

The Oscillator

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Program Calendar:

Friday, November 20, 2009:
Annual White Elephant Sale!
8 PM Location : The Bunker

Don't miss this chance to clean out the shack, basement, or garage and put some Christmas spending money in your pocket. On the other hand you could pick up the bargains you missed at the Hamfests this past summer. The Club will be collecting a 10% fee on all sold items to help support the Club activities. This fee will be waved on all estate sale items.

Friday, December 18, 2009
Election of Officers and Christmas Party
8PM Location: The Bunker

'Tis The Season! Please attend this important meeting to elect Club Officers for 2010. Party will follow elections. Please let an officer now if you can bring goodies for the party. Dues for 2010 will be due January 1, 2010. Why not avoid the January rush and renew your membership at the November or December meetings.

Club Activities

By Todd, KA9IUC

During October the Club hosted two open houses for those tanking the current Technician Class. There was a good turnout of Club members to demonstrate the modes available at the Club Station. Six or seven students attended the open houses. They were impressed with our equipment, antenna farm and range of different types of communication available. They were also grateful of the chance to visit and see hams in action and receive a little on the air training about ham radio. The time at the bunker was also spent on doing a little housekeeping and operating. Events such as this really show how lucky we are and how great it is to have the Club Station. Thought is being given to have The Bunker open one Saturday a month for general operating.

Election of 2010 Officers

By Todd, KA9IUC

Elections will be held the December meeting for 2010 Officers. As usual, the offices of President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer and one Board Member (past officer) are up for a vote. As of this writing there has been no response to the request for someone to head the nominating committee or for someone to run for one of the offices. Please take some time now to see if can help the Club in any by serving on the committee or running for office. It does take effort on your part but it is rewarding and does help the Club carry on its long history.

Officers, Board Members, & Committee Heads for 2009:

Tom Niemeyer	AB9LA	President	708.672-5844	tom1485@sbcglobal.net
Jim Everand	WD9GXU	Secretary	708.748.6798	None
Trish Jaggard	N9WDG	Treasurer	708.957.1973	the_jaggards@sbcglobal.net
Todd Schumann	KA9IUC	Director	708.423.7066	tschum3063@aol.com
Bruce Haffner	WD9GHK	W9VT Trustee	708.614.6134	WD9GHK@comcast.net
Jerry Dagenais	K9PMV	W9VT Station Mgr.	708.385.2866	K9PMV@sbcglobal.com
Tom Gunderson	W9SRV	Webmaster, W9VT	815.466-0245	webmaster@w9vt.org
Matt Schumann	N9OTL	Raffle Chairman	708.423.7066	mattschuman@yahoo.com
Dave Dell	N9LGP	Field Day Chairman	708.235-1270	n9lgp@sbcglobal.com
		Chairman of Board		
Brian J. Bedoe	WD9HSY	Repeater Trustee, Oscillator Editor, Director	815.469.1383	Bbedoe@aol.com

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.

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
441.975 Elwood, W0COP (underconstruction & on air at WD9HSY'S QTH)
All UHF's use a 114.8 PL All VHF's use a 107.2 PL

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

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

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

Cracker Barrel Net - Monday-Friday 3:00 PM Local 146.805 -600kc 107.2 PL

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

Upcoming Hamfests

Wheaton Mid Winter Hamfest: Jan 24,2009 8am, Kane County Fair Grounds

<http://wheatonhamfest.org/flyer.pdf>

Sunday night Weather Net

Well the Change to Daylight savings time has caused a snafu with the Sunday Weather net. The Repeater changes over to net mode to allow a longer time out time for the announcements and Rain. Since the change over the timer change is not taking place! Opppps! Hopefully this has been corrected but it can only be tested during the net (would you really want the time out timer set at 20 minutes?) (rag chewers please take note!) It should be OK now, but only time will tell! Sunday 8PM on the Club Machine 146.805 73, Brian WD9HSY

Visit Tri-Town's Web Page!

WWW.W9VT.ORG

ARRL Illinois Section Manager

Thomas T. Ciciora, KA9QPN ka9qpn@arrl.org

Tom's full page at the ARRL is: <http://www.arrl.org/sections/?sect=IL>

The turmoil continues from the 'informal' citation which Laura Smith issued to the EmComm participant in IA. Lots of words flying on the subject claiming to be 'authoritative' and 'final', but none from Ms. Smith, her boss or the Commissioners. There is an NPRM supposedly brewing out west. I recall Riley (and Ms. Smith after him, truth be told!) cautioning us not to look to Uncle Charlie for solutions, as we might not like the results. Quite honestly, I have to agree with them generally, but this is one of those things where I do not see a way out without some movement in the Rules. The technology and the art have progressed past what was envisioned years ago.

The effort to provide communications support for the recent Chicago Marathon was the subject of an article on the main page of the League website...which seems to have already vaporized. I have seen no other after action reports other than that piece. It certainly looks as if a good job was done by all involved.

By now, League members in good standing have received ballots for the Vice-Director election. Do your due diligence and VOTE. Our Central Division Director, Dick Isely W9GIG has once again been ushered unopposed into a new term.

Many emails and forwards of the story of the family in FL who was electrocuted to death (yes, you CAN be electrocuted without dying!) while trying to raise an antenna. People, before you start tossing wire or planting aluminum, make doubly sure that there are no electrical feeds above OR below. And, do your antenna work in the daylight. It only takes a minute to save yourself from disaster. Sad aside: in one forum, a person offered the comment that the situation was a direct result of relaxed licensing requirements. Where some people will stoop to further an agenda...

Amateur Satellite AO-7 turns 35!

Thirty-five years ago this Sunday (15 November), AO-7 reached orbit. The following is from the AO-7 page on the AMSAT-North America Web site:

AMSAT-OSCAR 7 was launched November 15, 1974 by a Delta 2310 launcher from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Lompoc, California. AO-7 was launched piggyback with ITOS-G (NOAA 4) and the Spanish INTASAT. The second phase 2 satellite (Phase II-B). Weight 28.6 kg. Orbit 1444 x 1459 km. Inclination 101.7 degrees. Octahedrally shaped 360 mm high and 424 mm in diameter. Circularly polarized canted turnstile VHF/UHF antenna system and HF dipole."

I consider it good fortune that the Grand Old Girl will be in Mode B on her 35th birthday. For some time, she has been toggling between Mode A (2 meter uplink and 10 meter HF downlink) and Mode B (70 centimeter uplink and 2 meter downlink) every 24 hours. According to information from Hal, ZS6WB, in South Africa, her daily toggle between Mode A and Mode B has been occurring very close to 0445 UTC, when at least a portion of South Africa usually is in her footprint.

So - from 0445 UTC on 15 November to 0445 UTC on 16 November, AO-7 should be in Mode B (UHF uplink - VHF downlink). I'm hoping she stays consistent with that daily mode switch! Let's celebrate her historic longevity and make Sunday a very busy day for AO-7. I intend to work every pass I can, and I hope everyone else who has Mode B capability will do the same.

If you're not set up for the linear satellites but have a receiver with CW/SSB capability on 2 meters, try listening to a pass. The middle of her Mode B downlink passband is 145.950 MHz and you will find most of the activity occurring between 145.940 MHz and 145.960 MHz. Generally, you'll hear CW operators below 145.950 and SSB operators above 145.950.

Here is a link to the online log for AO-7: <http://www.planetemily.com/ao7/ao7log.php>

Here is a link to the AO-7 page on the AMSAT-NA Web site: <http://www.amsat.org/amsat-new/satel...tes/status.php>

Visit Tri-Town's Web Page!

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Late Season Tropical Storm Ida Comes Calling on Gulf Coast

With only weeks to go before the end of the 2009 hurricane season, Tropical Storm Ida formed off the coast of Nicaragua, making landfall as a hurricane in the morning hours of November 5. The storm lost significant strength as it moved through Nicaragua and Honduras, only to reemerge in the Caribbean a day later, impacting El Salvador and Mexico. Ida gained strength, becoming a Category 2 storm with winds peaking at 105 miles per hour in the Gulf of Mexico. The path for Ida at this point was clearly toward the Gulf Coast of the US, with a projected landfall somewhere between Louisiana and the Florida panhandle. As Ida's path became more focused, Amateur Radio operators and ARES® groups concentrated on increasing their level of readiness should there be a need to respond.

On November 8, ARRL Emergency Preparedness and Response Manager Dennis Dura, K2DCD, began to obtain information from the Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi and Northern Florida Sections on their level of readiness and to set the stage for any necessary response coordination. The ARRL Headquarters Incident Management Team was also placed on alert to support this activity. "Fortunately, some of this coordination was made easier by the fact that Southeastern Division Director Greg Sarratt, W4OZK, and Northern Florida Section Manager Paul Eakin, KJ4G, as well as ARRL Media and Public Relations Manager Allen Pitts, W1AGP, and all were attending the Stone Mountain Hamfest in Lawrenceville, Georgia," Dura said.

ARRL Sweepstakes Takes to the Phone Bands Next Weekend

The SSB portion of the [ARRL November Sweepstakes](#) -- the premier domestic HF contest -- takes place next weekend, running 2100 UTC Saturday, November 21 to 0300 Monday, November 23 (or 4 PM Saturday to 10 PM Sunday EST). According to ARRL Contest Branch Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X, the event -- first called "[The January Contest](#)" -- started back in 1929 as a competition for handling formal traffic messages. "Sweepstakes is one of the oldest traditions in Amateur Radio," Kutzko said. "The contest exchange contains more elements than usual, an homage to the traffic-handling days of yore. If you have never participated in Sweepstakes, you are really missing out on some serious fun!"

Kutzko said the phone portion of Sweepstakes differs a bit from the CW portion: "The phone bands are considerably more crowded than CW. First there's the bandwidth issue: A single phone QSO takes up more -- *at least six times more* -- bandwidth than a CW signal does. There also tends to be more casual (non-contest) phone operating, such as nets, rag chews and scheduled contacts with which you need to be aware and coexist." He advises those participating in radiosport events such as Sweepstakes be courteous to other band occupants, whether they are contesters or not.

QST Contributing Editor H. Ward Silver, N0AX, said that some hams have picked up the habit of using "the last two" to call a station, meaning using just the last two letters of your call. "Please use your entire call sign," he advised. "Nine times out of 10, the other station will copy all of it the first time." Use standard phonetics, such as the ones found [here](#). A complete primer by Silver on how to participate in Sweepstakes can be found [here](#).

If you submit a score, Kutzko said to be sure to keep in mind the [new deadlines for log submissions](#). The log submission deadline for the SSB Sweepstakes is **0300 UTC Tuesday, December 8**. The preferred method of log submission is the Cabrillo electronic format. "We have several links on the [ARRL Contest Branch Web page](#) devoted to Sweepstakes tutorials, including how Cabrillo works and even templates for submitting an entry," Kutzko explained. "While the ARRL will never turn away a paper log, we are asking all entrants to submit their log electronically if possible; this will greatly help us to publish the scores in 60 days as many participants have requested. Contest clubs are encouraged to assist their club members with paper logs in the Cabrillo conversion process. The [WA7BNM Cabrillo Web Forms site](#) will walk you through creating a Cabrillo-formatted log."

While the object of the November Sweepstakes is to work all [80 ARRL and RAC Sections](#), no one says you have to do so! Sweepstakes is a good time to get on the air for a couple of hours and see what you can do. Whether you are operating from a fixed station with stacked arrays for every band or a small rig and a dipole, you are bound to make QSOs *and* have fun at the same time. Sweepstakes has been a part of Amateur Radio for nearly eight decades. Don't sit this one out -- get on the air, have fun and take part of one of Amateur Radio's oldest and finest traditions."

STS 129: HAM Radio Antennas OUTSIDE on the Space Station

"Lou McFadin, W5DID, a member of the [AMSAT](#) Board of Directors and a key volunteer for ARISS, showed the astronauts the best ways for them to safely unpack and assemble the antennas and associated cables once they and the hardware reach the ISS," said ARRL ARISS Program Manager Rosalie White, K1STO. "They reviewed how to maneuver and install the antennas during the spacewalk. Lou also oversaw the re-packing of the antennas and the onboard flight kit that accompanies shipments going to the ISS."

Astronauts will install and deploy our ARISS antennas during the second spacewalk of STS-129. The ham team will monitor the spacewalk activity via a NASA real-time teleconference call. "The new antennas will increase opportunities for the many hams who covet making contacts with astronauts and cosmonauts," White explained. "Frequencies available for transmission to and from *Columbus* will be 2 meters, 70 centimeters, L-band and S-band. To start, the two Ericsson radios (2 meters and 70 centimeters) that are already on the ISS (but seldom used) will be moved and installed in *Columbus*."

The upcoming mission -- set to launch at 2: 28 PM (EST) on Monday, November 16 -- will be the last shuttle mission to bring personnel to the ISS. There will only be [five more shuttle flights to the ISS after this one](#); the last shuttle flight on the launch manifest is [STS-133](#), on board [Discovery](#), with a launch target of September 16, 2010. STS-133 will be the 134th and shuttle flight and the 36th shuttle mission to the ISS.

NASA ISS Ham Radio Project Engineer Kenneth Ransom, N5VHO, told the ARRL that the new VHF/UHF Amateur Radio antenna is currently stowed in the bay of the space shuttle *Atlantis* and will be installed during the second extravehicular activity (EVA) of the shuttle mission; EVA is NASA's term for a spacewalk. "The antenna -- along with another VHF antenna -- was developed by ARISS in cooperation with the ESA to support an experiment involving the maritime Automatic Identification System ([AIS](#))," Ransom explained. "Both antennas will be installed on the Earth-facing starboard edge of the Columbus module. The AIS antenna will be forward and the ARISS antenna will be aft. The ARISS team is planning to migrate some stowed Amateur Radio gear to take advantage of the new antenna."

STS-129 will carry Commander Charlie Hobaugh, Pilot Barry Wilmore, Mission Specialists Bobby Satcher, Mike Foreman, Randy Bresnik and Leland Melvin; Wilmore, Satcher and Bresnik will be making their first trips to space. *Atlantis* will bring back Mission Specialist/ISS Flight Engineer Nicole Stott, KE5GJN, who has been on board the ISS since August 2009.

Now You Know! Some US Call Signs Not Issued by the FCC

If you're an American ham, chances are that your call sign was issued by the Federal Communications Commission. A "no brainer," right? Well, if you're an American ham who happens to be stationed at Guantanamo Bay or at one of the US bases in the Antarctic, your call sign is not issued by the FCC -- it's issued by the base commander. Guantanamo Bay (or Gitmo as it's commonly called) uses the KG4 prefix, followed by a two-letter suffix; this block is reserved exclusively for American hams at Gitmo. As for Antarctica, the [Antarctic Treaty](#), signed on December 1, 1959 (and entered into force on June 23, 1961), established the legal framework for the management of Antarctica, including allocation of amateur call signs; the National Science Foundation received their block on July 1, 1959. US military hams in Japan and Korea are also issued special call signs:

KA2AA-KA9ZZ -- reserved for US Army-authorized amateur stations in Japan.
[KC4AAA-KC4AAF](#) -- reserved for the National Science Foundation's use at the South Pole.
KC4USA-KC4USZ -- reserved for US Navy-authorized amateur stations at their Antarctic bases.
[KG4AA-KG4ZZ](#) -- reserved for US Navy-authorized amateur stations at Guantanamo Bay).

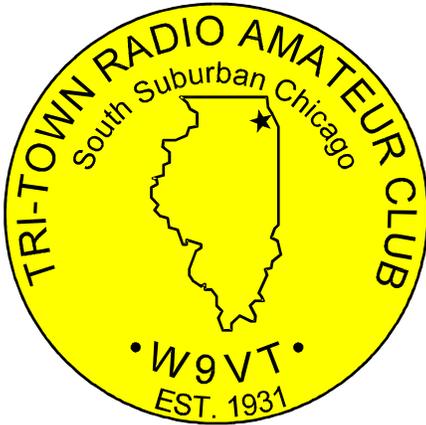
KL9KAA -- KL9KHZ -- reserved for assignment to US personnel stationed in Korea.

The 40 call signs having the first two letters AF, KF, NF or WF and the letters "EMA" following a numeral are available to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

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

November 2009

First Class Mail



Visit Tri-Town's Web Page!

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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