



THE COMMUNICATOR



Mailing Address: P. O. Box 976, Nokomis, FL 34274

W4AC Repeaters: 444.100 MHz (DMR) & 146.805 MHz (-) (PL100Analog)

Incorporated 1984

<http://www.tamiamiarc.org>

December, 2018

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President's message.....KB1HIP

As we finish the Thanksgiving Holiday period, I want to take this opportunity to thank all the officers, the board of directors, and all our members for their support of our radio club. Without them we would not have a successful and growing organization.

Again this month, I'd like to highlight an article written by Larry Evans and published in the November 7 issue of the Health and Leisure section of the Venice Gondolier Sun. It's a great article describing what the TARC club does, our upcoming license course, and also inviting guests to our monthly meeting. As a result of this article and other publicity, we have 29 signed up for the license course starting December 1, and we had 27 members and 8 guests in attendance at our November monthly meeting. Membership in our club is at an all-time high. We should all be proud of this accomplishment.

Our annual Christmas party will be held on Thursday, December 13 at Valenti's Ristorante located at 1200 E. Venice Avenue. Cocktail hour starts at 4:00 PM and dinner at 5:00 PM. Please let Jim Shortill, KJ4NDO, if you plan to attend and you have not yet signed up.

A couple of activities are coming up for December and January: First, if we can put it together, we plan to operate at the Boca Grande/Gasparilla Light House (USA 910) as part of the Amateur Radio Light House Society (ARLHS) Christmas Lights program which runs from December 15 to January 4, 2019. In addition, we will participate in the Winter Field Day (WFDA) event on January 26 and 27, 2019. We will discuss these two events at our December 12 monthly meeting.

As we finish this year, we are looking to fill the club officer and board positions for the next year. Please consider running for one of the positions. Your involvement will ensure that the club will continue to be an important part of the community. Please see me if you have an interest to serve.

In closing I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.
VY 73 to all de Andy, KB1HIP

Next Month

Election results

Party Pics

Next meeting December 12, 2018

Our meeting will start at **7:00 PM** on Wednesday, **12 December, 2018** at the Coast Guard Auxiliary Training Center, 1200 South Harbor Drive.

TAMIAMI AMATEUR RADIO CLUB *Minutes of the 11/14/18 Meeting*

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by President Andy Durette, KB1HIP. The pledge to the flag followed. Introductions were made by name and call sign.

MINUTES: President Durette requested a motion to accept the minutes of the October 10, 2018 meeting as published in the Communicator. Motion was made, seconded and approved.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer Frank Wroblewski, W2XYZ, reported an ending balance of \$4,242.43 as of October 31.

SUNSHINE: N/A

VE TESTING: Steve Phillips, WA1ZKN, reported that one candidate presented for testing. He passed both the Technical and the General exams.

LIAISON TO QCWA: QCWA meetings was held at Denny's Restaurant on Bee Ridge Road, Sarasota, FL at 11:00 AM, November 1st. There were 20 members, spouses and guests present. Hans Napfel WB2ZZB, presented a program on the use of Zeros and Ones for digital computing.

REPEATER / TECHNICAL: Frank Wroblewski, W2XYZ, reported that the digital repeater 444.10 MHz was working satisfactorily; the frequency used being TAC 311. The Club 2 Meter analog repeater is 146.805 MHz (-) PL 100. The digital net opens Tuesday at 7:30 PM. The 2 Meter net opens Thursday at 7:30 PM. The 10 meter net on frequency 28.450 MHz, upper side band, begins immediately upon the conclusion of the 2 Meter net. Frank noted that participation on all three nets was very good.

MEMBERSHIP: There are 67 regular members, 17 first year free, 0 Student, 5 life and 1 comp, for a total of 90 members.

PUBLICITY: Please contact Tom Porada, W4IEE, if you have an idea for an article, or someone asks for Club information.

OLD BUSINESS: 1. Christmas Party: The Valenti restaurant was chosen for the Christmas Party. The Party will be held on December 13th at Valenti's Restaurant, 1200 East Venice Ave., Venice, FL. Schedule of events: 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM, fellowship and cocktails. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM, Dinner. Approximately 30 members and wives have indicated that they will attend.

2. Auction: Our club equipment auction is scheduled to be held after the meeting on January 9, 2019. Please contact Jim Shortill, KJ4NDO, if you have items to contribute to the auction. A list of items to go under the hammer will be published in the Communicator. Any late arriving items will be entered on a separate list that will be distributed just prior the start of the auction.

3. Technician Licensing Course: Paul Nienaber, KN4BAR, Primary Instructor, advises that the course will be given the 1st., 2nd., and 3rd. Saturdays in December at the Jacaranda Library. Seventeen students have signed up so far. Contact Paul for class information flyers. Seats are still available for additional students.

By motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Club agreed to pay the FCC Technician License examination fee for students taking Paul's course.

4. Election of Club Officers: The election of Club officers will be held during the December meeting. San Yoder, K3SY, agreed to serve as a committee of one for the Nominating Committee.

5. Another Tent: This discussion was postponed until the December meeting.

NEW BUSINESS: 1. Light House Christmas Lights: Andy Durette, KB1HIP, advised that this event will start December 15 and last till January 4, 2019. This event is sponsored by the Amateur Radio Lighthouse Society, (K2JXW), see: www.arlhs.com. Andy is thinking of operating from Boca Grande/Gasparilla lighthouse, number USA 910. He would like to be contacted by members who would be interested in participating in this event, setting up a station and transmitting from the lighthouse. The ARLHS web site sets out the QSL rules.

>>>>>>>>

Minutes, con't

2. Winter Field Day in January, 2019: Winter Field Day is held on the last full weekend in January, 2019. Paul Nienbaer is planning to set up a station in the North Jetty Park. Members can work stations around the world in a park like setting under the comfy club tent. The event will run 24 hours, for members wishing to polish up their early hour operating skills. Contact Paul to secure an operating slot.

It was moved, seconded and approved that the Club would pay the \$90.00 onetime fee for this event.

3. New members wishing to obtain a club shirt should contact Gary Hagens, K6OC. Be sure to know your shirt size.

The 50-50 drawing of \$15.00 was won by Chet Fennell, KG4IYS. The amount was \$21.00. He donated it to the club.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

There were 35 members and visitors present.

The program was presented by Hans Napfel: His first presentation illustrated how zeros and ones are used by computers to do arithmetic and to support alphabetic requirements. In addition, he demonstrated via film, a complex mechanical computer created almost 500 years ago, in the shape of a young scribe who wrote legible notes. He also presented pictures of complex adding machines from the 1950s and 1960s as examples of robust, accurate, mechanical computing machines.

Winter -- brrr -- Field -- brrr -- Day

At the November club meeting it was decided that the club will participate in Winter Field Day as W4AC. A permit has been requested from the Sarasota County Parks Department to set up in the North Jetty Park in Nokomis with special permission to remain overnight (midnight to 8 am) from 10 am Saturday, January 26th to Sunday, January 27th. Any club members interested in participating should contact Paul Nienaber, KN4BAR, at 941-468-3843. A signup sheet will also be circulated at the December and January monthly club meetings so that all operating shifts can be staffed during this 24 hour event.

Event details:

Purpose: To foster Ham camaraderie, field operation, emergency operating preparedness, and just plain on the air, outdoor fun in the midst of winter for American, Canadian and DX Amateurs. Don't let those winter doldrums keep you locked up in the house.... get out and play some radio!!

- **When:** Winter Field Day runs for 24 hours during the last full weekend in January each year from 1900 UTC (2pm EST) Saturday to 1900 UTC (2pm EST) Sunday. For 2019, the dates are January 26th and 27th. Station set-up may commence no earlier than 1900 UTC (2pm EST) on Friday, January 25th. Station setup may consume no more than 12 hours total. How & when you schedule/spend those 12 hours is up to you.
- **Bands:** All Amateur bands, HF, VHF, & UHF except 12, 17, 30 and 60 meters.
- **Modes:** Any mode... CW, SSB, AM, FM, DStar, C4FM, DMR, Packet, PSK, SSTV, RTTY, Olivia, Satellite, etc...

You can review the rules for the event at <https://www.winterfieldday.com/rules>.

.....Paul, KN4BAR



DX Jack's page....

..... By Jack Sproat, W4JS

MAJOR CURRENT/UPCOMING DX ACTIVITY & PROPAGATION HIGHLIGHTS

CURRENT and/or SCHEDULED DX ACTIVITY										
COUNTRY – CALL SIGN	ACTIVITY PERIOD	BEARING	HF BANDS and OPENING TIMES (UTC)							
			80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10
East Timor – 4W/DS3EXX	Now to 02 Dec	299	NO	Nil	09-13	13-15	14-16	22-00	NO	NO
East Timor – 4W/HL1AHS, SSB/CW/FT8	Now to 03 Dec	299	NO	Nil	09-13	13-15	14-16	22-00	NO	NO
Sri Lanka – 4S7DLG by 2-op team, ++, FT8	Now to 06 Dec	28	NO	Nil	0100	2200	1300	1300	NO	NO
Ogasawara – JD1BPH & JI1CRM/JD1, all md	Now to 07 Dec	318	NO	08-11	06-13	20-01	21-00	21-00	NO	NO
Solomon Is – H44SHD by HB9SHD, ++, dig	Now to 10 Dec	274	NO	08-11	06-14	21-22	19-00	19-00	20-23	Nil
Cambodia – XU7AKB by HB9SHD, ++	Now to 14 Dec	<u>169</u>	--	NO	--	Nil	<u>2300</u>	<u>1600</u>	<u>13-16</u>	Nil
Minami Torishima – JG8NQJ/JD1, CW/RTY	Now to 31 Dec	308	--	--	--	19-01	20-00	--	--	--
Gambia – C5YK by ON7YK, ++, Digital	Now to Mar '19	88	--	22-11	--	17-22	12-20	13-18	15-19	Nil
Burkina Faso – XT2BR by F8FUA, all modes	02 to 11 Dec	83	00-06	00-07	07-10	18-23	11-18	12-18	14-17	Nil
French Polynesia – TX0A/TX0M, 2-op team	04 to 18 Dec	243	04-12	02-14	01-14	15-10	16-02	16-00	18-24	Nil
East Kiribati – T32NH by JA0JHQ, CW, FT8	05 to 11 Dec	267	04-12	02-14	01-14	16-11	17-02	17-01	17-00	18-23
Senegal – 6V1A by 10-op team, SSB, CW	07 to 09 Dec	293	23-09	21-11	19-12	11-00	11-20	12-19	13-19	Nil
Mariana Is – KH0TG by JL1UTS, 160m-20m	25 to 31 Dec	306	09-12	07-13	06-13	20-23	--	--	--	--
Vanuatu – YJ0AFU by VK4AFU, FT8/CW/S	25 Dec to 08 Jan	262	08-11	05-13	04-15	04-17	14-00	14-00	19-00	20-23

Updated 29 October based on 29 October *The Weekly DX*, <https://dx-world.net/> and <http://www.ng3k.com>

Notes: Time in bold = Bands with 75-100% opening; ??? = Call Sign not yet known; ++ = Mostly SSB; ** = Mostly CW; NO = No Opening forecast. Long Path bearings and opening times are underlined. Propagation forecasts are calculated using *W6ELProp* propagation software, cross checked with <http://www.voacap.com/hf/> and, where possible, VOACAP predictions based on current or recent operations.

-- NOVEMBER SOLAR ACTIVITY --

Through 28 November, the 10.7 cm Solar Flux ranged from 67 to 73, with a mean value of 69.0 (vs. 72.2 for Nov 2017 and 78.7 for Nov 2016). The A_p index was ≥ 7 on 10 days. The Sun was spotless on 20 days thru 28 November.

-- DECEMBER FORECAST --

Solar activity is expected to be very low throughout the month.

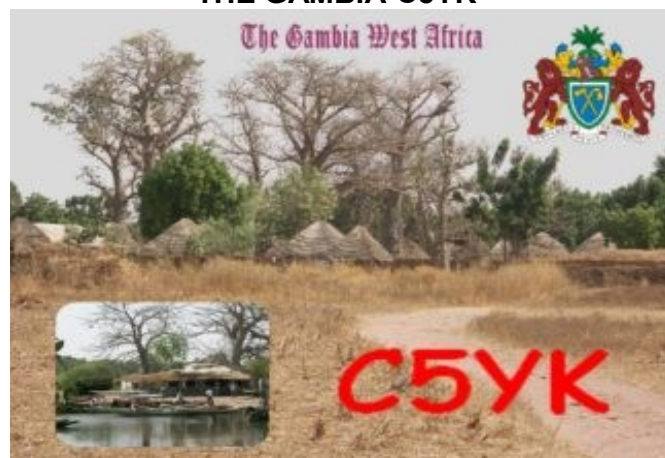
The greater than 2 MeV electron flux at geosynchronous orbit is expected to range from normal to high levels. Moderate levels are expected on 07 Dec and 14-16 Dec; high levels are expected on 02-06 Dec, 08-13 Dec and 28-31 Dec. The remainder of the forecast month is expected to be at normal levels. All enhancements in electron flux are anticipated in response to multiple, recurrent coronal hole high-speed streams.

Geomagnetic field activity is expected to range from quiet to G1 (Minor) geomagnetic storm levels. G1 (Minor) geomagnetic storm levels are expected on 02 Dec; active conditions are expected on 01 Dec and 07-08 Dec; unsettled conditions are expected on 03-06 Dec, 09 Dec and 17-18 Dec. Quiet conditions are expected for the remainder of the outlook period. All enhancements in geomagnetic activity are expected in anticipation of multiple, recurrent, coronal hole high-speed streams.

The 10.7 cm Solar Flux Index should range from 68 to 70; averaging 69.0 during December.

(From *NOAA Weekly Highlights and Forecasts*, 26 Nov 2018, *NOAA 27-day Space Weather Outlook Table*, 26 Nov 2018, and *45 Day AP Forecast, USAF*, 26 Nov 2018.)

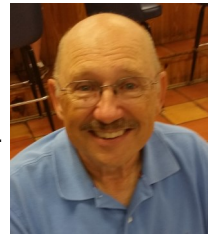
-- THE GAMBIA-C5YK --



Andre, ON7YK is again active from The Gambia as C5YK. Activity until March 9, 2019. QRV on 60-40-20-17-15-12-10m mostly Digi. (From <https://dx-world.net/>)

MERRY CHRISTMAS
And May The DX Gods Be With You During 2019!!

The ABCs of QSLs by XYZ, revisited



Now that you know (almost) everything there is to know about sending QSL cards (if not, read last month's Communicator), it's time to talk about ways of receiving them. Just as with sending cards, there are different methods of retrieving QSL cards sent to you. Of course there is the direct mail method, which for stateside QSO's usually involves you sending a card and including a stamped self-addressed envelope with your card or vice-versa. To get a DX station to direct mail you a card usually involves you sending the DX station two or more dollars either via mail or PayPal. Certain specialty organizations like SKCC, FISTS, OQRS also handle the transfer of QSL cards, but this conversation will stick to the usual method of, "...please QSL via the buro."

As we know from last month's article, our "Buro" for outgoing cards is the ARRL. The ARRL is also the "Buro" that foreign countries send QSL cards destined to our country. You'd think the ARRL would then forward the cards directly to you, but they don't. What happens next is someone at HQ sorts the cards by call districts, zero through nine. The bundles of cards are next sent to appropriate district QSL Bureau. The ten district (actually 11) bureaus are manned by volunteers from radio clubs or DX clubs that have agreed to process the cards sent to them by the ARRL.

<http://www.w1qsl.org/>

http://www.njdx.org/?page_id=30

<http://www.ncdxa.org/qsl.shtml>

<https://www.cdxa.org/w4qsl-bureau/index.php>

<http://www.k5eok.org/okdxa/>

<http://www.qslbureau.org/>

Each district operates slightly differently, but basically, club volunteers are assigned a letter of the alphabet and they are responsible for managing all cards and funds for callsigns having that particular letter following the number in the callsign. The idea is, you send the bureau money which they use to buy postage and supplies to forward cards to you. Your letter manager decides how often your cards are mailed to you. If he sees you frequently receiving cards, he may send you a pile monthly. Should it be that you receive very few cards, then he'll probably hold them for several months to see if more are coming for you. It's his decision, but of course you could contact him and express your desires for more or less frequent shipping.

Below is a list of the 11 bureaus for the 10 districts. The 4 call area has two bureaus (for callsigns that have one letter before the number and the other for two letters before the number), because Venice has the world's best DXers and contesters, thereby creating such a volume they need two bureaus to take care of us - or something like that. To start receiving cards, contact your bureau, the bureau that handles the number in your callsign, not the area you live in. Procedures vary between the bureaus, but send them money by check, PayPal or whatever they designate. Then sit back and wait for the cards to start rolling in.

<http://wvdx.org/joomla/index.php/test-page/79-qsl-bureau/90-7th-area-qsl-bureau-home-page>

http://arri-greatlakes.org/8th_bureau.htm

<http://qsl.nidxa.org/>

<http://www.zeroburo.org/>

73, Frank Wroblewski, W2XYZ

Hear Ye, Hear Ye, Auction at January club meeting



List of items to be sold - Bring money !!!

#	Item	Make	Model	Our Notes	Your Notes
1A	HF Rig	Icom	IC-735		
1B	Power Supply	Icom	PS-55		
2	Noise Bridge	Palomar Engi	R-X Noise Bridge		
3	Desk Mic	Icom	SM-8		
4	Antenna	NA	CB Antenna	BNC connector, for handi-talkie	
5	SWR Bridge	Diamond	SX-1000	430 Mhz - 1300 Mhz	
7	Antenna Analyzer	MFJ	MFJ-247		
8	VHF Mobile	Alinco	DR-135	needs work - voltage reg. chip?	
9	Desk Mic	Icom	SM-20		
10	Audio Equalizer	Realistic	31-1988A	5-band stereo equalizer	
11	Keyer/paddle	MFJ	MFJ-422B-X	integrated Bencher paddle w/ batt.	
12	Antenna Tuner	MFJ	Differential -T Tumer	3KW Roller Inductor Tuner	
13	Power Supply	Pyramid	PS-25G	needs work	
14	Desk Mic	Kenwood	MC-50	Discontinued Item	
15	Speaker	Icom	SP-20		
16	HF Rig	Icom	IC-706MKIIG	Includes Heil ICM mic	
17	DSP	Radio Shack	21-543		
18	Audio Equalizer	Optimus	31-2025	10 Band Stereo Equalizer	
19	Rotor Controller	Alliance	HD-73-1	Dual Speed	
20	Antenna Tuner	MFJ	MFJ-949D		
21a	HF Rig (Qty 2)	Yaesu	FT-101ZD	Lot is both rigs - one for parts only	
21b	Speaker	Yaesu	SP-901P	May include phone patch	
22	Antenna base	DX Engr.	Tilt base		
23	Foot Switch	Footrol	Type MA		
25	Hand Mic	Yaesu	MH-27	Does not work	
26	Desk Mic	Astatic	D-104	G Stand	
27	Low Pass Filter	Drake	TV-3300LP		
28	Low Pass Filter	E.F. Johnson	Low Pass Filter		
29	Antenna Switch	Heathkit	HW-1234		
30	Mobile Speaker	Motorola			
31	Coax Choke	Homebrew	Ugly Balun	15 tns RG-8 on 6" core w/UHF conn.	
32	Dummy Load	MFJ	MFJ-262	1KW Dry dummy load	
33	Desk Mic	Yaesu	MD-1c8	Tested good - really nice condition	
34	Hand Mic	Yaesu	MH-27B8	No audio	
35	Mag mount ant.	Larsen	NMO 2/70	with mag mount	
36	Mag mount ant.		2m/440		
37	Mag mount ant.		2m/440		
38	VHF Mobile	Kenwood	TM-261A		
39	CB Mobile	Uniden	PC-122XL		
40	VHF Mobile	Alinco	DR-1200T	Seems to be dead	
41	Power Supply	Astron	RS-35M	35A Linear with meters. Exc. cond.	
42	Base antenna	Comet		440 base antenna	
43	Base antenna		6 el 440 beam		
44	Base Antenna	Diamond	A144S5	5 element 2m beam	
45	Marine Mob. Ant.	Raytheon	DB-12-C	156-163 MHz fiber, some tip damg.	
46	VHF Mobile	Yaesu	FT-5100	2m/440	
47	Power Supply	Innovat. Tch.	Com Series 30	12v/30A	
48	HF antenna		Multi Band Dipole	window line feed	
49	HF	Alpha Delta	Multi Band Dipole	Coax feed, 40m reported not working	
50	Power Supply	Cobra	Regulated Power Pak	12v/2A	
51	TNC/Mic Switch	MFJ	MFJ-1272B	Set for Icom radio	

MORE>>>>>

Auction Items -- Page 2

#	Item	Make	Model	Our Notes	Your Notes
52	Power Supply	Micronta	22-120	12v/2.5A	
53	TNC	Kantronics	KPC-3		
54	TNC	Kantronics	KAM Plus		
57	Battery Charger	Schumacher	SE-82-6	6/2 Amp, 12V	
58	HF Rig	Yaesu	FT-890		
59	HF Rig	Yaesu	FT-890		
60	Antenna Tuner	MFJ	MFJ-949E		
61	Antenna Switch	???	4-Way		
62	Coax	RG-8x	25 feet +/-		
63	Sound Card	Signalink	USB		
67	HF Antenna	Hy-Gain	AV-640 40-10 Vertical	Some Assembly Required	
68	Antenna Tuner	MFJ	MFJ-989C Versa Tuner	Like New Condition	
69	Book	ARRL	2012 Repeater Dir.		
70	Power Supply	Pyramid	PS-26K	12v/25A	
71	Marine Mob. Radio	Unspecified	Unspecified	Works	
72	Bag O Cables		Various		
73	Coax		RG-8	Coil	
74	Quad Band Mobile	Yaesu	FT-8900R	29/50/144/440 - works	
75	Camera		Electronic	With short stand - works	
76	Networking Equip.		TV & CAT bridges		
77	CAT5 Cable		Box	25 feet	
78	Oscilloscope	Philips	PM-323 Dual Beam	With Manual	
79	PC Repair Cables			for board repair and removal	
80	Mob. Radio Mount		Black-for s/w radio		
81	Mobile Ant. Base		For whip antenna	includes extra spring	
82	Ant. control Unit				



Come one, come all to the TARC holiday party at Valenti's on Thursday, December 13th, 2018 !!

Gather at 4 PM for cocktails and conversation. Cash bar.

5 PM - order from their menu (individual checks).

After dinner - speeches (maybe) and door prizes.

Please contact Jim, KJ4NDO to include you and your's in the head count.

Check out their menu here:

<http://valentisristorante.com>

Valenti's offers six menu items for the party.

Chicken: Chicken Parm \$19.00

Pasta: Lasagna \$16.00

Fish: Shrimp Scampi \$19.00

Veal: Oreganato \$23.00

Pizza: Your choice from the menu, price varies

Vegetarian: Eggplant Parm, served over linguine. \$16.00

Appetizers/Antipasto and Dessert can be ordered off the menu at menu price. Salads ordered with the meal are an additional \$2.00. Cash bar. Price of the meal does not include tip.

We have selected a pleasant, comfortable restaurant; members who have eaten at Valenti's Ristorante praise the food and note that the portions are generous. We hope all of our club members have a pleasant evening.



tamiamiarc.org



TARC website gets a face lift

While the snow birds were away and the propagation was poor, the club's website received a much needed face lift over the summer. We migrated the authoring software from Jumla to WordPress and implemented a new brighter, mobile device friendly layout. Much of the old content is still there, it just looks different and it displays better on cell phones and tablets.

As part of the upgrade, TARC has moved into the 21st century and now offers online new member registration and dues payment via PayPal directly from the website. Also, current members may use the website to update their member profile (address, phone numbers, and call sign or license class), and pay their renewal dues online. A \$1 convenience fee will be added for these online transactions to defray the PayPal processing fees charged for using their service. Use the "Members" menu tab on the website menu bar to access these new features.

Information about our club and other area clubs, and 2-meter or 70-cm repeaters and nets is also updated and available on the website. There is a menu tab for "Elmers" where articles about ham radio can be posted for all to see. If you are doing, or have done something ham related that you think might be of interest to other club members or hams, submit your article with pictures to websupport@tamiamiarc.org.

The current month Communicator newsletter is always available for viewing or downloading from the front page of the website. Over the next few months, we plan to build an archive of past club newsletters. Currently, we have newsletter files going back to 2005 that can be uploaded to our website but only 2017 and 2018 newsletters are there now.

Future improvements to the website are being contemplated. A Silent Key page would be really

nice to remember those members who have passed on with a picture and small biographical sketch. We are taking submissions for this page now. Again, submit your Silent Key picture and narrative to websupport@tamiamiarc.org. Also, if anyone has any other suggestions for how to improve the look or content of the website they may submit them to this same email address.

Please take a few minutes to surf the tamiamiarc.org website and see what's there. We are trying very hard to keep a current calendar of events and club activities posted to the website so that any member may visit and see what is going on.

Members may now view or print the most current club membership roster from the website. To preserve the privacy of everyone's address, email, and phone numbers, the roster is accessible for download from a password protected page on the website. Click on the "Membership" menu and from the drop down menu choices select "Members Only". You will be prompted for a password. The password is "W4AC34285"; simple to remember, club call plus Venice zip code.

The password will be changed from time to time for security and these changes will be published in the Communicator for all members to see.

Paul Nienaber,
KN4BAR,
webmaster.



"Three dits...three dahs...three dits.
I think it's an S.O.S."

Shack of the month - WA1ZKN

Thanks for visiting my new ham shack! I put this station together with help from other club members, shamelessly stealing ideas from other stations I have visited.

The main shack work surface is a 96"x30" maple butcher block workbench top I got from Home Depot. Because the top is large and heavy (over 150 lbs.!) shipping can get complicated and expensive. Home Depot will ship to their store for free and I was then able to pick it up at my convenience (with help from Tom, W4IEE). Tom also used his router to round over the front edge of the bench to make it much more comfortable to work at.

The bench frame was purchased online from Global Industrial – it's rated for something like 3000 lbs. so I think it will hold up. The shelving is adjustable wire shelving originally designed for food service. Each shelf is rated for 800 lbs. For this application I got black powder coat instead of chrome or stainless. I purchased the shelving online from Shelving.com – they have a wide selection of sizes and finishes and will cut the up-rights to custom lengths for a very reasonable fee. To provide a smooth surface for the gear Tom and I cut pieces of 1/8" Masonite to use as shelf liners.

For power I ran two 20A 120V circuits from the main breaker panel in the garage. I distributed the power via two 12-outlet power strips on the wall just above the bench top. This way I don't have the big rat's nest of wires on the floor. Rather than pull the power inside the wall I found it easier to run some EMT conduit down the wall from a junction box in the attic. I also put in a 20A 220V circuit for a future HF linear but have not installed the outlet until I figure out exactly where the amplifier will sit.



My HF radio is an Icom IC-7610, which I highly recommend. It handles 160-6m in any mode. It has direct connections to my shack PC for digital modes, including RTTY. It has "real" knobs as well as a touch screen so it's easy to operate. All aspects of the rig (e.g. filters, noise reduction, preamp) are all configurable either via the front panel or by PC software. This makes it easy to switch between digital modes such as FT8 and traditional CW and SSB. This rig is also capable of remote operation via the Internet, although I have not implemented this. I feed a 10MHz frequency reference from a GPS Disciplined Oscillator into the 7610 so that I stay within about 1/2 Hz of my desired frequency on any band. The GPSDO also serves as my shack UTC clock.

The 2nd rig is an older Yaesu FT-847 HF/VHF/UHF radio that I use for VHF and UHF work. I am thinking about selling the FT-847 and replacing it with the 100 watt Icom IC-9700 144/440/1.2GHz radio that is supposed to be available early next year. We will see what Santa has to say ☺

The shack PC is a Dell PC that I purchased from Amazon as a refurbished unit. The two wide screen monitors allow me to make the FT8 waterfall big enough to see without my glasses while

Shack of the month

still having the browser screen to monitor DX spots and look up stations on QRZ.com. The TV on the top shelf is connected to the 7610 to display the same data shown on the rig's touch screen. The TV also streams video and music from the Internet.

The main power supply is a 70 Amp Astron linear that I have had for decades. I recently upgraded the power supply with new lighted meters for a little extra shack bling. I feed all the DC power through a RigRunner power strip. All the DC wiring is connected with Anderson PowerPole connectors. I have another 30 Amp variable voltage switching power supply on the "project desk" that I use when troubleshooting misbehaving equipment.

Antennas are pretty basic. The VHF/UHF antenna is an Ed Fong dual-band J pole that is hidden in a tree out in front of the house. With this antenna and an advantageous location in the West Villages I can hit every repeater on the DARN list without difficulty. The HF antenna is a "Drunken Snake Long Wire" made from Davis Polystealth low-reflective wire secured to the roof tiles with Christmas light stand-offs. To tune the long wire I use an Icom AH-4 tuner behind the bushes on the side of the house. The HF antenna is certainly an area of the station that can be improved, so I am always on the lookout for better (but stealthy) antenna systems. SWR and power output are monitored with Daiwa cross-needle meters.

To ground everything I have six 8-foot ground rods driven in around the perimeter of the house. I've connected all the rods with #6 copper wire which is tied into the ground system for the pool and the house ground. Both feedlines to the shack are protected with lightning arrestors mounted on a ground rod just outside the shack window.

It took me a couple of months to put this all together. As with any shack, it's a work in pro-



gress. I am continuing to fiddle with the arrangement of the shelves and the gear to improve the ergonomics. One example of this is the need to improve the cooling in the room. With several hundred watts of heat being rejected into the space, the room can get pretty warm. As a first step, I rearranged the ventilation ducts in the house to provide additional cooling air to the space. We'll see how effective this is when the weather warms up again. It may be necessary to increase the size of the ventilation ducts and vents in the room or install a ductless "split" system to really do the job.


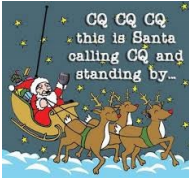

The station has been effective considering the antenna limitations. With the help of FT8 (I know, it's sort of cheating) I've been able to achieve WAS and DXCC. In addition to completing 40m single-band WAS, I am only a few contacts away from single-band WAS on 80, 30 and 20 and I don't have too far to go on 160, 17 and 15. I continue to chase DX and I am well on the way to 150 confirmed DXCC entities. Patience and a lot of listening are key.

I have to mention the support and patience of my YL Patti, N4IGI. She has been a big help in all the phases of the project. Thanks Patti!!!

Steve, WA1ZKN



December, 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
+ 10 meter net follows the 2 meter net at 28.450 mhz		* Peaches opens at 6:00 AM, or- ders taken at 7:00.		TARC net @ 7:30 PM W4AC / RPT 146.805 ** +10M net	Breakfast @ Peaches *	
2 	3 QCWA 11:30 AM Denny's Bee Ridge Road	4 Breakfast @ Peaches * DMR net @ 7:30 PM W4AC 444.1	5	6 TARC net @ 7:30 PM W4AC / RPT 146.805 ** +10M net	7 Breakfast @ Peaches *	8 TARC VE Session @ Jacaranda Public Library 10:00 AM
9	10 DARN Emergency net @ 11AM Starts on NI4CE/RPT 145.43 pl100	11 Breakfast @ Peaches * DMR net @ 7:30 PM W4AC 444.1	12 <u>TARC meet- ing @ Coast Guard Train- ing Center 7:00 PM.</u>	13 <div style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">TARC CHRISTMAS PARTY</div>	14 Breakfast @ Peaches *	15
16	17	18 Breakfast @ Peaches * DMR net @ 7:30 PM W4AC 444.1	19	20 TARC net @ 7:30 PM W4AC / RPT 146.805 ** +10 M net	21 Breakfast @ Peaches *	22
23	24	25 	26	27 TARC net @ 7:30 PM W4AC / RPT 146.805 ** +10 M net	28 Breakfast @ Peaches *	29
30	31 					

**The W4AC 146.805 Repeater is ANALOG, PL100. [If the 2-m repeater is down, please QSY to 146.58 simplex]

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Please check items of interest:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> C - Contests | <input type="checkbox"/> N - Net Control | <input type="checkbox"/> T - Training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> D - Digital (DMR, PSK, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> O - Computers | <input type="checkbox"/> U - VHF/UHF |
| <input type="checkbox"/> E - Emergency Comm. | <input type="checkbox"/> P - Packet | <input type="checkbox"/> V - VE Testing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> F - Field Day | <input type="checkbox"/> Q - Publicity | <input type="checkbox"/> X - DX |
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