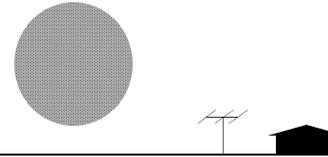


Twin City Amateur Radio Club

Champaign-Urbana, Illinois

May 2007

Milt Forsberg K9QZI, Editor



Hamfest Calendar

May 18-20 Dayton OH
Jun 2-3 Princeton IL
Jun 8-9 Hamcom Plano TX
Jun 10 Wheaton, IL
Jul 7 Indianapolis, IN
Jul 8 Aurora, IL
Jul 15 Peotone, IL KARS

VE Exams

08-May-2007 WABASH VALLEY ARC
7:00 PM (No walk-ins) ARRL/VEC
DAVID L PIFER (812) 466-1005
WORLD GOSPEL CHURCH
700 GARDENDALE RD TERRE HAUTE, IN 47803

12-May-2007 K9DUR 8:30 AM (Walk-ins allowed)
TERRY L HACKETT (217) 465-4884
BURKYBILE LAW OFFICE 15175 US HIGHWAY 150
PARIS, IL 61944

27-May-2007 VCARA ARRL/VEC 1:30 PM
JOSH D KITTLE (217) 431-9472
VCARA CLUBHOUSE WOODBURY HILL ROAD
DANVILLE, IL 61832 (Walk-ins allowed)

02-Jun-2007 SANGAMON VALLEY RADIO CLUB
9:00 AM (Walk-ins allowed)
JAMES STEVE UPCHURCH (217) 529-3218
AMERICAN RED CROSS 1045 OUTER PARK DR
SPRINGFIELD, IL 62704

03-Jun-2007 WABASH VALLEY ARC
1:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed) ARRL/VEC
D STEVEN SHORTER (812) 232-4788
GLAS-COL ANNEX 1730 S 7TH ST
TERRE HAUTE, IN 47803

Amateur Accessories

"Our name says it all"
Steve Zahos KR4S

Hamfests Internet Mail Order
MFJ, Heil, Maha, Diamond, Ramsey, Battery-Tech, ARRL

PO Box 7333 Phone 217-352-1725
Champaign, IL 61826 Fax 217-352-1781
E-Mail: kr4s@msn.com
www.amateuraccessories.com

TCARC
PO Box 2061
Champaign, IL 61825-2061

Meeting May 8

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

At our May meeting, Milt Forsberg, K9QZI, will present information related to scanning of public service bands, programming scanners and ham rigs with a computer, and a little information on the new digital radio systems for METCAD and the Illinois State Police.

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 Board meets the Thursday prior to the club meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the UI Fire Institute. Please note that this is a change from our past board meeting locations. All members are welcome to attend.

Auction – Big Success!

Our annual auction last month was a huge success. Attendance was about the same as in the past, maybe 4 or 5 more, but donations of equipment to the club were much higher than ever. Our net profit is around \$1,445, after expenses. The food operation may increase this a little. The club commission on sales was only about 5% of the total.

We thank everyone who helped with the auction. This includes the gear handlers, auctioneers, K9CW for computer tracking of sales, K9QZI for cash handling, and the XYLS who provided the food service. A special thanks goes to Steve, KR4S, with Amateur Accessories for his setup at the entrance and for his support in paying the building use fee as well as donating several items as door prizes. And, we thank everyone who donated equipment to the club for auction. Without you, our numbers would be much lower.

VE Exams

Our last VE Exam was Sunday, April 15, the day after our auction. Thanks to Fred Seibold, W9FWS, for heading up the exam session. Six completed exams for new or upgraded licenses, and we processed one paper upgrade. Congratulations to all.

TCARC Officers and Board Members

President Bob Minton WA9KGU 352-4859
Vice President Ralph Cox W9PGE 396-5111
Secretary Wayne Hamilton AB9FJ 384-4310
Treasurer Milt Forsberg K9QZI 352-5075

Board Members

Al Wolfe K9SI 688-2790
Drew White K9CW 643-7327
Ben Fisher K9BF 351-7655

VE Coordinator

Debbie Fligor N9DN 244-4446

Website

www.w9seh.org

Fox Hunt May 13

The next TCARC Fox Hunt is Sunday, May 13. Because that is Mothers Day, and about the only date available, the hunt will start at 4 p.m. to give everyone adequate time to spend with the family on that day. Plan to meet at the Centennial High School parking lot in Champaign at 4. The hunt begins there. The fox will be on the frequency of 146.550, and will be hidden by Ben, K9BF. Everyone is welcome to attend and/or participate. If you don't have experience fox hunting, you can go with an experienced hunter. Those arrangements will be organized at the start.

Field Day

Field Day is June 23 and 24. We have changed the location this year to the Ford-Harris Park on Ford-Harris Road. It is a small township park one-half mile west of US 45 and one mile south of Leverett Road. You can find the Ford-Harris Road 2.7 miles north of I74 on US45 or Cunningham Ave. Also, North Prospect intersects with the Ford-Harris Road near I57, but it might be a little difficult to identify, due to reworking of the roads in that location.

Wayne, AB9FJ, is coordinating operators for the weekend. We need operators and stations. If you can help with either or both, please contact Wayne. Dave, W9DML, again this year volunteered the generator in his motor home for our power. That worked well last year.

Field Day is a 24-hour period of operating on the bands, making as many contacts as possible. The plan is to set up in field conditions to gain experience in operating in an emergency where no power is available. Points are scored for contacts and are compared with other clubs operating with the same number of transmitters. We will have an evening meal at the site and everyone is invited to join in, operating or not. Details on the meal will be given later, when they are worked out. It is normally a covered dish type of meal. It is a great time for radio operation and fellowship, so mark your calendar now!

Hamfest Report

With the warming of the weather comes more hamfests on the horizon. There were a few in March and April, and the weather cooperated for the most part. Our club was well represented at the Terre Haute hamfest in March. It was a fairly small hamfest, but it was close and we had a nice day to travel. In April, the Madison Wisconsin hamfest was well attended. A few from TCARC were there, and again, the weather was good. Not all tables were occupied this year. The Galva, Illinois hamfest the next day was small. On April 29, the Arthur, Illinois hamfest was a winner. It was moved from the old fairgrounds to the new firehouse. There was plenty of space both inside and outside. Attendance was good as were sales. It looks like this hamfest now has a new home. Unfortunately, the hamfest at Sandwich, Illinois moved back a week and was in conflict with the Arthur event. We have no report on that one.

Coming up soon is the Dayton Hamvention. This is always an outstanding weekend, and should be on your "don't miss" list. It runs all day Friday and Saturday, and most of Sunday. That's May 18-20. With 2500 flea market spaces, a huge indoor exhibit area, and 20,000 hams scurrying around the grounds, you should be able to find almost anything you need for your radio hobby.

The first weekend of June is the Princeton, Illinois hamfest. It runs both Saturday and Sunday. As with most multi-day hamfests, the first day is the best. A week later is the one at Wheaton, Illinois. Also for the ambitious travelers, Hamcom near Dallas, at Plano, TX, is the same weekend, only on Friday and Saturday, June 8-9. Things slow a little in late June with Fathers Day and Field Day.

VCRA Hamfest

The Vermilion County Radio Association (Danville) announced the first annual hamfest to be held on August 25, 2007. Watch for further information on this hamfest to be held at the Vermilion County Fairgrounds near Oakwood.

TCARC 2007-2008 Officers

The nominating committee is working on a slate of recommendations for next year's officers. The election is at our June meeting. If you are willing to serve as an officer or board member, please contact one of the committee. They are Ben Fisher, K9BF, Al Wolfe, K9SI, and Drew White, K9CW.

New Server for TCARC Web Page

The TCARC web page is now at www.w9seh.org. We subscribed to a new server that is much faster, with a larger capacity.

Application Surge Continues Under New Amateur Rules

From ARRL News

It's been just a little more than two months since the FCC dropped the requirement that Amateur Radio applicants pass a Morse code test to earn operating privileges below 30 MHz. While the initial avalanche of applications immediately following February 23, when the no-Morse testing regime went into effect, has abated somewhat, business remains brisk for the ARRL Volunteer Examiner Coordinator staff.

"It's slowing down a little bit, but it's still substantially above what we usually see," observed ARRL VEC Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM. She estimated that new Amateur Radio applications were up by 35 percent, while upgrade applications were up by 150 percent over last year's volume.

In a typical pre-February 23 week, Somma said, ARRL VEC would receive paperwork from approximately 115 test sessions. "It's on the order of 150 to 200 sessions per week now!" she exclaimed. Somma and ARRL VEC staffers concurred that applications were roughly evenly split between newcomers and upgrades. She said she's also seen a spike in the number of applications from General and higher class radio amateurs to serve as volunteer examiners.

To satisfy his own curiosity, ARRL member Tommy Gober, N5DUX, compiled some FCC statistics on the number of new Technician, General and Extra licensees before and after the Morse code requirement was deleted. His numbers show the FCC issued nearly 700 more Amateur Extra, 3625 more General and 454 more Technician licenses in March 2007 than in the same month last year.

Figures from ARRL member and ham radio statistician Joe Speroni, AH0A, indicate the total number of Amateur Extra licensees is up 1649 from March 2006 to March 2007, while the General population grew by 2668. The total number of Technician licensees dropped by 1632 during the same period, however -- and it continues to drop going into April.

Speroni's figures also show that the grand total of Amateur Radio station licenses has declined by more than 12,800 over the past two years -- to 655,048 at the end of March.

The still-heavy volume has stretched the amount of time it takes for an application to proceed from examination session to license grant. "I think we're looking at eight to ten days from the test date," Somma allowed. By and large, those on the waiting end have been patient and understanding, she added.

A staff of seven full-time and three part-time employees handle the "incoming" from Amateur Radio exam sessions across the US and from other sites where US Amateur Radio examinations are administered through ARRL VEC.

There's no light at the end of the tunnel just yet. Somma and her staff are looking ahead to 450 examination sessions registered for May, another 400 in June and 320 apiece during July and August. And summer is "the slow season," she remarked. Another 900 test sessions already are on the calendar for the rest of 2007.