

SHORT CIRCUIT, NEWSLETTER OF THE ARCTIC AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
SHORT CIRCUIT, NEWSLETTER OF THE ARCTIC AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

APRIL 1988
APRIL 1988

Officers for the 1987-88 club year are:
President, Hank Hove, KL7HPR
Vice-President, Jim Dixon, NL7HI
Treasurer, Jim Gilmore, KL7SW
Secretary, Lewy Overton, NOSN
The newsletter is published monthly

Meeting Time

The next meeting of the Arctic Amateur Radio Club will be held in the Globe Room of the Geophysical Institute, UAF, on Friday, April 1. Coffee, snacks and conversation start at 7:30pm and the sit down business (short) meeting and program follow. Do all come out. THIS IS NOT AN APRIL FOOLS TRICK!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

LAPTOP MS-DOS COMPUTERS/PACKET TERMINALS--CHEEP!!!!!!

If you would like a complete laptop MS-DOS computer system for general computing or packet terminal usage for just a few bucks, please read the following. I will be picking up a quantity of Sharp PC-5000 systems in Los Angeles at cost for distribution to Alaskan hams within a few days. These packages include the basic laptop computer with a flip-up 80 column up & lower case liquid crystal display; the drop-in NLQ printer module which functions either with a ribbon cartridge for use on regular full-size bond paper or without for printing on thermal paper. The units come with removable nicad batteries and a 12 VDC, 800 MA wall charger for self contained field operation.

There are two types of externally accessible memories. Each package will come with two Sharp drop-in bubble memory cartridges of 128K each. These will be locally loaded with all available programs in versions specifically written for the PC-5000, including Wordstar, a terminal program which works great on packet, a spreadsheet, etc. There are also sockets in the underside of the computer for an additional 192K of RAM chips (not included, but available).

On the rear of the computer are several jacks including a standard RS-232C socket for the cable to your TNC, external printer, or what-have-you. This is NOT used for your modem. There is a separate small 300 baud modem made by Sharp which is included in the package. This is called their 5-way modem because it has a built in Touchtone pad, autodialer, speakerphone with modular jack, as well as the modem function.

If you would like one of these packages for \$399 for everything, call K4TXK at 455-6904 or leave a message on the KL7GNG BBS. Thanks and 73 - Craig

NEWS FROM THE AARC BOARD MEETING--MARCH 23, 1988

Hank Hove has resigned as president of the AARC. Jim Dixon, vice-president, will serve as acting president until new Board elections next fall.

The Tanana Valley Preparedness Net (ARES) will have a "super checkin night" on April 3 (Sunday) at 8 pm, USB 28.4. At 8:15 pm, checkin will be on the 39/97 repeater.

Comments on UPS (United Parcel Service) attack on 220^{MH} will be accepted through March 31. It's suggested that you send hand written remarks on your QSL card to: Federal Communications Commission, Washington, DC 20554. Refer to General Document 87-14.

Speakers and events are being planned for the Hamfest/Swapmeet in August. More news in the May newsletter.

QSL Party for KL7200KC!!!!!! Labels are printed. Pasting and mailout needs to be done. Time is March 29th at 7 pm. Call on 146.88 to volunteer for label printing party.

Emergency Communications
Jim Dixon, NL7HI

In response to a conversation I had at the last club meeting, seems to be some confusion about the role one would play by signing up as an ARES member. There are no requirements upon those who sign-up, just the suggestion that each individual take a little time to take part in the nets run regularly in Alaska, or any other practice that that would otherwise provide a little experience in handling traffic. Whether it is running the Tanana Valley Preparedness ARES net or just getting over mike fright, each provides the individual some experience in the thing that hams should excel in, communications. The main role that ARES will play is to provide information on the stations of the hams in the area. When an emergency occurs, it is real handy to know the capabilities of each persons station and be able to solicit help from the entire ham community instead of a selected group which there capabilities are known. Owning a handi-talky (2m or 220 Mhz) maybe the only requirement, as was the case with the lost child in Ester. Take the time to fill out the form or ask for one from me. It takes only a few minutes and may help to increase our speed and ability to respond to a disaster. New members of ARES includes the following: Taku, KL7YR; Bill, NL7F; George, KL7VZ; Dick, KL7IS; Eric, KL7AJ; Allen, KL7T; Jerry, KL7EDK; Ed, KL7XD; Dale, NR7L; Steve, KL7XO; and Dianne, AL7FG. If you returned a form and I missed you see me at ham lunch or at the next club meeting.

*THIS WAS THE TIME THAT WAS
ARCTIC WINTER GAMES AND ICE FESTIVAL*

The press called it "the most intensely active week for Fairbanks in recent memory," and they weren't exaggerating in the least. Consider this: Over 1700 athletes, coaches and supporters from across Canada and Alaska converged on Fairbanks during the week of March 13th through the 18th. The competitors slept on 1000 beds set up in three area schools, ate meal after meal catered into the Lathrop High School cafeteria, competed in dozens of demanding sports that will serve as the gateway to upcoming Winter Olympics; and shopped their hearts out at retail stores and malls all over Fairbanks.

And that's just the frosting on the cake. For all the activities that went so smoothly as seen by a casual observer, there were months if not years of preparations to back them up. The General Manager, Karl Kassel, in effect was the mayor of a sizable international community within the confines of Fairbanks with 32 paid staff members overseeing hundreds of volunteers in every conceivable category. Many of those groups, such as the extensive medical and security organizations, had need of immediate area-wide communications to conduct their life and property preserving missions. That's where a multitude of ham radio volunteers from Fairbanks' two major groups, the Arctic Amateur Radio Club and the Borealis Amateur Radio Club, came into play.

The magnitude of the required public service communications was so great that a different management system was set up than had been typical in the past. Two co-chairmen, Woody Baker, WL7BFX, and Craig Bledsoe, K4TXK, initially sought and received formal recognition from both area clubs shortly after the Fairbanks Hamfest last August. At the Hamfest Karl Kassel had addressed the evening dinner requesting support for the Arctic Winter Games. Immediately afterward Woody and Craig began canvassing both organizations for volunteers to work at all the AWG venues (event sites) and at the command post in a secure area in Lathrop High School. Every few days through the long Fairbanks winter there was another AWG organizational meeting where more critical communications were being laid on the ham radio volunteers. Doctors, security police, EMT's, ski patrol teams, and AWG senior staff all urgently needed radios and more radios. Something had to give way, and fortunately for the hams help came from a famous but unexpected source.

In the short weeks before the lighting of the Arctic Winter Games torch in the Big Dipper ice arena, the eyes of the world focused on the much brighter flame of the Winter Olympics in Calgary, Canada. Television cameras showed a multitude of officials intently operating brand new Motorola 800 MHz cellular system handheld radios around the Olympic grounds. Through the

good graces of our local Motorola representative, Mark Hewett, that entire system was shipped from Calgary to Fairbanks at the close of the Olympics for the use of the Arctic Winter Games. The dozens of handhelds arrived by air freight on Friday, March 11th; the system was installed on Saturday and three networks were set up and running for the medics, police and the executive staff by the opening ceremonies on Sunday evening.

All of these sophisticated commercial radios were backed up by an entirely independent network of amateur radio communications using the four 146 MHz repeaters around Fairbanks as well as direct (simplex) communications from the Lathrop command post. The base station equipment at the high school was donated and installed by Ted Collins, AL7HC, the owner of Alaska Radio, Inc. Was this redundancy necessary? Consider just two situations which occurred during this incredibly hectic week.

On Wednesday Bonnie Williams, NL7GL, was stationed at a lookout point on the Birch Hill biathlon course. Just a few feet away an eight year old girl fell under the tracks of a large snow machine and the heavy freight sled it was towing. Thanks to her immediate report an ambulance was dispatched and arrived within 15 minutes. The little girl, well into shock by then, may not recall how she came by the volunteer's pin that Bonnie gave her to comfort her while they were waiting for help.

The next day 16 year old Shelli Gunderson, WL7BNV, was watching an indoor soccer game while carrying a borrowed handheld. In the course of the game a young man from the Yukon team was slammed to the floor with his spine twisted backwards. Shelli promptly called for help and an ambulance and medical team members were on the scene almost immediately to transport the injured player to the hospital.

After the relentless pace of game after game, event after event, from one day to the next, the weekend should have seemed quiet by comparison. Well, it wasn't; because that annual celebration, the Fairbanks Ice Festival, was in full swing. Hams were out in full force for the Open North American sled dog races, the Ice Festival Parade, and the famous (or infamous) Ice Man Triathlon. Something unusual happens every year in the chilly procession of the Parade, and this year was no exception.

Last year's Parade featured the celebrated wrong turn of the hot tub float, wherein a trailer featuring a giant hot tub full of frolicking females circled all the way around Aurora Motors and ended up sideways in the parade route, blocking off the last half of the parade. EVERYBODY jumped into action to lend a helping hand and resolve that traffic jam!

This year the excitement was more like an unscheduled visit to the Twilight Zone, as hams and Ice Festival organizers searched for a float that literally disappeared out of the middle of the Parade just past the reviewing stand. It started when a very concerned mother contacted an amateur radio volunteer in the finish area to ask for help locating the Cub Scout float that never arrived. After searching around in all the conceivable parking spots around Aurora Motors, the event officials were notified and the hunt started in Earnest. The small dog-drawn wagon with the scouts has passed in review less than a block away, then disappeared from sight.

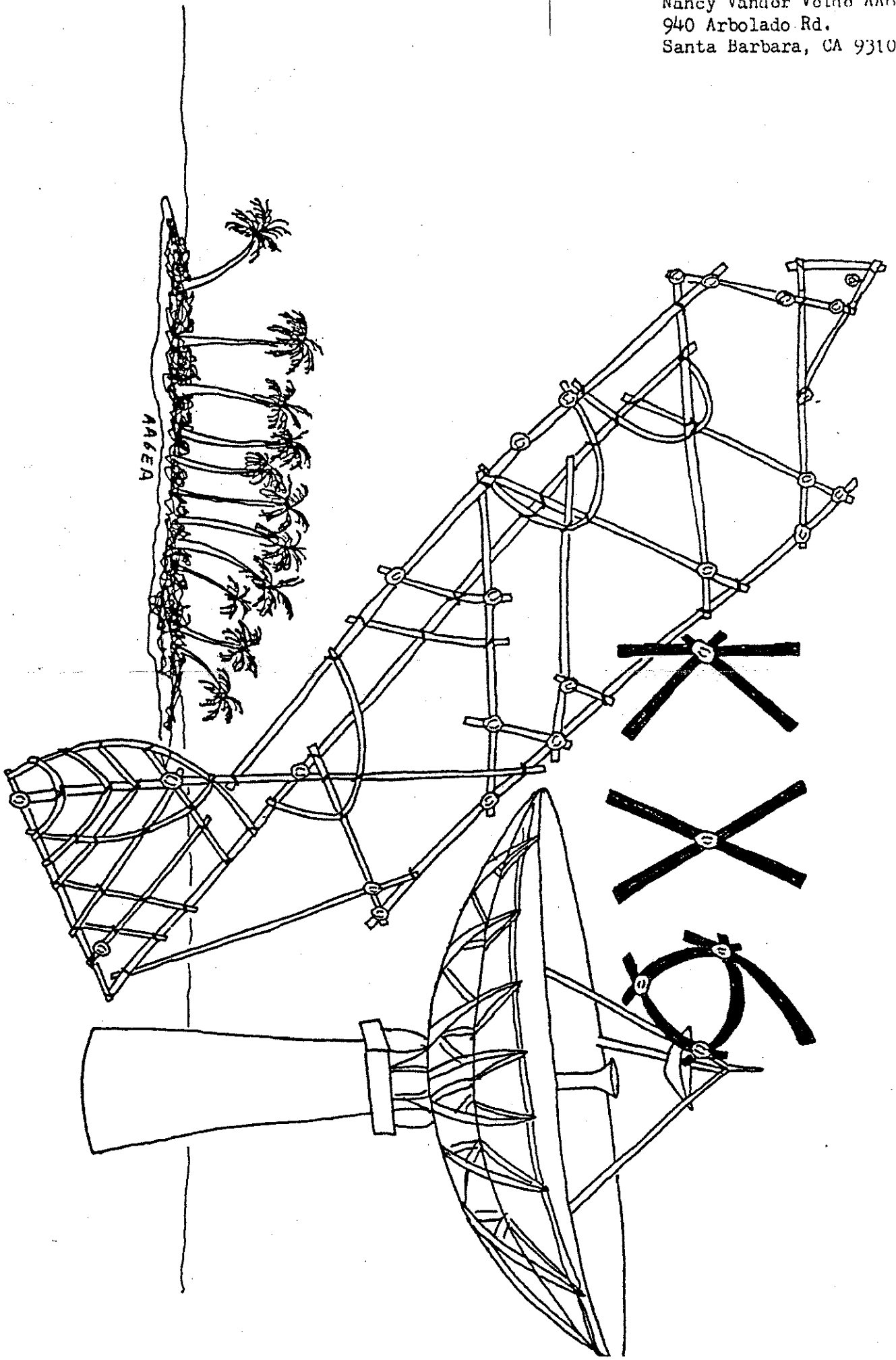
Finally Kirby Wheeler, KL7VK, asked that occupants of the adjacent German Club float be queried. One celebrating fellow recalled that the Cub Scout wagon had veered right onto Lacey Street for parts unknown rather than turning left to the finish area. Now the searchers spread out in pursuit across downtown Fairbanks' maze of one-way streets. Kirby suspected that the scouts may have returned to the starting area--and his hunch was accurate. There were were in a huddle behind the Borough School District building, soon to have an excited reunion with their greatly relieved parents.

There were many hams who volunteered all hour of their time through days and nights of multiple events, and we can't begin to thank each of them. I would like to acknowledge the special contributions of the daily team chiefs for both the Arctic Winter Games and the Ice Festival. Thanks go to Linda Carter, WL7BGL, Ed Stitch, KL7HFH, Lennie Torgerson, NL7JJ, David Williams, KL7JIZ, Dick Atwood, KL7B, and Woody Baker, WL7BFX. Team members who gave their all include Mike Drury, KL7GL, Jim Dixon, NL7HI, Lewy Overton, NOSN, Joan Soutar, NOAJW, Ed Perkins, Shelli Gunderson, WL7BNV, WSTKZ, Ed Hunstein, KL7XD, and Dwayne Gunderson, NL7JR. Finally, we greatly appreciate the donated amateur radio equipment for the command post courtesy of Ted Collins, AL7HC, and Kurt Torgerson, NL7GW.

Thanks again, everybody & 73's!

Craig Bledzoe, K4TXK

Nancy Vander Veldt AA6EA
940 Arbolado Rd.
Santa Barbara, CA 93103



Nancy Vander Velde (AA6EA) has sent me another chapter in her saga of travel in Micronesia. Let's enjoy our visions of such a far away place as we tromp through the mud of breakup.

Communication Within the Marshall Islands

Communication within a country of only 70 square miles normally would not be a problem...if this small land area was massed together. But in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, this tiny amount of land is spread amongst more than 1,000 islands scattered over a half million square miles of the Pacific Ocean. So from the earliest days of human habitation, communication has been the backbone of this society.

Initially, outrigger canoes were the only means to send word from one island or atoll to another. One has to admire both the courage and navigational abilities of these so-called "primitive" sailors, for they would cross hundreds of miles of open ocean and accurately arrive on a strip of flat land that is not even visible beyond the near horizon. They had no modern compasses or marine radios for emergencies. They knew their way because each and every navigator had carefully studied a chart of pandanus wood, coconut fiber and sea shells. From these, wave patterns and island locations were precisely known.

The ancient art of Marshallese navigation and long-distance outrigger communication has essentially vanished into history. But the communication that is now making history on the Marshall Islands is the modern electronic version.

Granted, three-element beams or towers do not dominate the skyline, and even telephones will not be found in most homes of the highly Westernized capital of Majuro, but there are a few amateur radio operators based on both the atolls of Majuro and Kwajalein. There are, of course, not the large number of hams as in the big cities of the United States with their special interest groups. Yet, for instance, on Kwajalein, there are enough operators to have their own club and two-meter repeater. And individual hams have as up-to-date gear and radio interests as could be expected anywhere on earth!

Most of these hams have come from other parts of the world, bringing with them both their hobby and their distinctive accents. So while you may find a KX6 station on the air that can give you a taste of what the official language of this Micronesian nation, Marshallese, sounds like, you are actually more likely to find operators with varying degrees of knowledge of Marshallese and speak with American, Australian, or even Tuvaluan accents.

If you should want to become portable or pertinent DX yourself in the Marshalls, the agency to check with, especially for non-US hams, is the Department of Transportation and Communication.

Yet even without making the long trip, you can tap into "Radio Marshalls" WSZO "The Mighty Voice of the Marshalls", a short-wave station at 6.070 and 4.940 and also broadcasting at 1.090 Mhz, between 7:00AM and 10:00 PM local time, (19:00 to 10:00 UCT), at 10,000 watts. World news is the simple retransmission of the Voice of America or Radio Australia. There is also local news given in both Marshallese and English, as well as popular music of all sorts, (rock to country), from the United States and elsewhere, interspersed with Marshallese songs. If trying to attune your ears to the initially strange sounding tongue of Marshallese, it is safer to concentrate on the spoken broadcast rather than the music, because other Pacific Islander songs are played and you may end up being enchanted by a Gilbertese melody by mistake.

Of the two main population center of Majuro and Ebeye (Kwajelein Atoll), with over 20,000 people between them, there are less than 1,000 phone numbers. (This figure excludes the American base on Kwajelein Island itself, next door to Ebeye.) As strange as it may seem, cars and taxis serve as good replacements for telephones, especially on Majuro. For only 30 cents for a taxi ride to anywhere within the metropolitan area, a telephone can seem to be rather a luxury. And when all else fails, the old method of putting one foot in front of the other and visiting in person, is hard to beat.

Where someone who is without a telephone needs to contact an overseas location (and does not have an amateur radio or is going to talk business), the Satellite Communication Station is able to make the connection. The dish use is monstrous! In a nearby office, an operator does the actual dialing for the caller. At \$4.00 a minute to the United States and even Guam, and \$3.00 to as nearby as the State of Kosrae, and as much as \$5.00 a minute to other places, one has the tendency to talk rather quickly. And telegraphs are slightly less, (40 cents per word), but still limit conversation.

The phoneless Outer Islands are kept in communication with the population center and the outside world by means of a government owned single-side band, short-wave station on a marine frequency.

Electronic communication within the Marshalls is just beginning to open up, as the ancient wood and sea shell type has baded into non-existence. As Telex, HF, VHF, Business and commercial radio begin to grow with this new nation, amateur radio will also expand. More and more KX6 call signs should be heard on the airwaves, and island names such as Jaliut, Enewetak, Namorik, Maleolap, Alingalapalap, Mili, and Ailuk may no longer be such oddities to non-Marshallese ears.

--Yokwe im jiljilimjounnoul-jilu
(Greetings/love and seventy-three)

UNKIND WINTER...HELL KINDA SORT OF

by Jerry Curry (KL7EDK)

Weather wise we've had it pretty nice. Packet routes sure took a beating though.

Our digipeater link through Byers became unusable for about 2 and 1/2 months when an early warm spell inflicted dramatic changes in the geometry of our passive (Big Mac). During this period we found ourselves using KL7IS at Lake Minchumina as an alternate route to Anchorage. I am thankful that Dick and his family were able to handle the increased battery load during this period. (Dick runs mostly solar power at his QTH).

The path has now returned to normal but another jinx has caught up with us. In a storm just a couple weeks ago KL7EKI lost his high performance antenna system and has dropped back to phased dipoles. He has some difficulty getting into Byers so the route through him is degraded considerably. You can still use the Byers route by going through AL7B, AL7FS, and AL7IH depending upon their status. Some path problems between KL7EDK and KL7GNG have been common lately. (KL7GNG is directly off the back side of KL7EDK's aluminum monument). If you get caught at one and can't seem to get through to the other try going through KL7AG.

AL7CM HEADS SOUTH OUT OF ALASKA

By Jerry Curry (KL7EDK)

I read a message on the BBS last week about AL7CM (Walt) pulling the pin and taking a job down in America. AL7CM owns and operates the BBS in Anchorage. Walt has been a ham in Alaska for 22 years. Many of us here in Fairbanks have known Walt all of the 22 years. (He was originally AL7EWQ back in the 'ole' days). Walt has provided a stable base for the advancement of packet radio in the south central area. Without a good smooth running BBS, packet radio does not grow rapidly. I hope that whoever takes over Walt's place as the BBS keeper will have the sincere interest in running a BBS like Walt had. You have to be dedicated to tie up \$5,000 worth of computer plus a radio, antennas and a lot of time. Walt will be greatly missed and his mark has been left on the growth of packet...for that I say Thank You and we'll miss you. 73's Walt...We wish you the best.

~~~~~  
FOR SALE

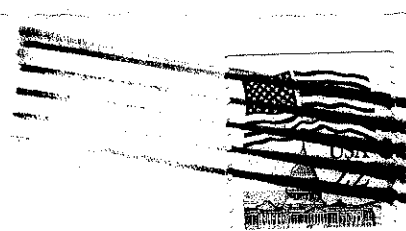
ICOM 280 two meter mobile; ICOM 701 base; Heath power supply; \$800.00 takes all.

Contact Alaina Bierman, 533 Alberta St., off Gilmore Trail, Fairbanks, 99712 no phone

CONTENTS: Communication Within the Marshall Islands  
Packet links update  
Emergency Communication practice

Short Circuit is published monthly by the Arctic Amateur Radio Club of Fairbanks, Alaska. Opinions expressed in the newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the club, its officers or members. Permission is granted to reprint or quote from Short Circuit, provided credit is given to the newsletter and to the individual authors. Contributions to the newsletter are welcome from any source, but we reserve the right to edit articles as appropriate.

SHORT CIRCUIT  
ARCTIC AMATEUR RADIO CLUB  
PO BOX 83231  
FAIRBANKS, AK 99708



Joe Voelkelt  
Box 82443  
Fairbanks, AK 99708