

THE PILOT KNOB AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



QRZ

QRZ VOLUME 1, ISSUE 12 DECEMBER, 2005

QST-FROM THE SHACK

By Mike Stewart, AB0VM

December is traditionally a time for reflection. If you were to fish through your back issue of QRZ, you'd find the following tucked away in one of the stories: "Mark your calendars for December 2, 2005 when we'll gather again to give thanks for our blessings, remember our losses, and celebrate what we hope is another great year together."

Sometimes looking back can be painful, and other times it can be a joy. 2005 was a bit of both. We've said good-bye to some of our members, gained a few more, and spent some pretty decent time operating together. Members voiced their view about 2005 at the November meeting, and the 2006 officers will work to make sure we sustain those areas that members found useful, and we'll improve those areas where we fell short.

In last month's QST, I commented on one area needing progress-public relations. We didn't wait long to start needed improvements. The Club asked Dennis Pearson, KC0TJY, to serve as the Club's public relations chair. Dennis was also appointed as an ARRL Public Information Officer for the Kansas Section. He's already accomplished several steps that will raise awareness of PKARC in our community. Congratulations Dennis and thanks for stepping up to serve.

Our last event for 2005 is the annual Christmas dinner. We've added a few new wrinkles to the tradition, so please don't miss the opportunity to share in our annual Christmas gathering.

Thanks to all who made PKARC a better organization in the past year. 2006 can and will be better. You can count on it!

Have a great and blessed Christmas season.

73,

Mike

AB0VM

Special points of interest:

- *QST-FROM THE SHACK*
- *Club Purpose*
- *Club Information-Officers, Nets, Meetings, Social Events*
- *Upcoming Hamfest Schedule*
- *FCC Examination Schedule*

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MID-AMERICAN
BANK

REMEMBER THERE
WILL BE NO MEETING
ON THURSDAY, 1 DE-
CEMBER

JOIN US FOR CHRIST-
MAS DINNER ON FRI-
DAY EVENING.

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.

DECEMBER MEETING CHRISTMAS DINNER

PKARC's annual Christmas dinner will be held in the Lincoln Room of the Mid American Bank, corner of 4th and Delaware in Leavenworth on Friday, December 2nd. All Club members and friends of PKARC are welcome to attend.

Doors will open at 6 p.m. with dinner starting at 6:30 p.m. Park in the building's south lot (4th and Cherokee) and enter through the building's south door. Talk-in on 147.000+.

The Club will provide meat and drinks. Please bring a side dish to share. Dinner will cost \$2 per person, not to exceed \$6 per family. Please RSVP via RF or e-mail to Mike, AB0VM, or Ed, KD7QOR, with the number of adults and children.

The Club Treasurer will collect 2006 dues at the dinner. 2006 dues remain \$20 for regular membership and \$35 for repeater support (including autopatch privileges).

The evening's activities include presentation of the Buffalo Chip Award and the 2005 Leavenworth County Amateur Operator of the Year award. Mike, AB0VM, will make a short presentation on experiences in Mississippi with Hurricane Katrina support. PKARC has several door prizes for Hams, and we'll make sure the Harmonics take something home, too.

FROM THE KICKAPOO QRP OPERATING DESK

GARY, WB0MNA

It's official! The 2nd Annual "Freeze Your Keys" winter operating event has been scheduled. Mark your calendars for February 11, 2006. That's the date we will be meeting again at Weston Bend State Park on 45 Highway near Weston, Missouri. This is a one day event with the activity occurring between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

We will try to secure the same shelter house as last year for the event and hopefully the weather will allow us to set up antennas and rigs without really freezing vital body parts in the process.

We'll be operating QRP mode using batteries if possible, plus putting out signals on the 20 meter and 40 meter bands using CW and SSB. The operating event will be listed in the ARRL QST magazine "Special Events" section in the near future, so watch for it.

We're looking for hardy operators to come out and participate. Last year we had 14 hardy souls show up. We kept fairly warm last year and the lunch meal was really great. If you missed last time, here's another chance to get involved in this fun and interesting operating event.

We always have a Field Day in the summer, now it's time to find out what it takes to operate in the cold time of the year. A lot of things can change with the equipment and antennas during winter, so bring out a rig and give it a real cold weather test.

We'll be talking more about this topic at the Club meetings, so be sure to attend the January and February meetings for more information.

While we're on the topic of cold weather events, Martha and I will be going to Bluff, Utah in mid-January to attend a hot air balloon flying event. We'll be flying as many days as the weather will permit. It does get pretty cold in southern Utah in January, so the burners on the balloon will feel good for sure. I'll keep you posted in future newsletters on how this event turns out. Maybe I'll get a chance to do some Ham radio operating from the balloon.

Have a good holiday season and we'll see you at the January Club meeting.

Gary A.

WB0MNA

GROWING NEW HAMS

CAN WE DO BETTER?

Bringing along new amateur operators seems to be a bit like growing a good lawn. Some things are opposite what you'd think. Spring is the time for fresh green grass, right? But you plant new grass seed in early Fall, just before everything dies off for the Winter. Properly cared for, the new seedlings will establish a root system and will continue to grow strong roots in the Winter. Come Spring, the grass responds to the warmth and rain by coming back lush and green. Properly watered and fertilized, the lawn will do just fine, even in the hot Summers. The cycle continues as new seeds are put down.

So how is this like amateur radio, particularly with respect to new Hams? Simple. New operators need the same care and attention as the grass seedings. Cast to the wind without adequate water and fertilizer, only a few grass seeds survive. But properly planted and with the right amount of attention, many more will make it through the Winter. In the same way, new operators need to be cared for after they've received their license.

Ham radio, particularly Ham classes, seem to have the opposite approach in some respects. All the effort into producing new operators goes in before the license is received. For some new licensees, the last attention they receive from other Hams is from the VE team at the exam session. Afterwards, they're like the wayward grass seed, only taking root, if they're tough and lucky enough to pick up some knowledge and experience on their own. Is this good enough to grow new licensees into good operators?

Where did you really learn about Ham radio? If we're honest, most of us learned about amateur radio after we got our license and not as a result of studying for the test. Passing the test, quite frankly, only gets an operator a piece of paper. Only once the new licensee picks up a microphone (or straight key in a few rare instances) does learning really start. It's then that we translate the band limits from paper charts to the dials. It's then that we learn how to talk to others on a net. And it's after licensing that we learn our own personal system for identifying our station every ten minutes and at the end of each contact with our own call sign.

What does this mean to us as licensed operators? First, maybe we should each resolve to teach less experienced operators how to be good amateur communicators. We do this through good on the air example and gentle correction. We have some PKARC operators who are very good at this, and we should all follow their example. Second, maybe we should examine how we try to bring new operators into our midst. Quite possibly, we might find that other methods for getting prospective Hams through the licensing process are more effective and productive. Lastly, we might discover that classes need to occur after the license is received and not before, as is currently the case.

How can you help? New operators need your support to get more involved in amateur radio and to become more proficient. Consider doing your part to grow new Hams in PKARC. Volunteer to make a presentation at a Club meeting about your favorite mode or piece of equipment. Informative discussions about equipment and procedures give all of us, especially new operators, the chance to learn from your experience. Second, actively seek out the new operators and help them

(Continued)

along. Invite them over to your shack. Demonstrate your equipment, so they see good engineering and safety practices. Take them out to the workbench and demonstrate good soldering technique with some coax and PL-259s. Or let them have some third party HF time to spark their interest in progressing further. Third, think about becoming an ARRL-affiliated instructor. It's very true that teaching a subject makes you learn more about it. You gain something by the experience too. The teaching doesn't have to end with a license class. You might want to sponsor a new Ham course. Lastly, always provide a good example for other operators when you're on the air. They imitate you more than you know.

This winter, I'd ask each of you to consider how you can grow new Hams. PKARC is a great place to learn about the hobby and service aspects of Ham radio. Each of you has something to contribute, so pick a patch of grass and start watering!

MEMBER HAPPENINGS

At the Club November meeting, those attending voted unanimously for Mike, AB0VM, to continue on as President for 2006. Doug Thomas, KC5VKG, will be the new Vice President and QRZ Newsletter Editor. Eric Hall, KC0RUR, will assume duties as the Secretary and Ed Menard, KD7QOR, will continue on as Treasurer.

Dennis Pearson, our new PIO, recently became the Emergency Service Officer for the Kansas Wing of the Civil Air Patrol. He is also the Wing Nurse Officer and Assistant Communications Officer-Administrative. He commands the Leavenworth County Composite Squadron #124, which will soon be located on Fort Leavenworth. If Dennis weren't busy enough, he was also recently appointed the Staff Officer for Communications with the Lake Perry Flotilla of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

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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