

Twin City Amateur Radio Club

Champaign-Urbana, Illinois

January 2010

Milt Forsberg K9QZI Editor



Next Meeting is January 12

The next TCARC meeting is Tuesday, January 12 at the UI Fire Institute, starting at 7:00 p.m. For the program, Milt, K9QZI, will present information on a possible club project which could involve many members or our club. Please see the details on the inside pages. Also, he will update us on the use of reflectors in the D-Star Digital Voice system. We might have one or two more quick presentations.

If you have not yet paid your 2010 dues, you can pay at the meeting

We apologize for the late timing of the newsletter this month. The meeting subject changed several times and we did not want to announce incorrect information. We should be back on time next month.

TCARC in QST

Check out the excellent article on page 79 of the January QST magazine about our FM contests by Sean Kutzko, KX9X!Whatever happened to our FM contests?

Christmas Party a Success

We thank Pat and Donna Curtin, N9GOC and N9KVE, for hosting the Ham Radio Christmas Party at their home in December. It was a potluck with an optional white elephant gift exchange. Their home was filled with Amateur Radio Operators and their families. The count was somewhere around 36. It was an excellent time to visit, eat, and participate or watch the gift exchange. Thanks to all who brought the excellent selection of food to share.

Happy New Year

As we begin 2010, we look forward to another exciting year in Amateur Radio. 2009 was a good year for our activities, even with the low number of sunspots. Our auction went well, providing the club with a boost in the treasury; Field Day was a lot of fun and we came in about halfway down the list of 5A stations. The hamfest season proved to be fairly good in attendance, and we welcomed several new Amateur Radio Licensees. Let's do our best to make 2010 an even better year! Please participate whenever you can, and offer assistance in managing activities.

Local Nets

D-Rats Net on W9YR	Tuesday 8 p.m.
Second Tuesday - meets Wednesday	
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
--------------------	----------

Website	www.w9seh.org
Analog Repeater W9SEH	146.760
D-Star Repeater W9YR	443.48125

Hamfest Calendar

Jan 9	Waukesha, WI
Jan 23	Fitchburg, WI (Madison)
Jan 24	St Charles, IL WCRA
Jan 30	Collinsville, IL
Feb 12-14	Orlando Hamcation, FL
Mar 7	Sterling, IL
Mar 13	Terre Haute, IN
Apr 10	AES Superfest Milwaukee, WI
Apr 17	TCARC Auction Champaign, IL



VE Exams

09-Jan-2010 Piatt County ARC
1:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed) ARRL/VEC
Michael S Mullins (217)278-5819
County Emergency Operations Center
302 S Charter St Monticello, IL

09-Jan-2010 Wabash Valley ARA
8:30AM (Walk-ins allowed) ARRL/VEC
Terry L Hackett (217)465-4884
Burkybile Law Office
15175 US Highway 150 Paris, IL

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

24-Jan-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

AMATEUR ACCESSORIES, INC.
TRANSEL TECHNOLOGIES NOW A DIVISION!
Your Source for ALL Major Brands!
Steve Zahos KR4S
P.O. Box 7333
Champaign, IL 61826
Orders: (800) 829-8321
Techline: (217) 352-1725
E-Mail: hamradiosales@gmail.com
www.amateuraccessories.com

Hamfests Internet Mail Order

TCARC
PO Box 2061
Champaign, IL 61825-2061

Synton - The UI Radio Club

For many years, TCARC has associated with Synton, the University of Illinois Amateur Radio Club. The Thursday evening Champaign County 2 Meter Net is co-sponsored by both clubs. We always welcome Synton members at all of our activities, and some of our members have provided assistance and equipment for Synton. A little known fact is that anyone can join Synton, merely by completing an application. Synton operates W9YH on all bands with equipment located in Everett Lab at Wright and Green Streets on the UI Campus. Synton members may operate the station's equipment whenever they wish. Those members associated with the University of Illinois and have an I-Card, can obtain a key to the W9YH station. Those not connected with the UI may be accompanied by a member who is associated. The equipment includes an HF rig connected to a vertical antenna on the roof of the building, as well as a 2 meter/440 rig connected to an antenna on the roof. The W9YH repeater is at the same location on 444.650 with a CTCSS tone of 103.5. Here is an excellent opportunity for anyone who joins to be able to stop in and operate the rigs whenever they have time, such as over the Lunch hour. It would be great if we can assist Synton increase the student membership. It is fairly small at present, with not enough numbers to recruit students on the campus. Possibly some of our present TCARC members can help with the recruiting. Associated with Synton is the University of Illinois VHF Experimenters Group. This is not a UI official club, but all members of Synton are members of the Experimenters Group. The Experimenters hold the club license call of W9YR, They were kind enough to suggest that this call be used on our D-Star repeater. The call is that of former member of TCARC and Synton, Jay Gooch. He changed his call in his later years from W9YRV to W9YR, so it could be available for club use. If you are interested in joining, please contact Debbie Fligor, N9DN, for information and an application. There is no charge. We encourage our members to join and support Synton!

Field Day Results

The 2009 Field Day results appeared in the December issue of QST Magazine. We operated 5A and scored about midway down the list of stations in the same class. It was a lot of fun and everyone had a good time. We look forward to Field Day 2010 on the last full weekend of June. Thanks to Wayne, AB9FJ, and Ralph, W9PGE, for heading up the 2009 operation.

Echolink

Our Echolink node is performing well at this time. After the physical move from Urbana to the repeater site, the audio quality has been outstanding. We no longer use a radio link from the Echolink equipment to the repeater. It is connected directly now. This permitted us to eliminate many annoyances such as the link identifier, the swish sound, and poor audio. We received permission from Andy, W9ADS, to keep the 8231 node number, which makes connecting much easier for everyone as that number was used for the node before the move. Having an Internet connection at the repeater site was the key to moving the Echolink hardware. We do have a few "tweaks" to make, which should improve the quality even more. At present, connecting by radio to a 5 or 6 digit node is a little difficult as the timing is very short to get all the digits entered. If you are not speedy, you will get an error message, or a connection to some other node. The vox is set a bit short, causing shutdown on voice pauses. We feel we can make adjustments for both to make operation easier for all.

HIFER

RIX the HiFer beacon on 13.561 MHZ running 4mw in the 22 meter part 15 band has been moved to Champaign, IL and is now atop the building known for many years as Presidential Towers. Base of antenna is at 218 feet above average terrain and is using a loaded mobile antenna. It is a solar powered beacon. Rob, N9RIX hopes the improved elevation will assist in ground and dx reception.

Auction

Our annual auction appears to be set for April 17, at the same location as the past few years, the Windsor Road Christian Church, in the 2500 block of W Windsor in Champaign. The format should be the same, with donations to the club for sale strongly encouraged. We plan to have door prizes and food service. Amateur Accessories, Steve, KR4S, plans to attend with his traveling store. This is always a fun time. Please mark your calendars now for Saturday, April 17.

Hamfests

The Winter hamfest season is underway. Local hamfests are indoors, so you can be assured of comfortable surroundings. The St Louis area hamfest in Collinsville, IL is January 30. It is always an excellent hamfest with a good crowd, and has easy access. February 12-14 is the Orlando HamCation, in Orlando, Florida. It is not local, but it does offer a very nice getaway from the cool white weather we have at present. This hamfest is indoors and outdoors. It has been growing in size every year, even with the poor economy. Motor home and camping trailer spaces are available on the grounds. Last year over 300 motorhomes were there. Friday, the doors open at Noon and Saturday-Sunday at 9 a.m.

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.

VE Exams

Our next exam is January 24. Please contact our VE Coordinator, Debbie, N9DN, if you have questions. The Tech Question Pool changes July 1, so there are two more opportunities to test locally under the present pool.

Celebrate Champaign's 150th

Champaign was incorporated 150 years ago this year. The city plans many activities to celebrate this occasion. The activities will be spread over the whole year, wrapping up in early 2011. Groups, clubs, businesses, and individuals are encouraged to participate in any or all of the activities. This is where we come in. A special event station is a great opportunity to make our presence known both locally and around the world. We can establish the station at many locations and over a long period if we wish. Normally, special event stations operate for a day or two, on HF bands, and raise a few contacts. However, we can take a different approach. Why not operate some HF, but concentrate on VHF/UHF, served by the Internet? We have Echolink, IRLP, and D-Star available. We can operate using only a power supply, radio, and small antenna. The ease of setup makes us mobile to operate at many locations. The clarity of linking systems should impress visitors to our displays. If we establish an overall time period for the event, maybe 1-2 months, we can advertise and invite contacts. We should create an outstanding QSL card or certificate and offer it to all who contact us. A schedule created for monitoring the nodes will permit many operators to participate locally. This will extend to our younger operators, regardless of license class. Hopefully, we can get support with some mention of this in QST magazine as we have a friend in a good location at the ARRL headquarters. Indoor and outdoor activities are planned by the city, but most still need detail. We might set up at some of these, using whatever is appropriate for the location. The contacts through the Internet could be from some of the locations, but those who want to operate from home could do so. Our club callsign, K9CU, would be ideal for this event, meaning that we will not need to apply for a special event call. We will discuss the concept at our January TCARC meeting. All ideas and suggestions are welcome. Volunteers to help with the program are especially welcome! Milt, K9QZI, is willing to chair this activity. Please join the committee if you wish to help plan.