



ARASWF

Newsletter



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December 2008

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Next Meeting will be held on January 27th 2009!!

From the President's Shack

Each fall our community, country, and much of the world engages in a remarkable event. One of the world's great celebrations begins. Originally a solemn time of religious remembrance, the period from Thanksgiving to New Years Day has become one of the world's great multicultural celebrations referred to generally as the holiday season! And what a celebration it has become. The spirituality of this time of Christmas and Hanukkah is often expressed as a time of giving.

Difficult and uncertain economic times this year will probably result in Santa delivering fewer IC-7800's this year. This does not mean we all can't give something. I ask the ham's of southwest Florida to consider giving something back to our hobby by encouraging, mentoring, and elmering the potential and newly licensed radio amateurs of our community. I will keep everyone informed of plans for licenses classes in the near future.

Thanks to everyone for the support I have received a President. I am looking forward to continuing as past-president. Please give the Club, our new president, Dave Schaare, W4SFR, and our officers your wholehearted support.

73's
Peter
KK4PG



November 2008 Meeting Minutes

Amateur Radio Association of Southwest Florida

Regular Monthly Business Meeting held at the Golden Gate Community Center, Golden Gate, Florida, on Tuesday, November 25th, 2008

Directors Present: Peter Gaddy, KK4PG - President
Bob Graf, W2HI - Secretary
G. William Reynolds, K2ZEL - Treasurer

Apologies: Tim Gibbons - Vice President
Tim Wallen, KC4SSD - Technical Director
Karl Geng, N1DL - Emergency Communications Director

Meeting Called To Order:

There being a quorum present with 24 members (including 3 directors) and 2 guests, in attendance, Peter, KK4PG, called the meeting to order early at 7:10 pm since the meeting room was already full at that time.

Introductions:

All attendees introduced themselves by name and call for the benefit of the members and guests in attendance. Visiting guests were Joe KK9TT, and Jim K3AVR, both from Marco Island.

Reading & Approval of Previous Minutes:

Reading of the Minutes was dispensed with since the minutes of the October meeting were published previously in the ARASWF Newsletter.

Treasurer's Report:

Bill, K2ZEL, presented a detailed Treasurer's Report for the period January 1, 2008 to November 25, 2008, summarized as follows:

Beginning Balance, 1/1/2008	\$ 4,520.29
Income for the period:	\$3,066.81
Expenses for the period	<u>(\$2,301.572)</u>
Ending Balance	\$5,285.53.97

Bill also reported that expenditures for the 2008 Christmas party, other than the \$100. hall deposit, have not yet been included in the Treasurer's Report.

Officers' Reports:

Nominations and Elections: Peter, KK4PG, reported that the club nominating committee has recommended the following officers for 2009:

President Dave Schaare, W4SFR
Vice President - David Worboys, KG4ZLB/MØZLB
Secretary - Bob Graf, W2HI (Incumbent)
Treasurer - Bill Reynolds, K2ZEL (Incumbent)

Peter then solicited additional nominations from the floor. There were none, and a motion to close the nominations was made by Bruce K9PWQ, seconded by George AA4GT. The motion was approved unanimously, and the secretary cast one vote for the above slate of officers, who were duly elected.

Christmas Party: Peter announced that plans for the Christmas Party are proceeding. It will be held at the same location as last year - the VFW Hall on Neff Way near the corner of Pine Ridge and Collier Blvd. The date is December 6th. Cocktails at 6:00pm (cash bar) and buffet dinner at 7:00pm. Door prizes will be awarded, including at least one prize of significant value. A sign-up sheet was passed around for additional members to indicate their plans to attend, and Bill stressed the importance of having a fairly accurate number so that the restaurant will be sure to prepare a sufficient amount of food. (It is assumed that they will also have a sufficient amount of spirits.) Incidentally, musical entertainment will be provided by our very own Steve KD4VRY.

Old Business:

Field Day Certificates: Bob, W2HI, passed out to those members not present at a previous meeting the ARASWF Appreciation Certificates for their participation and help in making Field Day 2008 a success.

New Business:

Emergency Communications Courses: Fred KF4MJJ announced that he is now certified to give the ARRL Emergency Communications Course, Level 1, and he encouraged interested members to contact him. It was also made known that this course is available on-line at a cost of \$45. Fred also announced that Collier County Commissioner Frank Halas has recently passed the examination to become a licensed radio amateur.

Technician License Courses: Jim K3AVR, from Marco Island, reported on the Technician's course that his group conducted previously. It involved 3 Saturdays, from 8am to 12pm. All who took the course, with one exception, subsequently passed the Technician examination and obtained their licenses._

Available Repeater: Peter KK4PG announced the availability of a used, three year old, Kenwood repeater from Lincoln Frost, KB4IQC, who previously operated a repeater on 145.27MHz from Plantation Island (Everglades City). Included in the package is a Kenwood TKR-750K2 repeater reported to be in excellent condition, microphone, programming software and cable, Astron 20A power supply, and 4-can duplexer with cabling. The combined cost new of this package is about \$2,800. Also available is an undisclosed length of hardline, and an antenna which is reported to be difficult, at best, to remove from an existing tower. Karl N1DL has possession of this equipment, and presently has the repeater on the air from his home QTH in North Naples, on 145.27MHz (-) with 67.0PL. Peter indicated that serious consideration is being given to acquiring this equipment, either as a replacement for the ailing Spectrum repeater now on 146.67, or as a second repeater to be operated by the club and located so as to provide improved signals to downtown Naples and eastern Collier County. A discussion of these possibilities is planned for the January membership meeting.

Committee Reports:

Field Day 2009: George AA4GT reported that several different sites are being considered for Field Day 2009, including Mackel Park on Marco Island, Veterans Park in North Naples, Cambria Park in Naples, Naples Airport property, the property in Golden Gate where Frontier Days are held, and many others, including

some hotels on Marco Island that may, or may not, be interested in hosting the event and providing both shelter and food.

George also stressed the importance of members stepping up and offering to operate CW for Field Day, which is badly needed to improve our score.

Special Feature:

There was no special feature this month.

50/50:

The 50/50 raffle was won by Fred, KF4MJJ.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Peter, KK4PG, at 8:00 pm on a motion by Fred KF4MJJ, seconded by Joe K9KNW.

Bob Graf, W2HI
Secretary



An open letter to the ARASWF membership

At the regular club meeting held in November, our President, Peter KK4PG, informed the membership that at the January meeting the President will entertain a motion to purchase a replacement Kenwood repeater at a cost of approximately \$1,000. There was little response from the floor about this, except one member asking "why should we spend \$1,000. on a repeater that sees very little use?" The purpose of the comments herein is to try to establish a starting point from which a decision can be made.

First, a little history as I remember it. Back in September 2005, it was decided by the membership to purchase a replacement repeater because the existing repeater was having continued difficulty and was resisting all efforts to make it consistently reliable. At that time the club treasury had about a \$2,700. balance, and the decision was to purchase a Spectrum repeater at a cost of about \$1,645., based mostly on what we could afford at

the time without completely depleting club funds. This turned out to be a unwise decision. Unknown to us, the company producing the Spectrum unit was in turmoil, and was not living up to its promises of prompt delivery and reliable support, and considerable difficulty was experienced in getting the unit and making it work properly. Subsequently the manufacturer went out of business.

Since then, the Spectrum repeater has had continuing problems, resulting in its removal multiple times for servicing and re-tuning. Even now, it operates at something less than full specification, and cannot be depended on for service-free operation when it is needed most (evidenced by the fact that it was not available during the 2007 ComGapFill emergency communications exercise). This has resulted in considerable time being expended by the 2 members who are most involved in repeater maintenance - KK4PG and WB7ECV. As Peter mentioned at the meeting, every time he has to go to the repeater site for repairs, maintenance, or whatever, it involves a full day. This is not fair to Peter, or anyone, who has to spend that much time keeping a club repeater going for the benefit of all members.

Now all of this hasn't yet addressed the question "why should we spend \$1,000.00 on a repeater that sees very little use?" Personally, I can think of two reasons.

First, I doubt that anyone will advocate that the club repeater be taken off the air. If it's working properly, it's there for anyone to use at any time 24/7, and stands ready to accommodate emergency traffic when needed. It sees regular use in the morning via echolink, and again in the evening, especially during season. In between, during the day, it's use may be sporadic, but it sees as much use as the membership wishes to utilize it. It's available for our members, and all others, to stay in touch with us from anywhere in the world via echolink. Besides, it is our sole technical achievement, and fulfills to some degree our responsibility to engage in continuing technical advancement. So, if we are to maintain such a repeater, it should at least be reliable and relatively maintenance-free, which the Spectrum repeater is not. Under consideration as a replacement is the Kenwood TKR-750K2 repeater, which is in use in this area for other repeaters, including the 146.40 machine, and on Marco Island. The operators of those repeaters readily praise this unit, and are not hesitant in recommending it. It certainly comes from a noted manufacturer who is not "in turmoil", and who we all recognize as supporting the Amateur Radio community.

Second, we need to be sure that our repeater will receive the attention it deserves, without unduly causing a burden on the members who have volunteered to maintain it. It can reasonably be anticipated that the Kenwood repeater will provide reliable operation

and minimum attention, and this is worthy of serious consideration. It's difficult, at best, to get volunteers to donate their time in behalf of the club - we all have many things to do and our time is both precious and scarce. I believe we owe a responsibility to those volunteers who do our bidding to not burden them with marginal equipment that requires them to spend an undue amount of time and attention to keep it operational.

Now, if we can agree that it is our responsibility to provide a reliable replacement repeater and relegate the Spectrum unit to backup status, then we have two choices. We can purchase a new Kenwood repeater from a friendly Kenwood dealer who will sell it to us at cost, which is approximately \$1,000. for the unit (which lists for about \$1,500). Or we can take advantage of an available used Kenwood repeater which is three years old and reported to be in "excellent" condition, also for \$1,000. But this latter used machine also comes with an Astron power supply, 4-can duplexer with cabling, the latest programming software, programming interface cable, and microphone (combined cost new of all this is about \$2,800.) which could be used for a second club repeater. There is also a run of hard-line available, and the package comes with a frequency pair at 145.27, which we assume the club can retain with the approval of the Florida Repeater Council.

Those who say that a second club repeater is not something to be seriously entertained might advocate purchasing the used repeater due to its reported "excellent" condition, and selling off the duplexer and hard line to reduce the net cost to something considerably below \$1,000. If, in fact, this used repeater is truly "excellent", this would present an opportunity to obtain the Kenwood unit at minimum net cost. But there is a risk with this approach - if the used repeater turns out to be something other than "excellent" and completely reliable, then this decision would turn out to be another unwise one.

Those who do advocate a second repeater that would provide improved coverage in the southern and eastern parts of Collier County might also advocate purchasing the used repeater because it would eliminate the necessity of having to purchase a new repeater, power supply, programming accessories and duplexer (combined about \$2800), and would provide an almost complete second repeater at a cost of only \$1,000. However, this is an entirely separate issue from the replacement of the Spectrum repeater on 146.67.

So, it seems that the first decision to be made at the January meeting is to determine if the club really wants a second repeater. If so, then purchasing the used repeater, power supply, duplexer, and frequency pair for \$1,000. makes sense. However, we would still need to vote on a new Kenwood repeater to replace the Spectrum machine on 146.67 at an additional cost of \$1,000. Thus, we would be deciding to allocate \$2,000. for repeaters - half for 146.67 replacement, and half for a second repeater/power supply/duplexer on a

separate frequency pair.

If the decision is negative, and the membership does not want to get involved with building up a second repeater, then the choice would be between purchasing a new Kenwood for \$1,000, or purchasing the used Kenwood for \$1,000. and selling off the duplexer and hard-line to reduce the net cost. But, as mentioned above, there is a risk in doing this if the used unit turns out to be something other than "excellent". The "risk-free" decision is a no-brainer - purchase the new Kenwood for \$1,000.

Hopefully this will stimulate some thought before the January meeting, and some in-depth discussion at the meeting, which will determine the future of the club's involvement with VHF repeater activity.

Incidentally, the used Kenwood repeater is currently on the air at N1DL's QTH in North Naples, operating on an output frequency of 145.270 (-), with PL at 67.0 Hz.

Christmas Party photographs

This is a small selection from the ones taken by Bob. For the complete portfolio please go the Club's website. [Click here!](#)





Trading Post

For sale:

1989 Blazer. 2 door, 5.4L, 4WD, 50000 miles

Been garaged its entire life and has a 6in Lift Kit with chrome rims with round step bars and 4 fog lights and a roo bar on the front.

Comes with Icom706 MKII with High Sierra Screwdriver antenna, Kenwood TM-731A 2m/70cm dual band. Tiny Track II APRS and APRS antenna. 2m Loop SSB antenna and 2/70 Antenna.

\$5,000.00 OBO.

Please e-mail Gary at glrandall@comcast.net or phone 239-466-3375



Cartoon Corner (thanks George!)



"No Greg went to the ham auction this afternoon, to get rid of a couple old radios that were cluttering up the place...Oh I think I hear him pulling in now!"

Editors Ramblings

Another year nearly over and with it a change in leadership for the Club with David Schaare (W4SFR) taking over the reins in place of Peter (KK4PG) who has served the Club excellently during his tenure. Thank you Peter for all your hard work!

The Christmas Party was well attended and many old and new faces were there. Holding the event in the VFW was an inspired idea as the drinks prices were extremely favorable! Thanks to Steve (KD4VRY) for providing the acoustic musical entertainment and to everyone who turned up.

With that, it only leaves me to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and lets hope 2009 is a somewhat more prosperous year than the one just ending!

73

David
KG4ZLB

Club Information

Meeting Time: 4th Tuesday 7:30pm Golden Gate Community Center
4701 Golden Gate Parkway
Naples FL

Club Repeater: WB2QLP
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: KI4UAT
Tim Gibbons

Secretary: W2HI
Bob Graf

Treasurer: K2ZEL
Bill Reynolds

Past President: KK4PG
Peter Gaddy

Technical Director:
Tim Wallen, KC4SSD

Emergency Comm. Director: N1DL
Karl Geng

Newsletter Editor: KG4ZLB/M0ZLB
David Worboys

<http://www.m0zlb.com>

Webmaster: W2HI
Bob Graf

Ops. Director: Vacant

Public Information Officer: Vacant

Special Events Co-ord. Vacant

Awards Manager: Vacant

VE Liaison: Vacant

Social Chair: Vacant

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the



**Amateur Radio Association
of Southwest Florida, Inc.**

Web Site

www.araswf.org