

# THE LISTENING POST

## Azalea Coast Amateur Radio Club

PO Box 4044  
Wilmington, NC 28406

[www.ac4rc.org](http://www.ac4rc.org)

147.180 (+.600 88.5)  
442.500 (+5 88.5)

July, 2012

### EYECATCHER!!!

The next Club meeting will be Tuesday July 17, 2012 at Cape Fear Community College North Campus. See the web site for directions. Also, it is time to pay Club dues for 2012. \$20.00 please, either mailed to the P.O. Box or brought to the meeting. Make sure your call sign is on your check. The Club roster and reflector list has been culled to reflect only paid up members. It is not too late to get off the disabled list and back on the active roster.

### CLUB OFFICERS for 2012:

President Charlie Vaughn K4WUH; Vice-President Don Hall N4OFF; Treasurer Allan Pellnat KX2H; Secretary Norman Clemmons K4YSY

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

Charlie K4UWH is away on assignment. His comments and observations will return next issue.

### REGULAR CLUB ACTIVITIES

Monday 9:00PM local net on the Club's .18 repeater.

Friday Noon Lunch Bunch, location changes weekly, announced on Club web site and via Club reflector. There are in fact three lunch Friday groups in the local amateur community. You can pay your money and take your chances.

Third Tuesday of every month, Club meeting at CFCC North. See web site for directions and parking pass.

Second Saturday of even months, Volunteer Examiner Test session at CFCC North, 10:00AM. See web site for directions and what to bring with you. Next scheduled Test Session 8/11/12.

### UPCOMING ACTIVITIES and EVENTS

#### July

17 Club Meeting

21 NC4MC Special Event Station Candor NC Peach Festival

21 CQ VHF Contest

21 Cary NC 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Swapfest

20-21 W4S SES Ashboro NC Operation Red Sleigh Christmas in JULY

21-28 W0R Special Event Station 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Bicycle Race Across Iowa

22-29 W9IMS Special Event Station Indianapolis Motor Speedway ARC Brickyard 400—For Car Racing Fans

25-29 W9ZL Special Event Station Oshkosh WI Experimental Aircraft Association AirVenture—For Aviation Fans

28-29 NJ QSO Party

28-29 RSGB IOTA Contest

#### August

4 Fayetteville NC Cape Fear ARC 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Swapfest

4 European HF Contest

4-5 NA CW QSO Party

4-5 ARRL UHF Contest

21 Club Meeting

### PRIOR ACTIVITIES

Once Field Day is over, we are well into the “Summer Doldrums” as far as Club activities are concerned. There is no planned activity on the Battleship North Carolina until late September/early October when the Cape Fear River water cools off a bit and the temperatures below decks in the Main Transmitter Room (Radio Two) drop accordingly. We are of course open to requests for Guest Operator

privileges for SSB activities in Radio Central (Radio One) which is on the regular tour and is air-conditioned.

Field Day activities will be discussed at the Club meeting next Tuesday.

### ODDS AND END NOTES

Contributions to the Club Newsletter are not only welcome but solicited. We are fortunate this month to have two submissions from members. If you wish to submit an article for inclusion in the Newsletter, please prepare it in font Times New Roman in a font size of 12.

### SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM THE CLUB TREASURER KX2H

**“THERE HAS BEEN AN ACTIVE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB IN WILMINGTON SINCE 1914. PLEASE REMIT YOUR ANNUAL \$20.00 DUES TO ACARC, PO BOX 4044, WILMINGTON, NC 28406.”**

### FROM THE NORTH CAROLINA SECTION MANAGER

The ARRL North Carolina Section Manager's e-newsletter can be found on the ARRL web site. You can also sign up to have it arrive directly in your e-mail box. The SM's newsletter provides a good overview of ham activities in NC and a heads-up on national matters affecting Hams at large.

### **C. D. Maffitt – Wilmington’s First Wireless Pioneer**

Marconi introduced the wireless telegraphy communications medium to the world in 1895. Wilmington then was the economic and financial powerhouse of a largely agricultural North Carolina. A 1905 Wilmington Star News item headlined “Has Marconi Aboard” reported “the newest complete Marconi outfit” aboard the Standard Oil Co. steamer *Maverick* (call sign GH) docked in Wilmington. The reporter expressed awe in the shipboard operator communicating easily with a station at Hatteras (Probably station HA) from the Wilmington port area a distance of 100 miles.

### **Prior to World War I**

Clarence D. Maffitt was born on his family’s farm on Greenville Sound about 8 miles from the Wilmington riverfront in 1873. He was the eldest son of Confederate Navy legend, John Newland Maffitt, the scourge of Union sea commerce as Captain of the privateers *FLORIDA* and *ALBEMARLE*, and runner of Union blockades in *OWL*. Today tourists may visit the USS North Carolina by crossing the Cape Fear river on a water taxi named *JOHN N. MAFFITT*. Clarence also had a famous Navy uncle, Lieutenant Eugene A. Maffitt, a survivor of the sinking of the ironclad CSS *ALABAMA*. Clarence had salt water in his blood.

By his middle 20's C.D, as he like to be called, survived being shipwrecked in the Bahamas, moved into the city at 520 Dock St. and had become a junior partner in a grocery and ship chandlery business on Water St. At about this same time Richard A. Dunlea was growing up in an immigrant family in Taunton, MA. These two gentlemen, following different paths, would lay the foundation of wireless communication and radio broadcasting in Wilmington.

When his senior partner retired C.D. took over and expanded the chandlery business to include the rental of small motor launches for "Boating Parties" on the river, and ultimately operated a regularly scheduled steamer passenger service between several Carolinas coastal cities, while also servicing the pleasure yachting community as Captain of the New York Yacht Club's *Rudder* station in Wilmington. In 1915 he was appointed agent for the North Carolina district of the Bureau of American & Foreign Shipping, better known as American Lloyds. C.D. Maffitt continued to operate his various shipping interests until his death in 1958 at the age of 85.

Allan KX2H

## A WORD ON HAM TO HAM SUPPORT

I don't know the origin of the use of "Elmer" as the pseudonym for mentor. Nor do I know how men (and women) with such different vocational, social, political and philanthropic interests can come together in their hobby of ham radio with a zeal to share knowledge and support for the novice. I am guessing that most of us have enjoyed the benefit of such helping hands.

That spirit is essential, or at least, it has been essential for me. I came to ham radio after thinking about it for about sixty years. When I was a paperboy, a ham was one of my customers I still remember his call sign: W4KBS (SK). He introduced me to the wonders of hearing the crackly voices of people hundreds or thousands of miles away coming from the speakers in his shack. Great grey cabinets full of glowing tubes and lots of meters and knobs and buttons and switches were an irresistible magnet for a thirteen year old.

By high school, I and a friend had "liberated" an old Navy transmitter from a dump on NAS Norfolk. We did not know a thing about electronics, DC circuits, or much of anything else. But we hoped to coax it into life and even staged some (unsuccessful) experiments.

In college, still harboring an interest in amateur radio, I had a couple of classmates who were hams and let me into the engineering school radio station and the AFROTC Mars station. Though the niceties of the law were overlooked, I did learn a few things and actually had my code speed up to about ten or eleven words per minute.

Fast forward forty years and the long dormant interest once again emerged and I purchased a Kenwood

TS-140S transceiver and antenna (a vertical whose manufacturer I have forgotten) which I intended for SWL and then hopefully as the core of my shack. It was tempting to operate it without the ticket; but I did not. Neither did I go ahead and do the preparation for the tests.

By 2005 and the passage of significant life events, I found myself having a new partner, having sold a house, car, and many belongings and living in the basement apartment of a friend in Atlanta waiting through the construction of a sailboat which was to be our new home. Finally, the moment had come. I was determined to have the license for SSB operations both for safety and for recreation and communications with friends and family. After a month on code and a month on theory and taking trial tests on line four or five times a day, I was ready for the long delayed visit to a test session.

I passed, barely, but I passed. Once again, a hand from a new friend who was the president of the Georgia Tech radio club, took me under his wing and introduced me to the club station. My first shaky attempts to operate could be an apt illustration for the term “amateur radio”.

Cruising allowed me to lift my level of competence and widen my scope of operations, but the marine SSB transceiver aboard the boat was somewhat limited. We did engage in digital operation through Winlink, a great help when away from wi-fi and other shore based amenities.

Most recently, the ACARC membership has once again come to my rescue as I have struggled to get on the air (with my ancient TS-140S). The willing loan of equipment, time and patience at the house, and more time outside getting an antenna in place, plus numerous telephone and e-mail briefings inched me toward on air capability.

I am embarrassed, but thankful, to admit yet another instance of a fellow ham getting me back on track. For the last four months I have been operating blissfully unaware my use of the antenna tuner was completely wrong. The light finally dawned and I reached out to a friend and fellow ham in Tampa and, via an extended video Skype call, my education was expanded-and low and behold I am getting about 100 watts to the antenna instead of 10 watts!

So, thank you for all the assistance. It is a great tradition that may distinguish us a bit from some other hobbies, and when combined with our commitment to public service, may distinguish us as unique.

Jeff KI4JDE

All for now, more later.      73 Bill AG4PA

