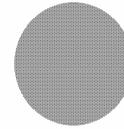


Twin City Amateur Radio Club

Champaign-Urbana, Illinois

December 2007

Milt Forsberg K9QZI, Editor



Hamfest Calendar

Dec 8 Carthage IL
Jan 5 Waukesha WI
26 Collinsville IL
27 St Charles IL
Feb 1-2 Jackson MS
8-10 Orlando FL

VE Exams

12-Jan-2008 K9DUR ARRL/VEC
8:30 AM (Walk-ins allowed)
TERRY L HACKETT (217)465-4884
BURKYBILE LAW OFFICE
15175 US HIGHWAY 150 PARIS, IL

January 27, 2008 Tentative Date
TCARC Exam Session ARRL/VEC
UI Fire Institute
Champaign IL
1:00 PM
Contact Debbie Fligor N9DN

03-Feb-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 47802

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Meeting December 11

Our next meeting of the Twin City Amateur Radio Club is Tuesday, December 11 at 7:00 p.m. at WLRW Radio, 2603 W Bradley Ave in Champaign. This is about half way between Mattis and Duncan on the south side of Bradley. Please park in the rear lot. We will tour the WLRW transmitter site, hosted by Al Wolfe, K9SI. He will explain the lightning protection in place for the installation. We will also have the opportunity to see the TCARC 146.76 repeater and the K9SI 444.100 repeater. Both are located at the WLRW site.

Please Send Your Dues Check Now

Our new year begins January 1. We need your support in the payment of your dues. The amount remains at \$20 per year, or, to add any members of your immediate family, the total is only \$21. One newsletter is sent to each family, but all Amateurs in your family are considered TCARC members. Please check the address label on this newsletter for the expiration date of your dues. If it is 12/07 or earlier, please pay the 2008 dues. If you are an ARRL member, "ARRL" should appear on your label. If it does not, please note this with your dues payment. Checks should be payable to Twin City Amateur Radio Club, or TCARC, and mailed to the return address on this newsletter. We can collect dues payments at the December meeting. Checks are preferred as they are easier to track in case of any posting errors.

November TCARC Program

Bob Smith, NH7WN, presented the program on his Amateur Radio satellite activities in Hawaii. Bob is relatively new to Amateur Radio, but he demonstrated that a strong interest and lots of experimenting can produce excellent results. It was fascinating to hear that often only he and one other amateur in Hawaii were the only ones on some of the busiest satellites as they pass over the islands. The footprint doesn't include the mainland US most of the time when it is over the islands. Mark, KC9DUU, made a video of the presentation and he has a DVD available if you missed the meeting and you would like to see the presentation.

TCARC Officers and Board Members

President Ralph Cox W9PGE	396-5111
Vice President Dr Mike Trautman	356-4302
Secretary Chris Anderson	403-1599
Treasurer 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

Season's Greetings To All

K9KNW Gets First VUCC/R Certificate

From Newline

The first 2 meter VUCC Reverse Award has been issued to Joe Goggin, K9KNW. This award is given by the Central States VHF Society and requires the operator to provide proof of confirmed contacts made while the station was operated from within the confines of 100 different grid squares. In other words, VUCC in reverse.

The VUCC Reverse award is not mode specific but, in this case, the 100 grids from which K9KNW operated were all meteor scatter QSO's. Also, all were completed using FSK441. That's, one of the modes included in the WSJT ham radio digital software suite developed by Joe Taylor, K1JT. (VHF Reflector)

Editor's Note:

Joe, K9KNW, is from Champaign-Urbana, and now lives in Naples, Florida. He owned the Motorola Radio Service locally and was a TCARC member. He was a big supporter of our local repeaters, providing equipment and manpower to keep them on the air in the 1970s and 1980s. He has pursued Moonbounce and more recently, is pursuing meteor scatter communications. The VUCC award is the VHF/UHF Century Club Award, which is issued for making a specific number of contacts in different grid squares. The VUCC/R award is the reverse, for making a number of contacts from different grid squares. Information on the awards is available on the ARRL website.

Life memberships

Three new Life Memberships were approved by a vote of the TCARC members at the November meeting. Mark Garrett, KA9SZX, Al Wolfe, K9SI, and Milt Forsberg, K9QZI were honored with the Life Membership status. The board recommends the award and the membership votes on it, usually at the meeting following the board meeting. Congratulations to all.

Hamfests

With the cooler weather, hamfests are slowing in our area. The ATV Banquet in Litchfield is not a hamfest, but a fun gathering of Amateurs from around the area. It was November 11. A few of our members attended and enjoyed the meal and program. Many door prizes were provided.

On the following weekend, November 17-18, the Fort Wayne radio club held the annual Fort Wayne Hamfest. It was run in the usual excellent manner. Attendance seemed to be down a little, but not a huge drop from last year. Until this year, there were 2 large rooms in the coliseum used for the event, but this year, only the larger room was occupied. This is an indication of fewer vendors. The single room was almost filled, and most vendors were happy with sales. The weather cooperated very well this year, with mild temperatures and dry roads.

The Saturday after Thanksgiving was the Evansville hamfest. It was about the same as last year, with a nice crowd and all tables sold out. Buying was a little slower than in the past, but many went home with their bargains. TCARC was well represented by vendors and attendees. Once again, the weather cooperated.

Coming up this weekend, **Saturday December 8, is the Big Bend Amateur Radio Club Hamfest** in Carthage, Illinois. Carthage is on the west side of Illinois, about 30 miles beyond Macomb. Mark Garrett, KA9SZX, lives in Macomb and welcomes TCARC members to visit him before and/or after the hamfest. This hamfest is a smaller, indoor event in it's fourth year.

There are a few outstanding hamfests scheduled for the winter months. Most are distant, but if you like to travel, they are well worth the trip. Starting 2008, Waukesha, Wisconsin is January 5. This is a fair size indoor hamfest. January 26 and 27 are the dates for Collinsville, Illinois and St Charles, Illinois. Both are good indoor hamfests. If you would like to head south to warmer climates in February, there are two good ones that direction. February 1-2 is Jackson, Mississippi.

The following weekend, February 8-10 is the big Orlando Hamcation. One of the few hamfests with increasing attendance, the Orlando Hamcation is a 3-day event with both inside and outside sales areas. It is an enjoyable event, and is well run. If you want to enjoy a warm weekend in February, plan now to attend the Orlando Hamcation.

D-Star Interest is Increasing

A few of our members have been fascinated by the new D-Star radio system. This is a VHF and/or UHF radio system utilizing digital audio communications. D-Star was developed in Japan and is an open-source program for use by Amateur Radio Operators. At present, Icom is the only manufacturer in the USA to adopt D-Star and produce radios for it. However, the other manufacturers could create similar equipment sometime in the future.

The use of D-Star is increasing every day throughout the world. The fascinating part is the backbone that has been created to permit users to talk to others anywhere there is a D-Star repeater, and with little difficulty. The backbone tracks users and repeaters, and can make connections automatically. The digital audio is more narrow band than analog, thus pushing the power of the transmitter over a smaller frequency range, which in turn, allows higher average power over the range. The result is a little further distance for communications. The system also permits text messages to be sent along with voice communications at the same time. Most of us are familiar with EchoLink and IRLP, but D-Star offers much easier connecting of repeaters and users. Radios can even be set to open the squelch only if a certain preprogrammed callsign is received. The system is similar to but not compatible with Motorola radios using APCO25 digital encoding. However, those radios require special programming software, available only to a few users, and many have no display, and cannot be programmed from the radio.

Special repeaters are needed to set up a D-Star system. Again, Icom is the only source for them. A few of our members are working on contributions toward the purchase of a repeater. The plan is to generate enough funds to purchase, and then donate the system to TCARC. This way, no one person will be responsible for the operation. So far, we have had some generous offers including \$100 and \$500 from 2 persons not even in our area and not connected with our club. They just want to encourage the use of D-Star. We hope to be able to purchase a repeater this winter. If you are willing to help financially, please contact K9QZI or AB9FJ.

The price of handheld D-Star radios dropped this fall. A new model will be released shortly, causing the current one to go on sale. There are only a few minor differences in the units, making the current model is a good buy at around \$370 to \$380. This is the ID-91AD. This radio operates both digital and analog modes.

We hope to devote one of our upcoming meeting programs to a D-Star presentation. There will be more information on this as we progress with the meeting plans.

VE Exams

Our next VE Exam is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, January 27, 2008 at the UI Fire Institute. Barring any conflicts, the exam will be on this date.

Chemistry Magic

From K9BF

The School of Chemical Sciences, Department of Chemistry, and American Chemical Society Student Affiliates are sponsoring a Holiday Magic Show on Friday, December 7 at 7:00pm and another on Saturday, December 8 at 2:00pm. Both shows will be held in G. L. Clark Hall (100 Noyes Lab), and are free and open to the public.