

## Hamfest Calendar

Apr 12 TCARC Auction  
 19 Stoughton, WI  
 26 Godfrey, IL  
 27 Arthur, IL  
 May 4 Sandwich, IL  
 16-18 Dayton, OH



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## VE Exams

05-Apr-2008 Sangamon Valley Radio Club  
 9:00 Am (Walk-Ins Allowed) ARRL/VEC  
 James Steve Upchurch (217)529-3218  
 American Red Cross-II Capital Area Chapter  
 1045 Outer Park Dr Springfield, IL

06-Apr-2008 Wabash Valley ARA  
 1:00 PM (Walk-Ins Allowed) ARRL/VEC  
 Raymond N Andrews (812)535-3222  
 Glas-Col Annex Ne Corner Of 7th & Idaho St.  
 1730 S 7th St (Rear Of Bldg) Terre Haute, IN

**20-Apr-2008 Twin City Amateur Radio Club**  
 1:00 PM (Walk-Ins Allowed) ARRL/VEC  
 Debra J Fligor (217)244-4446  
 Univ Of IL Fire Service Inst  
 11 Gerty Dr Champaign, IL 61820

# Twin City Amateur Radio Club

Champaign-Urbana, Illinois

**April 2008**

Milt Forsberg K9QZI Editor



## Meeting April 8

Our next meeting of the Twin City Amateur Radio Club is Tuesday, April 8 at 7:00 p.m. at the UI Fire Institute.

To get to the Fire Institute, go south on First Street from the Assembly Hall to the UI Credit Union - that is Gerty. Go West on Gerty to the end of the street. You will be in the Fire Institute parking lot. We are in one of the classrooms inside.

## The Auction is Just a Week Away

Do you have all of your items ready to go to sell at the auction? We are still looking for items donated to the club to help our treasury. It only costs you 10% if you want to sell your equipment. Bidder numbers are still \$2, available at the door. Food will be available at the church, so if you spend the day at the auction, you can eat well. The food lineup by Donna Curtin and Lynda Wolfe consists of Sloppy Joes, Italian Beef, Potato Salad, Baked Beans, Cole Slaw, Apple Pie, Brownies, Soft Drinks and Coffee. We need help from everyone starting at 9:00 a.m. to set up as well as after the auction to tear down and return the church to the original setting. The location is the Windsor Road Christian Church, 2501 W Windsor Road in Champaign. That's between Mattis and Duncan on Windsor. Invite everyone you talk with in the next few days. There will be a talk-in station on the repeaters on auction day.

## Field Day

We are continuing plans for a fun weekend on June 28-29. We will operate at the Ford-Harris Park in Somer Township again this year. That's on Ford-Harris Road just west of US 45, North of Urbana. More details will follow as we near the date. Ralph, W9PGE, is coordinating our efforts this year. Please contact him if you wish to participate.

## Postage Stamp on the March Newsletter

Our March newsletter was a very special mailing. A stamp was issued March 7, commemorating Dr. John Bardeen, a Nobel Prize winning physicist who was at the University of Illinois for many years. We managed to obtain the stamps for our newsletter and had them postmarked with the special first day of issue cancellation. You may have wondered about the plastic bag around the newsletter. That was necessary to prevent further cancellation by automated equipment at the Post Office. You now have a collector's item since these were only mailed to our newsletter mailing list. It may increase in value in the future due to the limited supply. If you don't want it, maybe you can find a stamp collector who does.

## Next VE Exam April 20

Our next VE Exam session is Sunday, April 20, at 1:00 p.m. Please contact N9DN for information.

## TCARC Officers and Board Members

<b>President</b>	Ralph Cox W9PGE	396-5111
<b>Vice President</b>	Dr Mike Trautman K9MLT	356-4302
<b>Secretary</b>	Chris Anderson W9CMA	403-1599
<b>Treasurer</b>	Milt Forsberg K9QZI	352-5075

## Board Members

Al Wolfe K9SI	688-2790
Wayne Hamilton AB9FJ	384-4310
Jeremy Lamb KC9KGJ	621-8036

## VE Coordinator

Debbie Fligor N9DN	244-4446
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Website [www.w9seh.org](http://www.w9seh.org)

## Last Month's TCARC Meeting

We were treated to an outstanding presentation on D-Star, the new digital voice Amateur Radio System. Kermit Carlson, W9XA, from Batavia, Illinois, shared his expertise on the subject. Kermit arrived early, taking time to visit the UI Campus where he was a student in 1973. About 20 of us joined him for an early dinner at the Atlanta Bread Co. At the meeting, we counted a total of 34 attending. His presentation was filled with Power Point slides, equipment demonstrations, and lots of answers for our questions. There is a DVD available if you missed it and would like to see the presentation. It runs about 2 hours. We greatly appreciate Kermit joining us for the evening.

## 2 Meter FM Challenge

The 2 Meter FM Challenge is now history. It was held Sunday, March 30. Around 20 Amateurs participated, exchanging names and locations. Two operated as rovers, going from town to town, making contacts and providing more points for everyone. A point was earned for each different station contacted and/or location. Rovers counted as a different location for each town of operation. Each town contacted created a multiplier of the total points. If you participated in the contest, be sure to submit your logs to W9SZ no later than 11:59 p.m. April 14, 2008. The results will be announced after scoring is complete.

## AES Superfest

The Amateur Electronics Superfest was Friday and Saturday, March 28-29 at the Milwaukee store. The weather was good for travel both days. It was a little chilly for the fox hunt, but it ran anyway. The crowd was about the same as in the past and it appeared there were more manufacturers represented this year. The seminars were excellent, as always, with topics such as digital Amateur Radio, D-Star, modulation, legal aspects of our hobby, astronomy, and Gordon West. Many prizes were drawn throughout the weekend, but none went to the Champaign-Urbana area. As in past years, it was worth the trip to Milwaukee.

## Courtesy Tone Returning

Our 146.760 W9SEH repeater will see a courtesy tone again soon. We have been without it for several months and the lack of it helped create confusion in that there is no space for someone to enter a conversation if those talking are quick on the microphone button. Some of our operators have become very quick. At times, individuals have tried for several minutes to enter a conversation. The time-out timer resets when the carrier drops. The carrier drop will be extended to just after the courtesy tone. If someone wishes to enter a conversation, they can just give their callsign during the period just prior to the courtesy tone. Then, when acknowledged by those talking, the new station can enter the conversation. This change should benefit us by allowing break-in and will aid in avoiding double transmissions by 2 stations. The timer will signal when the repeater times out, also. At present, this feature has also been absent.

## D-Star is Coming to CU

Our new D-Star system is ordered. We expect it by mid-April and we will install it after that. The Synton Amateur Radio Club agreed to let us temporarily use the W9YH repeater site, with an antenna on the Electrical Engineering Building. It will be in experimental mode for a while as we learn how to operate the system. We will have an Internet connection to use, so we should be able to connect to the gateway and the other D-Star systems worldwide. Funding for the system is provided by a very few individuals. We request contributions be made to help support this new venture. Please contact K9QZI or AB9FJ to contribute.

## Visit the TCARC Web frequently

We have updated a few items on our website and will continue to do so as interesting information appears. We update the links frequently and news as necessary. Go to [www.w9seh.org](http://www.w9seh.org).

Remember the TCARC Thursday net at 9:00 p.m. on our 146.760 repeater.

## Check your QST Magazine

The April issue of QST has several interesting items. WB9HFK participated along with 237 amateurs in the Straight Key Night on December 31, 2007. Sean Kutzko, KX9X, appears on page 118, sporting the new Field Day T-shirt. He also has greatly improved the contest listing in the magazine. Now we can look up the contests to get all the details including the exchange necessary for contacts. Sean is doing a great job as Contest Manager for the ARRL. If you are interested in ships, the Titanic Museum in Branson, MO will operate W0S on April 12-14. Frequencies are 14.250 and 7250. Information is on the website [www.w0s.org](http://www.w0s.org). Should you run out of exciting things to read, look at the article on microphones on page 57. If you ignore the month of the magazine, you might even want to experiment with microphones.

## Hamfests

The hamfest season is firing up in earnest. March found a few such as Terre Haute and Sterling. Both were similar to past years, with a few less attending. The AES Superfest wrapped up the month. Coming in April is, of course, our auction, along with the Arthur hamfest on Sunday, April 27. The following weekend is a hamfest at Sandwich, IL and of course, the big one in Dayton on May 16-18. If you are planning to attend Dayton, there are still hotel rooms available in the area.

This year, there is some road construction that will affect some of the Dayton attendees. Needmore Road will be one lane both on the east of I75 from Wagoner-Ford to Webster. Also, Needmore just west of I75 to Northcut Place will be one lane. I75 will be under construction from N Main St exit to just north of the Stanley Ave exit. That's the area where I75 and Route 4 intersect.

## Urbana Cell Phone Ban

Urbana is considering a ban on cell phones while driving. Several of our members contacted the City Council. Here is the answer we received:  
*Thank you for contacting me about this important issue. After reviewing the research, it is clear to me*

*that driving while talking on a cell phone is not a safe behavior. For the safety of everyone on our roadways, I believe the City of Urbana should take action to reduce distracted driving.*

*But you are correct -- we do not intend to ban ham radio, CB, storm spotting, emergency response, or many other kinds of Push-To-Talk or half-duplex communication. At our meeting last week we discussed lots of exceptions that need to be listed in the ordinance to make it clear that ham radio and all these other activities are not impacted.*

*There is still work to be done to determine exactly what legislation the City of Urbana should enact and how we will educate the public and effectively enforce any new laws. Research done in other cities shows that a simple ban does not lower the rates of cell phone driving long-term unless a strong educational campaign and "vigorous enforcement" accompany it, according to NHTSA. I don't think the solution is as simple as banning something -- and I agree with you that Jennifer Stark's situation is very different and this ban would not stop people like her from dangerous behavior (since she was a repeat offender whose license was supposed to be suspended but I understand that there was a clerical error that delayed her suspension).*

*In any case, I appreciate hearing from you and the ham radio community as we work to determine what the City of Urbana will do to effectively improve our roadway safety and reduce the dangerous behavior of cell phone driving.*

*If you would like to learn more about this issue, I encourage you to review the research listed on my colleague Charlie Smyth's website:  
[www.charliesmyth.org/docs/bikeandcellsites.html](http://www.charliesmyth.org/docs/bikeandcellsites.html)*

*Thank you again for your input. Stay Tuned for more details of the exact wording and exceptions in the coming months. Feel free to contact me any time. Regards,  
Brandon Bowersox  
Democrat, Urbana City Council  
<http://ward4.org/>, [bowersox@prairienet.org](mailto:bowersox@prairienet.org)*