



KEY KLIX

Amateur Radio Club of Savannah

January 2008

Volume 4

Issue 1

The Amateur Radio Club of Savannah Annual Banquet is going to be held at **Skyler's Restaurant, located at, 225 E. Bay Street, Thursday, January 10, 2008.** We will begin to assemble at 6:45pm, and order our meals off the menu around 7:00pm. Each person is responsible for his or her meal and gratuity. The 2008 "Slate of Officers" and the "Amateur of the Year" will be recognized. (The Annual Banquet is being held in lieu of the regular January meeting.)

For those who want more information about Skyler's check the below link:

<http://www.skylersrestaurant.com>

Please contact Andy Blackburn via Email: andy@g-net.net or Phone: (912) 238-4676 to let us know how many people in your family will be attending.

KF4LMT's Shack/Monitoring Post

Mac McCormick, KF4LMT

As a ham shack, my shack isn't much. At this point, it is pretty much composed of just a Radio Shack HTX-242 mobile 2-meter radio hooked up to an Astron power supply and a Hamstick 2-meter vertical antenna out back of the house. My interest in radio, however, extends to scanning and monitoring the VHF/UHF spectrum and this is where my shack turns into more of a monitoring post. I don't have a lot of funding to equip my ham shack/monitoring post, so I've collected the equipment over a number of years, found deals where possible, and I've also found inexpensive alternatives to some equipment.



In the photos above, the HTX-242 is hard to see, but it is under the computer monitor on the left hand side. It is programmed with local area repeaters and simplex frequencies as well as some VHF Coast Guard and Public Safety frequencies to augment the scanners. The scanners reside on the other side of the of the computer monitor. From left to right and bottom to top, there is a Uniden BC-796 for analog/digital land mobile, a Uniden BC-780 for military monitoring, a Uniden BC-895 for VHF/UHF aviation monitoring, a Radio Shack Pro-2005 for miscellaneous purposes and a Radio Shack Pro-2052 that gets used mostly for low-band VHF monitoring. To the left of the scanners is a Radio Shack DX-394 HF receiver with a Radio Shack DSP-40 signal

processor/amplified speaker. On top of the scanners is a Uniden BC-396 portable scanner, which is one of my favorite radios. It can be connected to the outside antennas to augment the other scanners.

A Larsen VHF antenna feeds the BC-796 and Pro-2005. A Lakeview discone antenna feeds the other scanners. Both antennas use RG-6QS cable; sure it's 75 ohm cable but the scanners aren't transmitting. I also use F connectors with BNC adapters at the back of the scanners. The reason for the F connectors is that I can't afford active multicouplers at this time, so I use TV splitters with TV signal preamplifiers in front of the to distribute the signals to multiple radios. The TV preamplifiers are used not as much to boost the incoming signal as much as they are to offset the loss in the splitters. This setup has worked quite well for several years, enabling me to feed multiple radios without an antenna farm in the backyard.



Some of you may remember David, K4DJD announcing he had some computers that were available to club members a few meetings back. I took David up one of these computers and have found it to be an excellent addition to the shack/monitoring post.

It is a Pentium II/450 MHz machine and had a CD drive and 2 1.0 USB ports. Minimal expenditure added a CD read/write drive and a 4 port 2.0 USB card to the machine, which updated its capabilities a bit. While it certainly isn't up to snuff for advanced web work, gaming, video work, etc. it does work well with radio applications, Word, Excel, etc.

I am currently using the computer for several radio related applications. I am running RecAll Pro, an application that records .wav or .mp3 files through the line-in or microphone inputs of the sound card. This enables me to record audio from the scanners or amateur radio equipment. Two copies of ID Tracker are also installed, one for the BC-796 and one for the BC-780; ID Tracker works via a serial connection to DB9 ports on the back of the scanners and tracks talkgroup ID's on trunking systems and conventional frequencies; logging them and recording audio from them. This is a great help in finding and identifying new frequencies and talkgroups because it can run unattended; the audio clips are logged with time and frequency/talkgroup information and can be reviewed at a later time. In addition to these applications, programming software for the BC-780, BC-796, and BC-396 are all installed. I'm sure that many more radio control and decoding applications could be run easily from this machine as well, both for amateur radio and scanning equipment. I think David has some more of these. If you are looking for a computer to devote to radio applications, these may not be a bad choice.

Next month I'll profile my mobile monitoring setup, which entertains me and enables me to "play radio" on my thirty-something mile each way commute to work. If you have any questions about the applications I listed above, e-mail me at kf4lmt@comcast.net.

Several hams on the repeater have been heard talking about it being illegal to talk on a 2-way radio while driving a motor vehicle in GA unless the operation is hands-free. The following is the Georgia Official Code for driving a motor vehicle and talking on the radio at the same time. This includes ham radio.

O. C. G. A. § 40-6-241

A driver shall exercise due care in operating a motor vehicle on the highways of this state and shall not engage in any actions which shall distract such driver from the safe operation of such vehicle, provided that the proper use of a radio, citizens band radio or mobile telephone shall not be a violation of this code section.

REDUCING SWR? WHAT!!!????

It was heard on one of the area repeaters that someone was telling someone else that the way to reduce SWR, was, to paint his antenna tower with silver paint. Also, if using copper-weld wire for your antenna, painting it silver also to lowers SWR.

Editor being facetious - Would the silver paint also keep buzzards from roosting on the tower? Would black paint increase the SWR? Is there an ARRL antenna publication on this? Are these suggestions C.B. leftovers? Geez, it's not April 1 yet.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ARRL MEMBERSHIP

The Amateur Radio Club of Savannah is an ARRL affiliated club; as such our membership roster must have a minimum of 51% ARRL members. It is very important that we maintain this requirement to remain an ARRL affiliated club, which has its benefits. Please help support our club and also the ARRL. Join or renew ARRL membership soon.

IT'S ARCS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME

It's that time again...time to renew your membership and support of the Amateur Radio Club of Savannah. Individual membership dues are \$30 and Family membership is \$40. Your support goes towards paying for the upkeep of the repeaters, paying the insurances, the P.O. Box, postage, and other misc. items during the year. Please send your check to the P. O. Box or give it to the treasurer before the March 31 deadline.

Articles are always needed for the **Key Klix!!!!** You can also list your items for swap or sale. Check-in to the 37/97, 2 meter net Thursdays at 9pm. CU at the banquet!!

YOU MAY BE AN OLD TIMER

You may be an old timer if:

- If your mobile rig is worth more than your car!
- If you can spell "Hammarlund" but not "Yaesu".
- If you consider the ARRL a bunch of wild-eyed radicals.
- If you bought most of your antenna tuner from the J. H. Millen company.
- If your call sign does not match your name or initials.
- If you can't copy CW slower than 25 wpm.
- If you know what a BC 221 and an ARC 5 T19 are.
- If you think repeaters are a fad.
- If you time out the repeater every time you transmit on the Sunday-night net.
- If you consider cutting a slot in your garage wall to clear your mobile antenna.
- If your automatic motor tuned mobile antenna is worth more than your pickup truck.
- If you think Tech-no-coders are an alien race.
- If you know how to neutralize a 304 TH amp.
- If you think home brew is a radio instead of a jug of wine.
- If you know where the "dit dit" at the end of a CW QSO originated.
- If you think single sideband is a fad.
- If you have QSOs that last longer than 30 seconds.
- If you recognize all the stuff in boxes under the tables at ham fests.
- If you don't own an HT and don't know what an offset is.
- If your wife is actually starting to call herself "the XYL".
- If your wife left ten years ago and you haven't noticed it yet.
- If your QSL collection no longer fits in your bedroom.
- If the neighbors dog is afraid to walk through your backyard.
- If you think a radio shack is a ham station instead of a toy (junk) store.

That's it for this month's Key Klix. I want to wish everyone a Happy New Year.
73 de Andy Blackburn, WD4AFY.



AMATEUR RADIO CLUB OF SAVANNAH



The Amateur Radio Club of Savannah, was founded in 1938, and is a non-profit 501(c)(3)(a) organization dedicated to:

- (a) Recognition and enhancement of the value of the amateur service to the public as a voluntary noncommercial communication service, particularly with respect to providing emergency communications.
- (b) Continuation and extension of the amateur's proven ability to contribute to the advancement of the radio art.
- (c) Encouragement and improvement of the amateur service through rules which provide for advancing skills in both the communication and technical phases of the art.
- (d) Expansion of the existing reservoir within the amateur radio service of trained operators, technicians, and electronics experts.
- (e) Continuation and extension of the amateur's unique ability to enhance international goodwill.