

# Ham Chatter



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April 2007

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## Meet the Member, John Prokop, N8MPX



### John Prokop, N8MPX

John Prokop, N8MPX, was fixing radios before he had his Amateur Radio license.

He got interested the hobby through some guys he worked with. He helped fix their ham equipment and got to talk on their radios at the same time.

In 1990 he tested for and received his Amateur Radio license. He currently holds an Advanced class license.

John grew up outside of Pittsburg in Ohio. He attended Kent State University where he got an associates degree in electrical engineering and later got into the telephone business. For the past 15 years he has been an engineer with U.S. Cellular. It's that job that brought him to Pitt County 14 years ago.

Unfortunately, the company car he drives for work isn't equipped for Amateur Radio use, he notes. At home, he has a Kenwood 850 and a Kenwood 790. He also has four or five different

Motorola mobiles.

John has a particular interest in satellite communication. He's looking forward to the launch of the latest Amateur Radio satellite. In the past he's done some packet work as well as sideband voice on AO-52. He has also talked to the space station Mir. Although his equipment isn't up currently, among his tools is satellite tracking software on his computer that keeps his antenna following the path of the satellite.

He says he also enjoys working HF, but currently doesn't have antennas up for it.

John also enjoys building much of his own equipment.

"I probably build more than I talk," he joked.

John and his wife Sue and have four kids aged 27 to 17- Matt, Amanda, Allison and Joey. - *Amanda Karr, KI4IWS*

## MS Walk - SAT 04/14

The Greenville MS Walk will be held on Saturday, April 14, 2007. The event will start in the parking lot on the north side of Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium. The five mile route runs a loop through campus and back to the stadium.

A total of 6 operators will be needed for this event. Operators will be needed from 9 am until noon. The event actually starts at 10 am. Doughnuts and coffee will be available before the event and lunch will be served after the event.

Anyone who is interested in participating in this event can contact me at 353-7161 or [kg4czv@earthlink.net](mailto:kg4czv@earthlink.net). - *Dave, KG4CZV*

## Next Meeting April 10

*The Brightleaf Amateur Radio Club will have its next meeting on Tuesday, April 10 at 7:30 PM at VFW Post Home 7032 on 1108 Mumford Road in Greenville. The program will feature Pitt County Sheriff detectives doing a program about Gangs in Pitt County. Sheriff Mac Manning, KD4AFL, is an active member of BARC. All members, families and guests are invited to attend.*

*The next board meeting will be April 24 at 7:30 PM at 3219 Landmark St., Suite 8B. All members invited.*

## Trailer clean up day

BARC will be participating in the Farmville Dogwood Festival on April 28 and 29, and possible the international festival on April 14. In preparation for these events, there will be a trailer clean up day at 12:30 pm on **Saturday, April 7, 2007** at Mark's Marine. For those of you who have not been to Mark's Marine before, it is located between Greenville and Grimesland at the intersection of NC-33 and Avon Road.

We encourage everyone to come out and enjoy the company as we make sure that all the equipment necessary for these upcoming events is accounted for. It is also a good learning opportunity for those who have not handled the club equipment before.

We look forward to seeing you there.

## Know your privileges! Misconceptions abound regarding Tech HF privileges

Some Technician licensees who gained new privileges February 23 remain unaware or uninformed as to what they may and may not do on the HF bands, says ARRL Regulatory Information Specialist Dan Henderson, N1ND. In addition to all Amateur Radio operating privileges above 50 MHz, Technicians who never passed a Morse code test now have CW privileges on certain segments of 80, 40 and 15 meters plus CW, RTTY, data and SSB privileges on certain segments of 10 meters. And that's it. "Know your privileges <<http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/bands.html>>," Henderson advises all Amateur Radio licensees. He says some Technicians apparently believe their new HF phone privileges go far beyond what they really have.

"Technicians have no phone privileges on any HF band other than 10 meters, period!" Henderson emphasizes. "That's the bottom line. If you want to operate phone on the other HF bands, you'll have to upgrade to General or Amateur Extra class."

A lot of Technician licensees appear to have done just that, according to statistics compiled by Joe Speroni, AH0A <<http://ah0a.org/FCC/Licenses.html>>. So

far in March, the number of General class licensees is up by more than 2700 over the February figure to 134,173, after hitting a 5-year low of just under 131,000 in January. The number of Technicians dropped by 4655 in the same period to 318,838. Speroni notes, however, that his mid-month figures tend to underestimate actual totals.

Most Technician license holders face a learning curve to take advantage of their new CW privileges on HF, but they no longer have to pass a Morse code examination. Technicians also may use their new HF privileges without having to apply for them first. No other license class automatically acquired additional privileges February 23. The "omnibus" rule changes effective last December 15 did not give Technician licensees without Morse code credit any additional privileges either.

Henderson further warns new Techs not to extrapolate additional phone privileges by misconstruing the FCC Part 97 rules to mean something they don't.

"And we all know the devil's in the details," Henderson says. "Remember, the FCC requires you to know where you may and may not operate and with what modes. Stick to the privileges your license allows or risk hearing from the FCC."

More information at <http://www.arrl.org/arrlletter/07/0323/> - Via ARRL Letter Online

## Next VE Session

The next Brightleaf Amateur Radio Club VE session will be held on **April 13**. Exams will be held at St. Peter's School on 5th Street and will start promptly at 6:30 PM. Tom Parsons, **W4TEP**, 355-2815. [w4tep@arrl.net](mailto:w4tep@arrl.net). Please bring the following:

- ◆ Photo ID (drivers license)
- ◆ Original Amateur Radio License
- ◆ Copy of Amateur Radio License
- ◆ Original CSCE's
- ◆ Copy of CSCE
- ◆ Test fee is \$14.00
- ◆ Proof of Tech Plus if before 3/21/87 and doing paper upgrade to General.

Be sure to bring **copies** of your Amateur Radio license and / or CSCE if upgrading.

## NC ARES Internet

<http://www.ncarrl.org/ares/>



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# Happy Birthday

Brightleaf Amateur Radio Club members birthdays in **April**.

- |    |        |            |
|----|--------|------------|
| 3  | K4KBB  | John McCoy |
| 7  | WB4FRB | Ray Black  |
| 12 | W4HM   | Walt Honea |
| 18 | WB4PMQ | Macon Dail |

Please let me know of any additions or corrections. - **W4YDY**

## Well Wishes

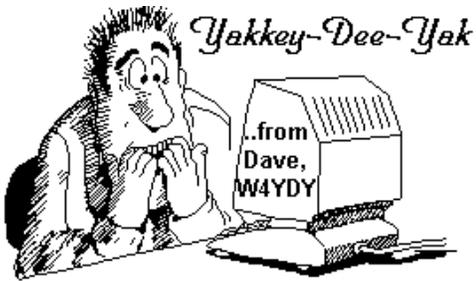
Thoughts and Prayers go out to the following:

- Gail**, wife of Mac Manning, KD4AFL
- Charlie Wells**, K4SKI



Please inform Dan Drake, **W4ISO**, [w4iso@arrl.net](mailto:w4iso@arrl.net) of any changes.

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Went to the RARSfest on April First and saw a lot of the BARC members having a good time and many other friends that I have made over the years via Amateur Radio. I attend hamfests for the fellowship and have a lot of fun meeting those that I have talked to over the years.

Hope I don't leave anyone out but remember seeing BARC members

KD4MTT, KF4UQB, WB4FRB, WA4SLC, KS4YF, W4ISO, AF4QY, K4BMH, W4ZRA, K4MHM, WA4MOK, N8MPX and KG4WEZ. There may have been others but I was told that the mind is the second thing to go and I can't remember what they said what was the first!!!

Changing subjects, there a web site that might be interesting to some political types and Amateur Radio operators. Governor Mitt Romney dismissed the role of Amateur Radio operators in emergency communications during a televised "town meeting" program in November 2005. The story is at <http://ema.arrl.org/article.php?sid=802> with a link near the bottom of them page to the video showing him making the statement about 10 minutes into the televised show.

On another subject, there is an article in this month's CQ Magazine on page 32 that really sparked my interest in a new phase of Amateur Radio. It's titled "Communications in the Infrared Band Using a Digital Music Playback Device, a Griffin Sound-to-IR Converter and Today's Top Ham Radio Songs". It's a newly declassified program that has messages stored in digital songs. You could send messages over the airwaves digitally and to me it looks like you could see the messages on a screen and also hear a song as I understand it. Haven't studied it much yet but plan to in the future. If anyone wants to join in on the project to clear up the kinks, please let me know. The top 40 songs are listed in the CQ article. I could be missing something but will try to clear it up. - *Yakkey-Dee-Yak*

## The Pitt County Repeater Association needs help

The Pitt County Repeater Association maintains three local repeaters and is always in search of support from local Amateur Radio operators.

The association was formed in 2003 after the death of Wayne Ross, WD4JPQ, whose call recently became the association's call.

The local repeaters have a history that stretches back to the 1970s.

The 147.09 repeater came on the air in 1974 using a Phelps-Dodge Superstationmaster antenna at 750 feet on the Channel 9 tower near Greenville Boulevard and Evans Street. Soon after that a Hustler G-6 antenna was installed at 650 feet for transmit. The repeater equipment was a GE Master Pro. Four-bay dipole arrays were added in 1982 and 1983.

In 1985, the 145.35 repeater came online. It used the old antennas that the 147.09 repeater had abandoned on the tower. The G-6 antenna was changed to a G-7.

In August 1986, the tower was reduced in height from 800 feet to 360 feet. The two repeaters split the use of three, four-bay dipole arrays. Each four-bay antenna is fed with 3 1/8 inch rigid transmission line that used to feed the old Channel 9 batwing antenna and the 107.7 FM antenna. Those had been abandoned when the TV and FM stations moved their transmitters to the 2000-foot Grifton tower.

The original 444.800 mHz repeater was built by Macon Dail, WB4PMQ and Gary Ambert, AI4J in 1983. It first resided at the top of Tyler Dorm at East Carolina University and later was moved to the WNCT-TV tower in 1994. The antenna, a commercial fiber glass, eventually failed due to water migration into the antenna. In order to improve coverage and antenna reliability, a new 8 bay DB products dipole array was purchased and installed in 1999. The repeater was scratch built from Hamtronics RF modules. The power amplifier and duplexer were manufactured by Motorola. The power output of the repeater is approximately 60 watts which includes duplexer and circulator losses.

Currently the main receiving antenna has a high SWR that needs to be fixed. The problem was discovered about a year ago and the association is hoping to raise enough money to fix it as well as replace the 35 repeater, which is currently being borrowed from the Columbia Repeater Association.

Estimates are for the total cost to amount to about \$2,500, said John Johnson, KE4TZN. It is currently unknown if it is the antenna or the feed line that is broken.

In addition to periodic repair costs, the repeater association also must pay \$200 a year to maintain liability insurance on the tower site.

"The big cost is insurance and maintenance. It's not cheap to fix something on a tower because we have to pay a professional to climb the tower and fix it," John said.

To help defray the costs, the association asks local hams donate \$20 a year.

By supporting the repeaters, hams get the codes to bring up the links, use the voicemail and EchoLink, along with any future features that the system may offer.

The 145.35 repeater has linking into Columbia, EchoLink and the Carolina 440 linking system which covers from the capital to the coast. The 147.09 repeater can also be linked to 145.35 and to Columbia if 145.35 is down.

The association also has plans for the future, including connecting all three repeaters together during less active times.

The board of Trustees of the repeater association are John Johnson KE4TZN; Macon Dail, WB4PMQ; Bernie Nobles WA4MOK, Mike Langley, KD4MTT and Bill Dawson WA4SLC.

To donate to the association, send donations to PCRA 1401 E Wright Rd Greenville NC 27858.

More information on the repeater association is available at [www.pcr.us](http://www.pcr.us). - *Amanda Karr, KI4IWS*

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### 2007 BARC Raffle Tickets Available

The drawing for the 2007 BARC Raffle will be held on Sunday, April 29, 2007 at the Farmville Dogwood Festival.

This year's grand prize will be a full size BBQ Pro Stainless Steel Grill, Model BQ4023. As an added bonus, there will be a special surprise prize for the person who sold winning ticket. Thanks to Mike, KD4MTT, for that prize.



If you haven't picked up your tickets from me yet, you can either get them from me at the next club meeting, or contact me by e-mail (kg4czv @ earthlink.net) or phone (353-7161). - Dave, KG4CZV

### Oakwood School Family Science Night

Recently, it was Family Science Night at Oakwood School and many demonstration booths were set up. Murray, K4MHM, Nick, N2FWL, and Peter, KG4WEZ, set up and ran an Amateur Radio demonstration booth for the kids and parents to see. The team demonstrated CW using straight keys and paddles. The kids loved the MFJ code reader as it was near the paddles and they could see if they sent code correctly. It became a game for them with instant gratification. They also enjoyed the Winlink system that Nick was showing explaining that this was the Internet before there was an Internet!

Murray showed not only the CW but also the HF SSB connections that interested the kids and the parents alike. APRS was also demonstrated using a GPS connected to a handtalkie and an OpenTracker. They could find the unit with the Internet web site [www.findu.com](http://www.findu.com) and seeing the maps.

The Oakwood Amateur Radio Society (OARS) was introduced to the families as a good activity to join. OARS is open to all families even if they do not go to Oakwood. A good time was had by all and hopefully a great impression was left with the kids. *Picture on page 7.* - KG4WEZ

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# BARC Meeting Minutes - March 2007

**Brightleaf Amateur Radio Club  
Membership Meeting  
VFW Hall, March 13, 2007  
Minutes**

President Dave Pulver, KG4CZV, called the meeting to order at 1930 hours.

Members and guests introduced themselves. There were 24 in attendance and are listed in the roll book. Dave welcomed all in attendance

**Minutes:** The minutes of the BARC membership meeting on February 13, 2007 were accepted as published in the March 2007 Ham Chatter.

**Secretary's Report:** No report.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Richard Cox, K4CRD, was absent so Dave Pulver made the report. Further information is available to members upon request..

**Health and Welfare:** Dan Drake, W4ISO, had no report, but did encourage members to let him know if anyone is ill.

**Ham Chatter:** Editor Dave Langley, W4YDY, announced that the new roster of dues paying members will be in the April Ham Chatter. He needs more members to do a "Meet the Member" column on. He has put videos of past Field Days on the web site.

**Publicity:** Pat Williams, KG4NSC, had no report.

**Volunteer Examiners:** Dave, W4YDY, noted that there will be a special VE session this Friday, 3/16, at St Peter's School at 6:30. The April one will continue to be as planned on April 20.

**Equipment:** Mike Langley, WD4MTT, announced that there will be a trailer workday on April 7 at 12:00 at Mark's Marine. The need for a hinged tower base plate was brought up and Mike will look into it.

**State ARES:** Doug Ferris, K4ROK, reminded members of the Amateur Radio State Emergency Service meeting in Raleigh starting at 10:00 on March 31 at the Administrative Building in Raleigh.

**Pitt County ARES:** Doug Ferris requested that ARES/RACES registration forms be updated as needed. Doug is pursuing RACES certification. This will allow for reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses, insurance, more money for

equipment and FEMA courses. Nick Conigliaro, N2FWL, is working on the Win Link set up. Nick also needs some help getting his tower down on Saturday – call Doug for directions.

Dave LeMoine, KV4CN, reported on the NC QSO Party. We operated from VOA Site C. There were 243 QSOs and a total of 29,696 points - more contacts, but less multipliers than last year. The log has been submitted for scoring. He thanked those who helped.

**Old Business:** Dave, KG4CZV, announced that raffle tickets are still available and members can turn in the money and ticket stubs – put you name on the stubs. Mike Langley brought in the grill: 4 burners, side burner, slide drip tray, thermometer, tank goes underneath. Due to its size, we will not be selling tickets at Down East or Raleigh Hamfests.

**Announcements:  
Events:**

MS walk is April 14 – this will be considered an ARES function since it is a mobilization. A least 6 operators are needed – call Dave Pulver. Event will start at Dowdy - Ficklen Stadium at 9:00 (coffee and doughnuts served); walk will start at 10:00 and end around 11:30 (lunch served).

International Festival is also April 14. It is in conjunction with ECU Centennial. There was no interest expressed in having an AR station there.

Dogwood Festival is April 28 and 29. Cost is \$50.00. Size of space is 10' by 10' and location may be in grassy central area. These conditions are not conducive to a Special Event station.

Murray Merner, K4MHM, reminded members that Field Day is June 23 and 24. We need as many BARC members participating as possible.

The Down East Hamfest will be March 25.

The Raleigh Hamfest is on April 1. Mike Langley has reserved a table.

Mike Langley announced the availability of Aqua Boxes that keep the enclosed water good for 5 years. He is ordering a number of cases - a pack of 3 is \$2.00 - contact him if you would like some.

Bill Dawson, KD4SLC, announced that Merlin Woolard, K4DIB, died a few weeks ago and his equipment is being sold. Contact Bill for the list of equipment and contact information

Bill also mentioned that the Williamston Swap Meet will be May 19 behind Bojangles. There are radio door prizes.

Peter Van Houten, KG4WEZ, spoke about the Family Science Night Out open to all at Oakwood School. He thanked Nick Conigliaro, N2FWL, and Murray Merner, K4MHM, for their help.

**New Business:**

Murray Merner brought up the need to financially support ARRL's effort to protect the bands for Amateur Radio and to help with the lawsuit against the FCC regarding BPL. Peter Van Houten, KG4WEZ, made the motion to discuss the issue. It was decided that the band protection should come under ARRL dues, but that contributing money to the lawsuit be considered. Doug Ferris, K4ROK, made the motion that \$200 be contributed to ARRL PBL law suit effort. The motion was seconded and passed with no dissenting votes.

**Program:**

Vern Wenger of Batteries Plus gave an informative presentation on batteries. Batteries Plus can give you advice on batteries and has products for all battery needs. He has some great deals too. Batteries Plus is a Ham Chatter sponsor.

**Drawing**

No 50/50 since Richard wasn't present.

Joel, Muhaluk, KI4LMY, won a prize as a raffle ticket seller. Since Joel was not present and it was not clear whether the person had to be present, a second drawing was held and John Prokop, N8MPX, won that one.

Dave, KG4CZV, adjourned the meeting at 2100 hours.

Respectfully submitted

*Murray Merner, K4MHM*

## Help requested

BARC members:

As you may be aware, a group of 21 amateurs are transmitting between 505 and 510 kHz under experimental license WD2XSH. More information on our experiment can be found at [www.500kc.com](http://www.500kc.com).

From time to time since September, we have heard a station on 505 kHz. It has the characteristics of a nondirectional beacon (MCW signal) and identifies itself as NEED. It is not on the air continuously, but it has been heard all over the eastern half of the USA. This may be a military beacon used occasionally for testing or training.

We think this station may be located near you. We wonder if any members of BARC know anything about this station, have heard it, or would be interested in listening for it the next time it is on the air. I would appreciate your announcing this.

Thanks much. 73, Fritz, W1FR

Frederick H. (Fritz) Raab, Ph.D.  
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Murray Merner, K4MHM, and Nick Conigliaro, N2FWL, demonstrate Amateur Radio at Oakwood School Family Science Fair. Story on page 5 - Photo by KG4WEZ

## FCC fines shop for selling non-certified CBs as ham gear

In a Forfeiture Order <[http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DA-07-881A1.pdf](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-07-881A1.pdf)> released March 2, the FCC has affirmed a \$7000 fine it levied on Ben Metzger of Titusville, Florida, doing business as 1 Stop Communications / 1 Stop CB Shop, for marketing non-certified Citizens Band transceivers. The FCC's Tampa Office issued Metzger a Citation in March 2006 for marketing certain Galaxy and Connex transceivers. Metzger has asserted that the units are Amateur Radio transceivers, which do not require FCC certification, not CB transceivers, which do. The FCC says the units are intended for use on CB as well as on amateur frequencies through a simple modification, and it has determined that such dual-use transceivers are CB transceivers under its rules.

Metzger told the Commission last May that he'd removed the radios mentioned in the Citation from his store. In June 2006, the FCC declined to withdraw the citation on the basis that the transceivers were marketed as ham gear.

Agents from the Tampa FCC office later revisited the shop and were able to buy a Connex CX 3300HP, which they say Metzger modified to operate on part of 10 meters as well as on CB and other frequencies (25.615 to 28.305 MHz). Metzger still maintains that the Connex CX 3300HP is a ham transceiver and that he did not violate any FCC rules, the FCC said. - *Via ARRL Letter Online 3/23/07*

# Ham Ads

*Ham Ads* will be run, free of charge in Ham Chatter for three months for each renewal. Ads must be received by the last week of the month to be included in the following issue. Send ads to: **Ham Chatter, PO Box 8387, Greenville, NC 27835, ATTN: Dave Langley** or email to: [barc@w4amc.com](mailto:barc@w4amc.com) (no spaces)

**No ads this month**

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## NETS

### VHF

- ◆ BARC Net, Mondays, 2000 on 147.09 MHz, W4GDF Repeater.
- ◆ Pitt County Emergency Communications Net, Mondays, 2100 on 147.09 MHz. (131.8 Hz Tone)
- ◆ Kinston Amateur Radio Society Net, 1,3,4 Tuesdays, 2000 hrs. on 145.47 MHz., W4OIX repeater in Kinston.
- ◆ Eastern North Carolina Traffic Net, Every night, 2030 on 146.685 MHz.
- ◆ Wilson Amateur Radio Club Net, Monday 2030 on 146.76 MHz.
- ◆ Piedmont Coastal Traffic Net, Nightly 2030 on 146.88 MHz.
- ◆ Newport WFO SKYWARN Net, Tuesday, 2100 on 145.21 MHz
- ◆ Carteret County ARS (CCARS) Emergency Net, Tuesdays, 1930 on the Newport 145.45 (-) MHz.
- ◆ Coastal Emergency Linking Net, Wednesday, 2100 ET on Ahoskie 145.13, Buxton 145.15, Columbia 146.835 & 443.30, Elizabeth City 146.655, Greenville, 145.35, Hertford 147.33, Williamston 145.41 & 444.25
- ◆ Beaufort County Emergency Communications Net, Thursday 2000 on 147.345 MHz. Preceded by Newsmen at 1930.

### HF

- ◆ Tar Heel Emergency Communications Net on 3923 kHz Nightly 1930.

### NTS CW Nets

- ◆ 3.571 2000 hours, slow speed (5-8 wpm) Carolinas Slow Net
- ◆ 3.573 1900 hours, high speed (20 wpm)
- ◆ 3.573 2200 hours, slow speed (12-14 wpm), South Carolina/North Carolina

## Pitt County Repeater Association

<http://www.pcra.us/>

# BARC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Apr 7 . . . . .	Trailer clean up day - See page 7	Jun 23/24. . . . .	<b>ARRL FIELD DAY</b>
Apr 10 . . . . .	<b>Regular Meeting</b>	Jun 26 . . . . .	<b>Board Meeting</b>
Apr 13 . . . . .	BARC VE Session	<b>Jun 28</b> . . . . .	<b>Ham Chatter Deadline</b>
Apr 14 . . . . .	MS Walk	July 10 . . . . .	<b>Regular Meeting</b>
Apr 14 . . . . .	ECU/International Festival	July 14/15. . . . .	IARU HF World Championship
Apr 24 . . . . .	<b>Board Meeting</b>	July 21 . . . . .	CQ WW VHF Contest
<b>Apr 26</b> . . . . .	<b>Ham Chatter Deadline</b>	July 31 . . . . .	<b>Board Meeting</b>
Apr 28/29. . . . .	Dogwood Festival, Farmville	<b>Aug 2</b> . . . . .	<b>Ham Chatter Deadline</b>
May 8. . . . .	<b>Regular Meeting</b>	Aug 14 . . . . .	<b>Regular Meeting</b>
May 26. . . . .	CQ WW CW WPX Contest	Aug 17 . . . . .	BARC VE Session
May 29. . . . .	<b>Board Meeting</b>	Aug 28 . . . . .	Board Meeting
<b>May 31</b> . . . . .	<b>Ham Chatter Deadline</b>	<b>Aug 30</b> . . . . .	<b>Ham Chatter Deadline</b>
Jun 12 . . . . .	<b>Regular Meeting</b>		
Jun 15 . . . . .	BARC VE Session		

**Regular Meeting** - 2nd Tuesday @ 7:30 PM  
**Board Meeting** - Last Tuesday @ 7:30 PM

BARC 2 METER NET - MONDAY NIGHTS AT 8:00 PM - 147.09 W4GDF REPEATER - 131.8 Tone  
PCEC 2 METER NET - MONDAY NIGHTS AT 9:00 PM - 147.09 W4GDF REPEATER - 131.8 Tone  
BRIGHTLEAF AMATEUR RADIO CLUB STATIONS

**W 1 V O A - W 4 A M C - W 4 U H S**



**Next Meeting  
April 10**

**April 2007**

To:



**Ham Chatter**  
Brightleaf Amateur Radio Club  
PO Box 8387  
Greenville, NC 27835