

Meet Clayton Gaskill – Station Manager WOWV



What is your background?

I have an electrical engineering degree from NC State University and an MA in Communications (Radio, TV, and Motion Pictures) from UNC-Chapel Hill. I worked in Charlotte for the Jefferson-Pilot TV and radio station group for most of the 80's and 90's, developing and supporting computer systems for TV newsrooms and broadcast marketing.

Are you a native islander?

My father was a native and I now live in the house where he was born. I grew up in Madison, NC, my mother's hometown in the Piedmont, but came to Ocracoke often throughout my life, until I moved here permanently in 2000. My first job was a couple of summers at the Pony Island Motel in the 1960's.

"I remember when"

Sigma Willis was an amateur radio operator, who talked about being a popular contact with other "hams" who wanted to talk to someone on every island in the world. Broadcasting is different, because the signals only go one way. I've heard there were some "pirate" broadcast efforts here, but WOWV is the first legitimate, licensed broadcast station to specifically serve Ocracoke and concentrate on information the locals can use, things that will never appear on the far-off mainland stations.

What specific duties do you have at WOWV?

As Station Manger of a volunteer organization this small, I'm basically the coordinator to make sure that things that must be done in any business get done. We have to comply with government requirements for broadcast stations as much as anyone else, though fortunately those burdens are lighter on a tiny non-commercial-educational station. I'm also much involved with keeping the

equipment going. Since Ocracokers come and go so much, I want to get the daily operation of the station well enough organized that the entire burden doesn't fall on only a few people. Having been on the air for only a year, this is still a work in progress.

New features at the station?

In June we started streaming our signal over the internet at our website: www.WOVV.org Right now, much of our day is scheduled and played by a computer. We really want to have live people doing that whenever possible, presenting something up-to-the-minute. Otherwise, why wouldn't you just listen to your MP3 player? We hope as the summer madness dies out we can find more people (including students) to get involved.

Are you ready for tropical season?

We have battery backups and generators to get us back on the air, at least when conditions improve enough for people to move around. This arrangement will also get us through those three- or four-hour power failures we have from time to time. We plan to make the best use of available people and communications channels during any emergency, though that will depend largely on what actually happens.

To volunteer, learn more or visit with Clayton stop by the studio M-F 10:00AM to 2:00PM.