



# KEY KLIX

Amateur Radio Club of Savannah

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**ARCS Meeting:** The next meeting of the Amateur Radio Club of Savannah will be held, Tuesday, September 11, 2007, 7:30pm, at Memorial Health University Center, in the Hoskins Building Classroom "5." The Hoskins building is on the South Side of the hospital near Parking Garage "C." Enter the Hoskins Building on the side that faces the Parking Garage "C." There will be a short program following the business portion of the meeting.

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**JOTA Update:** A site has been found for the Jamboree On The Air (JOTA.) The event will be held at the Mighty 8th Air Force Museum on Saturday, October 20th, 2007. The museum opens at 9 AM, but volunteers will need to get there early to help set up a shelter tent, tables, antennas, etc. We will operate from approximately 10 AM till the museum closes at 5 PM. We will close down operations sooner if attendance drops off.

This is slated to be an officially sanctioned Coastal Empire Council of the Boy Scouts event, and not just a couple of packs. The event will be publicized via the official BSA website for this area, with flyers distributed, etc. Attendance is uncertain, due to other events that weekend, but we have planned on approximately 100 scouts visiting throughout the day.

Planning needs to start now. We need to have at least two HF radios set up, with battery power. Due to very unreliable propagation, I will not be using my pack radio this year due to its low power. We need at least two 100w class radios at the site. If you'd like to volunteer and help out, please contact Jim Glenn KD4MJH or me.

Please pass the word around. This could be really big and exciting and a WHOLE lot of fun. Plus, if you get bored playing radio, you can look at vintage, cool, WW2 aircraft.

**CONTACT:** Philip Neidlinger, KA4KOE, JOTA Event Co-Chair, Pack 527, Richmond Hill, GA, Webelos Den Leader.

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### **Agency Monitoring Profile: Savannah Fire and Emergency Services**

Mac McCormick, KF4LMT

<http://kf4lmt.blogspot.com/>

Savannah Fire and Emergency Services is among the busiest fire department in this area and certainly the most interesting one to listen to. Savannah Fire makes extensive use of radio communications in their firefighting operations. Listening to them, you learn that there is more to firefighting than just putting water on a fire. Savannah Fire also utilizes the Incident Command System (ICS) that Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) has been putting heavy emphasis on in recent years. Listening to Savannah Fire's use of ICS can be helpful in learning how the ICS works. Furthermore, Savannah Fire is one of the more entertaining scanning targets in this area.

Savannah Fire uses the Chatham-Effingham TRS for the majority of their communications along with a UHF conventional repeater. Dispatches are multicast on one of the TRS talkgroups and the UHF repeater with dispatch using the callsign "SAVANNAH FIRE." The dispatches can be easily monitored using a conventional scanner or amateur radio gear with extended receive capability by programming in 453.925 (DCS of 315). In order to keep unit-to-unit traffic off of the dispatch channel and keep it clear for incident dispatches, they utilize an "Admin" talkgroup for administrative traffic. Once units are dispatched to an incident, they are directed to go to one of three "Fireground" channels; units respond to the incident on the fireground channel and conduct all further incident related communications on it unless they are directed to another channel. All fire departments on the TRS have access to the Fire Common talkgroup, which is used for multiple agency and mutual aid type responses. Savannah Fire makes heavy use of radio during their responses. Each fire station is equipped with base station radios. Each apparatus is equipped with a mobile radio; they are manned by three to four firefighters who are each equipped with a portable radio. Of all the fire departments in the Savannah area, you will probably hear the most tactical firefighting traffic from Savannah Fire.

Talkgroup ID	Name
36880	Dispatch
36912	Admin
36976	Fireground 1
37008	Fireground 2
37040	Fireground 3
37072	Fire Common

A typical response for a structure fire will be 3 engine companies, a truck (ladder) company, a rescue squad, a battalion chief, and a safety officer. If these units aren't sufficient, the incident commander will request a task force that can consist of an additional engine, truck, and squad (or a different combination if request by the commander). A typical response to a vehicle accident where extrication may be needed is one engine company, one rescue squad, and a safety officer (the respective Battalion Chief will sometimes send himself on the call). Other responses may vary on exactly what types of units are needed on scene.

Savannah Fire and Emergency Services has used "plain English" dispatch, which Savannah Chatham Metropolitan PD has recently switched to, for several years. You will hear very few codes or signals used on frequency and talkgroups above. Exceptions are response codes; Code 2 is used for a no lights and siren response (typically used by secondary units on alarm responses) and Code 3 is used for lights and siren responses.

Savannah Fire's unit numbering system, for the most part, is based on what station the unit is based at. ENGINE 1 and TRUCK 1, for instance, are based out of Station 1. Rescue Squads are an exception to this rule. Savannah Fire has two Rescue units; RESCUE 1 is based out of Station 3 and RESCUE 2 is based out of Station 7. There are also three Battalion Chiefs that respond to incidents and usually assume incident command; their callsigns are BATTALION 1, 2, and 3 respectively. Hazardous Materials (Haz Mat) units are based out of Station 6. MARINE 1 (not to be confused with Savannah Chatham Marine Patrol's MARINE # units) is Savannah Fire's multi-purpose boat that is tied up at the city dock on River Street; it does not have a permanent crew but it manned by one of the downtown units when activated.

Station Number	Location
Station 1	535 E 63rd St.
Station 2	5 Skyline Dr.
Station 3	121 E. Oglethorpe Ave.
Station 4	2401 Augusta Ave.
Station 5	6 W. Henry St.

Station 6	3000 Liberty Pkwy.
Station 7	6902 Sallie Mood Dr.
Station 8	2824 Bee Rd.
Station 9	1943 Capital St.
Station 10	13710 Coffee Bluff Rd.
Station 11	931 Mohawk St.
Station 13	McKenna Ave. @ Airways Blvd.
Station 14	Benton Blvd. area
Station 15	US 17/Canebrake area

Part of the Georgia Search and Rescue (GSAR) Coastal Task Force is based with Savannah Fire and Emergency Services. Of the two heavy rescue units in the Coastal Task Force, one is stationed at Savannah Fire's Station 6. Even though the apparatus and equipment are stationed with Savannah Fire, task force personnel come from numerous local departments.

Savannah Fire and Emergency Services has also worked with amateur radio operators in the past. In 1999, Savannah Fire requested and received assistance from ARES to perform backup communications in the event that their radio system was disabled by Y2K problems. Temporary amateur radio stations were set up at each fire station with the ability to operate through the 146.970 repeater or directly by simplex if the need be. Rather than celebrating the New Year as many did, volunteer amateur radio operators spent their new year at the fire stations providing a public service.

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## **Shelby Hamfest: It's Not Just Another Hamfest!**

**--Andy Blackburn, WD4AFY**

During the 30+ years that I have been a "ham," I have had the opportunity to attend numerous hamfests which include: Dayton, OH; Arlington, TX; Shreveport, LA; Shelby, NC; Charlotte, NC; Rock Hill, SC; Sumter, SC; Charleston, SC; Dalton, GA; Atlanta, GA; Lawrenceville, GA; Augusta, GA; Statesboro, GA; Savannah, GA; two different hamfests in the Jacksonville, FL area; Ocala, FL; Orlando, FL; Melbourne, FL; and Plantation, FL; to name a few. I still attend a few of these hamfests regularly.

Nick-named the "Grand-Daddy of Them All," my favorite hamfest is the Shelby Hamfest, in Shelby, NC. The hamfest is officially held at the Shelby fairgrounds, every year on the Labor Day weekend. The fairground has several buildings for ham radio, computer, and electronics dealers. There are acres and acres for the flea market, parking, camping, etc. The fairground has around 150 full hook-ups for campers. There are many areas suitable for tent or dry camping as well. There are restrooms and shower facilities on the fairground. (Everyone is supposed to pay for an admission ticket. You also pay a daily fee for each day that you camp on a site, and a fee if you have a "flea market" table.) I began to attend this hamfest in 1983.

The Shelby Amateur Radio Club opens the fairground 2 weeks in advance to campers on a first come, first served basis. My wife Beth Ann, and I took our camper and set up on the fairgrounds along with our good friend Jack Norris, WB4TWX, (from Six-Mile, SC,) the weekend before the official hamfest weekend.



Immediately after we set up our camper, we realized that our nearby camping neighbors also included friends and people that we knew.

Beth Ann and I left the fairgrounds around noon, Saturday, to go visit an elderly aunt in nearby Brevard, NC. We then went to a roadside Country Store, and purchased several gallons of ice cold, fresh-pressed apple cider, at Bat Cave, NC. (near "Chimney Rock.")



As we returned to Shelby, we were met by a severe afternoon thunderstorm. We were very concerned about our camper since we had left the camper awning out. Upon arriving at the fairground, we found that some nice folks (including Shelby Hamfest officials) had retracted the awning to prevent possible wind damage.

On Sunday, August 26, Beth Ann and I returned to Savannah since we both had to work Monday and Tuesday. I noticed that Beth Ann was reading something while I was driving home. After work on Tuesday, Beth Ann and I returned to Shelby. I noticed that Beth Ann was reading the same book on the trip back. Upon arriving, Shelby Hamfest officials met us and stated that they had kept an eye on our camper while we were gone the 2 days.

Wednesday morning, we set up our flea market area under a canopy.



Jack and myself displayed ham equipment and other misc. stuff, while Beth Ann displayed some of her surplus jewelry and other odds-and-ends. Our first customer was a ham friend from Virginia. He purchased several items from a "Silent Key's" estate that we had on display. Sales was brisk until around 2:30pm, when we had to quickly cover our wares and secure the overhead canopy due to a severe storm brandishing winds up to 70mph.



Numerous camper awnings and canopies around the fairground were damaged during this severe storm. We did not sustain any damage.

Around 3:30pm, Wednesday afternoon, Beth Ann stated that she was ready to take the Technician Ham Radio Test. Somewhat nervous, she headed over to the testing area (the fairground fire house) and filled out the paperwork. I accompanied her.



Testing began at 4pm. Around 4:30pm, the VE's announced that Beth Ann had passed the "Technician" test. She received a congratulatory hug by the examiners as well as a hug and a kiss from me. (Note: She only studied for the "Technician test" just several days during the drive to and from Savannah back to Shelby.)

Thursday morning, we uncovered our wares. Sales were good. Periodically, we would borrow Jack's red golf car to ride around the hamfest to visit and see what everyone else had for sale. More people and campers were arriving. The fairground was filling up fast. Around noon, I headed over to Norm Harrill's camper, to see if Beth Ann's callsign had been issued. Norm told me that Beth Ann had been issued the callsign, KI4ZDN. Beth Ann was officially a "ham."



Friday was the "official start day" of the hamfest. Dealers opened inside the buildings and most sites were taken in the flea market area. There was some flea market overflow outside the fairground area. Several concession stands also opened. Besides breakfast, sandwiches, and burgers, one stand was offering RC Cola and Moon Pies.





People were buying, and our items for sale were diminishing. Beth Ann was happy to see a lot of my surplus “stuff” go.

Saturday continued to be a successful day of sales. We sold 3 older color TV’s (to help fund a new color HDTV.) There were only a few items left on our flea market table by the end of the day. I made only a few small purchases i.e. connectors, and small parts.

You never know what to expect at this hamfest. I thought I had been out in the sun too long when I saw the following “sight.” I had to do a double take on this one. (It was a T-shirt)



Sunday arrived and many people had left the hamfest. It was time for us to pack up and get ready to return to Savannah.

We told Jack and all of our friends “bye,” and began our trek home with the camper.



We arrived home safely around 7pm Sunday evening.

The Shelby Hamfest is my favorite all-around hamfest. You can stay/camp on the hamfest grounds for up to 2 weeks. You get to see a lot of friends, and you get meet a lot of new friends. You get to peruse a very large flea market of new and used items or you can sell a lot of "stuff." You can take your first ham radio test, or upgrade. The Shelby Radio Club puts a huge effort into this event year after year. The Shelby Radio Club members are fine, friendly, personable people. The Shelby Hamfest may not be the biggest hamfest, but in my opinion it's the best. It's the "Grand-Daddy of Them All."

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## **FOR SALE**

ClearSpeech Speaker DSP noise reduction speaker. Almost new (paid \$119) Little used, Works well  
\$75 OBO

2 x Motorola T5950 GMRS/FRS HT's  
Includes charger, belt clips, and batteries  
Like new. Little used. Paid \$99 new  
\$30 OBO

Schumacher Battery Charger/Starter  
2/10/50 Amp / Good condition  
\$25 OBO

Lakeview 12M Mobile Antenna  
New in wrapper. Standard screw-down mount to base (not included)  
\$15 OBO

2 x Motorola Communications Speakers, Mobile mount, used  
3 NIB Motorola replacement speakers,  
1 Midland mobile communications speaker, used  
\$5 each OBO

Radio Shack Universal Power Adapter (wall wart) 1.5, 3, 4.5, 6, 7.5, 9, & 12v / 300ma, Includes adapter  
plugs  
Almost new \$8

Advanced Battery Systems "Periphex" Universal Charger/Conditioner  
HT Batter charger. All factory acc. included. Used, condition unknown (worked last time I tried it) \$5

Suction-Cup HT Antenna Window Mount, New \$5

Other items for sale also.  
Call Kurt (N4CVF) at 912-713-2133  
or e-mail at [khof1@yahoo.com](mailto:khof1@yahoo.com)

That's it for this month. Please keep those articles coming for the next Key Klix.  
73, de Andy Blackburn, WD4AFY, Key Klix Editor  
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## AMATEUR RADIO CLUB OF SAVANNAH



### **ARCS Elected Officers for 2007:**

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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.