

# The Oscillator

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## Upcoming Meetings

**Friday, September 19, 2014, 8 PM, Hazel Crest Village Hall**

### Testing Your HT's

Pete K9OWQ and friends will have some test gear to check HT's. Bring you HT and check Power, Frequency, Spurs

**Friday, October 17, 2014, 8 PM, Hazel Crest Village Hall**

Program for the evening is TBA. There will be a business meeting with refreshments and raffle

## Annual Tri-Town Picnic Held

The Tri-Town Picnic was held on Saturday, August 23, 2014. It was a great day with moderate temperatures and just a few drops of rain. The picnic was held at the QTH of Jim, KB9VR and was hosted by Jim and his XYL Joy. A big Thank you goes to Jim and Joy for hosting and to John, N9DWE and MJ for doing all the grilling. Door prizes were won by Bruce, WD9GHK, Mac WA9CYL and John, N9DWE. Thanks to all who attended and made the event such a success.

## Raffle to be Held for Dual Band Radio

A raffle is being held this fall by Tri-Town for a Baofeng UV-5RA dual band hand held radio. Raffle tickets will be \$2 each or three for \$5. Raffle Ticket sales started at the picnic and will be available at all club meetings until the drawing for the radio which will take place at the Christmas Party in December. The radio comes complete with antenna, charging base, ear phone/mike attachment, programming cable and best instructions, found to date, for programming. Thank you for your support of this year's raffle and good luck to all. Proceeds from the raffle will go to support the club's activities.

## BOD votes to increase Club Dues

Brian WD9HSY

Hard to imagine that it's been more than 22 years, since Tri-Town put the Repeater on the air! That was back in the day when Cell Phones were the size of BRICKS and Heathkit still sold a few kits. Yes, it has been that long since Tri-Town had a dues increase. It is kind of remarkable that it has been that long. The Club has done a great job over the years keeping things tight and within budgets. For an example, a few years back we started to send the Oscillator out by email rather than regular 1<sup>st</sup> Class Mail. The cost savings of printing and postage saved the Club hundreds of dollars a year.

Over the past decade our membership has been slowly declining. It is an unfortunate common occurrence with most radio clubs around the country today as the membership ages, moves on, or slips away. Just the of numbers in our membership is making it tough to stay ahead of the game. It was a tough decision to make, but your Board of Directors voted unanimously that this had to be done. Over the next meeting or two, your Board will be available to answer any questions or concerns you may have about this decision. Feel free to talk to any of your Board members. Any thoughts and ideas would be greatly appreciated

## Officers, Board Members, & Committee Heads for 2014:

Ed Stroh, K9EGS	President	708.877-5204	<a href="mailto:K9EGS@hotmail.com">K9EGS@hotmail.com</a>
Matt Schumann, N9OTL	VP, Chair. of Board	708.423.7066	<a href="mailto:mattschumann@yahoo.com">mattschumann@yahoo.com</a>
Jim Everand, WD9GXU	Secretary	708.748.6798	None @ No I' don't have one
Trish Jaggard, N9WDG	Treasurer	708.957.1973	<a href="mailto:the_jaggards@sbcglobal.net">the_jaggards@sbcglobal.net</a>
Todd Schumann, KA9IUC	Director	708.423.7066	<a href="mailto:tschum3063@aol.com">tschum3063@aol.com</a>
Bruce Haffner, WD9GHK	W9VT Trustee, Dir	708.614.6134	<a href="mailto:WD9GHK@comcast.net">WD9GHK@comcast.net</a>
Tom Gunderson, W9SRV	Webmaster, W9VT	815.466-0245	<a href="mailto:webmaster@w9vt.org">webmaster@w9vt.org</a>
Brian J. Bedoe, WD9HSY	Repeater Trustee, Oscillator Editor, Director	815.370.1383	<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, Eham, 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
<b>Tri-Town Alumni Net</b>	Monday through Friday, 2200 UTC on 7.285 MHz SSB

## Hamfests in the Area

SEPT 13	CFMC	Belvidere	<a href="http://www.chicagofmclub.org">www.chicagofmclub.org</a>	
	19-20	NIDXA	Elk Grove Village	<a href="http://www.w9dxcc.com">www.w9dxcc.com</a>
	20-21	Peoria AR Club	Peoria	<a href="http://www.w9uvi.org">www.w9uvi.org</a>
NOV	15-16	ACARTS	Fort Wayne	<a href="http://www.acarts.com/hfmain.htm">http://www.acarts.com/hfmain.htm</a>

# From The President's Desk

Ed Stroh - K9EGS

As I write this we are finally getting a nice break from the hot weather. It's only in the low 70's today with an upcoming week of 70's in the forecast. This is my favorite kind of weather. I hope that you had a nice summer and got to play radio at least a little bit in between vacationing and yard projects around the house, etc. I must confess that I have not been on the air much at all this summer. Maybe now that the weather is changing, that might change too. Fewer summer projects mean more free time for the radio.

Speaking of more time on the radio, there is a big operating contest coming up next month on the HF bands. It is called the CQ World Wide SSB Contest. It is held on October 25-October 26 on 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meters. This contest offers everyone a good chance to boost up your country totals toward achieving a DXCC award, or just to boost your country totals for the fun of it. Contests have frequently helped me to get my DXCC award. During the contest one can hear dozens and dozens of different countries on the air looking to make a contact with you. Give it a try. You might just have a little fun and even get the chance to sharpen your operating skills a bit.

The Tri-Town annual club picnic is now history. It was held at the home of Jim and Joy Boothe in Monee, IL. on August 23rd. Thanks to all who attended and helped to support your club. **Special thanks to Jim and Joy for hosting the picnic the second year in a row.** Thanks also to all those that helped out with cooking, setup, etc. At the height of the picnic there were almost 20 people in attendance. That was a nice turnout.

If anyone has any ideas for upcoming programs for our regular meetings please contact any of the club officers. You could even do a program yourself. It does not necessarily have to be directly related with amateur radio. As long as it would be a somewhat interesting topic to the membership. It could be about one of your hobbies or something along those lines. We are open to any ideas.

Now that the summer season is over, we will be getting back to our regular monthly meeting times. I hope to see you all at the next regular monthly meeting which will be September 19th at 8:00 PM at the Hazel Crest Village Hall.

## Field Day 2014

The ARRL has acknowledged the receipt of Tri-Town's Field Day entry form. Results are normally published in the December issue of QST. As a recap, Tri-Town's 2014 effort included ten members and four guests. Members included Ed K9EGS, Jim WD9GXU, Todd KA9IUC, Paul N9JFQ, Ron WB9JYZ, Randy KB9LIL, Mark KA9OOI, Steve K9SGB and Peter KE9YX. Member Bruce, WD9GHK was not in attendance but he contributed to the effort by providing the hand crank generator and 2M rig for Bonus Points. The guests included Mike KD9AFO, Bob W9ESX, Dave N9LGP and Neil N9NL. All of the CW contacts were made by two guests. All of the radios and antennas, with the exception of the beam worked great. The beam was able to transmit and receive but could only be turned a few degrees. This was because one of the ropes for lifting/lowering of the 160M dipole broke in the past and the wind blew the rope into the beam wrapping the end around an element and boom of the beam. Plans are being made on how to remedy this problem. The total points scored for Field Day were 1670, 1050 bonus points and 620 contact points.

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

# No Easy Answers for RadioShack's Slow, Downward Slide (Chapter 7 or Chapter 11 Bankruptcy Filing maybe looming)

09/11/2014 from the ARRL

Back in the day, [RadioShack](#) employees would answer the phone by saying, "You've got questions, we've got answers." But RadioShack now seems stumped, and the "B" word is looming ever larger as the retailer — once a go-to shop for electronic components and, at one point, even Amateur Radio and shortwave receivers — casts about for a white knight. Last March, in the wake of a substantial drop in holiday sales and a big fourth-quarter loss, the Fort Worth, Texas-based RadioShack announced plans to close 1100 of its outlets, leaving the chain with 4000 stores, including more than 900 dealer franchises. The last quarter was more of the same.

According to [CNNMoney](#), though, the retailer has only been able to shutter 200 of those shops — because it costs a lot of money even to close locations, and RadioShack has none to spare. It's already bleeding cash — some \$149 million just this year — in its struggle to board up unprofitable locations and keep its head above the rising waters, and, as CNNMoney reported, credit rating agency Moody's expects the company's bank account to run dry within another 12 months. One Wall Street analyst already has warned of impending bankruptcy, and Forbes.com [reported](#) this week that the retailer itself has confirmed the likelihood of a Chapter 7 or Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing, if it cannot find a buyer or restructure its debt.

The troubled electronics retailer continues to actively seek a substantial cash infusion, which, CNNMoney speculated, could come from its single largest investor, hedge fund Standard General, which owns nearly 10 percent of the company. RadioShack also has been negotiating with lenders, bondholders, shareholders, and landlords about a financial turn-around plan.

RadioShack CEO Joseph Magnacca said in a statement on September 11 that while the company was making progress in its turn-around efforts, "we are actively exploring options for overhauling our balance sheet and are in advanced discussions with a number of parties." A filing the retailer submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) this week was far more blunt. In short, it said that if RadioShack cannot sell the firm, partner with another company, or restructure its debt, "we may not have enough cash and working capital to fund our operations beyond the very near term, which raises substantial doubt about our ability to continue as a going concern." And if Plan A does not work out, the retailer told the SEC, "we would likely be required to liquidate under Chapter 7 of the Bankruptcy Code."

Ironically, RadioShack's stock price initially rose on the news, before dropping below the \$1 mark. It was off nearly 25 percent since the beginning of the week.

RadioShack once offered entry-level short-wave receivers, Citizens Band gear, a wide array of discrete components — including transistors, resistors, and capacitors — and, for a time, a fairly popular 2 meter hand-held transceiver and two different models of 10 meter single-band transceivers. It failed in its effort to market a dualband VHF/UHF hand-held radio, however. Over the years, RadioShack has offered fewer discrete components in its brick-and-mortar stores, moving that stock and other products to its online outlet, as it shifted its marketing focus to cell phones, consumer electronics, and various battery-operated gadgets.

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

# URGENT - We Need More HR 4969 Co-Sponsors

From Dick Isely, W9GIG, ARRL Central Division Director [w9gig@arrl.org](mailto:w9gig@arrl.org) or [dick@pobox.com](mailto:dick@pobox.com)

The ARRL is making good progress on obtaining U.S. House of Representatives Co-Sponsors for HR 4969. However, we still need more so that we can press the FCC into extending the provisions of PRB-1 to include private Conditions, Covenants, and Restrictions (CC&Rs) attached to private residential property. We need many more ARRL members sending electronic letters, email messages, etc., to their Representative requesting their co-sponsorship NOW. The U.S. House of Representatives has returned from its August vacation and this session will last about a month until they adjourn in October for election campaigning in their respective districts.

For an in-depth discussion of the rationale for submitting HR 4969, including a brief history of ARRL's struggle to obtain a level playing field for Amateur Radio Licensees living in CC&R restricted communities, please access the HR 4969 link in the horizontal scrolling portion of the ARRL website homepage.

If you do not know who is your representative, this information is available here. You will also find detailed instructions on how to communicate with your Congressman / Congresswoman.

Due to the short remaining best time (rest of September) for making your request, please send email copies to me and our new lobbying firm - The Keelen Group - in Washington, DC. The Keelen Group's email address is: [help@keelengroup.com](mailto:help@keelengroup.com) Please put HR 4969 as the first word in your email Subject line. On Monday, Sep 8th, I am flying to Washington, DC to personally lobby for this very important issue on behalf of all U.S. Amateur Radio Licensees. A very large quantity of individual, well-documented, polite but firm, email requests will greatly enhance my efforts. For the first time in the 12 plus years I have been your ARRL Division Director, I believe we have a pretty good chance to get the FCC to extend PRB-1. The more individual messages sent to the U.S. House of Representatives, the better our chances of success.

## FCC Enforcement Bureau Warns Two Hams for Failing to Identify Properly

09/08/2014

The FCC Enforcement Bureau has released *Warning Notice* letters it sent in July to two radio amateur, advising them that it monitored transmissions in which they failed to identify properly. The Bureau [posted](#) the correspondence earlier this month on its Amateur Radio Service Enforcement Actions web page. The two notices from FCC Enforcement Bureau Special Counsel Laura L. Smith, both dated July 21, contain essentially the same language.

In a [Warning Notice](#) to Gary E. Davis, W1IT, of Inman, South Carolina, Smith told Davis that he was monitored on July 15 and 16 at the FCC's High Frequency Direction Finding Center (HFDFC) in Maryland, failing to properly identify while operating on 7.185 MHz. "[Y]ou were heard by a Commission employee operating your Amateur Radio station for 20 minutes without identifying in a timely manner," Smith wrote. "The Commission employee used direction-finding equipment and confirmed the transmissions were coming from

In a nearly identically worded [Warning Notice](#) to John J. Krajewski, KB3MZQ, of Newark, Delaware, Smith said the HFDFC also had monitored transmissions by him on July 15 and 16, on 7.1 85 MHz, in which he failed to identify properly.

Smith said the FCC had "recorded the offending transmissions" in both instances and offered to make copies available to Davis and Krajewski. She further advised Davis and Krajewski that recurring "operation of this type" after receipt of the warning letters, could subject them to "severe penalties, including license revocation, monetary forfeiture (fines), or a modification proceeding to restrict the frequencies upon which you may operate."

In 2006, in response to a *Petition for Rule Making*, the FCC declined to modify its Amateur Service station identification rules. The petition received some 100 comments. In dismissing the petition the following year, the FCC concluded that the changes requested were "neither necessary nor supported by the Amateur Radio community," and that the failure-to-identify problem "would be better addressed by enforcement of the present rule, rather than a rule change."

# Next “Red Badge Day” on September 21 is a Chance to Rack Up Serious Centennial QSO Party Points

09/03/2014

ARRL’s “Red Badgers” will be out in force on Sunday, September 21 UTC (starting the evening of Saturday, September 20, in US time zones), offering another opportunity to snag some high-value contacts to boost your ARRL **Centennial QSO Party** total. During the second “Red Badges on the Air” activity, ARRL officers, elected officials — such as Director or Section Manager — Headquarters staffers and volunteers, and other members of the ARRL family who merit red ARRL name/call sign badges will take to the air. Contacts with red badge wearers are worth a lot of **points** — as much as 300 points per contact for working ARRL President Kay Craigie, N3KN — so participants can increase their Centennial QSO Party tallies very quickly. ARRL Membership and Volunteer Programs Manager Dave Patton, NN1N, said that ARRL red badge holders number about 200 — including officers, Directors, Section Managers, and Headquarters staff, many of whom will be on the air on September 21.

“Not just Red Badgers will be active, but many ARRL appointees, VEs, and members will be as well,” said Patton. “The first Red Badge Day on June 1 was a huge success but left many operators wanting more. Nine months into ARRL’s Centennial year, the Centennial QSO Party and W1AW activations already have proven to be the largest and most active special events in the history of Amateur Radio, with more than 20,000 participants on the air from all continents.”

The event is considered an activity day, *not* a contest, and operation is permitted on all bands. Participants can call “CQ ARRL Centennial QSO Party” on phone or “CQ CENT” on CW or digital modes. While the event will focus on encouraging ARRL red badgers to hand out Centennial QSO Party points, all activity is welcome, regardless of point value.

ARRL members are worth at least one point in the Centennial QSO Party. Participants get credit for each band/mode contact, regardless of point value. ARRL Centennial QSO Party participants can use the **leader board** to determine how many points they have accumulated.

Other high-value contacts include: President Emeritus (PE) or Past President (PP), 275 points; Honorary Vice President (HVP) or ARRL Vice President (VP), 250 points; Director (DIR), Director Emeritus (DE), or Past Vice President (PVP), 225 points; Vice Director (VD), 200 points; Section Manager (SM), 175 points; ARRL officer (OFF) or Past Director (PD), 150 points, and Past Vice Director (PV), 125 points. W100AW, Charter Life Member (CLM), or Past Section Manager (PSM) contacts are worth 100 points.

ARRL Headquarters department managers (DM), 75 points; ARRL Headquarters staffers/volunteers, (HQ), 50 points; Assistant Director (AD), 40 points, and *NCJ* Editor and *QST* columnists, 30 points.

## ARRL Vice President Rick Roderick, K5UR Keynote W9DXCC

08/29/2014

ARRL First Vice President Rick Roderick, K5UR, will be the banquet speaker for the 62nd annual **W9DXCC**, September 19-20, 2014, in Schaumburg, Illinois.

**Registration** remains open. The special hotel rate is valid through August 28; banquet orders must be received by September 13. DXers, anyone interested in learning more about DXing, and their guests are welcome. There is a full program of forums and discussions, and some of the illuminati of the DXing community will be on hand.

**E-mail** for more information. W9DXCC is an ARRL-approved Operating Specialty Convention and is sponsored by the **Northern Illinois DX Association**.

## New Amateur Radio Vanity Call Sign Fee Set at \$21.40

09/03/2014

The FCC has adjusted very slightly downward — to \$21.40 — its proposed Amateur Service vanity call sign regulatory fee for Fiscal Year 2014. In a June *Notice of Proposed Rule Making* ([NPRM](#)), the Commission said it was planning to hike the current \$16.10 vanity fee to \$21.60 for the 10-year license term. The FCC released a *Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* ([R&O](#)) in the proceeding on August 29, in which it recalculated the fee to \$21.40 for the 10-year license term. The \$5.30 increase still represents the largest vanity fee hike in many years. The new \$21.40 fee does not go into effect until 30 days after the *R&O* is published in *The Federal Register*.

In the *R&O*, the FCC said it considered eliminating the regulatory fee for Amateur Radio vanity call sign applications but decided not to do so “at this time,” because it lacks “adequate support to determine whether the cost of recovery and burden on small entities outweighs the collected revenue; or whether eliminating the fee would adversely affect the licensing process.” The Commission said it would reevaluate this issue in the future to determine if it should eliminate other fee categories. T

The FCC’s Office of Managing Director sets the actual fee vanity call sign fee, based on Wireless Telecommunications Bureau projections of new applications and renewals, taking into consideration existing Commission licensee databases, such as the Universal Licensing System (ULS) database.

The FCC reported there were 11,500 “payment units” in FY 2014. The Commission said the vanity program generated an estimated \$230,230 in FY 2013 revenue, and it estimated that it would collect nearly \$246,100 in FY 2014.

The vanity call sign regulatory fee is payable when applying for a new vanity call sign or when renewing any vanity call sign designated as "HV" in the FCC's ULS database.

## 73 on 73 Award Period Now Underway

*Paul Stoetzer, N8HM Thanks to AMSAT News Service*

09/01/2014

Paul Stoetzer, N8HM, is sponsoring a new award for contacts made via the UK Amateur Radio Educational Satellite **FUNcube-1** (AO-73) to promote activity on the satellite. The award period began on September 1.

Requirements are simple: Work 73 different stations on AO-73 (SSB or CW). There are no geographic restrictions on operating location, no QSLs are required, and the award is free, although Stoetzer encourages contributions to AMSAT-UK and to AMSAT-NA’s Fox program.

**E-mail** log extracts containing the call sign of each station worked and the date/time (UTC) of each contact. Include your mailing address.

The AO-73 inverting transponder uplink is 435.150-435.130 MHz (LSB). The downlink is 145.950-145.970 MHz (USB). Use no more than 5 W to a 7 dBi gain antenna when accessing the AO-73 transponder. —

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

# FCC Ups the Ante in Proposing Huge Fine on CB Operator

08/31/2014

Right on the heels of a whopping \$14,000 **proposed forfeiture** for a Florida CBer for failing to allow a station inspection, the FCC Enforcement Bureau is recommending a \$22,000 fine for a New York CBer. The FCC issued a *Notice of Apparent Liability (NAL)* in the case of James Engle of Lewiston, New York, on August 28, alleging that he interfered with the communications of other CBers, operated with an external linear amplifier, operated without authorization, and disregarded earlier FCC warnings.

“Mr. Engle was warned repeatedly in writing by the Enforcement Bureau that his actions violated the law, and his apparent disregard for the Commission’s authority warrants an increased penalty,” the FCC said in the *NAL*.

The FCC said that last October 23, agents from the Commission’s Philadelphia office, responding to a complaint from a CB operator on 27.325 MHz, CB channel 32, tracked the interfering transmissions to Engle’s station and “heard him repeatedly interrupt ongoing transmissions of another CB operator.” The following day, the agents inspected Engle’s CB station and discovered two linear RF amplifiers. The FCC said Engle “admitted that he used one of the power amplifiers” the previous night. Testing showed the unit was capable of putting out nearly 150 W.

The FCC pointed out that while its Part 95 rules do not require individual CB operators to obtain licenses, CBers who operate “in a manner that is inconsistent with the CB rules” are required to have an FCC authorization. “The Commission will presume an individual has used a linear or other external RF power amplifier, if the amplifier is located on the individual’s premises,” the *NAL* said, “and if there is other evidence showing that a CB station was operated with more power than allowed by the Rules.” FCC rules also prohibit using an external RF amplifier with a FCC-certificated CB transmitter.

Transmitting without FCC authorization merits a base forfeiture of \$10,000, the FCC noted, while the base forfeiture for interfering with other communications is \$7,000.

“The fact that Mr. Engle operated with a linear amplifier to cause intentional interference to other CB operators despite being warned twice in writing demonstrates a deliberate disregard for the Commission’s requirements and authority,” the FCC, in making an “upward adjustment” of \$5,000 in the proposed forfeiture.

Engle has 30 days to pay the fine or file in writing seeking reduction or cancellation of the proposed fine.

## TRADING POST

**FOR SALE: Ameritron AL-811H Amplifier** (800 watt Amp w/ 4 – 811 tubes)  
Very Good Condition. Strong tubes, strong output on all bands. Amp currently wired for 220VAC.

Asking \$625 or Best Offer, pick-up only (I can meet you at the club meeting).  
Contact: Marty, WJ9Q, martyd64@sbcglobal.net or cell 219-789-0374.

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

# The ARRL September VHF Contest Has Room for Everyone!

09/03/2014

The **ARRL September VHF Contest** provides a chance for radio amateurs at all levels to experience contesting on the most popular VHF and UHF bands as well as those less-frequented frequencies above 450 MHz. The higher you go, the greater the point value of your contacts! The contest gets underway on September 13 at 1800 UTC and wraps up on September 15 at 0259 UTC. Newcomers and veteran amateurs will be attempting to work as many 2 × 1 grid squares as possible on frequencies above 50 MHz from home stations, from the field, or from “rovers” that travel from grid square to grid square. With a heightened potential for tropospheric conditions, the September VHF Contest offers something that VHF contests at other times of the year often cannot.

New categories — Single Operator, 3 Band, and Single Operator, FM Only — have been added to allow stations with limited equipment to get in on the fun. With just a hand-held transceiver and Yagi, a single operator can take to the air and compete against other stations with similar equipment. Utilizing frequencies that require smaller, lightweight antennas provides an excellent opportunity for home brewing and finding a favorite hilltop operating location.

Six meters is probably the most popular band for this event, since many newer HF transceivers include 6 meters. Most SSB activity on 6 meters will take place between 50.125 MHz and 50.250MHz, and CW between 50.080 MHz and 50.100 MHz. The frequencies between 50.100 MHz and 50.125 MHz are considered a “DX window” for contacts between US/Canada and DX stations, so avoid US-to-US contacts in that part of the band.

Activity centers for SSB activity are 50.125, 144.200, 222.100, and 432.100 MHz. These are calling frequencies, however, and contest participants should avoid monopolizing them. Those operating FM on 2 meters are reminded that the **ARRL General VHF Contest Rules** prohibit contest operators from using the national simplex frequency of 146.52 MHz to make or solicit contacts. Check the [band plans](#) for details on all bands.

**Rules and entry forms** are on the ARRL website. All logs must be **e-mailed** or postmarked no later than 0300 UTC on October 16, 2014. Electronic logs are preferred. Send paper logs to September VHF Contest, ARRL, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111.

For more information about the ARRL September VHF Contest, **e-mail** the ARRL Contest Branch.

## Four DX Operations Approved for DXCC Credit

08/28/2014

The ARRL DXCC Desk has approved these operations for DX Century Club credit: A52JR, 4W/HB9FLX, 4W/N1YC, and 4W/PE7T. If a request for DXCC credit for any of these operations has been rejected in a prior application, [contact](#) the ARRL DXCC Desk to be placed on the list for an update to your record. Please note the submission date and/or reference number of your application in order to expedite the search for any rejected contacts.

DXCC is Amateur Radio’s premier award that hams can earn by confirming on-the-air contacts with 100 DXCC “[entities](#),” most of which are countries in the traditional sense. You can begin with the basic DXCC award and work your way up to the DXCC Honor Roll.

**Membership supports the Club Station, The Club Repeater, The Website,  
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# Ham Radio Payload to Circle the Moon

*Thanks to AMSAT-UK*

A lunar flyby with a ham radio payload transmitting JT65B mode on 145.990 MHz is expected to take place toward the end of this year, giving earthbound radio amateurs the opportunity to receive some otherworldly DX signals as the payload flies around the Moon.

China has **announced** plans to launch a lunar orbiter carrying a 14 kg battery-powered payload known as 4M-LXS, which was developed at LuxSpace. Signals from the Amateur Radio payload can be decoded using the free [WJST](#) software by Joe Taylor, K1JT.

The orbiter is one of the test models for Beijing's new lunar probe *Chang'e-5*, which will land on the moon, collect samples, and return to Earth. The launch, planned for 4th quarter 2014, is aimed at testing technologies that are vital for the success of the spacecraft. The orbiter will be launched into Lunar Transfer Orbit and then perform a lunar flyby before re-entering Earth's atmosphere after 9 days.

The orbiter, which arrived by air in Xichang, Sichuan, on Sunday, August 10, has been transported to the Xichang Satellite Launch Center

# Amateur Radio Onboard Japanese Asteroid Space Mission

*Thanks to AMSAT-UK*

According to a news report, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (**JAXA**) **Hayabusa 2** asteroid mission, now scheduled to launch in December, will carry the Abyss 2 (Shin'en 2) Amateur Radio satellite. A 17 kg, 50 cm diameter polyhedron, Shin'en 2, built by students at Kyushu Institute of Technology, makes extensive use of carbon-fiber reinforced plastic materials that can be bonded by heat to reduce its weight and the number of hardware fasteners. In addition to a Mode J linear transponder for Amateur Radio communication, Shin'en 2 will include CW and *WSJT* beacons. The inclusion of the transponder will offer an opportunity for earthbound radio amateurs to test the limits of their communication capabilities.

"For confirming the operational status of the spacecraft in deep space, the know-how of the Moon-reflecting communication technology can be applied. By using an Amateur Radio service transponder, amateur stations can communicate with each other when the spacecraft is in near-Moon orbit," a **project outline** on the Shin'en 2 website explains. "Beyond this distance, signal detection by Morse code and telemetry data transmitted from the spacecraft will be performed." The project is expected to help pave the way for future lunar rover missions.

Hayabusa 2 will make a round trip to the C-type asteroid 1999 JU3, arriving at the asteroid in mid-2018. It then would survey and take samples of the asteroid before departing in December 2019, and return to Earth in December 2020.

Shin'en 2 will be placed into an elliptical orbit around the Sun and travel into a deep space between Venus and Mars. Its inclination will be almost zero, which means Shin-En2 will stay in the Earth's equatorial plane. The distance from the Sun will be between 0.7 and 1.3 AU (an astronomical unit is 149,597,871 km).

The IARU-coordinated frequencies for Shin'en 2 are: CW beacon, 437.505 MHz; *WSJT* telemetry, 437.385 MHz; Inverting SSB/CW transponder, 145.940-145.960 MHz uplink (LSB)/435.280-435.260 MHz downlink (USB). The project also is hoping to gather listener reports.

The **ARTSAT2:DESPATCH** satellite will be on the same launch. The satellite, a joint project by students at Tama Art University and Tokyo University, will carry a 30 kg "deep space sculpture" developed using a 3D printer, as well as an Amateur Radio payload, a CW beacon in the 435 MHz band. At its maximum operational distance, it will be some 3 million km (1.86 million miles) from Earth about a week after launch. —

# NASA Astronaut Steven R. Nagel, N5RAW, SK

From NASA 08/27/2014

Astronaut and Space Shuttle veteran Steven Nagel, N5RAW, of Houston, Texas, died August 21. He was 67. In April 1991, Nagel was the commander of the first all-ham Space Shuttle crew aboard *Atlantis* with Kenneth Cameron, KB5AWP; Jay Apt, N5QWL; Linda Godwin, N5RAX — whom he later married — and Jerry Ross, N5SCW, during the SAREX (Shuttle Amateur Radio EXperiment) program, the forerunner to **ARISS**. In all, Nagel flew on four Shuttle missions in the 1980s and 1990s.

Nagel joined the Astronaut Corps in 1979 and was the pilot on the last successful mission of *Challenger* in the 1980s, the only time eight people were launched into space aboard the same spacecraft. Following the *Challenger* disaster in January 1986 that killed seven astronauts, Nagel was part of the effort to develop a crew escape mechanism.

"This was my best time at NASA, actually," Nagel once said in an interview for the space agency. "Nothing I ever did was more fulfilling than that 2 years, to be honest, even flying." Nagel logged 723 hours in space.

One of his last public appearances was at the 2013 ARRL Midwest Division Convention in Lebanon, Missouri, where he spoke to nearly 300 students at Lebanon schools, did a presentation about the first half-century of spaceflight, and took part in a youth forum with Carole Perry, WB2MGP.

Nagel retired from the Air Force and the Astronaut Office in 1995 and went to work for Johnson Space Center in Houston. A year later, he transferred to NASA's Aircraft Operations Division as a research pilot. He retired from NASA in 2011 and joined the faculty of the University of Missouri at Columbia. Survivors include Godwin and their two daughters.

## Balloons Carrying Amateur Radio Payloads Still Circling Earth

08/25/2014

Three simple plastic foil-envelope balloons carrying Amateur Radio payloads and launched from the UK by Leo Bodnar, M0XER, remain aloft and continue to circle the Earth. The oldest, identified as B63, was released on July 8 and became the second of Bodnar's balloons to circumnavigate the globe. The first to do so, B64, went up on July 12 and had completed one lap around the Northern Hemisphere by July 31. Air currents have carried the balloon within 9 km of the North Pole and within 10 km of its launch site. The last balloon to make it around the Earth was B66, which Bodnar released on July 15.

Each balloon carries a tiny 10 mW solar-powered transmitter that can alternate between **APRS** and Contestia 64/1000 digital mode on 434.500 MHz (USB). The Amateur Radio payload weighs just 11 grams.

As of August 25 at 15:30: The B64 balloon (M0XER-4 on APRS) was north of Moscow, Russia, at an elevation of more than 40,200 feet; the B63 balloon (M0XER-3 on APRS) was located nearly 42,000 feet above South Korea, and the B66 balloon (M0XER-6 on APRS) appeared to be over the Celtic Sea and approaching the tip of southern England.

The numeral following the "B" denotes the number of similar balloons Bodnar has launched (B-65 failed to deploy). The transmitter stores positions during its flight and transmits a log file that can recall 5 days of previous locations in the comments field of its APRS transmissions. If it has been out of radio contact, however, a straight line will appear on the APRS map.

# Pirate Radio Ship Redux: Radio Caroline Returns, Radio Veronica, North Sea Special Event Set

-- Thanks to Southgate Amateur Radio News

The renegade Radio Caroline, which entertained rock 'n' roll fans in the UK and Europe from the 1960s until the 1990s from offshore shipboard transmitters and studios, is back on the airwaves from the River Blackwater off England's Essex Coast using a temporary, low-power license. It has plans to obtain a permanent AM broadcasting authorization. Radio Caroline was among the first, and most famous, pirate radio ships of the era.

In a related vein, Arie Rietveld, PD0ARI, of Giessenburg, The Netherlands, has announced plans to operate special event station PD538RNI to commemorate two other pirate radio ship broadcasters from rock's early days — Radio Veronica, which last broadcast on 538 meters (557 kHz), and Radio Northsea International (RNI). PD538RNI will operate on phone from August 28 until September 19 on 10, 20, and 40 meters. Rietveld said his love of radio stemmed from listening to Radio Veronica and RNI in the early 1970s.

"Both stations transmitted from radio ships on the North Sea and had millions of listeners," Rietveld recounted in an **article** on Southgate Amateur Radio News. "Every day, good programs, fantastic DJs, nice jingles and radio tunes! The DJs became sort of family — a part of your life!" Rietveld said Radio Veronica transmitted on medium wave, while Radio Northsea International transmitted on medium wave, shortwave, and FM.

"Radio Northsea International on shortwave triggered me to listen to [shortwave] radio stations, and a new hobby was born," he said. RNI and Radio Veronica shut down on August 31, 1974, after the Dutch government made changes in the radio regulations. Radio Veronica subsequently went legit and continues to operate. After the pirate stations went dark, Rietveld got his ham radio license. "My love for radio started by listening to Radio Veronica and Radio Northsea International!" he said.

Rietveld, who enjoys operating from various locations, also occasionally operates marine/maritime mobile, and said he is on the air from PD0ARI every day.

According to Chris Arundel, G4KDX, another special event station, PA40VRON, will be on the air in late August to mark the Radio Veronica shutdown 40 years ago.

Radio Caroline, which was motivated by similar pirate radio operations on the high seas by Scandinavian and Dutch broadcasters, began operation in 1964. Named either after Caroline Kennedy or after a girlfriend of its founder, Ronan O'Rahilly, Radio Caroline transmitted on various medium-wave frequencies over the years, starting out on 1520 kHz — announced as "199 meters, since that rhymed with "Caroline." The station ran nearly 20 kW, using linked Continental Electronics transmitters

The earlier Radio Caroline inspired a number of competing offshore pirate radio stations, and these operations eventually compelled the staid BBC to start airing more popular musical fare. Radio Caroline finally departed the airwaves as a pirate broadcaster in 1991, after losing its anchor and running aground. The story of the shipboard station was fictionalized in the movie "The Boat That Rocked," which starred the late Phillip Seymour Hoffman. The latter-day incarnation of Radio Caroline has been a satellite and Internet broadcaster.

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# Tuskegee Airman / Congressional Gold Medal Recipient George Mitchell K6ZE SK

09/05/2014 John Bigley, N7UR/ [Nevada Amateur Radio Newswire](#)

ARRL Life Member, long-time Amateur Radio operator and Tuskegee Airman George T. Mitchell, K6ZE, of San Diego, California, died September 4. He was 94. During World War II Mitchell taught Morse code to the pioneering black aviators known as the [Tuskegee Airmen](#).

In 2007, Mitchell was among the group of Tuskegee Airmen veterans to belatedly receive the Congressional Gold Medal, the United States' highest civilian award, for his wartime service. African-American servicemen had been barred from training as military pilots until the Roosevelt Administration, faced with a federal lawsuit and mounting protests, opened an aviation school at Tuskegee Institute, a traditionally black college in Alabama.

"The world looked at us as second-class citizens," Mitchell said in a [San Diego Union-Times](#) 2003 interview about his time with the Tuskegee Airmen. "We knew we were in a fishbowl. We knew we couldn't fail." Some 450 Tuskegee fighter pilots flew more than 15,000 sorties over North Africa and Europe during the war. The story of the Tuskegee Airmen was the subject of a [1995 film](#).

A Philadelphia native, Mitchell, who got into ham radio at the age of 12, belonged to several Amateur Radio organizations, including the [OMIK](#) Amateur Radio Association, the Air Force Flyers Club, the Old Old Timers Club, and the Quarter Century Wireless Association ([QCWA](#)), from which he received a 75-year certificate in 2012.

Following the war, Mitchell went to work as a civilian engineer for the US Navy. He retired to San Diego, but subsequently returned to work on the sea, this time for the [Scripps Institute of Oceanography](#). He frequently spoke to school and civic groups about the role the Tuskegee Airmen played in the nation's history.

## SOLAR UPDATE

From Tad Cook, K7RA

Sunspot activity continued to weaken over the past seven days (August 28 through September 3). Average daily sunspot numbers declined from 113.4 to 85.1, and average daily solar flux went from 130.5 to 126.7. Geomagnetic activity was up recently, with average planetary A index increasing from 7.4 to 14.7, nearly double the values from the August 21-27 period week earlier.

The latest predicted solar flux values are 150 on September 5, 155 on September 6-7, 150 on September 8, 145 on September 9-11, 130 on September 12, 115 on September 13, 110 on September 14-15, 120 on September 16, 130 on September 17-19, 135 on September 20-21, then 130, 125 and 120 on September 22-24, and 115 on September 25-26.

Predicted planetary A index is 8, 10, 20, and 15 on September 4-7, 8 on September 8-9, 5 on September 10-12, 8 on September 13, and 5 on September 14-24.

One encouraging sign is the GOES-15 X-Ray Background flux has risen over the past few days. It was C1.2 on September 2 and C1.0 on September 3-4, and it hasn't had a C reading in quite some time. This is actually more significant than solar flux regarding effect on the ionosphere. You can see the background flux daily at <http://www.swpc.noaa.gov/ftpd/ir/latest/DSD.txt>. Checking the quarterly record, you can see that X-Ray background flux has not been this high since early July:

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

# ARES/RACES Mobilize in Wake of Nevada Flash Flooding

Thanks to ARRL Nevada PIC John Bigley, N7UR

9/10/2014

ARES/RACES members in Clark County, Nevada, activated Monday, September 8, after heavy rains sparked flash flooding. The Amateur Radio volunteers deployed after being called up by local emergency managers to support communication during recovery efforts in the Moapa Valley northeast of Las Vegas. At least two people died as a result of the flooding.

A slow-moving storm that spun off from Hurricane Norbert dumped nearly 4 inches of rain within the space of 90 minutes onto the town of Moapa. Heavy flooding and mud closed nearly 50 miles of Interstate 15, stranding motorists and truckers, buckling or washing away pavement in many areas. Nevada Department of Transportation officials said they expected that it would take several days before the highway would be reopened. Some alternate routes also were impassible. The flooding has been called the worst in more than 30 years.

Emergency sheltering was needed for nearly 200 tribal members of the Moapa River Reservation, as well as nearly 90 elementary and high school students. Stranded motorists were being cared for at a middle school in Mesquite, on the Arizona border.

ARES personnel staffed the Emergency Operations Center in Las Vegas, and the Clark County Mobile Communications Vehicle was on the scene. —

## FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate, KK4INZ, ARRL Keynote Convention Speech of Available on YouTube

09/09/2014

The July 18 keynote speech of [FEMA](#) Administrator Craig Fugate, KK4INZ, at the ARRL National Centennial Convention in Hartford, Connecticut, has been [posted](#) on YouTube. Fugate spoke before some 800 guests at the Friday evening convention banquet. Earlier that day, he and ARRL President Kay Craigie, N3KN, signed a *Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)* aimed at enhancing cooperation between the League and FEMA in the area of disaster communication. In his remarks at the banquet, Fugate said that before he even became FEMA administrator, it became clear to him that Amateur Radio could support ad hoc and innovative communication without relying on conventional telecommunication systems.

“The more sophisticated our systems become, the more fragile they become,” he told the gathering. He emphasized the need for resiliency in communication systems. “The relevancy of ham radio only grows,” asserted Fugate, who just upgraded to General class. “Amateur Radio is taking that hobby and turning it into saving lives.”

After Fugate’s talk, President Craigie presented him with the ARRL Medal of Honor.

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# W1AW/8 to Take the Snowball's Chance in "Hell" This Fall

It will be hell for W1AW/8 in Hell, Michigan, on October 18 — the Saturday of Michigan's second week in the **ARRL Centennial QSO Party** spotlight. Hank Greeb, N8XX, is organizing a team of operators and intends to put W1AW/8 in Feld Hell mode on 80 through 10 meters from Hell. He has recruited a couple of volunteers so far but could use more, he said this week.

"The plan is to have each band covered for at least one hour," said Greeb, who operates QRP most of the time. "We'd like to have at least three stations active, to cover three bands at once, hugging the maximum usable frequency (MUF) at first, and then moving to lower frequency bands as the MUF drops." Greeb said a website will announce the operating schedule, once plans have solidified. Watch for W1AW/8 to be spotted on Fell Hell mode.

Also known as Hiland Lake, Hell, Michigan, is an unincorporated community a few miles northwest of Ann Arbor. How Hell got its name is the subject of unconfirmed historical accounts and even some wild speculation. According to one version, after Michigan became a state, George Reeves, who built the community's first sawmill and operated its first tavern, was asked what to call the town. He is rumored to have replied, "You can name it hell, for all I care." The moniker became official in 1841. Other "Hells" exist in California, Norway, and the Grand Caymans. Michigan also has a town named Paradise.

Feld Hell — or Hellschreiber — is a facsimile mode invented by Rudolf Hell in the 1920s that used synchronous motors to transcribe letters onto a moving tape. Feld Hell has since morphed into a computer-generated mode, typically using AFSK into a SSB transceiver and decoding software that essentially "paints" the characters on the screen. Popular software includes *DM780* (part of the *Ham Radio Deluxe* suite), *Fldigi*, *MixW*, *MultiPSK*, and *IZ8BLY*. **Additional information** on this mode is available on the Feld Hell Club website.

And, just in case you were wondering, Hell, Michigan, has indeed frozen over a time or two. Contact **Hank Greeb**, N8XX, if you're interested in taking part in the W1AW/8 Feld Hell operation.

## Recommended Feld Hell Frequencies

160 meters: 1.840 MHz

80 meters: 3.574-3.584 MHz

40 meters: 7.077-7.084 MHz

30 meters: 10.137-10.144 MHz

20 meters: 14.063 MHz

17 meters: 18.104 MHz

15 meters: 21.074 MHz

12 meters: 24.924 MHz

10 meters: 28.074 MHz

6 meters: 50.286 MHz



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

September 2014



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: \_\_\_\_\_

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Regular Membership                      \$ 25.00

SWL Membership                              \$ 25.00

Extra Family Membership                  \$ 6.00

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total Paid by Club Member

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