

THE PILOT KNOB AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



QRZ

QRZ VOLUME 1, ISSUE 11 NOVEMBER, 2005

QST-FROM THE SHACK

By Mike Stewart, AB0VM

If you missed October's meeting, you missed a good one! (OK, so the second part was good, but we do have to conduct our Club business). Ron Cowan, KB0DTI, our Kansas ARRL Section Manager, joined us as the guest speaker. Ron gave members an overview of the Section's efforts with emergency preparedness, and he outlined several key initiatives regarding amateur support to served agencies. He noted the strong ARES group we have in Leavenworth County-one made possible by your participation. Ron reminded us that effective amateur support begins at the local level.

Most importantly, Ron challenged us in three key areas: growing new Hams, public relations, and "elmering." I haven't done enough in a few of these areas. Maybe 2006 will offer opportunities to do better. Only through a steady inflow of new, trained operators can we sustain both the hobby and the service aspects of amateur radio. I'd like to discuss this further in a future QRZ and at Club meetings and I welcome your ideas as to how PKARC can do more in this regard.

On a promising note, we had several new faces-both licensed and soon-to-be licensed-in the crowd at the October meeting, and we look forward to adding more. Make sure to do your part by welcoming new folks to our meetings. And some of you old faces ought to join us as well. We'd like to have more members at monthly meetings.

Ron also mentioned an interesting statistic; one that is rather troubling. Of the over 7,000 plus licensed operators in Kansas, only 21% are affiliated with the ARRL. That's about 1,500 of the total number of eligible operators. Not many when you consider all of the benefits associated with the League's activities. If you haven't already done so, I urge you to consider joining the ARRL. There is strength in numbers, and the Kansas Section could certainly use your talent and capabilities as a full ARRL member.

Please take a look through this month's Newsletter where you'll find information on the November meeting and our upcoming Christmas Party. Hope to see you at both. 73s, Mike, AB0VM

Special points of interest:

- *QST-FROM THE SHACK*
- *Club Purpose*
- *Club Information-Officers, Nets, Meetings, Social Events*
- *Upcoming Hamfest Schedule*
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PKARC TEST DATES

Club members and others interested in taking the FCC examinations for the various license classes should know that testing sessions for the Club have been set at the American Red Cross building on Shawnee Street, Leavenworth. The final testing date for 2005 is scheduled for 16 December. Please notify Martha Auchard at 772-7350 of your desire to take the test, so Volunteer Examiners can be notified and all the elements you need are on hand.

If you need assistance preparing, please ask any of the Club officers. Classes will be held also throughout the year depending on the number of those interested in devoting the time.

ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION

The PKARC Constitution and By-Laws require that PKARC hold an annual meeting in November. "The regular meeting of the Club in November shall be known as the Annual Meeting and be for the purpose of electing officers and any other business that shall arise." You'll find information elsewhere in this month's QRZ regarding the 2006 slate of officers. "Any other business that shall arise" includes a discussion of the Christmas Party and ideas for the 2006 program schedule. Bring your ideas regarding what you'd like to see and do in the coming year. This will be an open discussion, and everyone is welcomed and encouraged to participate.

We hope to see you there.

**CLUB
OFFICERS
NEEDED FOR
2006
ELECTIONS
SCHEDULED
FOR
NOVEMBER
MEETING**

Return of the 224.54 Repeater

Brian Short, KC0BS, informs us that the 224.54 repeater has returned to the air in Kansas City. Signal reports from anyone within 100 miles of Kansas City who has 220 capability will be welcome. Reports should be sent to kc0bs@arrl.net.

The repeater is located in Basehor, Kansas, along with the 145.390 repeater and K0SUN APRS node. It's height is 220 feet with 350 watts ERP and .31 microvolt sensitivity.

FROM THE KICKAPOO QRP OPERATING DESK

GARY, WB0MNA

Last month my comments concerned the 2005 Albuquerque Hot Air Balloon Fiesta and what it would be like to operate Ham radio from a hot air balloon. This month's comments will cover the results of that event which was held from September 30 to October 9.

To start with, the weather was not good for a large part of the Fiesta. We were able to fly on October 1, 2, 3, and 8. We set up to glow in the evenings on the field on those same dates. The wind and rain kept us on the ground the rest of the week. It was only a fair week for flying, so there were not many opportunities to use Ham radio in the balloon.

While this was disappointing, it still left us with an opportunity to discuss the aspects of using Ham radio when flying. There were three other Hams on the crew and several people with an interest in becoming Ham radio operators. The potential Hams' interests centered on the communications aspects for flying the balloon. They could easily see the strengths of Ham radio over the FRS (Family Radio Service) and aviation band radios currently in use. Our balloon team has been using the FRS type radios mostly and the interference from the public on the flying field along with other balloon crews using the same type of radios was quite strong.

Due to our sponsor using up the passenger space in the gondola on every flight we were able to do, there were no opportunities to display the advantages of using a 144/440 MHz FM handheld radio to the pilot. While this was disappointing, we were able to show some of the crew how well we could communicate between the chase vehicles. The only problem was we had difficulty keeping in touch with the pilot who was using the FRS radio to communicate with the chase crew.

Fortunately, the communications with the FRS radios was effective enough to make contact with the pilot to find out her intentions for making a landing. This communications between the pilot and chase crew is very important. It's always good to have your chase crew present when landing. Their job at this point is to catch the balloon gondola as even a small amount of wing will cause the balloon to drag along the ground when landing and increases the chances of passengers being injured, or the balloon being blown into some fence, building or worse yet...power lines.

Another aspect of using Ham radio in flying hot air balloons was the need for APRS

Automatic Position Radio System, when tracking the balloon. Even though the balloon is up in the air where you would think you can see it all of the time, this is not the case. The trees, hills and valleys along the flight path make visual contact impossible at times. This along with the 700 other balloons in the air at the same time can create problems with keeping your balloon in sight. Another problem is the roads don't always go to where your balloon is landing and the traffic on the roads keeps you from staying up with the balloon most of the time.

With an APRS transmitting device on the balloon, we could track the actual path of the balloon with a laptop computer, two meter radio and portable antenna on the chase vehicle. Using UI-View and Pmap7 software on the laptop computer, it would be easy to find the best roads or path to get into where the balloon has landed.

Hopefully, when we fly again, we'll get a better chance to test the combination of Ham radio and hot air balloons. Our next event for flying hot air balloons will be January 19, 20, 21 and 22 in Bluff, Utah. This is a winter event and yes, hot air balloons do fly in cold weather. With the burners generating several million BTU of heat every time the pilot needs to add heat, it's easy to stay warm while in the gondola.

I'll let you know how this event works out in a future article, so stay tuned. In the meantime, start thinking about our second annual "Freeze Your Keys" operating event in February, 2006. As we move forward with the planning for this event, we'll keep everyone informed, so warm up your radios and break out your winter coats.

Gary A, WB0MNA

**VOLUNTEERS ARE STILL NEEDED
FOR HURRICANE KATRINA/RITA
RECOVERY**

MAKING FRIENDS AROUND THE WORLD!

I first heard that phrase while taking the Tech License class with the Pilot Knob ARC. I received my license in November, 2004. While driving to work one morning in late February, 2005 at 5 a.m., I heard someone calling CQ,CQ. I did not hear anyone respond, so I answered the call and soon learned I was talking with Claus, 0Z3ABU, from Copenhagen, Denmark.

We were talking via a mode known as EchoLink. We talked for about twenty minutes about such things as where we were, what time it was there, our families, and the weather. When I arrived at work, I thanked Claus for the QSO and signed off. I looked up his call sign on QRZ.com and found he had a web site, which had some pictures of him, his antennas and his radio equipment. It also had an e-mail address for him, so I sent him a brief e-mail thanking him again for the QSO.

Now the story really gets good. In early September, I was asked if I would like to go to Nordborg, Denmark for my company on business. Well, not being one to turn down an all-expense paid trip, I said sure I'll go. Three of us were going, one of whom was from Denmark. Then I started thinking about Claus. I learned that we would have a seven hour layover in Copenhagen before our next flight and wondered if we would be able to meet each other. Well, I sent Claus an e-mail and asked if he remembered me and told him of my upcoming trip and if it would be possible to meet somehow. A couple of more e-mails and everything was arranged to meet at the airport.

We arrived in Copenhagen at 1:30 p.m., Sunday, September 24th. Claus and his wife Hanne were waiting for us. Claus had a small van and came prepared. The Danish like their beer and Claus had a few cold ones waiting for us in the van. It's very bad to drink and drive in Denmark, but he said it was fine for the passengers to do so while riding around. Claus and Hanne drove us all around Copenhagen showing us sites and stopping for us to take pictures.

Toward the end of the day, we took Claus and Hanne out to a nice dinner where we all sat and talked and thanked them for doing this for us. When we returned to the airport, I gave Claus a QSL card that I had brought along for him and he also had the same

(Continued)

Idea because he had one for me. I told Claus and Hanne if they were ever in the U.S. to look me up, so I might return the favor. Well, we all said our good-byes and the three of us went to catch our next flight. I had a wonderful time those ten days in Denmark, but the part I'll remember most was the time spent with OZ3ABU and his wife Hanne.

Once you get your amateur radio license, it not only allows you to talk on the radio, but it is also a membership card into an ever-growing family of radio operators, a family in which you truly can make friends around the world. By the way, Claus and I have also been sending each other e-mails now and then. All this from talking to someone on a radio.... Glenn Courtwright, KC0TIE

ZERO QSL BUREAU MOVES

The Tenth Call Area QSL Bureau has moved from Overland Park, Kansas to its new home in Florissant, Missouri. The Mississippi Valley DX/Contest Club assumed responsibility for incoming QSL cards from the KC DX Club on September 19, 2005. The new Bureau Manager is Norm McCourt, AC0N.

The QSL Bureau serves as a clearing house for incoming QSL cards from DX contacts. Cards for Hams in the Tenth Call Area are sent from an overseas bureau to the W0 Bureau in bulk. As cards come in to the Bureau, a volunteer sorter places incoming cards into an envelope with the amateur's call on it. Each of the thirteen volunteer sorters is responsible for two letters of the alphabet.

If you have paid envelopes with labels on file with the Bureau, your cards will be mailed to you periodically. "We supply envelopes for you at five for \$3.00. This includes one .37 cent stamp on each. You may purchase additional extra postage at .23 cents each. These are for mailings over one ounce. Please supply us with enough mailing labels for the amount of postage you order. Show your call sign, name, address and zip code on all labels."

If you would like to put envelopes on file with the Bureau, send labels with the required information plus the appropriate amount to the following address:

(Continued)

W0 QSL Bureau

P.O. Box 907

Florissant, Missouri 63032

The new Manager reminds all Hams who use the Bureau to include your call sign on any correspondence. Detailed instructions for the Bureau are located at its web site: <http://www.zeroburo.com>. Reminder: Outgoing QSL cards from your station to overseas go through the ARRL Outgoing QSL Bureau. Don't send outgoing cards to the W0 Bureau. See the ARRL web site for information on sending your cards to DX stations.

DID YOU KNOW? AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE PLATES AVAILABLE

Ever see a bugcatcher going down the highway and wonder whose car it was?

Kansas is one of many states that allow Hams to display their call sign on their automobile tag. The best news? It's cheap! Known as an Amateur Radio Operator (ARO) tag, Kansas Hams can display their call on their vehicle for only one dollar. This compares to the forty dollars to obtain a "personalized" tag.

In order to receive an ARO tag, simply provide a copy of an unrevoked, unexpired radio license (preferably you own) issued by the Federal Communications Commission to your County Treasurer. Only passenger cars or trucks (16,000 lbs. or less) qualify for ARO registration. You receive your Amateur Radio Operator tag approximately ninety days after ordering. The one dollar cost is in addition to registration, tag, title fees, and personal property taxes.

See your County Treasurer to order yours.

CLUB ELECTION BALLOT

The publication of this ballot constitutes public notification of nominees for Club officer positions for Calendar Year 2006 as required by the PKARC Constitution and By-Laws.

Those individuals listed below are running “unopposed” at the present time. The election of officers will take place at the monthly meeting on 3 November.

A member of the Nominating Committee will report this slate to the membership. The President will then open the floor for any additional nominations for each position. If there are no further candidates, a motion will be entertained to accept a motion from the floor for election by acclimation in accordance with the Club By-Laws. This motion must pass unanimously.

Anyone with a valid FCC amateur radio license and at least twenty-one years of age interested in serving who has been a member of the Club for one year is encouraged to seek office.

President

Mike Stewart, AB0VM

Vice President

Doug Thomas, KC5VKG

Secretary

Eric Hall, KC0RUR

Treasurer

Ed Menard, KD7QOR

THE PILOT KNOB AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

P.O. Box 632
Leavenworth, KS 66048
Http://www.pkarc.com

MEETINGS

Date: First Thursday of each month (except for December)
Time: 7:30 p.m., Central Time
Location: The American Red Cross
525 Shawnee

CLUB OFFICERS

PRESIDENT MIKE
STEWART, AB0VM

VICE PRESIDENT GARY
AUCHARD, WB0MNA

SECRETARY/TREASURER/
QRZ

ED MENARD, KD7QOR

AFFILIATIONS

THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY
LEAGUE
THE AMERICAN RED CROSS
THE LEAVENWORTH COUNTY
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT

The purpose of the club is to further the exchange of information and cooperation among members, to promote radio knowledge, fraternalism and individual efficiency, to provide assistance to the best advantage in the event of emergency, and to conduct club programs and activities to advance the general interest and welfare of amateur radio. Anyone interested in the activities of this organization will be eligible for membership. Members must comply with FCC rules and regulations, as well as rules established by the club. Dues are \$20 per year (no extra cost for spouse or minor children who are amateurs).

Editor's Note: QRZ is published monthly and may be quoted in other publications provided a credit line is included and the author (if known) is given acknowledgment. Items related to amateur radio will be advertised free of charge. Articles for publication in QRZ are always welcome and willingly accepted in any form. We reserve the right to edit material as necessary. Please let me know if you experience problems getting your issues of QRZ, or if it is received in a difficult to read state. Members are encouraged to receive their QRZ via E-mail, rather than paper copy. Requests to receive the hard copy version will be honored. Your effort to reduce club expenses will be appreciated.

Comments or suggestions regarding the QRZ format are welcome and appreciated.

Ed Menard, KD7QOR, QRZ Editor

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