

THE LISTENING POST JUNE 2011

AZALEA COAST AMATEUR RADIO CLUB  
PO BOX 4044  
WILMINGTON, NC 28406

EYECATCHER!!! Don't forget the Club meeting this coming Tuesday evening-7:00PM CFCC North Campus. Also, If you have not yet paid your dues for 2011, please do so at the meeting or send \$20.00 to the Club PO BOX. Put your call sign on the check.

CLUB OFFICERS FOR 2011

President-Charlie Vaughn-K4UWH; Vice-President-Don Hall-N4OFF; Treasurer-Allan Pellnat-KX2H; Secretary-Norman Clemmons-KI4YSY.

REGULAR CLUB ACTIVITIES

Monday 9:00PM-ACARC weekly Local Net on the club's 147.180 repeater (offset +.600; tone 88.5).

Friday noon Lunch Bunch-location changes weekly-location announced on club reflector.

Saturday morning breakfast at at 8:00AM at K&W Cafeteria on Oleander drive.

Third Tuesday of every month- club meeting at 7:00PM at CFCC North Campus-see web page for directions and parking pass.

Second Saturday of even months-VE Test Session at CFCC North Campus-see web page for details and requirements.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

The ACARC April meeting will take place this coming Tuesday evening (6/21/11) at 7:00PM at CFCC North. We are most often to be found on the third floor of the McKeithen Center, which is the building directly to the front as you enter the campus. Check with the security guard at the main entrance. Don't forget to check the club web page for specific directions and parking pass.

The Club meeting in June is usually the final opportunity to to tweak the planning for Field Day activities. As you are by now aware, however, for the first time in the memory of most of us, the Azalea Coast Amateur Radio Club will not conduct FD activities this year. You have seen the Club President's e-mail canceling Club participation in the event. The view from here is that too few people were willing to make an advance commitment to assist in setup and teardown or even to participate, and too few people would be performing too much of the work.

You have also seen the e-mail from the President of the Wilmington VHF Association setting forth the plans for a New Hanover County Field Day activity involving NHC Amateur Radio Emergency Services, the WHFVA and the ACARC, using the ARES call sign NC4NH. The event is open to all, ham and non ham alike.

Prior activities

On a more positive note, the Club's activities on board the Battleship USS North Carolina for Museum Ships Weekend was a complete success. We put "The Showboat" on the amateur bands for 692 contacts in 45 States—Hawaii, Alaska, Montana, Idaho and South Dakota must not have had their ears on—and 25 DX entities, including the UK, France, Spain, Germany, Portugal, The Ukraine, and 4 Canadian Provinces—Quebec, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island.

A troop of kids and parents from Roger Bacon Academy in Leland participated. Club members had made several presentations on various aspects of ham radio to a Tech exam class conducted by Bill—W2NG—and administered the exam. 4 "new" hams operated HF from the Battleship and made their share of contacts.

Of the 692 contacts, all but 88 were made on 20M SSB. Band conditions on 40M were difficult, both for CW(15 contacts from the TBM-4) and SSB (30 contacts-- all "pick and shovel work"). 43 contacts on 17, 15, and 10 meters were subject to pervasive and severe fading.

The workhorses of the event were the guys who worked the 604 contacts on 20M SSB, handling the pileups from all hams trying to contact "The Showboat". These guys were continuously busy from picking up the microphone in the morning to laying it down in the late afternoon on both days.

We contacted 22 of the participating Ships and other "Museum" entities.

Thanks to all who participated—Jack--WD40IN--Allan--KX2H--Norm--KI4YSY--Jeff--KI4JDE--Jay--N3QH--Ed--W3NZ--Jake--KQ4TG--Bob--WA3IRG--Mike--N4LPH.

By the way, there is a new article on Museum Ships Weekend posted on the Club's web page which you might enjoy.

At the June 11 VE Test Session, we administered 7 exams to 4 candidates. We passed 1 new Tech, 1 new Tech who also passed the General, 1 upgrade to General and 1 upgrade to Extra. 6 VEs were present. The new license grants came through from the FCC on June 15.

Some more positive news—Club President Charlie reports that the Club's ICOM 746 has been repaired. From what Charlie has learned, the 746 does not perform well in an event where strong signals from multiple transmitters are present. It is notoriously susceptible to strong RF or static fields, which can result in the very problems in the input circuitry requiring repair in this case.

Upcoming Events

JUNE

SAT 17—WVA QSO Party  
SUN 18—Fathers Day  
MON 20—ARRL Radio Week Begins  
TUE 21—ACARC Club Meeting; First Day of Summer  
SAT/SUN 25/26—ARRL Field Day

JULY

MON 4--Independence Day--HAPPY BIRTHDAY USA # 235  
SAT/SUN 9/10--IARU HF World Championship  
SAT/SUN 16/17--NA QSO Party  
TUE 19--ACARC Club Meeting  
ODDS & END NOTES

We are about 3 weeks into the 6 month hurricane season. While most hurricanes here in coastal Carolina make their presence felt in the latter half of the season, it is not too early to make at least some basic preparations in the increasingly likely event of a landfall here. Guidelines and suggestions are easily available from multiple sources. The New Hanover Department of Emergency Management provides an excellent starting point for making such preparations. While we have been fortunate for the past several years in not having landfall of a major hurricane, the law of averages indicates that sooner or later.....

In addition to providing for the safety of yourself and your family, it is not too soon to check the batteries in your handheld radio and other alternative power sources. If you decide to "ride out" a storm, your ability to communicate may well be needed.

As we go to press here, there has been a bit of a flapdoodle over the last couple of days concerning a report issued by the Solar Physics Division of the American Astronomical Society containing "...predictions for a major drop in solar activity..." for the foreseeable future. You can find the report on the ARRL website. Yesterday's ARRL Letter (6/16/11) indicates a further discussion on the ARRL web page today (6/17), but it hasn't appeared yet. The discussion bears watching. Can you say "HF Propagation"? It is probably to soon to engage in handwringing or argument. We will have to see how it settles out.

Speaking of "Old Sol" , the July issue of QST has a timely article entitled "Solar Indices--What Do They Mean?" There is also a short article addressing ARRL's change of providers for both equipment of individual ham's equipment and club liability and equipment insurance.

See you at the meeting.

All for now, more next month,

73 Bill AG4PA