got on the phone and begged me to take it. It will make more good bait.