

Gloucester County Amateur Radio Club General Membership Meeting Minutes Wednesday, December 6, 2023



President Jonathan Pearce WB2MNF opened the General Membership Meeting @ 1930 Hours with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ATTENDANCE :

- 30 In Person
- 20 Zoom

VISITORS : John Murrow, KD2NHK of Somerdale

NEW MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE : Todd Foster W2TEF (formerly KE2CAH) from Glassboro, NJ.

ANNOUNCEMENTS :

Jonathan Pearce WB2MNF noted that Club members have been receiving spam messages that purport to originate from him but did not. So ignore and delete these messages. Greg Ciraula W5DO and Jonathan made 11 QSOs from the W2MMD Clubhouse station during the recent Leonid Meteor Shower (the Geminid shower will occur December 13 - 16). The "Got My License - Now What?" session on November 27 at the Clubhouse was well attended. Thanks to presenters Tony Starr K3TS, Ron Block NR2B, Mike Thompson KG4JYA, John Zaruba Jr K2ZA and Jonathan Pearce WB2MNF. The November 29 Holiday Party/Fundraiser at the Pfeiffer Community Center was a great success and was attended by 55 persons. Thanks go to the volunteers who made it possible, particularly Phyllis Martin W2PDB, Kathy Romeo (XYL of Frank Romeo N3PUU) and Mary Jane Block (XYL of Ron Block NR2B).

Upcoming events are :

- December 9 : Tech Saturday Forum, beginning 9 AM at the Clubhouse, will concern "Raspberry Pi - From Zero to Hamclock" and other things that can be done with a Raspberry Pi
- December 9 -10 : ARRL 10 Meter Contest
- December 13 - 16 : Geminid Meteor Shower
- December 20 : GCARC Board of Directors Meeting at the Clubhouse, 7 PM
- December 27 : Dinner at the Clubhouse

There is no increase in Annual Club Dues for 2024. Dues remain at \$30/year but this just keeps the Club afloat. Members are asked to consider voluntary contributions when renewing membership. An extra \$10 will help the Club survive a year in which the annual Hamfest does not raise much money and an extra \$20 can help with the purchase of new equipment. Similarly, we can make donations to the RCA Museum in appreciation of the recent tours. These donations can be received by Anthony Cerami N2OAC or John O'Connell K2QA.

Jonathan Pearce WB2MNF asked Club members about their recent activities :

- Alan Arrison KB2AYU struggled with high noise levels to make one contact with the Czech Republic during the recent EME contest.
- Karl Frank W2KBF cautioned the membership that slingshots are illegal in New Jersey, so we must consider this when looking for ways to hang wire antennas.
- John Zaruba Jr K2ZA recommends the course offered by the CW Innovations group for increasing code speed up to 30 to 40 WPM.

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Jonathan Pearce WB2MNF reviewed the GCARC accomplishments in 2023, including :

- Licensing Classes, with 12 new licensees and 22 upgrades
- A new 160 Meter Loop Antenna
- Two New HF Towers
- DMR and Fusion Hotspots
- New VHF Gear from the ARDC Grant
- Overhaul of the Project Work Area to become a Maker Space
- Rebuilding of the VHF Room and installation of a Mini-Split Air Conditioner
- Meteor Scatter Contacts
- Upgrade of Winlink and EchoLink stations
- A profitable Hamfest, despite bad weather
- RCA Museum Tours
- Digging of trenches and installation of station grounds.

One sad note was the passing of long-time Club member Chuck Colabrese WA2TML.

Volunteer Appreciation Awards :

The GCARC Board of Directors has decided to issue Certificates of Appreciation to members who have made significant efforts to improve the Club over the past 1 - 2 years. These awards will be made quarterly (Club Officers and Directors are not eligible). The first five certificates (prepared by **Chris Prioli AD2CS**) were presented at the November 29 Holiday Party to :

- **Anthony Cerami N2OAC** for work on the Club generator, tower lift mechanism and arranging tours of the RCA museum
- **Gary Mirkin WA3SVW** for his role in hosting the DigiNet and Thursday Night Ragchew Net
- **John Zaruba Jr K2ZA** for his support of the Yaesu Repeaters and Licensing Classes
- **Carl Wittig N2CRW** for providing drawings of electrical, plumbing etc. work done/planned at the Clubhouse;
- **Kathy Romeo (XYL of Frank Romeo N3PUU)** for providing food at Field Day and the Holiday Party

Additional Certificates are being awarded to :

- **John Hill W2HUV** for providing training of Club members and support for the Remote Station
- **Chris Kelly KC2PC** for performing critical welding work on the new HF towers
- **Earl Moore KC2NCH** for hours spent performing Clubhouse upkeep, installations, lawn mowing, etc.
- **Mike Thompson KG2JYA** for reconfiguring the Winlink Station, GOES station and frequent presentations at meetings and Club events.

BUSINESS MEETING

The minutes of the November 1st General Membership Meeting, as published in Crosstalk, were approved.

TREASURER : John O'Connell K2QA reported YTD Budgeted items :

- Income : \$12,152
- Expenses : \$10,547
- Net Gain : \$1,604

Use of \$7,784 is restricted leaving \$16,393 unrestricted. Between profit from the Holiday Party and donations from fifteen people, for a total of \$3,200, we are almost half way to the \$7,000 needed for the VHF Tower Fund. The Treasurer's Report was approved.

GLOUCESTER COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO FOUNDATION :

The GCARF is a 501(c)3 public charity and contributions are tax-deductible. **John O'Connell K2QA** reports that, so far, the GCARF has paid for the air conditioner in the VHF room and supplies for the soldering class.

CLUBHOUSE REPORT : **Alan Arrison KB2AYU** reported that the satellite antennas are back up, with new rotators, so they are "good to go". **Jonathan Pearce WB2MNF** noted that tower bolts have arrived for the VHF towers, some work remains to be done on the tower bases and more donations are needed to fund the VHF towers.

FUTURE PROGRAMS : **Ron Block NR2B** provided a slide summarizing topics for the upcoming General Membership Meetings :

- **Tonight : Sheldon Parker K2MEN on Radio Controlled Model Aircraft**
- **January 3 : Open at the moment**
- **February 7 : Edward Efchak WX2R on the 2024 Solar Eclipse QSO Party**
- **March 6 : Ron Fish KX1W on everything you always wanted to know about ARRL Affiliation**
- **July 3 : Pizza Night**
- **August 7 : Robert Nelson Jr K2QPN on the NJ QSO Party**

DX and CONTESTS : **Tony Starr K3TS** noted the following contests :

- **December 9 - 10: ARRL 10 Meter Contest**
- **December 16 - 17: Croatian DX Contest**
- **December 23 - 24: Many Special Event Stations over Christmas Weekend**
- **December 30 - 31: Stew Perry Top Band DX Challenge**

PUBLIC SERVICE : **Bob Keogh KD2NEC** addressed the importance of understanding the expectations of our "served agencies", e.g. the American Red Cross. We must be prepared to support Disaster Relief Operations by taking appropriate training, participate in exercises and check into nets. It is necessary for us to become familiar with use of Winlink and the form templates available in Winlink. Also, Bob would like to know if GCARC members would be interested in a tour of the Battleship New Jersey some time in the future.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE :

Chris Prioli AD2CS has not had many people sign up for the next round of licensing classes that begin January 8 (Mondays) for Technicians, January 9 (Tuesdays) for Generals and January 12 (Fridays) for Extras. Sessions are planned in mid-January for building Fox Hunt Offset Attenuators and Tape Measure Beams.

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE : **Ron Block NR2B** provided the second reading of the new draft of the GCARC Constitution, which had been circulated previously to the membership. The new constitution was adopted by a unanimous vote.

ANNUAL ELECTION :

An Election Committee was formed, consisting of **Greg Ciraula W5DO**, **Marylu Ciraula KE2CEF** and **Gary Hewitt N2WHV**. Since all candidates were running unopposed, the Election Committee instructed the Recording Secretary **Karl Frank W2KBF** to cast a single vote for each of the candidates. The official outcome, taking effect in January 2024, is :

- **President : Jonathan Pearce WB2MNF**
- **Vice President : Ron Block NR2B**
- **Treasurer : John O'Connell K2QA**
- **Recording Secretary : John Zaruba Jr K2ZA**
- **Corresponding Secretary : Frank Romeo N3PUU**
- **Director : Alan Arrison KB2AYU**
- **Director : Bill Price NJ2S**
- **Trustee : Carl Wittig N2CRW**
- **Trustee : Sheldon Parker K2MEN**
- **Trustee : Leonard Rust W2LJR**

OLD BUSINESS : None

NEW BUSINESS : None

CLOSING REMARKS :

President Jonathan Pearce WB2MNF noted that the Club does NOT have a Capital Budget but relies upon generous donations. This was illustrated by summarizing the many things that were NOT paid from Club Dues :

- **VHF Room cabling, fixtures, insulation, and wallboard**
- **Air conditioning for the VHF Room**
- **Upgrade to the Winlink Station including antenna, diplexer, radios, and computer**
- **Upgraded computer for EchoLink**
- **A new modem, switches, cabinets, and Network Attached Storage**
- **TV for main room**
- **Long-term loan of towers**
- **Satellite rotators and antennas**
- **FLEX 3000 radio**
- **Computers in all 3 rooms plus UPS and screens**
- **Satellite Station (many items)**
- **DMR and System Fusion hotspots**
- **160 Meter loop antenna**
- **Test Bench Equipment and Supplies**
- **All grounding copper and lightning protectors**
- **VHF antenna repairs**

In summary, donations are needed in order for the Club to keep doing "new stuff".

The Business Meeting concluded @ 2047 Hours and was followed by a presentation from **Sheldon Parker K2MEN** on **Radio-Controlled Model Aircraft**.

Karl Frank W2KBF, GCARC Recording Secretary