



THE COMMUNICATOR

Newsletter of the TAMAMI AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Incorporated 30 November 1984 – Venice, Florida
Mailing Address: 1419 E. Manasota Beach Rd., Englewood, FL 34223-6341
Web Site -- <http://tamiamiarc.tripod.com>
W4AC Repeaters – 146.805 MHz(-), 444.100 MHz(+) both w/100 Hz PL



-- OCTOBER 2006 --

-- PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE --

Well, it's been a quiet month in South Sarasota County, and that's probably a good thing. My wife and I have enjoyed going on some nature hikes, the most recent of which was a guided tour of the Red Bug Slough, located near the intersection of Beneva and Clark in Sarasota. It's amazing to have a very nice preserve of wetlands and oak hammocks surrounded by city streets. Were it not for some traffic noises, one could imagine that they were in a truly rural area.

Reports from the North are that the weather is getting pretty chilly already, which probably accounts for a lot of the snowbirds we are already seeing. I'm noticing that my commute to TARC breakfasts is taking a bit longer than earlier this month.

The WA3RRS household will be making one more temporary move—this one to Nokomis—before we take up residence once again in sleepy Venice. We'll certainly be more than happy to be back from our odyssey!

VY 73 de Konrad-WA3RRS

-- TARC WEEKLY NETS --

The TARC Simplex Net meets every Tuesday at 7:30 PM on 146.580 MHz; the TARC Net is held every Thursday, except on meeting dates, at 7:30 PM on our 146.805 W4AC Repeater (- 600 Hz offset and 100 Hz PL tone required). In addition, the Snowbird Net meets daily on 14.278 MHz @ 10 AM, and on 7.230 MHz @ 7 PM.

-- UPCOMING DARN ACTIVITY --

The Diocese Amateur Radio Network (DARN) will conduct communications exercises at 11 AM and 7:30 PM on 10 October, and TARC members are encouraged to check in when prompted by the Net Control. As DARN makes use of our W4AC Repeater during these exercises, please avoid use of EchoLink during the exercise period. Thanks!

"Government is the only enterprise in the world which expands in size when its failures increase." – US District Judge Janice Brown

---000---

-- OCTOBER MEETING --

Our next TARC meeting will be at 7:00 PM on 12 October 2006 in the Community Room of The Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice, 601 South Tamiami Trail (Business US 41), across from the Venice Regional Health Center. After the business meeting, "Making Use of the Magic Numbers" will be discussed. Come out, see the refurbished meeting room, and show support of your club.

-- N4CTC HITS TOWN! --



Bob Preston-N4CTC was in town for a few days in mid-August, and some TARC members met with Bob for breakfast at Anita's, on US 41 in Osprey.

-- HAM RADIO REAL ESTATE --

Looking for a home where you can put up antennas without any neighborhood or governmental problems? How about a home already boasting a tower or more? Try <http://www.homes4hams.com>. A brief tour of some of the properties included two here in Florida, a beautiful home of six acres overlooking Santa Fe, New Mexico, and a home on 160 acres north of Houston, Texas that has a contest station with six towers. Possibly if more hams knew of this site the listing would be more extensive, however, it looks like a good start towards assisting hams find homes where they can possibly realize the station of their dreams.

TAMIAMI AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Minutes of the Meeting

14 September 2006

President Konrad Owens-WA3RRS called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM and led the pledge of allegiance. Special recognition was given to new TARC members Ron Hogarth-KI4QOE and Jack Schoenthaler-KI4REI, and to visitors Steve Belok-KC4HDD of Venice and Bob Faulcon-N1LVO of North Port. Introductions were then made all around.

MINUTES – Charlie Covell-W4DB moved that the minutes of the 10 August 2006 meeting be accepted as published in the September 2006 issue of *The Communicator*, seconded by Diana Gregory-KI4GRF, and passed.

CORRESPONDENCE – Jack-W4JS announced receipt of the flyer for the Melbourne Hamfest to be held 14-15 October.

TREASURER'S REPORT – Treasurer Don Gray-WD7A reported that the 10 August starting balance was \$4341.55. Receipts were \$12.00 from the August 50/50 drawing. Expenses were \$41.00 for one month's Internet service at the W4AC Repeater site, \$13.79 for printing and stamps, and \$20.00 to Jack-W4JS as a stipend for past miscellaneous expenses, totaling \$74.79. The ending balance is \$4278.76. Bob Avrutik-N1RA moved acceptance of the report, seconded by Jim LaCourse-AI4NQ, and passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

SUNSHINE – No news of any illnesses.

VE TESTING – Jack-W4JS reported that four candidates were successful at the 09 September VE session.

REPEATER/TECHNICAL – Stew Haag-W4MO reported that our W4AC Repeater is operating satisfactorily. Konrad-WA3RRS then reminded all of our weekly nets, both on the repeater and on simplex.

CLUB PROPERTY – Konrad-WA3RRS advised the membership that, at the 12 September TARC Board of Directors Meeting, the officers had voted that the ICOM IC-746PRO should be offered to Jeff Watson-W9NYX and his son John-KI4QOC, and that the Kenwood TS-440S should be offered to Diana Gregory-KI4GRF for use on a long-term basis. Use agreements, which call for annual review and for extraordinary use by the Club, were signed by Konrad and the respective parties. Experienced Club members will provide assistance setting up the equipment as necessary.

LIAISON TO QCWA – Jack-W4JS reported that 15 Suncoast Chapter 53 members and friends attended the 06 September lunch at the Panda Pavilion, US 41, in Venice. Starting 04 October, the Chapter

luncheon meetings will return to Denny's on Bee Ridge Road, Sarasota.

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS – Konrad announced the Board of Directors' decision to establish a TARC Public Relations Committee that would develop and initiate programs to promote Amateur Radio to the general public, and that would develop and conduct a TARC Training Program for entry level training of potential new amateurs. Diana-KI4GRF agreed to Chair this committee, assisted by John-KI4QOC and Stew Haag-W4MO.

ADJOURNMENT – A motion to adjourn at 7:28 PM was made by Stew-W4MO, seconded by San Yoder-K3SY, and passed. There were 15 members and two visitors present.

PROGRAM – Jack-W4JS offered a program on "The Ins and Outs of QSLing."

Jack Sproat-W4JS

Secretary

-- REGIONAL HAMFESTS --

- 07 October FREE!! At Terry Park Baptist Church, 7024 Merrill Rd., Jacksonville. TI: 146.790, Info: Billy-N4UF, 904-765-3230
- 14-15 Oct ARRL Florida State Convention, Platinum Coast ARS, Melbourne Auditorium, 625 E. Hibiscus Blvd., Melbourne. TI: 146.850, Info: Jan-K4QD, 321-956-2492
- 04 Nov Lake ARA Hamfest at Eustis Senior Center, 301 W. Ward Ave., Eustis. TI: 147.255 (PL 103.5), Info: David-KR4OW, 352-357-3485
- 04 Nov North Brevard ARC Hamfest at DAV Chapter 109, 435 Singleton Ave., Titusville. TI: 145.490 (PL 100), Info: Bob-N6USP, 321-264-2622

(From <http://bellsouthpwp.net/k/kb4vol>, the Bill Britton-KB4VOL site, and October 2006 QST)



Ever work this station? See page 5 for follow up.

CURRENT/PENDING DX ACTIVITY & PROPAGATION FORECASTS

CURRENT and/or SCHEDULED DX ACTIVITY										
COUNTRY – CALL SIGN	ACTIVITY PERIOD	BEAR-ING	HF BANDS and BEST OPENING TIMES (GMT)							
			80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10
Namibia – V5/DF6QP, DJ8VC & DL8JS	Now to 13 Oct	107	23-05	22-06	20-00	17-21	17-19	18-20	NO	--
Mongolia – JT800OK	Now to 08 Oct	354	10-11	07-13	23-01	00-01	NO	NO	NO	NO
Aland Is – OH0JWH	Now to 08 Oct	31	23-08	03-10	12-19	14-16	15-16	NO	NO	NO
Namibia – V5/G3RWF	Now to 07 Oct	107	23-05	22-06	20-00	17-21	17-19	18-20	NO	NO
Malawi – 7Q7CE	Now to 06 Oct	90	23-04	21-04	21-01	16-20	16-18	14-18	NO	NO
Corsica – TK9Z	Now to 05 Oct	51	22-07	20-08	18-01	14-18	14-19	NO	NO	NO
South Cook Is – E51APX	Now to 05 Oct	246	04-12	02-13	01-09	17-01	18-22	19-21	19-21	NO
Mayotte – TX6A & TX8A	01 – 27 October	85	23-03	21-04	20-00	17-20	17-18	16-18	NO	NO
Madagascar – 5R8/DJ7RJ	05 – 17 October	90	23-03	22-03	20-00	17-20	18-20	14-17	NO	NO
Palau – T8???	06 – 10 October	306	08-12	07-13	12-14	14-16	15-17	NO	NO	NO
Niue – ZK2???	06 – 20 October	252	05-12	03-13	02-13	17-01	18-22	19-22	19-22	NO
India – AT6MYL	15 – 29 October	19	23-01	22-02	20-22	13-16	NO	NO	NO	NO
Revilla Gigedo – XF4DL	17 Oct – 03 Nov	259	23-13	00-24	14-01	15-23	17-21	17-20	NO	NO
Cocos Keeling Is – VK9CGC	30 Oct – 20 Nov	3	2300	22-00	22-00	14-18	15-19	NO	NO	NO

Updated 28 September 2006, based on 27 September 2006 *QRZ DX*, and 25 September 2006 *The Weekly DX*

Note: **Time in bold** = Best Band(s) for opening; ??? = Call Sign not yet known; ++ = Phone Only; ** = CW Only; NO = No Opening forecast. Long Path bearings and opening times are underlined. All forecasts are calculated using *W6ELProp V.1.03* propagation software, available at <http://www.qsl.net/w6elprop/> by Sheldon C. Shallon-W6EL. Solar Flux and K-index varied in accordance with NOAA 27-day forecast.

-- SEPTEMBER SOLAR ACTIVITY --

During September, the Solar Flux ranged from 70 up to 87, with a mean value of 75.4 (vs. 90.8 for September 2005 and 103.1 for September 2004). The A-index was ≤ 10 on 22 days.

There were several days during September when the geomagnetic field ranged from disturbed to major storm levels. These events occurred rather well as predicted 04, 18-19 and 24 September, resulting in some radio blackouts. Otherwise, propagation conditions were generally favorable during the month.

-- OCTOBER PROPAGATION --

During October, solar activity is expected to be at very low to low levels. No greater than 10MeV proton events are expected.

The greater than 2 MeV electron flux at geosynchronous orbit is expected to be at high levels on 02-07 and again on 15-23 October.

The geomagnetic field is expected to be at quiet to unsettled levels for the majority of the period. Recurrent coronal hole wind streams are expected to rotate into geoeffective positions on 01-02, 14-15 and 21 October. Unsettled to major storm periods are possible 01-02 October, while unsettled to minor storm periods are possible 14-15 and 21 October. The Solar Flux should range from 70 to 75.

(From NOAA Weekly Forecast of Solar and Geomagnetic Activity, 26 September 2006 and NOAA 27-day Space Weather Outlook Table, 26 September 2006.

“To prevent inquiry is among the worst of evils.” – Thomas Holcroft (1745-1816), The Adventures of Hugh Trevor, 1794

-- THE MORSE MAESTRO --



Here's Bob Avrutik-NIRA at his compact but very effective station. Bob loves chasing DX on CW along with some PSK31 and RTTY on the side. A description of Bob's station follows on page 4.

CONTESTS & ACTIVITIES

Contest/Special Event	Begin-End Times/Dates	Bands/Modes	QSO With	Exchange
European Autumn Sprint	1600Z 07 Oct 1959Z 07 Oct	80 – 20 Meters Phone Only	European DXCC Entities	Both Call Signs, Serial #, Name
Oceania DX Contest	0800Z 07 Oct 0800Z 08 Oct	160 – 10 Meters Phone Only	VK/ZL/ Oceania Stations Only	R/S + Serial Number
10 – 10 Day Sprint	0001Z 10 Oct 2359Z 10 Oct	10 Meters Only SSB, CW, Digital	Members of 10-10 Interna- tional	Call, Name, State, 10-10#
North American RTTY Sprint	0000Z 15 Oct 0400Z 15 Oct	80 – 20 Meters RTTY Only	Anyone, Anywhere	Call Signs, Name, Serial #, QTH
European Autumn Sprint	1600Z 14 Oct 1959Z 14 Oct	80 – 20 Meters CW Only	European EXCC Entities	Both Call Signs, Serial #, Name
Oceania DX Contest	0800Z 14 Oct 0800Z 15 Oct	160 – 10 Meters CW Only	VK/ZL/Oceania Stations Only	R/S/T + Serial Number
FISTS Fall Sprint	1700Z 14 Oct 2100Z 14 Oct	80 – 10 Meters CW Only	Members of FISTS CW Club	R/S/T, QTH, Name, Power
RSGB 21/28 MHz Contest	0700Z 16 Oct 1900Z 16 Oct	15 and 10 Meters CW Only	United Kingdom Stations	R/S/T + Serial Number
Worked All Germany	1500Z 21 Oct 1459Z 22 Oct	80 – 10 Meters Phone and CW	German Stations	R/S/(T) + Serial Number
JARTS World Wide RTTY Contest	0000Z 21 Oct 2400Z 22 Oct	80 – 10 Meters RTTY Only	Anyone, Anywhere	R/S/T + Age of Operator
10 -10 International CW/Digital Contest	0001Z 28 Oct 2359Z 29 Oct	10 Meters Only CW, Digital Only	Members of 10-10 Interna- tional	Call, Name, State, 10-10#
CQ World Wide DX Contest	0000Z 28 Oct 2400Z 29 Oct	160 – 10 Meters Phone Only	DXCC Entities	R/S + CQ Zone (FL is Zone 5)

From October 2006 issues of *QST* and *WorldRadio*

-- CQ WORLD WIDE DX CONTEST --

Starting at 8:00 PM EDT 27 October, the CQ WW DX Contest is undoubtedly the biggest DX contest of any year. Dozens of contest stations are set up in areas where ham radio may otherwise be rather scarce, and virtually all the “big guns” come on the air for this contest. It’s an excellent opportunity for anyone to get on the air, work some DX, and see how well their station works. The exchange is simple: for Florida stations, it’s just “5 9 5.” Everybody is “5 9” in a contest, and we’re in CQ Zone 5. Give it a go!!

-- THE STATION AT N1RA --

Bob Avrutik-N1RA operates a station that proves you can be active on HF and work great DX from a home in a deed restricted community. Bob assembled his station within a clothes closet, from which he removed the bifold doors. Bob installed an operating desk and extra shelves to hold the equipment.

Bob’s xcvr is a Yaesu FT-1000D driving an Alpha 87A and into a Ten Tec Automatic antenna tuner. Also seen in the photo are various power supplies, a NIR-12 noise/interference reducer, an Alinco DR-

605 2-meter radio, and a KAM Plus TNC for RTTY, packet, etc.

For years, Bob used multiple dipole antennas stretched across the loft area of his home; only recently did he get permission to put up a Hy-Gain AV-640 vertical for 40 to 6 meters. Those dipoles served him very well, but he is most pleased with the new vertical.

Bob has shown us that if you really want to get on HF from a restricted area, you can do it. Not only can you get on, but you can be competitive with the “big kids.” Well done, Bob!

-- VANITY CALL SIGN FEE REDUCED --

Effective 06 September 2006, the regulatory fee to obtain or renew a vanity call sign was reduced slightly to \$20.80 for the 10-year license term. The next months promise to be active with vanity call sign renewals, as the first such licenses were issued in November 1996.

(From the *ARRL Newsletter* via the October 2006 issue of *WorldRadio*)

---000---

-- HS0AKO/K3ZXL BACK IN 1974 --



Yes, the HS0AKO QSL on page 2 was used by Dan Schaaf-K3ZXL, when he was with the USAF and stationed at Utapao Royal Thai Air Force Base. Dan had this Heathkit equipment set up in his locker.

-- DAN-K3ZXL IN 1996 --



Dan dropped out of ham radio for a spell but got the bug again when he moved to Punta Gorda. Dan regained his General ticket in May 2005 and upgraded to Extra in June 2005. As soon as his new home was finished, his station followed immediately.

-- THE HF STATION AT K3ZXL --



Vintage Yaesu equipment, with Good Luck Buddha. Dan rubs Buddha's head and in comes the DX.

-- THE VHF STATION AT K3ZXL --



Again, Dan uses vintage Yaesu equipment, running 200 watts on 6- and 2-meter Phone and CW.

-- THE ANTENNAS AT K3ZXL --



Dan uses a variety of antennas, with a 3-element tribander at 30', a 4-element beam for six meters, a 13-element beam for two meters, and a vertical for 10-40 meters. A good basic ham radio set up.

During some 13 months on the air, Dan has worked 255 DXCC entities on HF, using SSB, CW, RTTY and PSK. In addition, Dan has racked up 49 DXCC entities, 45 states and over 100 grid squares on six meters. All this when Sunspot Cycle 23 was tanking. Another example of being active on the air, enjoying his license privileges, and accomplishing something.

-- HOW ABOUT YOUR STATION? --

In response to requests, your editor has received photos of some members' stations. Considering our total membership, however, the response has been rather minimal. Come on, don't be bashful!! Let your fellow TARC members know what you use to "reach out and touch someone" via ham radio. Large or small, we would like to see what you use. Lack of response could result in your editor's photos being shown as a last resort. Do you want that??!!

-- DX SPOTTING SITES --

There are several sites on the Internet that provide links to DX spotting clusters, however, you may want to try the direct routes to these clusters.

DX Summit is at <http://oh2aq.kolumbus.com/dxs/>. This is probably the most widely used site, with reports being posted from around the world. There is no need to register; anyone can open the site and see what's happening. You can be selective in what you want to see, i.e., you can select HF Phone, HF CW, VHF, etc. You can also select specific bands for reports. DX calls that were previously posted can be retrieved from the archives, to see when you missed some station you had been looking for, and you can post your own report after you work a good one. NOTE that you always post it AFTER working the DX or, otherwise, you've alerted all the competition!!

Another site is <http://www.dxcentral.com/>. To best utilize this site, you should register with your call sign, e-mail, latitude and longitude and a password. Then you can customize the bands and modes for which you want to see reports. You can also check off which specific DXCC entities you need, and an e-mail will be sent to you as soon as a station from that entity is spotted on this cluster.

Undoubtedly, there have been arguments for and against such spotting clusters, however, there is no argument that they are now a permanent fixture in amateur radio. They are useful resources, for both the new and seasoned operator.

-- SPACE WEATHER DATA SOURCES --

Do you turn on your radio and wonder why there are few or no signals to be heard? Or, are you fortunate enough to listen and find the frequencies full of signals? How can you explain this difference? Well, band conditions are due to the respective status of the solar weather and the Earth's geomagnetic field. A quick check of the data related to these factors can supply you with the answers. In addition, all propagation forecasting programs need these values, as well as the current or desired date(s).

The resources for you to instantly know the appropriate Solar Flux value, and the geomagnetic A and K indices are at your fingertips. These data are available from various sources, including the following:

WWV – Until the advent of the Internet, the hourly broadcasts from Fort Collins, Colorado were the only source of these data. The Solar Flux Index, mid-latitude A-index and mid-latitude K-index are broadcast at 18 minutes after the hour on several frequencies, however, 10.000 MHz is best for this area. The value for the current day is first broadcast at 2118 GMT.

Internet Sites – Several Internet sites and an e-mail service offer these data at any time of day.

WWV – The exact text of the WWV broadcasts is at <http://www.sec.noaa.gov/ftpdir/latest/wwv.text> any time, 24 hours a day.

DX-Central DotCom – The latest WWV text, as well as two days of the SFI, A and K indices, is available at <http://www.dxcentral.com>.

DX QSL NET – The solar and geomagnetic indices can be found at <http://dx.qsl.net/propagation>. This very complete site also provides additional data, such as solar wind velocity, recent sun spot numbers, solar X-ray flux, solar images and rectangular maps of the Earth showing the grey line and the MUF patterns for 3000 km signal paths.

E-Mail Updates – Tomas Hood-NW7US, Propagation Editor for *CQ*, provides a daily update of the latest indices via e-mail; usually within a half-hour of 2100 GMT. This is a subscription service, for which Tomas asks a small donation from time to time. To learn more, go to <http://hfradio.org>.

As can be seen, the resources are readily available, waiting for interested parties to make use of them. So, what's stopping you?

-- SHORTWAVE BROADCASTING DYING --

Nations around the world are closing down their overseas broadcasting, realizing that listeners are migrating to MP3 players, Internet radio and podcasting. BBC, Swiss Radio International, Finland's YLE, Deutsche Welle, Japan's NHK, Korean Broadcasting, RFE, et al, are all closing down or reducing services.

Overseas shortwave broadcasting was initiated in 1927, when Philips Laboratories of the Netherlands transmitted shortwave broadcasts from Eindhoven to the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia). England began the BBC Empire Service in 1932.

The average age of shortwave listeners to Deutsche Welle is about 50 years, as younger listeners utilize alternative technology to hear German language broadcasts. Several international broadcasters have agreements with local FM stations to rebroadcast their programs with more stable signals and clearer sound.

With advancing technology "radio" can be distributed via digital TV, mobile phones, computers or satellite radio.

BBC ended its North American transmissions in 2001 when there were still two million listeners. Now, with FM rebroadcast agreements with local stations, BBC now has five million listeners in Canada and the US.

(From "Shortwave-radio looks short-lived," Doreen Carvajal, 24 Sept. '06 *International Herald Tribune*)