



ARASWF

Newsletter



Vol. XXIII No. 9 The Journal of the Amateur Radio Association of Southwest Florida September 2007

Club Information

Meeting Time: 4th Tuesday 7:30pm
Golden Gate Community Center
4701 Golden Gate Parkway
Naples FL
Club Repeater: K4YHB
146.670 (-600) PL 136.5
EOC Repeater: WB2WPA
147.030 (+600)
Club Web Site:
<http://www.araswf.org>
Club Officers/ Chairpersons
President: KK4PG
Peter Gaddy
Vice President: None
Secretary: W2HI
Bob Graf
Treasurer: K2ZEL
Bill Reynolds
Past President: KK4PG
Peter Gaddy
Technical Director: WB2QLP
Jordan Mash
Emergency Comm. Director: N1DL
Karl Geng
Ops. Director: None
Public Information Officer: None
Special Events Coord.: KI4LUD
Bob Quinn
Awards Manager: KD4VRZ
Gary Randall
VE Liaison: AI4CZ
Carolyn Conklin
Newsletter: WD8RFL
Mike Welsh
Webmaster: W2HI
Bob Graf
Social Chair: W2JQ
Sigi Boernet

From the President's Shack:

At our September meeting, Bill Reynolds K2ZEL, will be giving a presentation on NVIS Antenna's. The following from QSL.Net gives us an introduction to the principle:

NVIS, or Near Vertical Incidence Skywave, refers to a radio propagation mode which involves the use of antennas with a very high radiation angle, approaching or reaching 90 degrees (straight up), along with selection of an appropriate frequency below the critical frequency, to establish reliable communications over a radius of 0-200 miles or so, give or take 100 miles. Although not all radio amateurs have heard the term NVIS, many have used that mode when making nearby contacts on 160 meters or 80 meters at night, or 80 meters or 40 meters during the day. They may have thought of these nearby contacts as necessarily involving the use of groundwave propagation, but many such contacts involve no groundwave signal at all, or, if the groundwave signal is involved, it may hinder, instead of help. Deliberate exploitation of NVIS is best achieved using antenna installations which achieve some balance between minimizing groundwave (low takeoff angle) radiation, and maximizing near vertical incidence skywave (very high takeoff angle) radiation.

73,
Peter, KK4PG

Amateur Radio Association of Southwest Florida

**Regular Monthly Business Meeting held at the Golden Gate Community Center,
Golden Gate, Florida, on Tuesday, August 28th, 2007**

Present: Peter Gady, KK4PG - President
Bob Graf, W2HI - Secretary
G. William Reynolds, K2ZEL – Treasurer
Jordan Marsh, WB2QLP – Technical Director

Apologies: Karl Geng, N1DL – Emergency Operations Director

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Called To Order:

There being a quorum present with 14 members, including 4 directors, and 1 guest in attendance, Peter, KK4PG (President) called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

Introductions:

All attendees introduced themselves by name and call for the benefit of the members and guests in attendance.

Reading & Approval of Previous Minutes:

Reading of the Minutes was dispensed with since they were previously published in the ARASWF Newsletter.

Treasurer's Report:

Bill, K2ZEL, gave the following Treasurer's Report:

Cash on hand, Previous Balance		\$4,891.00
Income:	\$ 114.00	
Available funds		\$5,005.25
Expenses:		
Deposit paid to VFW for		
Christmas Party	\$100.00	
Postal Box Rental	<u>\$ 40.00</u>	
Total expenses	\$140.00	
Balance 8/28/07		\$4,865.00

Officers' Reports:

Upcoming events – Christmas Party: Peter KK4PG reminded the membership that the only club social activity during the year, the Christmas Party, is being planned for Friday night, December 7th, at the VFW facility off Pine Ridge Road just west of Route 951 in Naples. A minimum of 50 persons is required, and the per person cost will be \$15., which will include a buffet dinner. A cash bar will also be available. This year there will be door prizes awarded, some of which will be substantial, and the ladies will receive a favor. Because the club needs to make certain monetary commitments and deposits, there will be a request that members planning to attend remit a deposit – this will be addressed in the Newsletter and at future meetings. Finally, Peter asked if any of the members might know someone who might be able to provide music entertainment, and George N3ISH responded that he might know someone who is good at parties like the Christmas Party being planned, and he will make the necessary inquiry and report back to the membership.

Radio Interview: Peter KK4PG announced that he and George N3ISH will appear on local radio station WGCU next Tuesday, September 4th, from 2 – 3pm, to discuss amateur radio, and he encouraged members to call in and participate.

Emergency Communications: Peter KK4PG announced his intention of trying to clarify the club's status with the EC for Collier County. Apparently the local ARES organization is not being utilized for emergency communications assistance at the local shelters, and the club has been contacted by the EC for a list of members available for duty at the shelters. In the past, the club has sometimes been criticized by the EC for its response to similar requests. Peter noted that it is important to maintain a strong ARES presence in Collier County, and to inform public officials that ARES should be their first contact to be made in time of public service need.

Next Month Special Feature: Peter KK4PG announced that the special feature for the September meeting will be a Power Point presentation by Bill K2ZEL about NVIS – Near Vertical Incidence Skywave. (Sounds like a likely source of a "Trivia question" on the Wednesday night net.)

Committee Reports:

VE Testing: Carolyn, AI4CZ, reported that only one person appeared at the last VE test session on Saturday, August 11th. That person, who was from out-of-town, passed the Technician exam. She expressed regret that we did not have a larger attendance, particularly since the exam was advertised with flyers at various locations in addition to the ARRL web site. Finally, she stressed the importance of replying to her emails, and for the VEs to let her know whether or not they are able to attend the test session to assist.,

Old Business:

Listing of Hams in Collier County: Peter KK4PG asked John NSØI about the status of the project to prepare a database of all the licensed hams in Collier

County. John responded that some work needs to be done to update the list, and then it will be ready for review and possible distribution. Peter hoped this project can be completed before the end of the year so invitations can be made to join ARASWF and participate in club activities.

New Business:

Field Day Study Committee: Peter KK4PG requested members for this study committee, to consider such things as:

- a. What are our objectives in operating Field Day – technical, social, or some combination thereof;
- b. The use of amplifiers, vs power not exceeding 150 watts for all stations;
- c. The number of stations to be operated and the classification to be used, such as 4A vs. 5A;
- d. Operator commitments and planning. This year there were extended periods when only one station was operating and the other stations remained off the air due to lack of operators;
- e. Operating times to be observed, since this year most of the stations were dismantled at noon instead of going until 2:00 as permitted.

Jordan WB2QLP, John NSØI, Bob KI4LUD and Minot WB2GGE agreed to participate, with Jordan spearheading the effort.

ARRL Election for Vice Director: Jordan WB2QLP announced that his good friend, Jeff Beals WA4AW is running for Vice Director of the Southeastern Division of ARRL, and he asked the members to consider his qualifications in the upcoming election. Jeff is known to several of the club members, having previously attended some club functions.

Special Features:

This month's special feature was a presentation by Dan W4BN about some vintage gear he built and/or used. In addition to displaying a 1935 vintage Radio Manufacturing Engineers RME-69 general coverage HF superheterodyne receiver, he described in some detail his efforts in successfully building a vintage single tube transmitter using a single Pentode Type Screen Grid Transmitting Tube RK-22, as described in the May, 1934 issue of QST. His efforts resulted in a working 3-band transmitter which he displayed to the audience. Nostalgia prevailed, and several club members participated in the discussion.

50/50:

The 50/50 raffle was won by Bob, W2HI, who donated his winnings back to the club treasury.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Bob Graf, W2HI
Secretary

ARASWF ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Annual ARASWF Christmas Party and Dinner will be held at:

VFW Post 7721, located at 800 Neff Way, Naples, FL 34119 on December 7, 2007.
[This is near the intersection of Pine Ridge Road and 951 (Collier Blvd)]

Cocktail hour starts at 6:00pm, with dinner served at 7:00pm

Dinner price is \$15 per person and there will be a cash bar.

Main dish baked chicken and roast beef

Server gratuity for dinner is included in the price, but bar tips are not.

There will be Door Prizes.

If attending, you will need to sign up in advance and pay the \$15 meal price, per person attending. See Bob, KI4LUD or Peter, KK4PG.

Please register and pay for your meal(s) at one of the next few meetings.



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Members appear on Radio... Broadcast Radio that is!

On September 5, 1007, three of our members, Peter Gaddy, Jordan Mash, and George Tomlinson appeared on the WGCU (90.1 FM) "Gulf Coast Live" program. The topic was Amateur Radio in Southwest Florida.

Use the following link to go to the "Gulf Coast Live" web page and scroll down to find the September 5 program. Click the button to hear the audio of the program.

[Link to WGCU Gulf Coast Live Web Page](#)

Alternatively, copy and paste this into your browser, to hear the audio:

mms://quartz.fgcu.edu/gclive/WM090507.wma

Carl Pacini, KI 4AII Scouting Mission to St. Pierre et Miquelon
August 15 - 17 2007

This describes a scouting trip I made to St. Pierre et Miquelon, in August, as a prelude to a DXpedition planned for next year.

In mid-August, I traveled to the island of St. Pierre, a French overseas territory off the southern coast of Newfoundland. It has a prefix designation of "FP." I arrived on Wednesday, August 15. Once I landed, I took a taxi to go pick up a reserved rental car. The taxi driver took me to a local garage that rents cars. None of the large car rental chains have operations on St. Pierre as the entire population of the island is around 6500. Upon arrival, I did not realize that island businesses shut down for the entire day because August 15 is Feast of the Assumption.

Despite this obstacle, the taxi driver took me to the home of the garage owner. He and his wife came to the door and stated that no paperwork could be filled out because of the holiday. Without checking my drivers license, credit card, passport, etc. the garage owner and his wife gave me the key to a rental car. They told me to return the next day to take care of business. I was stunned by such trust extended to a foreigner. It is like a return to the world of "Leave It To Beaver."

Later that afternoon, I hooked up an Icom 706 Mark IIG, an MFJ tuner, a 20 meter hamstick in a magmount, and an Ameritron ALS-500M linear amp. I tried powering the amp and radio from the car's battery with the engine running. Unfortunately, I blew a fuse on the 2004 Renault. I was out of action until the next day. The ALS-500M can draw up to 82 amps.

On Thursday, August 16, I received a new rental vehicle and purchased two new marine batteries to serve as a power source for the radio and amp. I drove to the top of a hill and set up to get on the air. I was about 100 meters above the Atlantic Ocean in a 40 mph wind. I was about 200 meters from the water. As you know, vertical antennas and saltwater a powerful combination. This match up can compensate for a lack of power or a Yagi antenna. Initially, I used a 20 m hamstick and operated with about 300 watts.

After a short while, the ALS 500 M malfunctioned so I stayed on the air using about 125 watts. I am convinced that the only reason I was able to continue to make good DX contacts is the saltwater and height. When you only use a hamstick, 125 watts might as well be QRP. In the famous words of Jordan Mash, "Life is too short for QRP." I wholeheartedly agree.

I made close to 200 contacts in a few hours of air time on Thursday and Friday morning. Some of the more interesting contacts were Saudi Arabia, Kyrgyzstan and Ivory Coast. I must say that I learned how difficult it is to manage a pileup. I certainly could use some lessons in that area. Some radio operators just keep coming at you no matter what type of order you try to implement to give each person a chance to have a QSO. This summer has taught me much about DXing and DXpeditions between my short trips to Alaska (KL7) and St. Pierre et Miquelon (FP). It is a marvelous experience to physically see some of the places to which one sends "wireless telegraphy" to have a QSO. Moreover, one meets new people from a different part of the world that broaden one's horizons and open up one's mind to different ideas. DXpeditions are a lot of work and fun at the same time. I hope to go to St. Pierre next summer with a friend from Ottawa, Canada for a few days. If anyone in ARASWF is interested in such a trip please let me know.

73,

Carl, KI4AII

ARRL Elections in October

Editor's Note: The following statements were received from the individuals running for office in the upcoming ARRL elections.

Jeff Beals, WA4AW

Candidate for Vice Director in the Southeastern Division

To all my fellow members of the Southeastern Division,

After many years of service in the ARRL Field Organization, many of you have urged me to run for the Board of Directors. I'm pleased to announce my candidacy for Vice Director in the Southeastern Division. Continuously licensed since age 12, I've made a lifelong commitment to Amateur Radio and the ARRL. I have held many of the Section level leadership positions such as Assistant Section Manager, Section Emergency Coordinator and Affiliated Club Coordinator as well as serving on the National Emergency Response Planning Committee. As an Assistant Director, meeting with you at hamfests, club meetings and Field Day sites, I have heard your concerns about the present and future of Amateur Radio. I have worked with you in the field with emergency communications, radio clubs, technical problems and public service events and have gained much valuable experience. The Board level is the place to effect change in League policy and direction. I plan to partner with the new Director to put forth such positive change based on your input. Our incumbent Director, Frank Butler, W4RH, is retiring after 28 years of service to the ARRL board and you will elect a new Director as well. I have personally worked with all the candidates for Director and confident this working relationship will continue with your new Southeastern Division team. I am asking for your support and your vote when you receive your ballot from HQ in October. Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Please read my additional background information at <http://www.qrz.com/wa4aw>

When we work together, anything is possible.

Very 73,
Jeff Beals WA4AW
ARRL Southern Florida Section
Assistant Section Manager
Affiliated Club Coordinator

Sharon T. "Sherri" Brower, W4STB
Candidate for ARRL Southeastern Division Director

Dear Fellow Amateur,

I am Sherri Brower, W4STB and I would like YOUR vote to be YOUR voice of amateur radio at the ARRL as your Southeastern Division Director.

You will receive a ballot in early October asking you to choose from four very different candidates for this position. Some will tell you how many years they have been licensed, some will tell you of their awards, others will tell you how long they have served in their current position and the organizations they belong to. You can read my information at W4STB on QRZ.com.

A Division Director serves without compensation, keeps informed about the issues affecting amateur radio and activities within the division.

I have been involved in the ARRL Field Organization since 1991 and have held a variety of appointments. I have served on the national ARRL Public Relations Committee since 2003 and have been the Chairman since 2004. I have worked with non-ARRL amateurs, ARRL members, all levels of Field Operations appointees, Headquarters personnel, and ARRL Directors and I have listened to their concerns. Your concerns are also my concerns.

Division Directors need a balanced approach to recruit and train new hams and encourage ARRL membership. Efficient emergency communications, new technology, band plans, budget expenditures, experimentation, threats to our frequencies and our ability to erect antennas are issues the ARRL Board of Directors must address.

Each amateur should have a voice heard by the Board of Directors. The Directors should respond to members and keep them informed of the issues. Reading the published minutes of Board meetings on the Internet does not accomplish this. If elected Director I will send you periodic newsletters and seek your input on matters coming before the Board. I will work to improve communication between Headquarters, the Board of Directors, and the ARRL members.

Thank you for all that you do for amateur radio, individually and with your clubs and ARES® groups. Our volunteers and appointees in the field are what make ARRL work at the local level. I will work to find ways to better recognize these efforts.

Endorsements from some of my supporters:

From Dick Mondro, K4FQT (former Vice Director, Great Lakes Division):

"I feel you have displayed exceptional leadership in every position you have taken on and are a dedicated and experienced public servant. Your experience with the ARRL and support of its programs, as well as your knowledge of emergency communications makes you the best candidate for division director.

You have my complete support."

From Phyllisan West, KA4FZI (ASM for Traffic handling, active on HF statewide nets-FAST, FMSN, and QFN, digital traffic, and liaison out-of-state digital traffic to/from NTSD and Winlink stations):

"I know you will make an excellent SE Division Director, but I will greatly miss you as SFL Section Manager. You have always been so prompt to respond to my messages and helped handle those tough challenges. Your help as liaison with the various government agencies when we had all those antenna/tower problems was great. I guess it's a good thing you retired this year so you and David are free to travel around the division."

From Jeremy Briggs, K4OCD (ASM webmaster and Technical Specialist and Karen Briggs, K8KB (SFL Section Emergency Coordinator and Technical Specialist):

"Karen and I have been involved with amateur radio for a number of years now. In that time we have come to enjoy the fellowship that radio offers, not just on air but those "eyeball" QSO's we look forward to at club meetings, hamfests and picnics. Over the years we have met a lot of genuinely great people who, as we do, promote this great hobby of ours. One notable person is Sherri Brower W4STB, ARRL Southern Florida Section Manager. Karen and I have admired her dedication to supporting our section through the ARRL since we first met. She gives enormously of her time to help educate and promote amateur radio in South Florida as well as on air, around the world. As Sherri W4STB now seeks the opportunity to advance to Southeastern Division Director we fully support and encourage all to vote in her favor. We can't think of a better person for the job!"

From Richard Block, KG4CHW (DEC Suwannee District, NFL Section):

"I have known and worked with Sherri Brower W4STB when I was the EC in Broward County. She has always worked to promote amateur radio in a positive light. I would be proud to serve under her leadership as the Division Director."

Please read my bio at <http://www.grz.com/w4stb> - I believe you will find that I have experience in many areas of amateur radio.

It's not possible for me to visit your club meetings and meet each of you in person between now and the election. I do wish to communicate with you and answer each of your questions. E-mail me at w4stb@yahoo.com (please put SE Div Election in the subject so I can easily sort it from other topics) with your questions, concerns and ideas.

Please relay this information to your clubs and at least three ARRL members that you know.

Make a Note to Vote for Sharon T. "Sherri" Brower, W4STB for Southeastern Division Director. <http://www.freewebs.com/w4stb/>

Thanks for taking the time to read this and thanks for your support.

Stay Safe and Stay On the Air.

Very 73,

Sherri Brower, W4STB

Greg Sarratt, W4OZK

Candidate for ARRL Southeastern Division Director

Dear Amateur Radio Operator:

As you may or may not know, Frank Butler, W4RH, is retiring after 27 years at the end of 2007 as the ARRL Southeastern Division Director. Frank has done an excellent job as Director and, while we will miss him and his leadership, I have a strong desire to serve the Southeastern Region in this capacity.

I have served as ARRL Section Manager for nearly 4 years, which has given me the opportunity to meet and work with many of you. My time with ARRL has been very rewarding in a number of ways. Foremost it has allowed me to build relationships and gain valuable experience working with ARRL headquarters, emergency communications, DXing, VHF/UHF, public service, education, contesting, hamfests, clubs, operating events, youth membership and digital operations.

As the ARRL Southeastern Division Director, I will represent the entire Southeastern Division. In this capacity, I plan to promote all facets of our great hobby, incorporating both older and newer technologies, DX, and enhancing our emergency communication capabilities.

I know that when we work together, big projects are possible, especially when capitalizing on the diverse Southeastern amateur capability, experience, spirit and numbers. This will help make ham radio the best hobby and public service contributor it can be. I sincerely want to be your ARRL Southeastern Director and I believe that together we can make our Division the best of all 15 Divisions.

You ARE amateur radio. Your voice counts. Your vote counts. I am asking for your personal endorsement, support and votes from your clubs and groups. Please call your friends in Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands and ask them to vote for me, Greg Sarratt, W4OZK, as ARRL Southeastern Division Director in October!

Remember, together we can have a major positive impact! I would appreciate your vote and support in this all-important, sought-after position.

Look for more Southeastern Division election information coming up; through flyers and on my web site, <http://www.w4ozk.com>

Thank you,

Greg Sarratt, W4OZK
ARRL Alabama Section Manager

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

From Jan Heise K4QD k4qd@cfl.rr.com

Fellow ARRL Clubs,

Please help us publicize the upcoming Melbourne Hamfest and ARRL Florida State Convention sponsored by the Platinum Coast Amateur Radio Society (PCARS).

Date: 13-14 October, 2007

Location: Melbourne Auditorium, 625 E. Hibiscus Blvd, Melbourne, FL 32901

Time: Tailgate: 6:00AM-5:00PM Saturday, 8:00AM-4:00PM Sunday
Auditorium: 9:00AM-5:00PM Saturday, 9:00AM-4:00PM Sunday

Setup: 6:00PM-9:00PM Friday night, 7:30AM-9:00AM Saturday

This is a great hamfest with a large tailgate area and large indoor vendor and swap table area. There are forums, meetings, youth activities, a hidden transmitter hunt, great door prizes and grand prizes, a consignment booth, and much more. Vendors include MFJ, CT Morgan, GAP, and many more. There will be info tables and prizes from ICOM, Kenwood, Yaesu and others.

We would appreciate you putting this info in your newsletter, on your website, or passing it on to your members. We will be glad to do the same to support you in the future.

See full info on our website: www.pcars.org Email: hamfest2007@pcars.org

Thanks & 73,

Jan Heise, K4QD, Chairman,

2007 Melbourne Hamfest & ARRL FL State Convention

From Jordan Mash, WB2QLP:

From the OH-PA DX Bulletin:

6E/XF4, REVILLAGIGEDO. Carlos, XE1YK, the President of Mexico's FMRE, has announced the dates for a Revillagigedo expedition to celebrate the 75th anniversary of FMRE. The operation will be a full month and take between November 15th and December 15th. Paperwork for the permission will be initiated this week requesting the callsigns 6E4LM and XF4YK. The operators will focus on 160 and 6 meters, where they feel XF4 is most needed, but they will be on the other HF bands as well with a goal of 25,000 QSOs. They plan to use simple antennas and 100 watt radios. More details should be forthcoming.

You might be a “REAL HAM” if...

By Don Keith N4KC
www.n4kc.com

Recent comments on this and other web forums dealing with the hobby of amateur radio have attempted to posit the point that someone is not a “REAL HAM” unless he or she meets certain arbitrary criteria. Those include such requirements as passing a code test to get licensed, using equipment with tubes in it, or being able to build a transceiver from scratch, using only a pie tin and a handful of grab-bag parts from a swap meet.

With apologies to a certain comedian who has made a gazillion dollars with his “You might be a redneck if...” shtick, here goes my feeble attempt at a similar definition of a “REAL HAM:”

If you have a ham band antenna on all four fenders of your car, the roof, in the trunk lip, and another one clamped to the trailer hitch with an alligator clip and duct tape...you might be a “REAL HAM!”

If your wife...sorry, “XYL”...asks you to help bring in the groceries while you are chasing a rare one and you yell back, “QRX! QRX!”...you might be a “REAL HAM!”

If you can recite the numbers of every driver, modulator, and final amplifier tube in every Heathkit, Drake or Collins transmitter or amplifier ever made, and name the best idling grid current for 90% of them...you might be a “REAL HAM!”

If when you were a teenager, you tore open the cases of your little brother's “Flash Gordon” walkie-talkies just to see if you could modify them to work on 10 meters or used the pans from your sister's Easy-Bake oven to breadboard a code-practice oscillator...you might be a “REAL HAM!”

If you have ever tried to ker-chunk the repeater while riding in a funeral procession...you might be a “REAL HAM!”

If your kids...sorry, “harmonics”...know your call sign, your grid square, and your 10-10 number, but not your middle name...you might be a “REAL HAM!”

If you have at least a half-dozen different sets of hilarious (at least to you and the guys on your 75-meter roundtable) phonetics for your call letters...you might be a “REAL HAM!”

If you have more countries confirmed than you have dollars in your 401-K and more bucks invested in your tower, rotor and tri-bander than you have in your retirement annuity...you might be a “REAL HAM!”

If you have ever taken an HT to church or a scanner to the courthouse while on jury duty...you might be a “REAL HAM!”

If you painted the walls of the new playroom downstairs in the colors of the resistor color code...you might be a “REAL HAM!”

If you ever chopped up your wife's...sorry, XYL's...patio furniture to build a Yagi for 15...you might be a “REAL HAM!”

If you have ever attempted to use a gutter downspout, the hubcap from a '93 Buick, your dog's food dish, your neighbor's rose trellis, the vent hose from a clothes dryer, a wicket from your mom's croquet set, or a one-quart metal Thermos bottle (with or without coffee) as an antenna...you might be a “REAL HAM!”

If you read the ARRL “Repeater Directory” or the latest catalog from one of the big “candy stores” while taking your daily “constitutional” ...you might be a “REAL HAM!”

If you know the formulae for Ohm's Law and Kirchoff's Law and can read a Smith Chart from 100 feet but have no idea who Paris Hilton is...you might be a “REAL HAM!”

If you typically go to hamfests wearing your "Hams do it with frequency" tee-shirt, a "KNOW CODE" belt buckle, at least two HTs clipped to your belt and an earpiece for each in each ear, a pith helmet with a 440 ground plane sticking out the top, and a blinking-LED button with your callsign on it...you might be a "REAL HAM!"

If you know the prefixes for every DXCC entity as well as their beam headings but you don't know your oldest kid's...sorry, "first harmonic's"...birthday...you might be a "REAL HAM!"

If you ever flagged down a local utility bucket truck and tried to bribe the guy to hang some ropes and pulleys in the trees in the backyard...you might be a "REAL HAM!"

If you call beers "807s," money "green stamps," your house your "home QTH," your car your "moe-byle," your base station your "shack," the FCC "the friendly candy company," anything a salesman tells you "Bravo Sierra," the big brouhaha at the last club meeting "a Charlie Foxtrot," your wife your "XYL," and your kids "harmonics" ...you might be a "REAL HAM!"

If you ever tried to convince your fiancé that Dayton, Ohio, has replaced Niagara Falls as the Honeymoon Capitol of the World and that the first part of May is absolutely the best time for a wedding...you might be a "REAL HAM!"

Of course, if you MET your fiancé in the flea market at Dayton when she tried to jaw you down on the price of a Hallicrafters HT-37 with a bad power transformer...you might be a "REAL HAM!"

This Hobby Keeps Us Coming Back

[Scott Benjamin \(VE3VVF\)](#) on August 28, 2007

[View comments about this article!](#)

One thing I seem to notice when I read a bio on QRZ.com or some other Amateur Radio forum is that very many of us get our Amateur Radio Operator's license but at some point, for one reason or another, leave the hobby. Some are leave due to family issues. Perhaps difficult financial times have forced us to sell our gear. Maybe we have moved to a location that prohibits antennas. Maybe our work lives do not allow us the spare time to get back to it. Maybe we just have too many other irons in the fire. There are as many reasons as there are Amateurs but there is one thing that seems to be most prevalent:

We return to this wonderful hobby.

Maybe our financial situation has improved. Maybe we have retired and have more time on our hands. Perhaps we drove by a home that has a tower with a TH-6 atop it and said to ourselves "Wow it's been a while since I've been on the air". For me, it was a combination of a few. I got my ticket in 1997 when I was in the military serving up north. One of my coworkers was an examiner and he got me into it. I used the club station, VE8RCS, which I believe had an FT-1000, but when I returned home I was not in a position financially to get big shack set up. (At the time I was not aware of all the facets of the hobby and homebrew and QRP were not really well known to me.

Within a year I was out of the military and living in a small community and I couldn't help but notice the amount of antennas I saw around the neighbourhood. Another time I was in my attic crawlspace one day and noticed a dipole strung in the rafters that ran the length of the house. Cool, I thought, a ham must've lived here years ago. Also, I would see vanity license plates around town with call signs on them. I can't afford to get into this hobby, I thought. After 6 years I moved to a small farm and one day something just clicked in me that said "Hey, I have room for an antenna. Maybe I can get back into the hobby somehow". Using the internet I found a couple of sites that led me to the Radio Amateurs of Canada website. I applied for and got my own call sign. I then found some email addresses of hams in my area and sent out a few emails. They did not know me but were more than willing to help me. Wow, I thought, what a great group of people. At that time I didn't even really know what an Elmer was but before long I had one and not long after that (with his help) I was back on the air. After almost 8 years of being QRT I was back in the hobby again.

Visit our Club Web Site at: www.araswf.org

NEXT MEETING - TUESDAY - SEPTEMBER 25, 2007
7:30 PM - GOLDEN GATE COMMUNITY CENTER