



ARASWF

Newsletter



Vol. XXIV No.9 The Journal of the Amateur Radio Association of Southwest Florida
September 08

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Next Meeting will be held on September 23rd 2008!!

From the President's Shack

The next order of business for our club will be the annual nomination of Officers and Directors to serve for the next year. At our September Meeting I will ask for volunteers to comprise a nominating Committee.

Victor Hill of the Golden Gate Fire District is seeking our assistance to help a number of C. E. R. T. volunteers obtain their Amateur Radio Licenses. I have also learned that a number of Sheriff's officers would like to obtain a Ham License. I will coordinate with these departments and report at the next meeting.

73's.

Peter
KK4PG



Echolink update

Carl, WA9ZIF reports that the Echolink system is now up and running satisfactorily!



Meeting Minutes

Amateur Radio Association of Southwest Florida

Regular Monthly Business Meeting held at the Golden Gate Community Center, Golden Gate, Florida, on Tuesday, August 26th, 2008

Directors Present: Peter Gaddy, KK4PG – President

Bob Graf, W2HI - Secretary
G. William Reynolds, K2ZEL – Treasurer
Tim Wallen, KC4SSD – Technical Director

Apologies: Tim Gibbons – Vice President
Karl Geng, N1DL – Emergency Communications Director

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Called To Order:

There being a quorum present with 12 members (including 4 directors) and 2 guests, in attendance, Peter, KK4PG, 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. Visiting guests Alan Boll, KF4DNL, and Garardo Reyes, HI3GRF, introduced themselves (both became ARASWF members at the conclusion of the meeting.)

Reading & Approval of Previous Minutes:

Reading of the Minutes was dispensed with since the minutes of the July 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 August 26, 2008, summarized as follows:

Beginning Balance, 1/1/2008	\$ 4,520.29
Income for the period:	\$2,641.50
Expenses for the period	<u>(\$2,063.82)</u>
Ending Balance	\$5,097.97

Bill further reported there are no large expenditures planned in the foreseeable future.

Officers' Reports:

Nominations: Peter, KK4PG, reminded the membership that it not too early to start thinking about candidates for club Officer positions next year, and he will soon be appointing a nominating committee to formally make such considerations.

Christmas Party: Peter also inquired of the membership their feelings about the location of last year's Christmas Party (VFW), and indicated that we will consider the same location for this year.

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ARES: Peter discussed the situation in Collier County and the apparent dissolution of ARES by the EC, and what may be done to resurrect an active ARES here. Bill, K2ZEL, then took some time to outline the duties of the EC and what his responsibilities are in forming and maintaining an ARES organization. It is apparent that the present circumstances are not conducive to having an active ARES, and Peter outlined several steps in trying to correct the situation.

Field Day Certificates: Bob, W2HI, passed out to the membership Appreciation Certificates for their participation and help in making Field Day 2008 a success. Certificates for members not present will be held by Bob and brought to future meetings where those participating members who were absent at this meeting can pick them up.

Old Business:

New Business:

146.67 signals from the East Coast: Mike, WD8RFL, reported that signals from the AREC VHF net held on Saturdays at 7:30 pm from the east coast were booming into the Naples area, being transmitted on 146.67 from a 400-foot high tower there with a circular radiation pattern. Peter, KK4PG, reported that the antenna there used to be skewed for the eastern coastline, but when the antenna was damaged during Wilma in 2005, it was replaced with a new one and adjusted for a more circular radiation pattern, thus the strong signal into the Naples area.

Committee Reports:

Special Feature:

Peter played for the membership a video presentation about Digital Voice Communications, that included a segment about such operating on the HF bands, most notably 14.236 MHz. Another segment about VHF Digital Voice Communications was not played, and will be presented at a future meeting. The presentation discussed the use of the AOR Fast Modems, models 9800 and 9000, and also the use of down loadable software, including WinDRM and the

newer FDMDV, both of which utilize a computer sound card. One feature of this presentation was the demonstration of a plug-in USB sound card, which caught everyone's attention. It was stressed during the presentation that high power is not required for excellent Digital Voice Communications – typically less than 100 watts is sufficient. Finally, it was suggested in the video that this means of communication might have to be channelized in the future, not unlike VHF repeater activity, because it really is not compatible with SSB operations.

50/50:

The 50/50 raffle was won by Jeff, NJ2F.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Peter, KK4PG, at 8:35 pm.

Bob Graf, W2HI
Secretary



New Members

We would like to welcome Alan Boll, KF4DNL and Gerardo Reyes, HI3GRF, both of Naples, to membership of the Club. Welcome gentlemen!



Trading Post

Nothing this month!



Just who may be listening (?)

Can our signals be picked up on other planets?



Gliese C is a very long way away

A television company has joined forces with a social networking site to send a message to the nearest theoretically inhabitable planet. But can our television and radio broadcasts already be picked up in space?

There is no widely accepted evidence of intelligent extraterrestrial life.

And yet the idea of sending messages to whoever is out there has been a recurrent theme over the years, whether it has been the plaques on Pioneer 10 and 11, Blur's call-sign for Beagle 2, the Arecibo message of 1974 or the Soviet "Mir" message of 1962.

The latest is a collaboration between RDF and Bebo to send a signal to the planet Gliese C, more than 20 light-years away, carrying 500 messages from earth.

In a letter to the Daily Telegraph, former BBC News website science editor Dr David Whitehouse raised the possibility that transmissions from Earth could draw the attention of "malevolent aliens", were any to exist.

But ordinary television and radio broadcasts can also travel out of Earth's atmosphere and through space, albeit quickly becoming mind-bogglingly diffuse and hard to pick up.

Space scientist Dr Chris Davis, of the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, says it is possible that television and radio signals from Earth could be picked up on other planets, but it isn't easy.

Some radio waves, such as those of a short-wave frequency, bounce back off the ionosphere and are therefore poor candidates to be picked up in space. But waves like FM radio or television signals can pierce it and travel through the vacuum of space at the speed of light.

"There are two things that you would need to get a signal [to other planets] - firstly, it has to be able to leave our planet, secondly it would have to have as much power as possible," says Dr Davis.

"As you go into space that power would dissipate. They would need more and more sensitive equipment to pick it up."

In the case of the RDF/Bebo message, it is being sent in a concentrated beam by the giant RT-70 radio telescope in Ukraine.

But television and radio broadcasts are omni-directional - albeit focused as much as possible towards the horizon - and that means a lot of diffusion.

Assuming the energy spread out equally in a sphere, and that the receiver on Gliese C was as big as the planned Square Kilometer Array of antennas on Earth, the television signals reaching the planet would be a billion, billion, billion times smaller than the original signal generated on Earth, says Dr Maggie Aderin, a space scientist at technology firm Astrium.

"Detecting a signal like this with lots of background noise would be incredibly hard, but what they would look for is a pattern in the signals to show that they were not naturally occurring."

And that of course is what is going on on Earth in the form of the Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence program.

Seti uses facilities such as the Allen Array in California to, among other things, look for meaningful patterns in radio waves from space. And that means if there were aliens out there, they could be doing the same thing.

"Some of our radars are easily detectable quite far, hundreds of light-years, into space, if the aliens wish to try, and if they're in the beam," says Seth Shostak, an astronomer at Seti.

"Of course, no one more than about 50-70 light-years away will have yet heard from us, but I figure that our earliest broadcasts are washing over about one new star system each day. So the potential audience is growing."

Shostak calculates that Nasa's recent broadcast of Beatles music towards Polaris, the North Star, using a 210ft antenna and 20kw of power, would require any potential aliens to

have an antenna seven miles across to be aware of it. To actually receive it as music, this would need to be increased to a 500-mile wide antenna. Polaris is 430 light-years away.

But if aliens can watch our television, there might be a problem. Astronomer Carl Sagan, in his book *Contact*, suggested the first high-powered television broadcast the aliens would have picked up would be Hitler's broadcasts at the Nuremberg rallies.



The Seti project is listening out for alien broadcasts

A different "mobile" installation

The local hams here on the mountain kept asking me how come I have a mobile rig in every car but not in my NEV (neighborhood electric vehicle).

Well I finally did it as you can see in the pictures. I use a German AEG-Telefunken man pack that Ulrich Rohde (of Rohde & Schwarz fame) N1UL ex KA2WEU of Marco Island had designed with his team some years ago. (take a look at his web site <http://www.marcoisland.org/ka2weu.htm>)

It can do 20 Watts SSB and CW and with the homemade interface box attached I have also done digital modes (MFSK, PSK, Olivia and RTTY).

Within 10 minutes I worked a station in Texas and one in Vermont. However when in motion the regulator or the motor or both make a racket and the noise is S9. Got to work on that.

The advantage of the manpack is that it is self contained and has a built-in antenna tuner. Its very rugged and can be submerged in 3 ft of water for an hour without harm - so some

rain won't hurt it.

Its a great unit for first responders in EMCOM and I intend to bring it to Naples for that purpose.



Touring in style!

We left Marco Island in April on our big trip out west in a new motor coach and car and thought some of you amateur radio operators might be interested in the ham gear we're carrying.



The car we tow is an '07 Ford Edge equipped with an IC-706, 2 & 70cm on-glass antenna, and a quick release mount for 40m, 20m, and 17m Hamstick's. When not in use the 'Sticks fit neatly through a coat hook out of the way of passengers and cargo.



The 706 head is mounted in the center console and the audio is routed through the car stereo. When Lisa KK9TTL is driving or disappears in an outlet mall, I'll often operate on 20m. I carry a set of headphones in the glove box in case the whistles and screeches get to be too much. By the way, when you've got a mobile rig in your car, the mate's shopping is never a problem - the "gatherer" goes inside to forage and the "hunter" plays contentedly with the radio.



That's the 144/440 antenna on the right rear glass of the Edge. On the coach the elevated bat wing which cranks down for travel is for off-air TV, a Hamstick dipole is at the rear, and the coach's glass-mount 144/440 antenna is on the driver's side window poking out at an angle - necessary so it doesn't go boing-boing on the roof cap. The Direct TV in-motion dome is just barely visible between the air horns. If we want we can watch TV going down the road. . . but it's not prudent.

We use an IC-7000 in the coach. The head is mounted to the driver's left and yes, there's room to get a can of pop in and out of the cup holder if you're careful. The audio is routed through the coach sound system - you haven't lived until you've heard HK3ZOR in Bogotá in 5.1 surround sound.

The business end of the radio sits conveniently in a large rigid map pocket beneath the cup holder, out of sight. Power and antenna cables go out of the cockpit into an electronics bay with a door to the outside.



The 7000 is set up to monitor CB Ch.19 (27.185 MHz) for road and safety reports. CB comes in handy plus it doubles as a vocabulary builder - at times the language is quite colorful - but knowing what's going on up ahead is important.

On the 2-meter side in the coach we use a glass mount antenna which also covers the 440 band. I've programmed the 7000 with several CB channels (1, 9, 31 plus 19) plus FRS frequencies for when we convoy where those are being used for inter-coach communication. We occasionally monitor and announce we're listening on 146.52 but in all our travels we've never once had a comeback.

When we arrive at a destination I usually separate the car from the coach while KK9TTL Lisa checks in. Then we use a 2 meter simplex frequency for car-to-coach coms with 'TTL in the lead as we find our camp site (someday I'd like to hear, "There's a topless gal sunbathing at Site 29" but instead it's usually, "Watch out for that low hanging branch on the right!").

We also carry a couple of handhelds, two scanners, an MFJ antenna analyzer, and various spare connectors, parts, and other accessories. Plus, if I really get in a jam, I have access to the unlisted phone numbers of K3AVR on Marco and WA9TIR in Chicago who serve as unpaid technical advisors for our expeditions. They both helped immeasurably getting all this stuff set up and working - and not one hole was drilled in the coach!

The main HF antenna is a 20 meter Hamstick dipole on an MFJ-1906H collapsible mast manually elevated about 35 feet. The mast is made of nested fiberglass sections secured with compression clamps with the bottom section resting in a sleeve I fashioned and secured to the rear hitch with band clamps.



This setup is for stationary use only! For travel we collapse the mast, remove it from the sleeve, disconnect the 'Sticks, and store it all in one of the basement bays. If we're in a place where the dipole can't be erected because of trees or overhead wires I can connect the 7000 to the antenna on the Edge. . . or just use the Edge's 706. At present I simply run the coax from the front along and under the side of the coach to the back. Perhaps someday we'll secure it permanently under the rig but in the meantime it's handy to be able to run it to the Edge when necessary. I suppose we could route the coax back to the Edge when towing and use the car's Hamstick with the 7000, but frankly I don't like operating while piloting 60,000 pounds of motor home and car down the road at 75 mph. As we travel around the country we usually try to check in to the Spiderweb Net that runs daily between 8:30 and 9:30 AM Eastern on 14.347 MHz Quite a few of the folks from Marco and some from Naples participate. We also try to call CQ occasionally on that frequency when we're running around in the car when the coach is "docked."

And we can connect to the Internet from anywhere using a Motosat Datastorm dish. We wouldn't want to miss all that spam!



The Datastorm mates with a Motosat controller, a Direcway/Hughes modem and a garden variety wi-fi router. The [Datastorm website](#) is an excellent resource if you're interested in this kind of thing.

But wait, there's more!

Other antennas porcupine off our bus. The two little ones you see to the right of the satellite dish are for AM and FM into our stereo system. Toward the front there are several antennas for the combination Pioneer AVIC-03 in-dash AM/FM/GPS/MP3/Sirius radio, back-up camera with audio pick-up, and CD/DVD player. Yup, that's all in one unit; it also does Blue tooth cell phone. To feed the TVs there's the previously mentioned bat wing for local broadcasts and the KVH in-motion dish in a forward dome



The AV compliment includes a 5.1 surround sound amplifier and tuner, DVD, VCR, Direct TV receiver with digital video recorder, and a switch box.

We have plenty of video. There's a TV above the dash, another at the opposite end of the living area, one in the bedroom, and one more in an outside bay with a separate AM/FM/CD player next to it. All four are hi-def 32" Sony Bravia's. Through the switch box we can route any combination of satellite, DVD, off-air or VCR inputs to any or all of them.

Our coach is a Mountain Aire made by Newmar, floor plan #4123. If you'd like to see pictures of the inside or read up on the specs, go to this website:

<http://www.newmarcorp.com/models/luxury/Mountain%20Aire/60>

The layout, colors, and pictures shown are exactly the same as ours.

In case you're interested in keeping up with our adventures, we send out sporadic narratives about what we're seeing and doing. If you'd like to be on our distribution list, just drop a note to kk9tt@arrl.net.

We've been all through the West this year and hope to be back on Marco Island at the end of October. . . as soon as we get a certified letter from NOAA that there will be no more hurricanes this season!



Solar Cycle 23/24 ?

Comments from Solar Cycle 24.com

So the big story out now, is the first spotless month in quite some time. The sun really does not know what the date is, So it did not exactly plan to take the month of August off. In 1996 there was up to 42 spotless days in a row depending on who you talk to. This started in September 96 and dragged into October 96. Currently there is 43 days technically without a sunspot counted by NOAA. There was however a small sunspot that formed, but was short lived and did not receive a NOAA number. Catania did give this region a number on the other hand. Bottom line is that nothing earth shattering is going on right now. If things continue like this for another month, then that will be a very different story. We will all see what September brings us.

Interesting viewing at:

<http://www.solarcycle24.com/>



What being an E comm Operator means to me

I got started in Emergency Communication with the Red Cross over 15 years ago. I started as a volunteer in Tampa at the Florida Hurricane Watch, later in Orlando as the State Communications Chair.

When I started I thought I would be working with all sorts of neat radio equipment. Well not so, I was asked to help set up the Phones, Computers, Faxes, but no radio equipment. I suppose I could have told them "Hey I am here to talk on the radios, not fax stuff!" Well common sense prevailed and I pitched in and learned how to set all that up in less than 4 hours! Each time I went to the Hurricane Watch it got easier. Had to program the Fax machines each time, got to be pretty good at it. But wait, that has nothing to do with radio stuff... Well yea, but it is communicating. Phones are for communicating, Faxes are for communicating, Computers, well you get the point.

As an ECOMM Operator you may not be asked to just talk on a Ham Radio. You may be asked to help with Phones, Computers, or Faxes. At some time you may even be asked to talk on a non-ham radio. Why you ask? Well true or not a lot of folks think hams know how to use phones, faxes, computers and all that communications equipment, go figure. So when you show up as a ECOMM Operator you may be asked to help with all that other

communications equipment, as a matter of fact, if the normal communications equipment does not fail, you may not need to talk on you ham radio at all. However if the normal communications equipment takes a dump it is going to probably happen when the weather is not the best(strong winds, high water) if you are not all ready there, you are not going to be able to get there in an emergency. You have to all ready be there.

So I guess you have a choice, you can show up with the attitude that, I am part of our community and I am here to do what it takes to help our community. Or, you can choose to not help. I think the Amateur radio operators in_our county have the capacity to help the community; they just need to step up and do it.

To all who have stepped up in the past, THANK YOU!!! Please continue to do so.

Fred C. Edwards KF4MJJ

Hamfest Announcements

43rd Annual Melbourne HAMFEST

and

ARRL Florida State Convention

Sponsored by the Platinum Coast Amateur Radio Society (PCARS)

October 11 & 12, 2008

Saturday: 9AM-5PM Sunday: 9AM-2PM

Setup: Fri, Oct 10th at 6:00PM to 9:00PM, Sat, 7:30AM to 9:00AM

Talk in: W4MLB on 146.25/146.85 repeater - No PL (Open Repeater)

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

See more info and late updates on our PCARS website www.pcars.org Go to the PCARS

Editors Ramblings

At the time of writing we appear to have dodged Hurricane Ike so that's a relief for all concerned. A very busy Hurricane season and it can't end too soon!

Whilst doing a little housekeeping on the membership e-mail addresses recently, I realised that I had continued to e-mail Newsletters and other stuff to Jordan, WB2QLP, SK. The interesting thing is that nothing has been bounced back as "inactive", "no user name", "over quota"...nothing!

Therefore I am hoping that somewhere Jordan is reading everything I send him.

Until next month....

73

David
KG4ZLB/MOZLB



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 Coord. Vacant

Awards Manager: Vacant

VE Liaison: Vacant

Social Chair: Vacant

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Web Site

www.araswf.org