

The Oscillator

Published BI-Monthly by the Tri-Town Radio Amateur Club, Inc. PO Box 1296, Homewood, IL 60430
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Upcoming Programs

JANUARY	SWEARING IN OF THE NEW OFFICERS GET TO KNOW THEIR POSITIONS IN THE CLUB
FEBRUARY	FIREFIGHTING IN ANTARCTICA
MARCH	SHOW AND TELL
APRIL	NWS WITH BILL WILSON AT A SPECIAL TIME OF 7 P.M.
MAY	OPEN (Time to Stepup and Give a Presentation)
JUNE	FIELD DAY, Planning, Organization, Smoke, & Mirrors

As of this moment the Club is in need of a Program Chairman and a Chairman for Field Day. So you want a thankless Challenge? A need for personal Abuse? Need an excuse to Drink? Or drink more? PLEASE SEE A CLUB OFFICER, if you want to take the Chairmanship!

From the Vice-President's Desk (President-Elect)

73's Trish N9WDG

My thanks to all who came out to the December meeting, and welcome to the new members who signed up. I hope to see everyone in the coming year. Thank you for electing me your president, and I hope to serve in the best interests of the club. If you want to know more about my plans for the future of the club, then join us at the January meeting. Myself, along with the other elected officers, will be sworn in to our posts then. Also, I want to congratulate Todd for being President these past four years and wish him well on his next adventures that he will pursue. Don't forget dues are due. Hope everyone has a joyous new year and will see everyone in January.

From the Treasurer's Desk,

73's Sharon KA9IIT

I wish to thank one and all in electing me to another term as your treasurer. Not wanting to sound repetitious but of course, dues are now due. I want to thank all those who paid at the December meeting. We have started the new year with a great start with more renewals than this time last year. I also want to welcome those who just joined our organization. Welcome one and all. Club clothing is also available so get your orders in. Badges, see Trish. Hopy everyone has a safe, healthy, and prosperous new year. See you in 2005!

Officers, Board Members, & Committee Heads for 2005:

Trish Jaggard,	N9WDG	President	708.957.1973	rjaggard@netzero.net
Henry Van Bogaert	N9HVB	Vice President	708.687.3946	N9HVB@W9VT.ORG
Jim Everand,	WD9GXU	Secretary	708.748.6798	NONE
Sharon Gunderson,	KA9IIT	Treasurer	708.957.7944	sgunderson@gwclow.com
Rich Poortinga,	KB9IPS	Director	708.957.4421	richardpoortinga@juno.com
Jerry Dagenais,	K9PMV	W9VT Mgr / Dir.	708.385.2866	K9PMV@msn.com
Bruce Haffner,	WD9GHK	W9VT Trustee	708.614.6134	WD9GHK@earthlink.net
Matt Schumann	N9OTL	Raffle Chairman	708.423.7066	mattschuman@yahoo.com
Brian J. Bedoe,	WD9HSY	Chairman of Board	815.469.1383	Bbedoe@aol.com
		Repeater Trustee, & Oscillator Editor		

Members of the Tri-Town Radio Club Inc. publish the Oscillator 6 times a year. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Officers or members of the Tri-Town RAC, but of the contributors. All articles may be reprinted as long as full credit is given. Other publications are asked to reciprocate their newsletter. Some Articles printed here are from AMSAT, ARRL Letter, TAPR, World Radio, and Other Amateur Radio Publications. Illustrations by **Libby Bedoe, KB9WOV**.

Club Meetings & Nets

Club meetings are the **3rd Friday** of each month at the **Village of Hazel Crest Village Hall**, 170th and Holmes. All are welcome and refreshments will serve. Don't forget to bring a Friend.

2 Mtr FM 49'ers Net - Wed, 8:00 PM Local, 146.490.

40 Mtr SSB Net - Saturdays, 8:30 am Local, 7.2625.

10 Mtr SSB Net - Thursdays, 8:00 PM Local, 28.490.

Cracker Barrel Net - Monday-Friday 3:00 PM Local 146.49

2 Mtr FM Weather Net - Sundays, 8:00 PM local, on **The Club's Repeater** 146.805 -600kc 107.2 PL

Visit Tri-Town's Web Page!

Be sure to checkout: **www.w9vt.org**. This is Tri-Town's page and it will lead you to a lot of interesting and useful web sites. There you find information about the Club, Bunker News, Nets and the ability to send E-mail to the Club officers.

The W1AW Operating Schedule may be found on the web at, <http://www.arrl.org/w1aw.html>

Upcoming Hamfests

23	Jan 2005	Wheaton CRA	St. Charles, IL
13	Mar 2005	Sterling-Rock Falls ARS	Sterling, IL
16	Apr 2005	North Shore Radio Club	Grayslake, IL
4-5	Jun 2005	Princeton Hamfest	Princeton, IL
12	Jun 2005	Six Meter Club	Wheaton, IL
10	Jul 2005	Fox River Radio League	Aurora, IL
17	Jul 2005	Kankakee ARS	Peotone, IL

Don't Forget, 2005 Dues are Due! It's already January!

Awards Presentation at the December 2004 Meeting

In light of the good deeds of many TTRAC members, the awards committee was established in the 2003 club season. The objective of the committee is to give recognition for persons who have made contributions to the advancement of the Club. The criteria used for the awards is the "Amateur's Code" found on the inside cover page of the ARRL handbook.

The awards have a three tier structure. The top award is the Vern Dawson-W8VZE award for exceptional contributions. Next is the Certificate of Merit award for noteworthy contributions. The Certificate of Appreciation is for faithful administration of club duties.

Awards committee chairman, Jerry K9PMV gave the following awards to worthy Tri-Town'ers.

Certificate of appreciation

- **Matt N9OTL** for being Raffle committee chairman and field day cook.
- **Henry N9HVB** for creating W9VT.org web site.
- **Clark W9BQL** for being 49er net NCS for over 25 years
- **Carl N9EVD** for being 10 Meter NCS for 14 years
- **Bud N9ML** for being 40 meter Alumni net NCS
- **Ken KB9OGO** for being Weather net NCS
- **Jerry K9PMV** for being W9VT station manager (Award given by Todd, KA9IUC)

Certificate of Merit

- **Dan WB9ACN** for being director on the board and organizing Homewood RR day.
- **Jim KB9VR** for being all purpose good guy and promoter of the Club.

The Vern Dawson W8VZE award

- **Todd KA9IUC** for being club president for 4 years.

The awards committee tries to be fair and unbiased in giving the awards each year. It's common knowledge, however, that many not listed here have made contributions to the betterment of Tri-town Radio Amateur Club. It is to these, also, that we extend sincere appreciation for their time and talent in furthering the goals of the club. If you have an award nomination idea or would like to be on the awards committee, please let Jerry K9PMV know.

SOLAR UPDATE

Astral aficionado Tad "Shining Star" Cook, K7RA, Seattle, Washington, reports: Happy New Year! A week ago it looked like the solar flux would stay above 100 over the following 10-12 days. Now the last of sunspot 715 is disappearing around the edge of the sun, and it looks like solar flux should stay around 85 with sunspot numbers below 40 over the next week.

Sunspot numbers for December 30 through January 5 were with a mean of 40.7. The 10.7 cm flux was with a mean of 95.4. Estimated planetary A indices were a mean of 19.6. Estimated mid-latitude A indices were a mean of 12.6.

HAM RADIO ANTENNA BILL RE-INTRODUCED IN VERMONT

Radio amateurs in Vermont have renewed efforts to get a ham radio antenna bill signed into law in the Green Mountain State. Introduced in the 2005 session of the Vermont House of Representatives, the bill, H.12, would require Vermont municipalities to "reasonably accommodate" Amateur Radio communications with "minimum practicable regulation"--in line with the limited federal preemption PRB-1. It also includes a schedule of minimum regulatory heights for antenna structures.

"Antennas and antenna support structures shall not be subject to any conditions, special review, or other processes that may be applied on an exception basis to other types of permit applications," the draft legislation declares.

Presumably, that provision could permit antenna structures of 200 feet or more. While §97.15(a) does not specify a maximum height, it does require owners of structures "located at or near a public airport" to notify the Federal Aviation Administration and register their structures with the FCC if the structure will be more than 200 feet above ground level. Under the proposed legislation, municipalities could not restrict the number of antenna structures for any lot size.

The measure makes provisions for a locality to accommodate amateur antennas in "a duly designated design control or historic district." In those situations, a municipal ordinance, bylaw, or rule could restrict amateur antennas and associated support structures to overall heights of less than 75 feet, but it could not prohibit them altogether. The bill also would grandfather all Amateur Radio antennas and support structures constructed prior to the effective date of the proposed law.

If H.12 is approved by Vermont's House and Senate and signed by the governor, Vermont would become the 22nd state to enact such legislation. A copy of the bill is on the Vermont Legislature Web site
<<http://www.leg.state.vt.us/docs/legdoc.cfm?url=/docs/2006/bills/intro/h-012.htm>>.

National Weather Service Open House

by Jerry, K9PMV

On Saturday, December 4, 2004, **Todd, KA9IUC** and I drove to Romeoville, IL to participate in the 6th annual SKYWARN Recognition Day. After a nice tour of the Lewis University campus (unintentional), we arrived at the National Weather Service Office. The day's activities consist of an open house tour of the weather offices and operating the special event station set up there. Volunteer amateurs had installed temporary HF antennas for the special event station's use. These antennas were a triband beam up about 15 feet and 3 HF multiband verticals. Also present in the parking lot was the Red Cross's communication vehicle. It was very impressive with state of the art communications gear from DC to light. It goes all over the U.S. and had been used extensively in the Florida hurricane disasters last season.

Inside, we were greeted by NWS personnel and were given the grand tour. The main work area is where the weather monitoring takes place. There were about a dozen LCD flat monitor screens where every aspect of a weather system can be monitored. Also, this is where the NOAA weather voice synthesizer computers for VHF broadcast are located. Weather information is simply keyboarded in and the computer synthesizes the voice. The office also contains their amateur radio station. It is to this position where we communicated during last summer's severe weather events using the club repeater. **Phil, NW9V** was our amateur radio host and special event station manager. We also met with **Bill Wilson, KB9ZXN**, who presented a weather program at TTRAC's April 2003 meeting.

After the tour, Todd and I sat down for some serious ham radio operating. The amateur station consisted of 3-SSB rigs and 1- CW rig. It was set up in the adjacent conference room. The special event call sign was **W9S**. We took turns operating for about 45 minutes each on 20M SSB. The propagation was good and we worked them as fast as they came. The QSO exchange was call sign, name, QTH and local weather conditions. We had the luxury of volunteer **Ann WD9JHP** to do all the logging. Notable QSOs were with Spain and 2 QSOs to Prince Edward Island in the Canadian Maritimes. It was great fun and good to see amateur radio's important role in weather reporting.

See Jerry and Todd in pictures at the NWS at the end of the issue!

AMATEUR RADIO PRAISED AS LIFELINE IN SOUTH ASIA

As the tsunami relief and recovery effort continues in South Asia, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has joined those paying tribute to Amateur Radio's ongoing emergency communication role. Director and Executive Vice Chairman S. Suri, VU2MY, of India's National Institute of Amateur Radio (NIAR), noted January 5 that the PM "was all praise for hams in India and the entire world who helped us in this hour of need." Suri said the administrator of hard-hit Car Nicobar Island has asked NIAR to keep on duty Rama Mohan, VU2MYH, and five other radio amateurs who have been providing communication with the island since shortly after the December 26 disaster.

"The district administration chief of Car Nicobar Island spoke to me this morning to say even now it is only the ham communication that is aiding them for relief and rehabilitation measures," Suri said in an e-mail to Jay Wilson, W0AIR, of the Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response Association (DERA) and shared with ARRL. Mohan, who had received DERA training in the US, was part of NIAR's VU4NRO/VU4RBI DXpedition to Andaman and Nicobar Islands. When the earthquake and tsunami struck the region, DXpedition team leader Bharathi Prasad, VU2RBI, promptly shifted the operation to handle emergency traffic and health-and-welfare inquiries between the island and the Indian mainland. More than 20 Indian radio amateurs are said to be involved in providing emergency communication support in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Ironically, until the recent NIAR DXpedition the Indian government did not allow Amateur Radio operation from the islands. It's since cleared the way for all Indian hams to operate from VU4.

In the disaster's immediate aftermath, Suri said, Mohan and other DXpedition team members risked their lives to alert the chief of administration on Andaman Island, since tsunami waves later overran the road they'd traveled. NIAR staff member Jose Jacob, VU2JOS, was providing emergency communication remote Hutbay Island.

Harpole, who was visiting the DXpedition in Port Blair on Andaman Island when the earthquake and tsunami hit, has since been helping to handle emergency traffic from Thailand, where his wife's family lives. "I have been listening to the traffic from VU4 back to the India mainland, and by now it is smooth as silk with lots of H&W and some government messages running almost constantly," he said in an e-mail made available by QRZ DX <<http://www.dxpub.com/>> Editor Carl Smith, N4AA. Harpole advised amateurs worldwide to avoid the primary emergency traffic frequency of 14.190 MHz.

In Thailand, Harpole reports, hams have been using mostly 2 meters for their emergency traffic "and doing a huge job." He said he's heard very little from Bangladesh, and nothing from Sumatra and Burma (Myanmar). The earthquake's epicenter was some 100 miles off Sumatra, a part of Indonesia.

Just three days after the calamitous tsunami, Radio Society of Sri Lanka (RSSL) President Victor Goonetilleke, 4S7VK, declared that "uncomplicated short wave" radio had saved lives.

"Ham radio played an important part and will continue to do so," he said in an e-mail relayed to ARRL. Goonetilleke said Sri Lanka's prime minister had no contact with the outside world until Amateur Radio operators stepped in. "Our control center was inside the prime minister's official house in his operational room," he recounted. "[This] will show how they valued our services."

Horey Majumdar, VU2HFR, in Calcutta, said improvisation was "the name of the game" in the emergency's aftermath. "Hams had to switch to good old CW and switch frequencies from 14.190 and 14.160 MHz to 7.090 MHz," he said. Majumdar noted that hams from all over "have been checking into the VU emergency nets and extending their fullest cooperation in the truest spirit of Amateur Radio." FCC staff has told ARRL that if the government agencies responsible for the Amateur Service in affected countries do not object to their amateur stations receiving messages from US amateur stations on behalf of third parties, the US has no objection to its amateur stations transmitting international communications in support of the disaster. Additional information on Amateur Radio and the tsunami disaster is on the ARRL Web site.

FCC RELEASES 100's OF PAGES OF BPL DATA, FILINGS

The FCC has made public more than 650 pages of technical presentations, correspondence and filings that it says it used in making its decision on the BPL Report and Order in ET Docket 04-37. The Commission adopted new rules to govern so-called Access Broadband over Power Line systems on October 14, but they have not yet become effective. The ARRL subsequently filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request that called on the FCC to release any studies the Commission had relied upon in deciding to embrace the technology. Some information contained in the documents has been blanked out or redacted.

The documentation includes presentations and graphs resulting from field tests of BPL trials in Pennsylvania, Maryland, New York and North Carolina. The tests, conducted by the FCC Laboratory's Technical Research Branch, looked BPL technology by Amperion, Current Technologies, Ambient Technologies and Main.Net.

Approximately 150 pages of the documentation consisted of technical material and presentations by FCC staffers. The remaining 500-plus pages include correspondence, technical reports and interference complaints from radio amateurs to the FCC. Falling into the last category is extensive correspondence involving the Alliant Energy BPL field trial in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. That pilot project was abandoned after difficulties in resolving interference issues with local radio amateurs proved insurmountable.

The FCC just this week provided additional spreadsheet data to ARRL under separate cover. By releasing the information, the FCC made it part of the official record in the proceeding. Some, but not all, of the BPL-related material is on the FCC Electronic Comment Filing System under ET Docket 04-37.

"There are enough frequencies that amateurs can operate and BPL can operate in a compatible mode," Franca told Strassman. Franca also expressed confidence in technological solutions to any Amateur Radio-BPL interference issues that might arise. "I'm very optimistic at the end of the day," he said. "Technology is going to solve this problem."

In another BPL-related development, Electric Broadband LLC reportedly has dropped out of the Cottonwood, Arizona, BPL field trial, and project oversight has shifted to Mountain Telecommunications Inc (MTI), which had been handling system operations for EB. The FCC issued a Part 5 Experimental license to MTI on January 3. On the same day, the Verde Valley Amateur Radio Association (VVARA) asked the FCC to hold up the swap and instead dismiss the pilot project's WD2XMB Part 5 license "with prejudice," alleging the operator had "failed to live up to the terms of the instrument." The VVARA also said it wanted the BPL field trial shut down.

"Mountain Telecommunications Inc has been involved in the field with the Cottonwood BPL trial since its start and has not complied with the requirements of the existing license by promptly mitigating harmful interference on the 60 meter Amateur Radio band," VVARA Vice President Robert Shipton, K8EQC, told the FCC, noting that six weeks have passed since the interference report was filed.

The Cottonwood Experimental license stipulates that the licensee "must establish and maintain a liaison relationship with the Verde Valley Amateur Radio Association" and respond to interference complaints "in a timely manner."

School Kids Talk to the ISS via Ham Radio

Youngsters in Oklahoma and Brazil got a chance over the holidays to question International Space Station (ISS) Expedition 10 Commander Leroy Chiao, KE5BRW, about life in space. Both direct 2-meter contacts with NA1SS came off largely without a hitch, and Chiao answered all questions posed by each group. Sponsoring the contacts was the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) program. Students in grades 3 through 12 from schools in Oklahoma and Texas gathered December 22 at the Tulsa Air and Space Museum (TASM) for their contact.

The museum cooperated with TRO and AMSAT to arrange the contact. TRO's Bill Griffin, NI5X, and AMSAT's Keith Pugh, W5IU, set up the Earth station at TASM. Pugh served as the control operator, and the station used the TRO WA5LVT call sign for the QSO.

Among those looking on were several news media representatives, including three Tulsa TV stations, two newspapers and CQ magazine.

On December 27, a Scout group in Brazil participated in the first ARISS school group contact with that country. Scouts from Rio de Janeiro and elsewhere gathered at the Forte de Copacabana military base where the contact took place. ARISS-Brazil member Tadeu Fernandes, PY1KCF, served as the control operator at PY1ERR.

"The Earth looks wonderful from space," he told one Scout. "It is the most fantastic view, everything is very brightly colored and that's one of our favorite things to do--to look at the earth." The fact that space walks can be tiring is offset by the beautiful view of Earth, Chiao told another youngster. Some 50 onlookers and news media turned out for the occasion. More than 200 amateur stations around Brazil were able to listen in on the contact via HF and EchoLink outlets. ARISS is an educational outreach program with US participation by ARRL, AMSAT and NASA.

ARRL MAKES RADIO PSA AVAILABLE

The ARRL has released a topical public service announcement (PSA) for use by radio stations. The 30-second PSA may be downloaded free from the League's Web site in either .wav <<http://www.arrl.org/pio/Allen-PSA0105.wav>> or .mp3 <<http://www.arrl.org/pio/Allen-PSA0105.mp3>> formats.

"Ham radio works when other communications don't," is its central message. Conceived, written and voiced by ARRL Media and Publications Manager Allen Pitts, W1AGP, the PSA focuses on Amateur Radio's role in emergency communication--including activity by South Asia amateurs in the wake of the devastating earthquake and tsunami.

"It is directed at getting people who are community-minded to look into becoming hams," Pitts commented. He urged ARRL Public Information Coordinators and Officers to aid in distributing the announcement to broadcasters. The PSA invites anyone interested in becoming a radio amateur to contact ARRL via its toll-free number, 800-326-3942. For additional information contact Allen Pitts, W1AGP.

Special Event Station January 15-16 "Project Diana," 1st Ever Moonbounce!

The Ocean Monmouth Amateur Radio Club (OMARC) in New Jersey will operate a special event station January 15-16 to commemorate "Project Diana," the first-ever successful moonbounce experiment, conducted January 10, 1946, by the US Army Signal Corps. OMARC will operate N2MO on CW, SSB and possibly other modes in the General and Novice-Technician subbands of 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meters. An article on the Project Diana accomplishment, "A DX Record: To the Moon and Back--How the Moon-Radar Feat was Accomplished," appeared in the April 1946 issue of QST. Special event QSL information and more on Project Diana is on the OMARC Web site <<http://www.omarc.org>>.--Steve Hajducek, N2CKH

FCC CITES HOMEOWNERS FOR INTERFERENCE TO HAMS!

Things aren't all that friendly in one Friendswood, Texas, neighborhood, where a dispute over interference from one couple's battery chargers to a neighboring radio amateur has resulted in an official FCC Citation to the couple. The December 10 Citation is the latest chapter in a long-running dispute that FCC Special Counsel Riley Hollingsworth has described as "an unfortunate neighborhood situation." The Citation sprang from complaints by ARRL member William Cooper, W5ZAF, that his next-door neighbors' battery chargers were interfering with his ham radio activities. The FCC concurred.

"Investigation by the FCC's Houston Office revealed that on December 7, 2004, you were operating battery charging devices at your residence," the Citation said. "These devices were observed to be generating radio frequency pulses on various high-frequency radio bands. These radio frequency pulses were determined to be causing harmful interference to the Amateur Radio Service." Only after FCC agents visited the couple's home did the interference cease. The FCC did not make the couple's names public nor did it post the Citation on its Web site.

Since it began about a year ago--when Cooper first suspected the interference he was hearing came from his neighbors' Christmas lights--the squabble has escalated beyond the interference issue. Both parties have hired attorneys, and volumes of correspondence have changed hands. Last September, the couple complained that Cooper's antenna support structure violated homeowners' association covenants.

After notices from the FCC's Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau went unanswered, Hollingsworth issued warning notices to the couple last June and September alleging that the battery chargers--apparently used to charge some electric scooters--were causing interference. Cooper provided his neighbors with free toroid core devices that resolved the interference, but the couple subsequently removed them. The couple told Hollingsworth they'd initially been willing to work with Cooper but took out the filters after he allegedly made disparaging remarks about them to another neighbor and took photos of their house and property.

Hollingsworth responded by emphasizing that it's the couple's responsibility to correct the interference--whether or not they accept Cooper's help. Simply unplugging the chargers when not in use--as they had suggested--was not an acceptable solution, he told them in his final Warning Notice. Cooper claimed the chargers had been operating 24 hours a day.

The FCC Citation, which does not require a response from the couple, warned that subsequent violations could lead to fines, equipment seizure and even possible criminal sanctions.

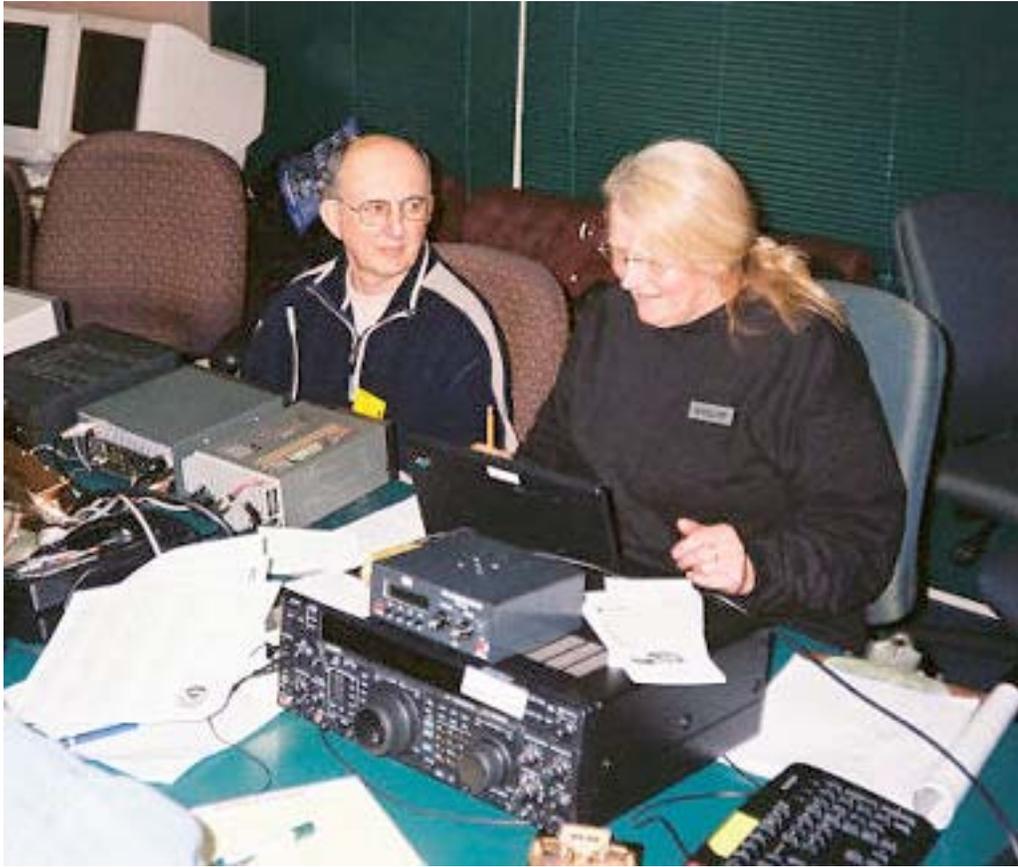
Robert A. Pazanin, SK

Pazanin, Robert A. age 75, of Hegewisch, passed away January 4, 2005. He is survived by two brothers John (Pauline) Pazanin, Phillip (Marge) Pazanin, a sister Ann (late Kenneth) Robertson, many nieces and nephews. Preceded in death by his parents Filip and Kate Pazanin. Visitation Friday, January 7th from 2 to 8 p.m., at the **Opyt Funeral Home**, 13350 Baltimore Ave., Chicago. Services Saturday, 9 a.m., from the funeral home to St. Columba Church for 9:30 a.m. Mass. Interment St. Mary Cemetery, Evergreen Park, IL. Robert was retired from Republic Steel after 30 years as an electrician, a Korean War Army Veteran, member of the Loyal Order of Moose, Croatian Federation Union #275 and a Ham Radio Operator WD9FEN.

Published in the Chicago Sun-Times from 1/6/2005 - 1/7/2005

Don't Forget, 2005 Dues are Due! It's already January!





Tri-Town Radio Amateur Club Membership Application

Name _____ Call _____

Address _____ License Class _____ ARRL Member Y / N

City, State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Email Address: _____

_____ Regular Membership	\$	20.00
_____ SWL Membership	\$	20.00
_____ Extra Family Membership	\$	6.00
_____ Bunker Buddie	\$	5.00
_____ Auto Patch w/1 Speed Slot	\$	25.00
_____ Extra Speed Slots	\$	5.00
	\$	_____ Total Paid by Club Member

For Example: Regular Member, with A/P and Bunker Buddy (20+25+5) = \$ 50.00

Tri-Town Radio Amateur Club Inc.
PO Box 1296
Homewood, IL 60430-0296
January 2005

First Class Mail



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