

# The Oscillator

---

Published BI-Monthly by the Tri-Town Radio Amateur Club, Inc. PO Box 1296, Homewood, IL 60430  
Volume 59 Number 1 January 2013 Club Call W9VT

---

## Tri-Town General Meetings

**Friday, January 18, 2013, 8 PM Hazel Crest Village Hall**

**Friday, February 15, 2013, 8 PM, Hazel Crest Village Hall**

Please check the Tri-Town Nets and web site from program information.

### From The Board Room

By Todd Schumann, KA9IUC

These will be my last comments to you as the Chairman of the 2012 Board of Directors. The 2013 Officers and new Director will be sworn in at the January general meeting and the new Chairman elected at the February Board meeting. 2012 was a good year for Tri-Town only because of the efforts put forth by its members for successful activities throughout the year. I want to take time to thank those who put forth that effort. Thanks to Tom, AB9LA for serving as Club President for four years and as net control for the Sunday Night Weather Net. Thanks to Matt N9OTL, Jim WD9GXU, Trish N9WDG, Brian WD9HSY and Bruce WD9GHK for serving as officers and directors. Extra thanks go to Brian WD9HSY for his trusteeship of the repeater and being the editor of The Oscillator and to Bruce as trustee of the W9VT. Thanks to Tom W9SRV for being our webmaster and hosting the Club's picnic. While we are on the subject of the Club picnic, thanks to John N9DWE for his grill work on the burgers and hot dogs. Thanks go to Mark KA9MDJ for bringing refreshment for the meetings. Thanks also to Martin WD9JGG for his efforts on the annual Drivin the Dixie event. A final Thank You to all the Club members who helped make events like Field Day, Drivin the Dixie, Club nets and meetings successful. Finally I want to congratulate Scott KC9TGG on being elected President for 2013 and wish him success in the coming year.

If you have any ideas or comments for programs, raffle prizes, the Club station, nets or other Club activities, please talk with any Club Officer or Director. Your input is always welcome and encouraged.

## Net Control Operators Needed

Not too long ago, Tri-Town had four weekly nets and a Monday through Friday net. The 40M and 10M Nets went QRT due to band conditions, lack of net control operators and lack of interest. The Cracker Barrel Net met the same fate but there is usually some activity on 146.49 throughout the day. That leaves the Sunday Night Weather Net and the Wednesday Night 49er Net. While the number of check ins to both nets has dwindled, they remain important for the passing of Club information, Ham Radio news programs, and traffic. The Club is in need of control operators for these two remaining nets. While each net has its own format, the control operator does have flexibility as to how the net will be conducted. The 49er Net was moved to the Club repeater so that more hams could participate but that has not become a reality. It would be great if the Club had eight control operators, the workload would be once a month. As it is with two, the workload gets to be a bit too much. Can you help? Please see any Club officer if you can.

**Check out the Club Website: [WWW.W9VT.ORG](http://WWW.W9VT.ORG)**

# New Officers Elected for 2013

Elections of 2013 officers were held at the December 21, 2012 Tri-Town meeting. Elected were Scott Heath, KC9TGG President, Matt Schumann, N9OTL Vice-President, Jim Everard, WD9GXU Secretary, Trish Jaggard, N9WDG Treasurer and Brian Bedoe, WD9HSY Director. Bruce Haffner, WD9GHK and Todd Schumann, KA9IUC continue in their current terms as Directors.

## Officers, Board Members, & Committee Heads for 2012:

Scott Heath, KC9TGG	President	708.481-4882	<a href="mailto:whammybar@wowway.com">whammybar@wowway.com</a>
Matt Schumann N9OTL	VP, Raffle Chairman	708.423.7066	<a href="mailto:mattschuman@yahoo.com">mattschuman@yahoo.com</a>
Jim Everard WD9GXU	Secretary	708.748.6798	None @ No I' dont have one
Trish Jaggard N9WDG	Treasurer	708.957.1973	<a href="mailto:the_jaggards@sbcglobal.net">the_jaggards@sbcglobal.net</a>
Todd Schumann KA9IUC	Chairman of Board	708.423.7066	<a href="mailto:tschum3063@aol.com">tschum3063@aol.com</a>
Tom Gunderson W9SRV	Webmaster, W9VT	815.466-0245	<a href="mailto:webmaster@w9vt.org">webmaster@w9vt.org</a>
Bruce Haffner WD9GHK	W9VT Trustee, Dir	708.614.6134	<a href="mailto:WD9GHK@comcast.net">WD9GHK@comcast.net</a>
Brian J. Bedoe WD9HSY	Repeater Trustee, Oscillator Editor, Dir.	815.469.1383	<a href="mailto:Bbedoe@aol.com">Bbedoe@aol.com</a>

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, QRZ.COM and Other Amateur Radio Publications.

## 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.

## Official Club 2 Mtr hangouts:

146.49 Simplex, & The Club's Repeater 146.805 WD9HSY/R

## Unofficial Club Hang Outs:

442.375 Homewood, 441.300 Grant Park WA9WLN/R, "Waldofar"  
443.325 Frankfort WD9HSY/R & 147.165 Kankakee Co. WD9HSY/R  
All UHF's use a 114.8 PL All VHF's use a 107.2 PL

## Club Nets

<b>2 Mtr FM 49'ers Net</b>	Wed, 8:00 PM Local, on <b>The Club's Repeater</b> 146.805 -600kc 107.2 PL
<b>10 Mtr SSB Net</b>	Thursdays, 8:00 PM Local, 28.490.
<b>2 Mtr FM Weather Net</b>	Sundays, 8:00 PM local, on <b>The Club's Repeater</b> 146.805 -600kc 107.2 PL

## We need your Membership!

**Membership supports the Club Station, The Club Repeater, The Website,  
The Oscillator, and many Club Activities!**

# ARRL Petition FCC to Create New MF Band at 472-479 kHz

ARRL Letter

At the 2012 World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-12), delegates approved Agenda Item 1.23: a 7-kilohertz-wide secondary allocation between 472-479 kHz for the Amateur Radio Service, with a power limit of 5 W EIRP (or 1 W EIRP, depending on location). Before this portion of spectrum is made available to radio amateurs in the US, the FCC must first approve its use and amend its rules to reflect the change. As such, the ARRL filed a Petition for Rulemaking on November 29, asking the FCC to amend Sections 2 and 97 of its rules and create a domestic Amateur Radio allocation at 472-479 kHz, conforming to the allocation status and limitations set forth in the international Radio Regulations.

"The subject of a low-frequency (LF) allocation, and/or a medium-frequency (MF) allocation in the lower portion of that range for the Amateur Radio Service has a long history at the Commission," the ARRL pointed out in its Petition. "As yet, however, the Commission has not created either one." Presently, the lowest domestic frequency allocation for the Amateur Service -- and the only MF allocation -- is at 1800-2000 kHz.

The ARRL also pointed out that there is an Amateur Radio allocation in all other areas of the radio spectrum, providing for experimentation in virtually all types of radio frequency communications. "Technical self-training and furtherance of radiocommunications development in the Amateur Service (which is in essence an experimental radio service) would be greatly enhanced by an LF allocation and an allocation in the lower portion of the medium-frequency (MF) range," the ARRL maintained. "It is now timely, in response to actions taken at the 2012 World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC) to create a new, domestic MF allocation at 472-479 kHz for the Amateur Radio Service." The ARRL pointed out that while it is also desirable and timely to have an allocation in the LF portion of the spectrum, that matter was addressed in the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Order, just released in ET Docket 12-338 on November 20.

## FCC Reduces New Jersey Ham's Forfeiture from \$20K \$16K

ARRL Letter

After unsuccessfully appealing to the FCC to cancel his \$20,000 forfeiture, Joaquim Barbosa, N2KBJ, of Elizabeth, New Jersey must pay \$16,000 for "willfully and repeatedly violating Section 301 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended by operating a radio transmitting equipment on the frequency 296.550 MHz without Commission authorization."

The FCC noted in the Forfeiture Order that based on the examination process involved in pursuing an amateur license, "amateur licensees are expected to have an understanding of radio operations and pertinent FCC regulations, including Part 97 of the FCC's rules governing the Amateur Radio Service. Licensed amateur operators know that they are authorized to operate only on the frequencies listed in Section 97.301 of the rules, as designated by their operator class and license. Pursuant to the Table of Allocations, the 267-322 MHz band -- the band that Barbosa was operating in -- is allocated solely for federal government use, which we continue to believe Barbosa knew (or should have known) was not authorized for non-government use."

## For the New Year - QRZDroid 1.10 Released

From QRZ.com

QRZDroid version 1.10 has just been released and is now available on Google Play. QRZDroid runs on most Android systems, but not guaranteed for all.

The latest update has the following features:

No longer labeled as a 'Beta' release. All ads and advertising have been removed. Uses the new, dedicated QRZ data server.

Happy New Year from the QRZ Engineering Team (that's me)

**We need your Membership!**

**Membership supports the Club Station, The Club Repeater, The Website,  
The Oscillator, and many Club Activities!**

# IARU Welcomes Two New Member Societies

ARRL Letter

Earlier this year, the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) notified its Member Societies that two new national Amateur Radio organizations wished to join the IARU and would need to be voted in: the Federation of Radio Sport of Azerbaijan (FRSA) and the St Vincent and the Grenadines Amateur Radio Club (SVGARC). Ballots from all the Member Societies that responded were counted on November 1.

Based in Baku, Azerbaijan, the FRSA was formally organized on December 30, 2001. There are 50 licensed members of the FRSA out of a total amateur population of approximately 50 in Azerbaijan. The SVGARC is based in St Vincent, St Vincent and the Grenadines and was formally organized in 1951. There are 21 licensed members of the SVGARC, out of a total amateur population of approximately 134 in the country. Both organizations have confirmed to the IARU that they have the ability to meet financial obligations as a member of the IARU, are legally able to act in the furtherance of IARU objectives within their respective countries and will adhere to the Constitutions of both the IARU and its respective Regional Organization.

In order for a new national organization to gain IARU membership, there must be 53 affirmative votes from current IARU Member Societies. The Federation of Radio Sport of Azerbaijan received 60 affirmative votes and the St Vincent and the Grenadines Amateur Radio Club received 61. All Member Societies that voted did so in favor of admitting these national organizations to the IARU. There are now more than 160 IARU Member Societies.

## Logbook of The World Web Page Now Daily & Hourly Status Updates

ARRL Letter

The ARRL has created a new informational page to issue daily status updates and information of interest to the Logbook of The World (LoTW) user community. These updates will include planned downtime and changes that will impact LoTW operations. In addition, LoTW's processing queue is now updated hourly, telling how many logs and QSOs have been uploaded to the LoTW system and are awaiting processing. New hardware that will improve LoTW's throughput is on order and is expected to be running in six to eight weeks.

Rick Murphy, K1MU, and Dave Bernstein, AA6YQ, have been charged with rebooting the Trusted QSL open source project. If you have demonstrably strong C++ development skills that you're interested in applying toward improving LoTW's usability and efficiency, please contact Bernstein via e-mail [aa6yq\(at\)ambersoft\(dot\)com](mailto:aa6yq(at)ambersoft(dot)com). We appreciate the user community's patience while we work to bring LoTW's performance to an acceptable level.

## QRZ and HRD to make Joint Announcement at Orlando Hamcation

From QRZ.com

With a successful beta-test of the pre-release version of Ham Radio Deluxe 6.0 well underway, plans are on target for a production release roll-out at Hamcation 2013, February 8, 9, and 10th.

The initial customer feedback from the beta test program has been extremely positive. Users are raving over the new Cluster and Awards design in HRD Logbook as well as label printing. This interface was designed by Mike Carper, WA9PIE who says: "I designed the new Worked Status Indicators and awards reports in Logbook to be the most powerful asset available for DXers and awards hunters. Worked Status Indicators in logbook now show you worked and confirmation status of countries for both band and mode. LoTW and eQSL participants are now indicated in the cluster. We now track almost 200 unique awards and 100 endorsements in fifteen of the most popular awards programs. When completed, I found that I qualify for eight awards and ten endorsements that I was unaware of previously."

For additional information about Ham Radio Deluxe 6.0 as well as their great support forums, please go to <http://www.ham-radio-deluxe.com>

# The Maritime Mobile Service Network, 45 years of service

From QRZ.com

Thursday, January 3, 2013, marks the 45th Anniversary of the "Maritime Mobile Service Network". The need for the type of volunteer service provided by the network had existed for many years. The launching of an organization to meet this need was placed on the drawing board when nine (9) amateur radio operators met at the home of Chaplain Alla Winston Robertson, USN, WB4AKB (now KB5YX) on December 27, 1967. Those meeting with Robertson were: S.C. Rock, WA4YVQ; Mel White, WA4IQS; D. Freeman, K1YLI; J.G. Kincade, WA4YVX; Art Werner, K3QYQ; H. Bretches, K4DBR; L.B. Lapman, W4SAW; and G.W. Powell, WA4RRO. This group agreed to launch the Maritime Mobile Service Network, or MMSN, on January 3, 1968 at 2130 UTC on 14.320 MHz but had to move to 14.317 MHz a few weeks later to avoid excessive interference. In 1969, when the net moved to 14.313 MHz, it also established 14.300 MHz as an alternate working frequency and for years operated on either frequency depending on nearby interference, but, since before 2000, the net has been operating exclusively on 14.300 MHz.

The original purpose of the MMSN was to "Serve Those Who Serve" in the United States military during the Vietnam crisis. Since that time, the network has grown considerably in hours of operation and services provided and consist of a dedicated group of Radio Amateurs who unselfishly volunteer their time, equipment, and efforts to serve and assist those in need of communications from foreign countries and the high seas.

Our primary purpose now is that of handling legal third party traffic from maritime mobiles, both pleasure and commercial and overseas-deployed military personnel. We also help missionaries in foreign countries, and volunteer net control stations from throughout North America maintain the network. Furthermore, these stations are assisted by relay stations to ensure total coverage of the Atlantic Ocean, Mediterranean & Caribbean Seas, and eastern Pacific Ocean. The network, in particular, has been formally recognized for it's work with emergency traffic by the Dept. of Homeland Security, the United States Coast Guard and the National Weather Service, to mention a few.

The Maritime Mobile Service Network has grown in hours of operation from a 5 hour net operating 7 days a week to the 9 hour format today which is from 12:00 pm to 10:00 pm Eastern Time during daylight savings time and until 9:00 pm during standard time. In the early years, phone patch traffic was heavy, estimating over 10,000 pieces of traffic handled each year from 1968-1977. One of our net control stations (Dave Wagner, WA2DXQ in Fort Lauderdale, FL) ran well over 1000 phone patches during the 2 year period of 1977-1978, mostly to United States Navy (USN) ships in the Mediterranean and Red Sea but also to a few missionaries and both private and commercial vessels. Though the need for phone patch traffic has diminished considerably over the past 15 to 20 years, the need is still there. If it hadn't been for a number of our net control stations equipped with a phone patch, some rescues the net's been involved in would not have been as successful. Many mariners in the Caribbean Islands, Central and South America and the Gulf of Mexico view the network as a resource for weather information as well as a safety valve and trusted contact point for essential communications.

## It's Time to Renew Your Club Membership

It's that time of the year again! Time to renew your membership in Tri-Town Radio Amateur Club. Your membership shows your support of Tri-Town and all of the Club activities. The Club has some very real major expenses of insurance for the equipment and liability and operating costs for the repeater. Cost have been trimmed were possible. The Club tries to control costs of refreshments, raffle prizes, and Club Parties so that the donations cover those costs. These are ongoing challenges. So please renew your membership as soon as possible. Do you have a friend who would like to join? Membership info can be found in each issue of The Oscillator and on the Club's web site [www.W9VT.org](http://www.W9VT.org). Of course new members are always welcome. Dues can be paid by mail or they can be brought to any Club meeting.

**Check out the Club Website: [WWW.W9VT.ORG](http://WWW.W9VT.ORG)**

# Amateur Radio balloons recovered in Morocco and Mississippi

From QRZ.com

Amateur radio high altitude balloons K6RPT-12 and N0D have been recovered in Morocco and Mississippi.

K6RPT-12 was launched from California on December 3 at 0126 UT, successfully crossed North America and the Atlantic, and landed in Morocco on December 5 at 0923 UT.

On Christmas Day Ron K6RPT announced that his California Near Space Project payload had been recovered by a team of French and Moroccan amateur radio operators in Morocco on December 23.

More details and pictures at: [http://www.californianearspaceprojec...s\\_cnsp-18.html](http://www.californianearspaceprojec...s_cnsp-18.html)

N0D (BLT-32) was launched late on December 15 but the balloon burst over Mississippi the following day. It was found on December 20 by a hunter in Mississippi who rang the team to ask what the heck was in the box he found with all the wires hanging out!

## Dx'ing the NWS NOAA Weather Radio Channels

Brian WD9HSY

Here is a list of the National Weather Service NOAA Weather Radio Freqs within 100 miles of the Bunker. NOAA uses 7 Freqs in the USA. Most of us can hear at least one of these stations on each freq most of the time. When the band is open you may hear multiple stations, "mixing" or you may hear a station you don't normally hear at all. This can be an easy test to see if the band is "open" or open in a particular direction. I have all 7 in the memories of my 2 mtr rig to keep an eye on the weather, and to check on band conditions!

Is it nice that the US Government has given us a bunch of "VHF Beacons!" (HI HI)

State	Town	Frequency	Call Sign	Power Out	Dist	Bearing
ILLINOIS	Plano	162.4000	KXI58	300 Watts	41	281
INDIANA	South Bend	162.4000	WXJ57	1000 Watts	77	83
ILLINOIS	Lockport	162.4250	KZZ81	1000 Watts	16	279
LLINOIS	Princeton	162.4250	WXL22	300 Watts	90	263
INDIANA	Hebron	162.4500	WNG689	300 Watts	32	120
ILLINOIS	Odell	162.4500	WXK24	1000 Watts	55	227
WISC	Racine	162.4500	KZZ76	300 Watts	81	359
ILLINOIS	Rockford	162.4750	KZZ57	1000 Watts	85	306
INDIANA	Montic/Lafay	162.4750	WXK74	1000 Watts	90	150
INDIANA	La Porte	162.5000	KJY62	1000 Watts	44	76
ILLINOIS	Crescent City	162.5000	KXI86	300 Watts	55	185
ILLINOIS	Crystal Lake	162.5000	KXI41	300 Watts	56	328
ILLINOIS	Kankakee	162.5250	KZZ58	300 Watts	30	192
ILLINOIS	Dixon	162.5250	KZZ55	300 Watts	91	283
ILLINOIS	Bloomington	162.5250	KZZ65	300 Watts	98	222
ILLINOIS	Chicago	162.5500	KWO39	300 Watts	21	12 Original Chicago WX
ILLINOIS	DeKalb	162.5500	WNG536	100 Watts	58	297

**Check out the Club Website: [WWW.W9VT.ORG](http://WWW.W9VT.ORG)**

# Wheaton Mid-Winter Hamfest Jan 20! (one-week earlier than usual)

Rich, N9DKO

The 2013 WCRA Mid-Winter Hamfest will be held at the Kane County Fairgrounds Exposition Center in St. Charles, Illinois on Sunday, January 20, 2013. This is the same location as last year! Please note that this is one-week earlier than usual.

We're planning a great hamfest that will include the usual flea market and commercial vendors but also several interesting and informative breakout sessions, on-site VE Testing, hourly prizes and more! Hamfest hours are 8am to 1pm and there will be plenty of FREE parking.

Anticipated forums are:

- . Jim O'Connell, W9WU - Amateur Radio & The Law
- . Dale Kwarta, NJ9E - Go Kit Radio in a Box
- . Mark Thompson, WB9QZB - D-Star Update

Flea market tables may be reserved in advance and are \$25, \$35 with electricity. Day-Of tables, if available, will be \$30, \$40 with electricity. Everyone at your table must have a hamfest admission ticket. Advance admission tickets are a bargain at \$8 each and include four prize stubs! Day-Of tickets will be \$10 and have only one prize stub. Children under 12-years of age are admitted free. Advance tickets can be purchased by mail. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope plus your check or money order made out to WCRA Hamfest to: WCRA Hamfest PO Box QSL Wheaton, IL 60187-1055

You can download the hamfest flyer/ticket order form here: <http://wheatonhamfest.org/flyer.pdf>

General questions about the hamfest? Call us at (630) 604-0157 or via e-mail at [info@w9ccu.org](mailto:info@w9ccu.org) Ticket questions should be directed to me. [N9DKO@arrl.net](mailto:N9DKO@arrl.net) Thanks and we hope to see you at the hamfest!

## What is the Beep, Beep, Beep on the Repeater?

From Brian WD9HSY

There has been some interesting band openings with the mild fall/winter so far this year. Some of the other repeaters on '805 can be heard in the background. I went and double checked the repeater directory and there are 993+ repeaters within 300 miles of us on the entire 2 mtr band alone! On 146.805, there are 16 repeaters and there are 3 that use the same PL tone of 107.2! Sometime their users can tickle and trip our receiver and they may not even know it, they think that they are on there repeater alone!

Well it works both ways. That is why we ask base stations and high powered mobiles to keep the power down as to be the "quiet, good neighbor".

So bare with it, it happens only a few times a season. If it gets real bad the control ops can shut the system down. Yes, it can be annoying, but what it is saying is to check the simplex freqs, like 146.52 and others and work some FM DX!

## We need your Membership!

**Membership supports the Club Station, The Club Repeater, The Website, The Oscillator, and many Club Activities!**

# The Amateur Amateur: HO-HO-Handheld Transceiver!

By Gary Hoffman, KB0H ARRL Contributing Editor

Got an Amateur Radio item on the list you wrote to Santa this year? Of course you have. But if you're like me, you don't really expect to get it. First, what we want (well, what I want, anyway) is way too expensive. Second, it's probably too heavy for Santa's sleigh (or for Mrs Santa to carry out to the SUV). And third, Santa can't just go to the mall and buy it. It has to be ordered over the Internet or from a mail order house. That last one is the kicker. (Mrs) Santa wants to be able to drive to the store and buy it, rather than phone in an order and be asked a lot of complicated technical questions that he (she) can't answer.

I think the manufacturers of Amateur Radio transceivers have figured this out, because they keep coming up with newer model handheld transceivers. While (Mrs) Santa may have trouble getting you that super deluxe DX station, or that unbelievably long antenna, he (she) just might attempt to get you that slick little handheld rig that just came on the market. It's affordable, more or less. It's certainly portable (and easy to wrap). And there's even a slim chance that the local electronics store might have one in stock.

When my wife Nancy and I first got our Amateur Radio licenses, we bought a pair of Yaesu FT-530 handheld transceivers. Having new tickets -- and no notion of how we might use them -- these radios seemed like the prudent thing to get. They had all the latest features of the day, which, back then, included automatic repeater splits and CTCSS tone encoding.

All that has changed, of course. Handheld transceivers sport many more features these days. Sadly, many of them have lost the feature that means the most to me: buttons. You're supposed to program your handheld radio by connecting it to a computer (cable and software not included). Well, okay. But honestly, I don't know how they expect you to get around carrying a laptop on your belt.

Moving on, though, I am fascinated by the new stuff they manage to package in these little transceivers. For example:

## **China Makes Radios, Too!**

The radios aren't all coming from Japan any more. China has also entered into the Amateur Radio market. Rumor has it that other Asian countries are also getting into the act. Look for brand names such as Baofeng, Wouxun, TYT and Anytone. Wherever they come from, all of these new arrivals have one thing in common: They're cheap.

## **Aha! says (Mrs) Santa.**

But is cheap a good thing? Does the axiom "You get what you pay for" apply in this case? Or do these new imports stand up to the Japanese models we're used to seeing?

Truthfully, I don't know. I found a pile of product reviews and read as many of them as I could before my eyes started crossing and came to no firm conclusions. Some people love the new imports. Other people hate them. Really hate them.

## **Wrapup or Wrap-Up?**

So you may or may not find a new handheld transceiver wrapped up under your Christmas tree this year, but if you don't, it won't be because the manufacturers weren't trying. More and more models have come out with not just two bands, but three. The 1.25 meter band is showing up in more models, as is APRS. And the Chinese have introduced handheld transceivers that target the economy-minded among us.

Who knows? Maybe you'll get lucky.

- Names have been changed to protect the innocent (and not-so-innocent).

**We need your Membership!**

## New QuickStats Poll Now Available on ARRL Website

Four new poll questions have just been published on the QuickStats page on the ARRL website. Let your voice be heard!

Questions in this month's QuickStats poll:

How do you feel about the frequent use of macros during keyboard-to-keyboard digital contacts?

Did your college have an Amateur Radio club?

If you were applying for a job, would you mention your Amateur Radio experience on your resume?

Are you comfortable working around high voltage?

Visit the QuickStats page and be sure to bookmark it in your browser. Results from this QuickStats poll will be published in the April 2013 issue of QST on the QuickStats page, located in the rear advertising section of the magazine. Along with monthly poll results, QST QuickStats offers colorful charts and graphs that highlight interesting Amateur Radio statistics.

## Senate Approves 2nd Term for FCC Commish Mignon Clyburn

In June 2012, President Barack Obama nominated Mignon Clyburn to serve a second term as FCC Commissioner. On January 1, 2013, the Senate confirmed her nomination, paving the way to Clyburn's first full term as one of five FCC Commissioners.

"I am so pleased that the Senate has approved Commissioner Clyburn's re-nomination to the FCC," said FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski in a written statement. "Commissioner Clyburn is an excellent and dedicated public servant and has been a strong advocate in seeking to extend the benefits of broadband to all Americans. I look forward to continuing to work closely with Commissioner Clyburn and congratulate her on her new term."

Clyburn's five-year appointment is retroactive to July 1, 2012, when her first term expired. No date has yet been announced for her swearing-in ceremony.

## Solar Update

Tad Cook, K7RA

The average daily solar flux was down this week about 4 points to 113.4, while the average daily sunspot numbers were down 6.7 points to 65.4. The geomagnetic indices were very low and stable, which should please 160 meter operators who are also enjoying the long periods of darkness in the northern hemisphere. Sunspot numbers for December 20-26 were 53, 55, 67, 90, 53, 58 and 82, with a mean of 65.4. The 10.7 centimeter flux was 114.1, 114.6, 115.3, 114.2, 113.1, 113 and 109.8, with a mean of 113.4. The estimated planetary A indices were 6, 4, 1, 2, 3, 3 and 3, with a mean of 3.1. The estimated mid-latitude A indices were 7, 3, 1, 2, 2, 2 and 2, with a mean of 2.7.

The predicted solar flux from NOAA and USAF call for 110 on December 28-30, 115 on December 31-January 4, 105 on January 5-7, 110 and 115 on January 8-9, 120 on January 10-12, 115 in January 13-19, and rising to 120 on January 20-22. The predicted planetary A index is 8 on December 28-29, 5 on December 30 through January 12, 10 on January 13, and back down to 5 on January 14-25.

Amateur solar observer Tad Cook, K7RA, of Seattle, Washington, provides this weekly report on solar conditions and propagation. This report also is available via W1AW every Friday, and an abbreviated version appears each Thursday in The ARRL Letter.

# **New York City Ham Wins Appeal, Can Keep His Tower**

In September 2010, Paul Isaacs, W2JGQ, of New York City, obtained a building permit for his Amateur Radio antenna support structure, comprised of a 40 foot tower topped by a Yagi antenna. Isaacs installed his antenna system on the roof of his four story brownstone -- 58 feet above ground -- in lower Manhattan.

Almost four months later -- months after the erection of the system -- the New York City Department of Buildings (DOB) declared its intention to revoke Isaacs' properly attained building permit, claiming that his Amateur Radio antenna system was not, in the Department's opinion, "an accessory use." Isaacs appealed the decision through the Department's bureaucracy, and when that didn't reverse the decision, he had a series of hearings before the New York City Board of Standards and Appeals.

In November 2012, the Board ruled that though perhaps uncommon, an Amateur Radio antenna system is indeed an accessory use under New York City's zoning ordinance and the building permit was properly granted. "The Board agrees with DCP [Department of City Planning] that the size of a use can be relevant to whether it is 'incidental to' and 'customarily found in connection with' a principal use," the Board wrote in its decision. "However, it finds that in the case of Amateur Radio towers, unlike cellular [towers] and certain other uses, there is no articulated standard to guide DOB in determining at what height a particular radio tower becomes a non-accessory."

## **FITSAT-1 Satellite to Flash LEDs Over the US & Europe**

--Our thanks to Trevor, M5AKA, AMSAT-UK

On December 12 and 13 the FITSAT-1 CubeSat will be sending Morse code by flashing its array of super-bright LEDs. Depending on local conditions, the light may be visible to the naked eye and will be easily visible through binoculars. The LEDs will send "HI DE NIWAKA JAPAN."

The satellite will be visible over the eastern half of the United States on the morning of December 12. The LEDs will flash for two minutes starting at 0614 UTC. Europeans will get their chance at 2210 UTC on December 13.

FITSAT-1 was developed by students at the Fukuoka Institute of Technology (FIT) in Japan. As well as the optical LED experiment the satellite carries several Amateur Radio payloads: a CW beacon on 437.250 MHz, a telemetry beacon on 437.445 MHz and a high-speed data downlink on 5840.0 MHz.

More FITSAT tracking information is available at <http://www.satflare.com/track.php?q=fitsat#MAP>.

## **RAC Announces New Incoming QSL Bureau Address**

Effective immediately, Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC) has instituted a new, centralized address for its Incoming QSL Bureau. RAC International Affairs Officer George Gorsline, VE3YV, told the ARRL that hams should no longer send any cards through the provincial QSL bureaus. Please direct any questions regarding this new policy to Gorsline via e-mail. Please address all QSL cards sent to Canada via the RAC's QSL bureau to:

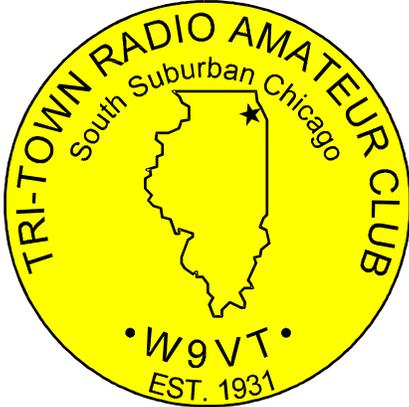
**RAC National Incoming QSL Bureau**  
**Box 51**  
**Saint John, NB**  
**E2L 3X1, Canada**

**Check out the Club Website: [WWW.W9VT.ORG](http://WWW.W9VT.ORG)**

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

January 2013

First Class Mail



Check out the Club Website: [WWW.W9VT.ORG](http://WWW.W9VT.ORG)

## 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

**We need your Membership!**

**Membership supports the Club Station, The Club Repeater, The Website,  
The Oscillator, and many Club Activities!**