



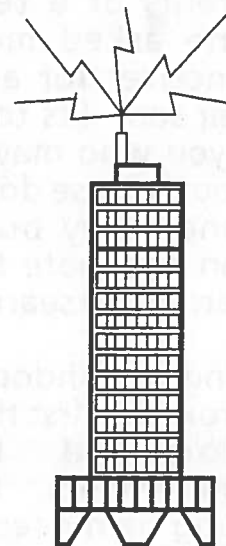
# XARC

## Monthly Newsletter

The Voice of the Xerox Amateur Radio Club

Xerox  
Amateur  
Radio Club

KE2MK/R  
224.26/444.825  
145.29



Bob Karz  
Mike Ishler  
Pete Fournia  
Rick LaDonna  
John Wright

K2OID  
KE2LU  
WA2BPQ  
N2IJI  
KE2MK

President  
Vice President  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Trustee

December 15, 1991

### Next Club Meeting

**December 19th, 1730 hrs**

### Program for Next Meeting

With the VHF Contest upcoming, Gene Parker, KE2T, and Barry Rickett, N2EZX, will discuss our strategy to retain the prestigious Rochester Cup. Join us to see how we plan to take on the RDXA and others and prove that last year's victory was no fluke.

**Dues are due! Application in this month's Newsletter. Please pay if you have not as yet.**

### Election Results

At the last meeting, Mike Ishler, KE2LU, was elected Vice President, Pete Fournia, WA2BPQ, was elected Secretary, Rick LaDonna, N2IJI, was elected Treasurer, and John Wright, KE2MK, was elected Repeater Trustee. There were no nominations for President. Since the meeting, Mike Ishler has been nominated for President and Dave Sweet, N2BHL, has been

nominated for Vice President. Both have accepted. The elections will be completed at the December meeting. Bob Karz has agreed to become newsletter editor, and Karz's Column will continue.

### License Classes

I'm very pleased to report that Mark Dietrich, KB2LXA, Lisa Karz, N2LPQ, Chris Liebfried, N2OHB, and Jose Soler, N2LPF all successfully upgraded to General last Thursday. In addition, Warren Boudrie became a Technician Plus and Craig Furiman became a Technician. Exams for the remaining novices and techs will be this Thursday at 7:00 PM after the meeting. Congrats to the new hams and upgrades.

### KARZ's Corner

Most of us, whether hams or not, get enjoyment from shopping. For my wife, its cloths. For Emelda Marcos, its apparently shoes. For John Sununu, its stamps, and for me its electronics and especially ham gear. Its been said that I've never seen a Radio Shack I didn't like (hi hi). This month, I was presented

a rare opportunity to shop when the parents of a teenage ham friend of mine asked me to find a used HF transceiver for a Christmas present for their son. (Its to be a surprise, so those of you who may know who I'm talking about, please don't tell). The amount of money they budgeted seemed more than adequate to buy some really nice gear, so the search began.

Being well indoctrinated in the ways of Xerox, the first thing I did was draw up a prioritized list of customer requirements. I decided my budding young ham needed digital readout and receiver incremental tuning at a minimum since his current (borrowed) transceiver had neither. I also decided that some kind of QRM fighting feature (IF shift or a notch filter) would be nice, that capability on the new bands would be a plus, that a solid state final that needed no tune up would be advantageous, and that I'd also like a speech processor, dual VFO's, and general coverage receive.....Then I priced rigs with these features and suddenly got back to reality. Yes, there are used rigs out there with such capabilities, but they cost nearly as much as the new rigs. I'm not absolutely sure, but I believe ham gear has held its value better than many other investments (gold, silver, and diamonds to name a few). So with my original requirements - digital and RIT - in mind, I decided to leave the rest opened and stick to budget.

I started by checking into the Sunday Monroe County FM Net and immediately had calls from hams with a Kenwood TS-130 and a Ten Tec 544 for sale. That sent me scurrying for my back issues of QST. What is a 544? What is a TS-130, for that matter. I dismissed the 544 as a little to dated (also, the asking price was out of line), but the 130 seemed reasonable - all solid state plus the new bands, so I "filed away" his info

and began pursuit of the 800 phone numbers in QST. I discovered that the ICOM 730 looked like a good rig to go after, and that there were several attractive candidates from the main manufacturers as well.

You'd be amazed how many 800 numbers there are to call in QST when you're searching for used gear. After a few hours I felt like I was operating my own phone "boiler room". Anyone who thinks the economy is bad ought to try making a few phone calls to these ham stores. First off, anything they get disappears in a hurry, and the prices are remarkable. It appears that some of the stuff (a Kenwood TS-830 for example) goes for more than it cost new. Several places don't handle used gear at all. I got to wondering what's happened to all the transceivers the (mostly) japanese manufacturers cranked out over the past ten years? Does EVERYONE keep all their past rigs? Its hard to believe they're all being advertised in the swap sheets. In any case, I didn't consider the swap sheets for three reasons. First, they are expensive (typically \$15 to \$25 because of their minimum subscription), second, there's no guarantee they'll have what you want, and third, buying a substantial piece of gear through the mail from a private individual "sight on seen" could be asking for trouble.

The ICOM 730 was growing on me as the ideal rig for my friend. It was solid state with dual VFO's built in. Furthermore, a few were owned by club members who seemed happy with them. Maybe it was small with relatively few "bells and whistles", but the guys and gals at the 800 numbers assured me the price was right and they'd be glad to sell me one if they had one in stock. I called two club members who had bought their 730's used and asked them how. One I'd describe as luck - the seller offered it at the same price as the radio store had offered as

trade in. This number is embarrassingly low even knowing that the stores have overhead and profit to consider. The other called the 800 numbers. "How often", I inquired reflecting on my own 800 experience. "Every other day or so" was the gist of the reply. I guess you can find exactly what you're looking for if you're willing to make a career out of it (hi hi). At any rate, I never did find an ICOM 730 for sale. In desperation I answered a classified in QST for a 730, but it was already gone.

Finally, I sent a mail note out to the club asking for help. I got a single reply about a Yaseu FT101ZD for sale. That sent me back to QST again. After this, I'm sure I'm well qualified to open up a second hand ham gear store. It seemed reasonably feature wise, so I checked it out, and it was beautiful - I mean MINT MINT MINT condition. It didn't have quite everything on the list (no solid state finals and no dual VFOs for example), but the RIT did span  $\pm 5\text{KHz}$  which should be plenty for the DX splits, and there were several nice "bells and whistles". We quickly reached a fair price. (The value of ham gear is surprisingly well defined. That is, there's a relatively narrow range between a really bad deal and a great one.) Then all that was left was to go check out the TS-130 half way to Buffalo. The ham selling it was a very nice guy, and it's always fun to tour someone else's set up. The 130 is also a nice rig, but it's really more for mobile use, and while it is in very good condition, it was not as pristine as the Yaseu.

Yesterday, I picked up the Yaseu and Friday it will be delivered to its new home. It's ironic, but after literally a nation wide search, the rig of choice was located less than a mile from my young ham friend's home.

So after several days of work, hours on the phone, and miles on the car, we have met success. Was it worth it?.....You bet it was. Would I do it again?..... in a second. After all was said and done, it was FUN.

73 and Happy Holidays

Bob, K2OID

## **Letter From Shannon Wixxom, WV2J**

18 November 1991

At Anchor off Green Cay, Bahamas

Dear Barry,

Offshore passage making is truly a unique experience. It is a physical and mental challenge, and certainly not for the faint of heart. But, if it's the thing for you, then you will be there.

Our plan was to sail from the Beaufort-Morehead City, North Carolina area almost due east for a day, to punch through the Gulf Stream (which flows north and therefore contrary), then pick up the edge of the trade winds (Easterlies) and sail south by south-west to Marsh Harbor in the northern-most Bahamas.

So much for plans. The first day worked out fine and we made 150 miles easterly in a spanking north-west wind. Ron and our crew person (another good friend Fred) were seasick the first day out (I don't suffer the malady myself), but were OK by the second day. As we sailed off the Cape Lookout shoals into the deeper water off the continental shelf, our boat was joined by about a dozen dolphins, swimming and jumping on both sides of the boat. They like to ride in the bow wave created by the keel, and come close enough to touch. It is a most enchanting experience. They're lovely and graceful creatures. One squeaked at me.

On the second day, things began to degrade. To make a long story short, a storm coming up the US coast chased us far east into the Sargasso sea ( where they have those big mats of Sargasso weed, yes we saw lots of them).

During the height of the storm, the winds blew 35 - 45 knots and seas built to 15 - 17 feet (estimated). I watched flying fish coming zipping out of the side of a wave and into another - above my head. We were down to using just our storm staysail, and going as much south as we could. Our boat proved to be the fine, weatherly offshore cruiser she was designed to be, and with her deep keel and narrow entry, she rode the very rough weather with a minimum of pounding. Still, it was very rough weather and it was really hard to get around in the boat. It gives new meaning to the word 'bludgeon'.

The crew did as well as the boat. Certainly having a willing and semi-experienced third hand was of enormous help, and I think Fred got all the adventure he wanted. And it was certainly fantastic, especially during the height of the storm, to have two hours on and four hours off, instead of the 2 on and 2 off Ron and I do alone (it's called watch-on-watch). Even then, we all snatched sleep during the day, and slept like stones the first night in Nassau. You speedily develop the ability to sleep through truly awful conditions, no matter what. Sleep deprivation will do that.

The last two days were superb sailorman's days: sunny, warm, breezy ( even had a half day of calm). It was during the last evening out that I talked to you. My monday sked had passed the word back to Rochester that we were OK, if overdue. We found out later that the storm was covered on TV, so lots of friends and relatives were worried. So ham radio turned out to be valuable. In fact, it was critical. I listened every day to the high seas forecast out of Norfolk,

Va. (8.764 Mhz), so we knew what to expect.

And after all that, what a SPLENDID landfall the Bahamas is!!! Weather is paradisaical (warm days and cool nights), bright tropical sun, white sand beaches, clear, brilliant turquoise water, coconut palms, flowers ..... but Barry, believe me, we earned it on that trip.

I gave Fred your address and he's going to give you a copy of the video tape he made. It will probably be boring for you, just lots of water going by, and of course he didn't have it out during the worst of the weather. I'll be interested to see it myself ... someday.

We stayed in Nassau for four days cleaning up, resting and repairing some minor storm damage - also getting our fair share of conch fritters and pina coladas.

19 November 1991

At anchor off Rose Island

We had to switch anchorages, as some weather blew in and made Green Cay very bouncy. We had to do it in cloudy weather, not a good situation for reading the bottom, but we made a short but hairy passage. So now a word about boat handling in the Bahamas. There are almost no aids to navigation here (buoys, lights, marked channels), so NOBODY sails at night and you use charts, cruising guides and "eyeball navigation". The water is so clear here that you tell by it's color the depth of the water. Dark blue is deep and OK. Turquoise and green are shallower but OK. Light green and whitish blue are TOO SHALLOW. Brown is rocks and/or coral heads - stay away! The deep draft keel that did so well in the stormy ocean is a liability here. The coral heads are so numerous, they cannot be charted.

So generally, I stand at the bow and pilot us in and around the waters. We have VOX walkie talkies and I can talk to Ron at the helm. We also use it to get up the anchor in a blow with me at the

helm and Ron at the windlass. That way we don't have to yell at each other. Speaking of radios, the Ham Waterways Net on 7.268 at 8:45 EST is absolutely invaluable. They give the best weather synopsis for the Gulf, Florida straights and Bahamas and southeast coast. We listen EVERY day as Nassau radio weather just tells you what the weather is now (I can cope with that myself).

A little about the Bahamas: it is a commonwealth of 700 islands stretching 600 miles into the Atlantic / Carribean. The total population is about 125,000 people, over half of whom live in Nassau, the capitol. So yes, that leaves many beautiful cays and islands totally uninhabited. Those are the places we like: snorkeling, fishing, beach combing and goofing off with a stop every two weeks or so at a tiny town for supplies and mail. Some winter vacation, huh?

Life is very laid back here, except for handling the boat in a blow. The people are friendly and polite and they make great bread pudding.

More later on the air.

Regards to all,  
Shannon WV2J/C6A

## Club Library

The club now has a library which is used to maintain copies of equipment manuals and related articles of projects, radio mods and the like. Anything which may now or in the future be of interest to amateur radio is appropriate to include in the library. Anyone who has ever purchased a used piece of equipment without the manual and then tried to get a copy of the manual

can appreciate the value of this library. I am soliciting all of you to make copies of any manuals or related articles you may have and mail them to me for inclusion in the library. I will occasionally publish an index of what is in the library and of course queries are welcome at any time.

Thanx Barry N2EZS

## Equipment loans

As many of you know the XARC has recently increased its equipment inventory by leaps and bounds over what we had just a short time ago. I have been asked, as the chairman of the station committee, to publish a list of equipment which is available for short term loan to members of the club. When borrowing a piece of equipment, a note should be left in the club station with the item borrowed, the date borrowed, the anticipated return date, and the borrowers name and call.

The following is a list of equipment located at the station in building 337 which is available for lending per the above guidelines. All other items are not to be removed from the station for personal use.

Heathkit HW101 transceiver with speaker and power supply  
KDK 2 Meter FM transceiver  
12 volt power supply (blue box type)  
Bird wattmeter, 3 - 30 Mhz, up to 100W  
Kenwood VHF/UHF watt/SWR meter, 140 - 500 Mhz  
Headphones  
ARRL Handbook  
ARRL Antenna book  
US and Foreign area call books (1988 issue)  
Software library disks, Amateur related, (5 1/4 and 3 1/2 DSDD disks)

All of the equipment located at the station is, of course, there for the use of

all our members at any time. I would strongly encourage you to use the station. The performance of the station is better than most would imagine.

Thanx Barry

## **Do you have QSL cards to send?**

As a club we are entitled to combine ARRL members cards in one mailing. Just order your cards as always, include a current mailing label from QST and give them to one of the club officers.

## **Is your ARRL membership up for renewal?**

If so remember to renew through the club. See Rick LaDonna(x29477) for details.

## **Hamfests/Auctions**

If anyone knows the dates of a hamfest not listed here please forward the information to Mike Ishler 139/24A , Ishler:Wbst129:Xerox

## **Wantads/For Sale**

Dentron kilowatt Tuner, balanced and unbalanced outputs, with new 17 position switch & coax connectors and manual -- \$90.

CALL John Facci or

John S Facci:Wbst128:Xerox