

Hamfest Calendar

Apr 10 AES Superfest Milwaukee, WI
 Apr 17 TCARC Auction Champaign, IL
 Apr 17 Stoughton, WI
 Apr 24 Godfrey, IL
 Apr 25 Arthur, IL
 May 2 Sandwich, IL
 May14-16 Dayton, OH



VE Exams

10-Apr-2010 Piatt County ARC ARRL/VEC
 1:00PM (Walk-ins allowed)
 Gregory Crawford (217)369-2182
 County Emergency Opps Center
 302 S Charter St Monticello, IL

18-Apr-2010 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

08-May-2010 W5YI W5YI VEC
 1:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed)
 Keith R Hanson (309)378-4416
 American Red Cross-Conf. Rm
 1 Westport Ct-Rt. 9E Bloomington, IL

Twin City Amateur Radio Club

Champaign-Urbana, Illinois

April 2010

Milt Forsberg K9QZI Editor



Next Meeting is April 13

The next TCARC meeting is Tuesday, April 13, at the UI Fire Institute, starting at 7:00 p.m. Our program this month by Mike Haydon, AC2Q, is a short presentation regarding his ongoing project, a 600 Watt Solid State HF Amplifier, using the Motorola Notes EB104 kit from Communications Concepts. The presentation includes general operational theory, design of protective and interface circuitry, and lessons learned.

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.

Resident Curmudgeon

Our Resident Curmudgeon is with us, writing a few articles for the newsletter. The second article in his series this month is "Some Net Procedure Notes"

Auction April 17

Our auction is only a week away. Most details are arranged, but we can use more help the day of the auction. One change this year is that Neil, K9PIX, will provide the food service with his new "Veggie Wagon" with all sorts of veggie foods. He is opening a business May 1 and wishes to test the waters at the auction. He is experienced in this service and is fully licensed by the health authorities. The XYLs providing food in the past are taking a year off and want time to consider some health board requirements for the future.

Local Nets

D-Rats Net on W9YR	Tuesday 8 p.m.
ARES 444.100	Tuesday 9 p.m.
TCARC D-Star 443.48125	Wednesday 9 p.m.
Champaign Co 146.760	Thursday 9 p.m.
Illini Net 14.320	11:30 a.m. Daily Except Thursday

TCARC Officers and Board Members

President	Larry Mohr K9LMM	356-3794
Vice President	Jeremy Lamb KC9KGJ	621-8036
Secretary	Chris Anderson W9CMA	403-1599
Treasurer	Milt Forsberg K9QZI	352-5075

Board Members

Al Wolfe K9SI	688-2790
Wayne Hamilton AB9FJ	384-4310
Dr Mike Trautman K9MLT	356-4302

VE Coordinator

Debbie Fligor N9DN	244-4446
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Website	www.w9seh.org
Analog Repeater W9SEH	146.760
D-Star Repeater W9YR	443.48125

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TCARC
 PO Box 2061
 Champaign, IL 61825-2061

TCARC Auction

April 17, 2010

Windsor Road Christian Church

Doors open at 11 for the public

Auction starts at 1

Equipment donations are welcome

D-Star Net

As most of our D-Star users know, we created a D-Star net on Wednesday evenings at 9 p.m. When the W9BIL repeater came on line in Moultrie County, we linked the repeaters for the net. Recently, some of the Amateurs in the Northern part of Illinois wanted to form an Illinois net. They picked Wednesdays at 8 p.m.... Participation was very light. We discussed combining efforts and all agreed to merge our "Central Illinois D-Star Net" with the "Illinois D-Star Net" and link by using Reflector 001B. In fact, Reflector 1B has been designated as the Illinois Reflector and all D-Star repeater operators are encouraged to link to that reflector from time to time to visit around the state. While we don't want to link continuously, users may link for a time when they are listening and /or wish to talk. Please unlink when you finish.

Our first combined net was a week ago, with limited participation. However, this week 5 repeaters linked, along with a few DV Dongle users, and one Hot Spot. 15 stations checked into the net, including one from Tokyo, Japan. We are pleased to see the quick increase. The repeaters connected were W9YR, W9BIL, W9PIA, W9CEQ, and NS9RC. W9BIL is the Moultrie Klub, W9PIA is Peoria, and the other 2 are in the Chicago area.

The net is informal, providing a way to visit with others around the state. We encourage exchange of information, announcements, items for sale or wanted, questions and/or answers. Those wishing to check in just to say hello are most welcome.

A DV Dongle may be used with a computer instead of a radio, and there is the DVAP, which is a Dongle with RF so you can talk using your HT into your computer and on out to the Internet. The Hot Spot is another option, using a standard FM radio and a computer. You can transmit into the Hot Spot with your D-Star radio and on out to the Internet.

Hamfests

Last month, the hamfest at Terre Haute was held in the National Guard Armory. It was moved there last year, and this location is a big improvement over the fairgrounds. All vendors were inside, with plenty of room and comfortable surroundings. Attendance was small as was the vendor participation. Amateur Accessories was the anchor vendor at the hamfest. It was a nice day to make a drive to Terre Haute and visit the hamfest.

Upcoming is the Amateur Electronics Supply Superfest on Friday and Saturday, April 9-10. As always, this will be an enjoyable and informative 2 days in Milwaukee. It is free, as is parking. Many manufacturers will display their products and several seminars are scheduled, providing a variety of topics from sunspots to weather to the Gordon West show. Saturday morning includes a hidden transmitter hunt.

Just another reminder, the next weekend is our auction on April 17. Details are elsewhere in this newsletter.

April 25 is the date for the MARK (Moultrie Amateur Radio Klub) hamfest in Arthur, Illinois. As always, this is a most enjoyable event, with many local Amateurs attending. It is a chance to visit with friends from around the area as well as to pick up more goodies! There will be a seminar on D-Star during the morning. Food service is available at the hamfest. The location is the Arthur Fire Station, a very new building with lots of room inside. The fire trucks are moved out for the day and everyone can fit in the garage area. Anyone wishing to set up sales outside may do so. The Fire Station is on Route 16 in Arthur, and is easy to spot.

Don't forget Dayton! It is coming up fast and furious on May 14-16. Flea Market spaces are still available online. Hotel space is also available at a few locations. Don't miss it!

Some Net Procedure notes:

By Al Wolfe K9SI

Nets are useful events that allow us to gather on the air and exchange information in a concise efficient manner. We all have busy schedules and time is often our most valuable personal asset so it behooves us to do nets well. Let's don't waste everyone's time during a net.

On many of the nets we hear several over-used 'filler' words and phrases that are used from habit, maybe to give us time to think, or to make what we are saying sound official. Probably the best and most egregious example I can think of is the over-use of the word 'net'. If one is participating in a net then why in the world is it necessary to say 'for the net' or 'back to net' or 'on the net'? If I say "no traffic for the net" then it implies that maybe I do have some traffic for someone, just not for this net. If I say 'back to net' it implies that somehow we have left the net but are now getting back to it. Probably 'back to net' really means 'back to net control', but it still is useless filler as turning things back to net control is implied by there being a net in the first place. If I say 'Good evening to everyone on the net' it leaves out non-participating listeners. A simple "Good evening" suffices and is less than half as long. When asked, say, by an ARES net control to check in, a proper response would be, for example: "Tom, near Bondville, no traffic, KB9XYZ". That takes about four seconds max but the essential information is passed and legal requirements are met. You can keep it brief.

Get in, get out, and get out of the way. Save your wind-bag talents for 75 meters.

The ol' curmudgeon, Al, K9SI

ARRL Membership Renewal

Please remember to renew your ARRL membership through TCARC as we receive a commission. New member applications are most welcome. Send the form along with a check payable to TCARC to our PO Box.

New Controller for 146.76

The Board agreed to purchase a new controller for our 146.76 repeater. The controller does just as it sounds, controls the repeater. We do have one in operation, but the functions are limited. At present, we can turn the repeater on and off, and we have a method of running Newsline without timing out the timer, but the quality is not as we would like to have.

The new controller has many user features. This means that all repeater users can control certain functions by use of their microphone keypad. The features are limited only by our imagination. We can add announcements like time and weather, run announcements if appropriate, as well as control operator functions limited to only control operators. The Newsline service will sound much better as well. The controller has Internet capabilities which we may set up so some functions are available over the Internet.

The controller is manufactured by Pacific Research and is their model RI-300. Ben, K9BF, is testing it and will soon install it in the repeater. Look for it within the next week or two. There are more options we can install, should we wish to add more features. He has experience with this controller as he recently installed one in one of the Decatur repeaters. This model is in use in many repeater systems around the country. It should add a lot of fun as well as more control to our repeater. Once it is installed, we will provide instructions for users to operate it. For those who just wish to talk on the repeater, nothing will change. The extra features are optional should not affect the use of the repeater.

Echolink appears to be operation well on the repeater, and will continue with the new controller. There should be no change to Echolink with the installation of the new controller.

Remember to check into the Champaign County 2 Meter Net each Thursday at 9:00 p.m. All Amateur Radio Operators are welcome.