



THE FEEDBACK

Volume 03 Issue 06

September, 2003

THE AMATEUR RADIO NEWSLETTER

Laurel Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

PO Box 146 Laurel, MD 20725-0146

<http://www.larcmd.org>

email: larc@larcmd.org

Meetings and Nets:

⇒ 1st, 3rd, 5th Wednesdays:

On-the-air Net at 8:30pm on 147.225+ PL156.7 (no tone required during nets)

⇒ 2nd Wednesday:

Informal/Social Gathering at 7:00pm – Sullivan’s Restaurant; Rt. 198, at Rt 197

⇒ 4th Wednesday:

Monthly Meeting at 7:30pm - The Woman’s Club of Laurel, 384 Main Street, Laurel

⇒ Nightly:

Informal Net/Rag-Chew from 9-11pm on 147.540

Repeater: 442.500+ PL 156.7 Hz

VHF Simplex 147.54; UHF Simplex: 445.975,

Laurel Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

c/o Pud Reaver, W3YD
6516 Brooklyn Bridge Rd
Laurel, Md, 20707



FIRST CLASS MAIL

Next Meeting:



Sep 24, 2003; 1930L

PRGM: TBD

THE LAUREL AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Officers:

President:	Jim Cross	WI3N	301-725-6829	jcross3@juno.com
Vice-President:	HD (Frank Scott)	K3HDM	301-773-0155	hdm@prodigy.aol
Secretary:	Open			
Treasurer:	Jerry Siegel	N3WSG	301-937-1174	j_siegel@compuserve.com
Past President:	Pud Reaver	W3YD	301-498-6293	preaver@earthlink.net

Other LARC Positions and Contacts:

FAR Representatives:	Dan Blasberg	KA8YPY	301-345-7381	ka8ypy@arrl.net
Laurel VEC:	Diane Zimmerman	AA3OF	301-937-0394	aa3of@arrl.net
LARC VE Testing:	John Creel	WB3GXW	301-572-5124	wb3gxw@arrl.net
AutoCall Reporter:	Pud Reaver	W3YD	301-498-6293	preaver@earthlink.net
T-MARC/D-MARC Rep:	OPEN			
Public Information Officer:	Pud Reaver	W3YD	301-498-6293	preaver@earthlink.net
Youth Programs:	Mark Doore	K3RAM	301-572-2385	k3ram@arrl.net
Education and Training:	Pud Reaver	W3YD	301-498-6293	preaver@earthlink.net
Technical Specialist:	Kevin Arber	W3DAD	301-725-0038	w3dad@amsat.org
ARES/RACES Coordinators:	Jim Cross	WI3N	301-725-6829	jcross3@juno.com
Official Emergency Station:	Pat Gormley	KK3F	301-864-4694	
Official Bulletin Station:	John Creel	WB3GXW	301-572-5124	wb3gxw@arrl.net
Official Bulletin Station:	Pud Reaver	W3YD	301-498-6293	preaver@earthlink.net
Official Bulletin Station:	Al Brown	KZ3AB	301-490-3188	kz3ab@arrl.net
Official Relay Station:	Pat Gormley	KK3F	301-864-4694	
Official Relay Station:	Pud Reaver	W3YD	301-498-6293	preaver@earthlink.net

LARC Special Interest Groups and Mentors:

Antennas:	Kevin Arber	W3DAD	301-725-0038	w3dad@amsat.org
Packet Radio/APRS:	Mark Doore	K3RAM	301-572-2385	k3ram@arrl.net
Repeaters:	John Creel	WB3GXW	301-572-5124	wb3gxw@arrl.net
Satellite/EME:	OPEN			

ARRL Field Organization:

Atlantic Division Director:	Bernie Fuller	N3EFN	814-763-1529	n3efn@arrl.org
Atlantic Division Vice Director:	William C. Edgar	N3LLR	814-362-1250	n3llr@arrl.org
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MD/DC Emergency Coord:	Mike Carr	WA1QAA	410-799-0403	bamcc@erols.com
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MDC Section Bulletin Manager:	Al Brown	KZ3AB	301-490-3188	kz3ab@arrl.net

Items to be published in *The Feedback* should be submitted by the third Wednesday of the month. Email submissions may be made to preaver@earthlink.net

The Feedback is published monthly (except December) as the newsletter of the Laurel Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

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Publisher: Mark Doore, K3RAM

PRESIDENTS' RAMBLING

The above title is appropriately “apostrophied”. Jim got back from vacation just in time to handle the ISABEL affair, and has not had time to ramble on, except to say that he hopes to have some info on the LARC exploder before the meeting on Wednesday.

I, on the other hand, as editor and ex-president, will take advantage of his absence to make the following comments:

The September meeting (this Wed, Sept 24) will also include a PVRC session ... planning the next contest challenge for the club.

I sent a message to the Bill-sked folks (those of us who used to talk with Bill Bowden, KI7AO, in Washington state.) The sked has been dormant for a few months, and I was wondering “was los?” I got replies from Bill and Roger (W3LM). They are included in this FEEDBACK...some editing by me regarding personal stuff.

We have another excellent technical article from W3DAD. Kevin has been contributing for many years, and all his articles are posted on a separate page on the LARC site.

I forget why, but at the time I thought the following URLs were interesting

<http://www.museumofhoaxes.com/photos/blackout.html>

<http://urbanlegends.about.com/>

This (Sep) meeting will probably have a report from the NOMINATING COMMITTEE, and may talk about the upcoming Christmas/Installation banquet. Come with some nominations and ideas.

Remember the current editor (me) said he would serve through 2003. Take a look at this issue ... putting the FEEDBACK together is a piece of cake ... we're looking for some volunteers for 2004 ... let Jim know.

Looks like Rohn may be going out of business.

Anyone recognize the lady in the photo?

30/PUD

Kevin Arber, W3DAD

RF analysis instrumentation for the ham radio operator has come a long way in the last ten years. In the mid 90s I bought an RF1 from Autek Research and was amazed at this instruments capability, accuracy and ease of use. It contained a low distortion RF source and frequency counter, and measured SWR and Impedance over the HF range. It could also measure inductance and capacitance. But a new generation of improved instruments are available; namely the VA1 and MFJ-259B.

In looking at the QST ad for the MFJ-259B it claims to read SWR, complex RF impedance, return loss in dB, reflection coefficient and other parameters over the frequency range of 1.8 to 170 MHz.

SWR: This term is familiar to most hams and refers to the standing waves generated on a transmission line by the power reflected at an antenna mismatch. Standing wave ratio bridges are still used by hams to measure SWR and are commonly found in HF antenna tuners. The voltage standing wave ratio is called VSWR and is given by:

$$VSWR = SWR = E_{max}/E_{min} = (E_f + E_r)/(E_f - E_r)$$

Where $E_f = E$ forward and $E_r = E$ reflected.

If the impedances are known then the SWR can be expressed as a ratio of the two impedances: $SWR = Z1/Z2$. if SWR is less than 1, then $SWR = Z2/Z1$

Reflection Coefficient, ρ : This is the reflection value that is measured by simple SWR meters using a bridge. Although these meters are usually calibrated in SWR, the value measured is reflection coefficient. The MFJ-259B displays ρ which is related to SWR by:

$SWR = (1 + |\rho|)/(1 - |\rho|)$, where $|\rho|$ is the absolute value of ρ . Notice to the similarity to the equation above for VSWR if E_r is set to 1.

Also $|\rho| = (SWR - 1)/(SWR + 1)$.

Return Loss: Return loss is given by:

$$RL = -20 \log |\rho| \text{ (a negative number)}$$

Return loss provides a dB value for the matched qualities of a device. It is often used to characterize the input matching quality of a low noise amplifier.

Complex Impedance: A resistor exhibits an impedance value of its resistance at all frequencies. At RF frequencies devices may exhibit a considerable amount of capacitance or inductance as well as resistance. The capacitive or inductive component is called **reactance**. Reactance in combination with resistance is complex impedance. Complex impedance is a vector value; it has both magnitude and direction. In polar coordinates, magnitude is the Z value and the direction is given by an angle. A 50 ohm resistor has a Z of 50 ohms and an angle of zero degrees. In rectangular coordinates the value is given as $Z = R +/- jX$. The R value is the resistance and the X value is the reactance, positive for inductance and negative for capacitance (series circuit). Knowing these values by direct measurement is very informative and convenient. Although the complex value of the impedance can be derived from measurements taken from the RF1 or a noise bridge, the tester is required to do some math.

Recently these instruments have been used to characterize and measure losses in antenna tuners and baluns [1,2]. Coaxial cable measurements are also easily made. Other useful measurements are coaxial cable loss and length and the ability to match cables.

Although somewhat expensive, the MFJ-259B lists at \$259.95, these instruments are a must have for the antenna experimenter and technically inclined ham.

[1] F. Witt, AI1H, "How to Evaluate Your Antenna Tuner .?" QST, Apr 1995.

[2] F. Witt, AI1H, "Baluns in the Real (and Complex) World," The ARRL Antenna Compendium, Vol 5, (Newington: ARRL 1996)

Good to hear from you. Thought maybe that you guys had been blown away by Isabel.

I've been doing the usual....biking, scootering (my new thing) and some hamming.

Let me know what the current sked is with Bill and Russ...and maybe I'll try to tune up.

Today our local ARES group supported the "Lake Clean-up Operation" for the county. Since we live in Lake County, we had a lot of lakes to cover. The clean-up was done mostly by high school kids. We just gave the usual communication support with the county EMS and Event Staff personnel over the county. We had about 20 from our ARES group operating with the HTs, etc. NCS was located in the Co. EMS facility and used the local repeater for county coverage.

Earlier this AM I turned on the IC-735 and using the dipole in the attic, made a few contacts with the SC QSO Party. Funny,...when a station is looking for contacts....even my weak signal gets a 59 report!

I'm also working with the local hospital to get a "station" set up for our ARES operation, like we had at the Greater Laurel-Beltsville Hospital. We're trying to get the hospital to fund the purchase of the equipment.

Recently I have been doing a lot of scootering. I bought a Honda "Silver Wing", which is a BIG 600 cc scooter. The speed odometer says 120 mph, but I've only had it up to 85 mph. It really flies! I've taken a few trips with some friends on their Harleys.....from Natchez, MS...up the Natchez Trace Parkway to Nashville, TN...and back to Clermont, FL. Just got back from a trip up to Helen, GA, in NE Georgia. I still ride the bike, but the scooter is my relaxation!

In two weeks....I'm doing a "little" 50cc scooter ride along the Blue Ridge Parkway with a group of about 20 other little scooters.

Other than that....I try to make my daily run to the spa/pool...and work on my tan! Hey, does this retired life sound tough or what? You and Pat should come by and check out the area. We have a guest room....and it's got AC !

Shirley's doing fine. Daughter is expecting twins next month. And we're sending all the hurricanes up to the northeast!

Tell all I said "Hi" from sunny and warm Florida.

73, Roger

--- Roger Davis

--- rldavis8@earthlink.net

Hello Pud & LARCers

Thanks for the email, Pud. Good to hear that old laurel was not hit too bad!

Hasn't been a good year at all here, and not just because of the absence of the LARC sked !!! Look forward to getting

back on that though.

Eye problems continue on & on it seems. left eye has recovered fairly well and is still improving somewhat seven months after the repair of the detached retina. Had necessary cataract surgery in the right eye at the end of June, after laser "tack down" of that retina. Corneas continue to worsen however, and additional visits to corneal specialists in recent months confirm that I will have to have a corneal transplant in BOTH eyes, probably one in 2004 and another in 2005, as the healing/recovery process after each is six months to a year.

Am currently investigating a newer and less radical (apparently) procedure developed in Europe and now just being introduced into the US, to see if it would be appropriate for me....Currently it is being done in only a handful of US hospitals, and only in Portland, OR on the entire west coast.

Am currently wearing contact lenses (first time ever for me) as the two eyes are so radically different. Have a helluva time getting them in every day; usually require MJ's assistance. Needless to say our long distance travel has stopped completely.....Hoping to get my drivers license renewed next month though, as right eye qualifies under WA law - though right at the 20/40 minimum !!

Looks as if we'll be here all winter....and spring...and summer....etc. so ham radio is a good thing. Had some fun in the WAE contest a week ago, and the WA QSO party this weeekend. Looking forward to CQ WW and ARRL SS this fall, though I suspect that with current position in sunspot cycle it will be primarily a 20/40m contest, as was the WAE. After I get a new prescription in a week or so, I hope to fire up on PSK-31. I've had the software loaded for some time.

73 to All, KI7AO

ROHN Files for Chapter 11 Protection

September 16, 2003

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ROHN INDUSTRIES, INC. FILES FOR CHAPTER 11 PROTECTION;
\$9.5 MILLION DEBTOR-IN-POSSESSION FINANCING SECURED;
BOARD MEMBERS RESIGN

PEORIA, IL, September 16, 2003 — ROHN Industries, Inc., (OTCBB: ROHN), (the "Company") a provider of infrastructure equipment to the telecommunications industry, announced today that the Company and five of its direct and indirect subsidiaries have filed voluntary petitions for Chapter 11 relief in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Indiana (the "Bankruptcy Court").

The Company also announced that, concurrent with the Chapter 11 filing, it has entered into a \$9.5 million debtor-in-possession ("DIP") line of credit with the lenders that are party to the Company's Amended and Restated Credit Agreement, subject to the approval of the Bankruptcy Court, which will include funds that will be rolled forward from the Company's current credit facility. Subject to the provisions of the Bankruptcy Code, the Company remains in possession of its assets and properties, and continues to operate its business. The Company said that the objective of the Chapter 11 proceeding is to maximize recovery to creditors by facilitating an orderly sale of assets. The Company is currently in discussions with an unrelated third party regarding a proposed sale of the assets of the Company.

Upon the filing of the bankruptcy petition of the Company, but following the approval by the Board of Directors of the Chapter 11 filing, Stephen Gorman and Jordan Roderick each have resigned from the Board of Directors of the Company. Currently, Horace Ward, the Chief Executive Officer of the Company, is the only remaining director of the Company.

Commenting on today's announcement, Mr. Ward said, "Our immediate goal is to stabilize

The VEC informs an applicant his paperwork was shoddy, and we don't cotton to that crap in laurel! "you got ten seconds, good buddy. Better start runnin'!"

