

## Hamfest Calendar

Jan 24 Collinsville IL  
 Jan 25 St Charles IL  
 Feb 13-15 Orlando FL  
 Feb 21 Fox Lake IL  
 Mar 8 Sterling IL  
 Mar 14 Terre Haute IN  
 May 15-17 Dayton OH



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## VE Exams

17-Jan-2009 W5YI W5YI/VEC  
 1:00 PM (Walk-Ins Allowed)  
 Keith R Hanson(309)378-4416  
 American Red Cross-Conf. Room  
 1 Westport Ct-Rt. 9E Bloomington IL

**25-Jan-2009 Twin City Amateur Radio Club**  
 1:00 PM (Walk-Ins Allowed) ARRL/VEC  
 Debra J Fligor (217)244-4446  
 Univ Of IL Fire Service Institute  
 11 Gerty Dr Champaign, IL

01-Feb-2009 Wabash Valley Ara  
 1:00PM (Walk-Ins Allowed) ARRL/VEC  
 Raymond N Andrews (812)535-3222  
 1715 South 8th St Terre Haute, IN

07-Feb-2009 Sangamon Valley Radio Club  
 9:00 AM (Walk-Ins Allowed) ARRL/VEC  
 James Steven Upchurch (217)529-3218  
 American Red Cross 1045 Outer Park Dr  
 Springfield, IL

14-Feb-2009 Piatt County Arc  
 1:00 PM (Walk-Ins Allowed) ARRL/VEC  
 Michael S Mullins (217)377-1523  
 Emergency Ops Center - Piatt County  
 301 S Charter St Monticello, IL

# Twin City Amateur Radio Club

Champaign-Urbana, Illinois

January 2009  
 Milt Forsberg K9QZI Editor



## Meeting January 13

Our next meeting of the Twin City Amateur Radio Club is Tuesday, January 13 at 7:00 p.m. at the UI Fire Institute. Our program is a video presentation on "Digital Voice for Amateur Radio", which covers D-Star and APCO25 modes. It is an informative video, produced for Amateurs and was purchased by Debbie, N9DN, at the recent digital conference in Chicago. There is a second part covering HF digital modes such as AOR, WINDRM, DRMDV, and others. This part will be presented at a future club meeting.

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.

## Auction April 11

We have the date of Saturday, April 11 locked in for our next auction. The location is the same as the past few years, the Windsor Road Christian Church, which is between Mattis and Duncan on the South side of Windsor. The time remains the same as in the past and food will be available. If you have any items you can donate to the club for the club to sell, we will greatly appreciate the gift. Much of our operating money comes from the sale of donated items at the auction. Our dues are only a small portion of our annual budget. Please talk up the auction as much as possible to others who are not club members. There will be more details on the auction soon. This is the Saturday between Good Friday and Easter. This date was chosen as there are no hamfests competing and the church was available for our use.

## Dues Are Now Due

Thanks to everyone who paid 2009 dues. We had a good response before the end of 2008. Please check your address label to verify that your dues have been recorded. If "12/09" appears at the top, you are paid for this year. If the year is "08" or lower, then you have not paid this year's dues. If you find an error, please contact Milt, K9QZI, to have the error corrected. If you are not up to date, please send your check to the return address on this newsletter.

## Newsletter by Email

If you want to receive this newsletter by email, please send a note to newsletter@w9seh.org so we may add your email address to the list. Several have indicated that they wish to receive the electronic newsletter. We are working on a way to indicate your dues status with the email. At present, if you have any questions about your dues, please contact Milt.

## TCARC Officers and Board Members

<b>President</b>	Dr Mike Trautman K9MLT	356-4302
<b>Vice President</b>	Larry Mohr K9LMM	356-3794
<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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<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.w9seh.org">www.w9seh.org</a>
<b>Analog Repeater W9SEH</b>	146.760
<b>D-Star Repeater W9YR</b>	443.48125

## VE Exams

Our next VE Exam Session is Sunday, January 25, at 1:00 p.m. at the UI Fire Institute. All exam elements are available for testing. The exam fee is now \$15.00 for the session. The fee covers the opportunity to take any or all of the elements for Technician, General, or Extra Class licenses. If an element is failed, then we are required to charge an additional \$15.00 if the person testing wishes to re-take that element. Walk-ins are welcome. Please contact Debbie Fligor, N9DN, for information or questions. We appreciate prior notification of special needs.

## Pat Butler Recovering Well

Pat Butler, N9PAT, is recovering at home from triple bypass surgery in late December. She was in Provena Hospital for a few days and is now at home, getting along well. Thanks to the other Pat, N9GOC, for keeping us posted on her progress when she was in the hospital. We send our best wishes to Pat Butler on a speedy full recovery.

## Holiday Dinner

Thanks to Ben, K9BF and Sherry, N9DOG, for hosting their Ham Radio party. It was the evening of December 13 at their home. Around 40 attended and everyone had an enjoyable time. Thanks to all who brought dishes to share - there was a lot of good food! This was a party for all Amateurs and their families, not restricted to club membership. We greatly appreciate Ben's and Sherry's hospitality.

## Are We Different?

It is a pleasure to hear all the activity on our repeaters. Very few communities have as much activity on repeaters as we do. Many times, on other systems, no one responds to a call to talk. Around CU, almost all calls are answered. Our frequent informal invitations to join gatherings at food establishments add a lot to the local friendliness. Let's keep it going!

## D-Star Repeater W9YR

There are many items to report related to D-Star and our W9YR repeater. The system is functioning well, with a little interference at times from other RF on the tower. We will be working on a solution for the interference. It looks good for installing a DSL line to access the Internet. We have not yet ordered it, but if everything goes well, it could be in place in a week or two. This will permit the connection of the repeater to the Gateway and open up the possibility of connecting to other D-Star repeaters around the world. We have carefully taken time in connecting to be sure we do not do anything to upset our host where the repeater is located. They do not permit any outside connections to their Internet connection.

We have heard a lot of testing by K9LMM and K9MLT on the repeater. They are working on texting across the D-Star repeater. They can now send text, email, and small graphics to each other using their computer and D-Star HT. This can be done at the same time they are talking by voice to each other. This is just one more feature of the system.

Wayne, AB9FJ and Milt, K9QZI, attended a D-Star workshop in Lafayette, Indiana on January 10. It was a 3-hour presentation on the details of D-Star and a look at some of the future additions in process of development. Some of these include attachments for analog radios that will permit D-Star use, a home D-Star box that will permit us to use our D-Star HT talking into our analog radio which will then transmit into the D-Star system. This gives us the freedom to move around and benefit from the higher power and antenna. Permanent repeater linking is easier with software in development.

In less than 3 years, D-Star has grown from 48 users in the Spring of 2006 to 6,527 registered users today. This does not include users not registered to use the gateway. There are 349 repeater systems in operation with an average of 1200 users in a 24-hour period.

## W9SEH 146.76 Repeater

A few changes were made on our 146.76 repeater. The courtesy tone from a few years back was reinstated, and there is a voice ID in place now. The courtesy tone is a Star Trek sound. When you are in a conversation, please wait to transmit after the tone. This provides open air for others to join in the conversation. Without the wait, it has often been difficult to enter a conversation due to the rapid-fire keying where there is no space for anyone to enter. When someone does want to enter, the best way is to just give your call letters in the space before the courtesy tone. Then, those in conversation can acknowledge the presence of the person entering and give that person an opportunity to comment. It is not good practice to try to make a long comment in the space before the courtesy tone - just use a callsign or other short indication. The courtesy tone will not be heard if you use CTCSS decode, or tone squelch. Echolink procedures prohibit our courtesy tone and ID from going out on the link. By shutting off the CTCSS tone during the courtesy beep, it won't go over Echolink. If you use tone squelch, you can watch your S-Meter and when the repeater signal drops, you know that the beep has completed. The voice ID may change from time to time and any similarity to the real K9BF is purely coincidental. We hope these changes will improve the repeater operation and decrease the doubling transmissions. Please help with your cooperation.

## Echolink and IRLP Use

Please remember a few suggestions when using the links. Before connecting, announce your call and that you are connecting. After connecting, wait 15 to 30 seconds to be sure no conversation is in progress on the other end. When you talk, give the system time to drop, then press the mic button and wait 1-2 seconds to allow the system to connect in the other direction. Announce your call after disconnecting. These suggestions will help make the link use more enjoyable for everyone on both ends of the conversation.

## Hamfest Report

There are not many hamfests to report due to the holiday season. The one at Waukesha, Wisconsin was well attended on January 3. There are some coming up in the next few weeks. January 24 is Collinsville, IL, near St Louis, and the 25th is St Charles, IL. Both should be good hamfests. The Orlando Hamcation is February 13-15. There is a space shuttle launch scheduled for February 12. Last year, there was a launch the day prior to the opening of the Hamcation also. The space center is about an hour drive from Orlando.

## Dayton Hamvention Update

Planning is underway for the 2009 Dayton Hamvention. The website is being updated frequently. No mailings have been sent, and there is no indication as to when they will go. The committee is doing everything possible to correct the problems encountered last year by flea market vendors and some inside vendors. Outside spaces are to remain at the same price as last year. Visit the website frequently to keep up on the planning progress. You can find it at [www.hamvention.org](http://www.hamvention.org)

## Ham Radio Goodwill

On New Year's Eve, we heard a request for a contact by Echolink from a couple in Tennessee. Steve, N1LHI, was going to drive through CU on January 1 and wanted his wife to keep in touch by Echolink. We visited with them on the link, then listened for him when he came into repeater range. He stayed overnight in Champaign at a hotel that we suggested, and several of us joined him for Supper at Fazolli's. He made the trip to Chicago, visiting his brother, then returned on Sunday. As he entered our repeater range, another group of our members was at Billy Barooz, eating, as usual. He joined us. He is impressed with our hospitality and activity on the repeaters. From home, he was the contact for our Echolink demonstration at the ARES meeting. This is just another example of goodwill that Amateur Radio can create.