

RCA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

MARCH, 2010 MONTHLY NEWSLETTER INDIANAPOLIS, IN

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE RCA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB WILL BE
TUESDAY, MARCH 9th, 6:30 PM AT THE [G.T. SOUTH'S](#),
5711 E. 71st STREET, INDIANAPOLIS, IN

RCA ARC NEWS

SUMMARY OF THE FEBRUARY MEETING – At the 9-Feb. meeting a motion was approved to pay dues to the Indiana Repeater Council and the Indiana Radio Club Council. The January VHF contest was discussed. K9RU was on the air from W9VW but a broken rotor left the antenna acting like a weather vane. Not being able to point it in the desired direction was frustrating and not many contacts were made. The new computer for Echolink, donated by W9GOV, has been installed on the W9RCA repeater and brought online by David, N9KT. Echo Producer, and add-on for Echolink has been installed and gives added features to Echolink. AF9A proposed some changes that would keep the repeater CW ID audio from being passed back to the Echolink network. N9KT was at the meeting and was recognized for all the long hours he has spent getting the new computer and software up and running. Dave, N9KZJ gave us an update on everything going on at WW2IND USS Indianapolis War Memorial Station. K9RU announced a license testing session scheduled for March 20, 2:30PM, at the W9IMS Club station.

TESTING SESSION COMING UP AT W9IMS -- Want to take a shot at getting your amateur radio license or upgrading? The W9IMS Amateur Radio Club will host an ARRL exam session on Saturday, March 20th at the club station, the W9IMS Comm Center, located at 3319 N Gale Street. Gale is a dead-end street off of 34th street and the Comm Center is located at the end of the street, left side.

The session will begin at 2:30 p.m. Saturday afternoon, so you can still sleep-in and make the exam. Walk-ins are welcome, but we would prefer advance notice if possible.

All amateurs and would-be amateurs are welcome. You do not have to be a member of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Amateur Radio Club to attend the session. Contact Jim Rinehart, (317) 218-7304 or k9ru@arrl.net for more information.

Click here for details on what to bring to the session (and what you can't bring), plus other important info: <http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/examsearch.phtml>

NEW LOCAL SWAP MEET COMING IN APRIL! April 17th 2010...O'Dark-Thirty Swap meet is FREE admission, donuts & coffee (while they last) and rain or shine event. (bring your own rain cover). 0600-noon... The location is northwest corner of Southport Road & Madison Ave. PITCH-IN Lunch!

NEW CALL – Greg, ex KB9OSE is now WR3K !

HAMFESTS & OPERATING EVENTS

The next scheduled Indianapolis Radio Club VE test will be on April 3.

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|-------------------|---|
| March 6-7 | ARRL DX Contest - Phone |
| March 27 | Bartholomew County Hamfest 4-H Fairgrounds, Columbus, IN, |
| April 17 | O'Dark-Thirty Swap, NW corner of Southport & Madison, Indy. |
| May 14-16 | Dayton Hamvention, Hara Arena, Trotwood, OH |
| June 26-27 | Field Day |
| July 10 | Indianapolis Hamfest, Camp Sertoma, Indianapolis |

See the [ARRL Contest Branch page](#), the [ARRL Contest Update](#) and the [WA7BNM Contest Calendar](#) and the [ARRL Special Event Station Web page](#) for more info.

ARRL DX PHONE CONTEST BRINGS DX IN FULL FORCE TO THE HF BANDS!

With the 2010 ARRL International DX CW Contest now history, the first weekend in March brings the next round of competition: the [2010 ARRL International DX Phone Contest](#). Like its CW predecessor (Feb. 20-21), this event focuses on DX stations working all US states and Canadian provinces, while US and Canadian amateurs try to work as many DX countries as possible over the 48 hour contest period.

"Conditions during last weekend's CW contest were, by all accounts, very good indeed," said ARRL Contest Branch Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X. "Fifteen Meters was open for extended periods of time, allowing excellent QSOs to be made from the US and Canada to all corners of the globe. Even 10 meters decided to show up for the party, with openings both Saturday and Sunday to South America and Africa, with a sprinkling of Europe thrown in for good measure."

For the veterans, it was a delight to have good propagation on the higher bands again. For the more recently licensed, it was a chance to finally experience an opening on bands that have more or less remained dormant due to the extended low in the 11 year solar cycle.

Just as in the CW contest, US and Canadian stations send a signal report and their state or province, while DX stations send a signal report and their transmit power. Remember that for this contest, Alaska and Hawaii are considered DX -- this means that stations in KH6 and KL7 focus their efforts on working Stateside and Canada.

How can you participate? You are only limited by your imagination and willingness to get on the air. If the high bands remain active, even stations running 100 W and a dipole or vertical antenna will work a lot of DX. If you live in an area where antenna restrictions exist, take your contest effort on the road! Operate from your car, set up a portable antenna in a park or campground or see if a friend's station is available.

The ARRL DX Phone Contest runs from 0000 UTC Saturday, March 6 through 2359 UTC Sunday, March 7. Complete rules and forms may be found <http://www.arrl.org/contests/forms/>. The high bands are finally showing signs of life. Why let all this DX pass you by -- get on the air and have some fun! --ARRL Letter

FCC ALLOWS ROBOTIC DEVICE IN AMATEUR BAND

In January 2008, a company called ReconRobotics filed a request with the FCC for a waiver of Part 90 of the Commission's Rules with respect to the Recon Scout -- a remote-controlled,

maneuverable surveillance robot designed for use in areas that may be too hazardous for human entry. A waiver is required to permit licensing of the Recon Scout because the device operates in the 430-448 MHz band, which is allocated to the Federal Government Radiolocation service on a primary basis, as well as the Amateur Radio Service and certain non-federal radiolocation systems on a secondary basis. More than two years later, the FCC [granted the waiver request](#) in the form of an *Order* (WP Docket No 08-63), subject to certain conditions.

According to ReconRobotics, the Recon Scout device can be thrown, dropped or launched into hazardous areas and can provide an operator located a safe distance away with video and audio, along with infrared, biological, chemical, heat, radiation or other data. It would be marketed for use by state and local law enforcement and firefighting agencies, as well as by security personnel in critical infrastructure industries.

The FCC noted in the *Order* that they had received more than 70 comments "generally consist[ing] of public safety and law enforcement entities supporting the waiver request, and amateur radio operators opposing it." In their initial waiver request, ReconRobotics asserted that even though the device operates in an area allocated to other services, including Amateur Radio, the Recon Scout operates with only 1 W peak power and it is "unlikely to cause interference to these services."

ARRL's Arguments Against the Waiver -- In its [comments](#) filed in May 2008 ([as told in a May 29, 2008 article on the ARRL Web site](#)), the ARRL called on the FCC to deny ReconRobotics waiver request, "either permanently or even temporarily," calling on the Commission to require ReconRobotics to "initiate a rulemaking proceeding if it feels that the Part 90 or Part 15 rules governing analog devices are not sufficiently accommodating and should be changed, and could be changed consistent with interference avoidance. Repeatedly granting waivers for analog devices which do not meet the fundamental interference avoidance requirements of the existing rules is bad spectrum management and ill-serves the Amateur Service."

"Because [the Recon Scout] operates on a channelized basis, each of the three channels being six megahertz wide, the necessary bandwidth of the device is apparently close to 6 MHz," the ARRL argued. "[ReconRobotics] asks that it be granted an unspecified series of permanent waivers to allow the marketing and sale to, and use of this device by law enforcement and fire department personnel for public safety applications. The Amateur Service, which has a heavily occupied, secondary allocation in the 420-450 MHz band...would be potentially substantially impacted by grant of these waivers."

The ARRL noted that ReconRobotics asked for "unspecified permanent waivers of Part 90 rules" in order to market and sell its product, but, as the ARRL pointed out, more than the Part 90 rules would have to be waived: "Because the three channels (430-436 MHz, 436-442 MHz and 442-448 MHz) on which the device is proposed to operate...are all within that segment [430-450 MHz], what is being requested is not only a waiver of Part 90 service rules, but also a waiver of Section 2.106 of the Commission's Rules, the Table of Allocations. The only allocations in the 430-450 MHz band are for Government Radiolocation (limited to military radars) and on a secondary basis, the Amateur Service. Per Section 90.273 of the Commission's rules, frequencies above 429.99375 MHz and below 450 MHz are unavailable to stations in the land mobile service anywhere in the United States."

The ARRL's comments also stated that ReconRobotics "fails to establish that the 420-450 MHz band is the only viable choice and that no other band would be suitable; an obligation of the Petitioner in order to entitle it to a waiver. In requesting the waiver, ARRL asserts that ReconRobotics only claimed, but did not show, prove or demonstrate, that other bands were

not suitable for its purposes. In other cases before the FCC as recent as 2006, the Commission denied such waivers, saying, "We do not believe that the public interest requires grant of a waiver merely to accommodate a manufacturer's choice of a specific frequency when others are available." The ARRL contended that "nothing in the four corners of [ReconRobotics'] request indicates anything that would verify the factual conclusions offered. The waiver request boils down to 'trust us, we have checked into this.'"

The ARRL claimed that a permanent waiver of the Commission's Rules permitting nationwide marketing and use on a licensed basis of land mobile short-range transmitters, benefiting as it does only one manufacturer to the exclusion of all others, "is an inferior method of conducting spectrum allocations and spectrum management" and that ReconRobotics "should be required to refile its proposal as a petition to modify the Table of Allocations for this purpose.

Upon learning that the FCC had granted the waiver, ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ said that "While we are completely sympathetic to the desires of law enforcement and firefighting agencies and certain security personnel to have a tool like the Recon Scout at their disposal, the fact remains that 430-448 MHz is a poor choice of frequency range for such a device in the United States. In its *Order*, the Commission does not say otherwise; it simply concludes that by imposing an array of conditions and limitations on the use of the device by eligible Part 90 licensees, the potential for harmful interference to Federal and licensed non-Federal users of this band can be, in the Commission's view, adequately minimized. Additional details can be found here: <http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2010/02/25/11361/?nc=1> –ARRL Letter

NEW ARRL CONTEST ----THE ARRL ROOKIE ROUNDUP

The ARRL Rookie Roundup is designed to help newly licensed amateurs build their operating skills on HF. It is a contest specifically for those new to Amateur Radio, similar to the ARRL Novice Roundup that ran from 1952 until 1995. The Rookie Roundup brings the fun and Elmering of the old Novice Roundup into the 21st century. Three Rookie Roundups will be held each calendar year: SSB in April, RTTY in August and CW in December.

The Rookie Roundup will be scored 100 percent in real time through the www.getscores.org scoring system. There are three ways to participate: by using your favorite logging software with the real time scoring support, by downloading a simple logging program from the www.getscores.org Web site or by logging your contacts directly into a www.getscores.org Web page. No separate logs are required -- it all happens online in real time and final scores will be available online within hours of the end of the contest! More information is available on all of these options at www.getscores.org. Of course, you can get on the air and make contacts without logging them, but you won't have as much fun!

Who is a Rookie: Any ham licensed for 3 years or less. If you were licensed in 2008, 2009 or 2010, you can compete in the 2010 Rookie Roundup. Non-Rookies may only work Rookies, while Rookies may work everybody. A major part of the success of this contest will be non-Rookies getting on the air and working the Rookies, just as in the Novice Roundup.

Entry Categories: Single Operator Rookie, limited to a maximum of 100 W. Spotting assistance or using call sign and frequency alerting systems is allowed, but self-spotting or asking somebody to spot you is not. All Rookies must identify themselves as a rookie. Example: "Kilo Bravo One Quebec Alfa Whiskey, Rookie." Non-Rookies only need give their call; no designation is needed.

Awards: Certificates will be available for all participants to download. The top five high scores from each US call area, Canadian province and Mexican call area will be recognized on their certificate. No national winners will be recognized.

Go to www.getscores.org for more information on how to participate. Be sure to check out the April 2010 issue of *QST* for complete rules and other information. The Rookie Roundup -- a fun event for *all* amateurs! –ARRL Letter

LORAN-C SHUT DOWN

The Coast Guard published a Federal Register notice on Jan. 7, 2010, regarding its intention to terminate transmission of the LORAN-C signal Feb. 8, 2010 and in a series of small ceremonies February 8th the U.S. Coast Guard shut down Loran-C, a navigation and timing system that has guided mariners and aviators since World War II.

The death blow came last May when President Obama called the system obsolete, saying it is no longer needed in an age in which Global Positioning System devices are nearly ubiquitous in cars, planes and boats. Shutting down the Loran-C will save the government \$190 million over five years, Obama said. But supporters of Loran -- including the man known as "the father of GPS" -- say the nation's increasing reliance on GPS paradoxically has increased the importance of maintaining Loran as a backup.

At 3 p.m. Monday, the U.S. Coast Guard turned off Loran signals at 19 of the 24 Loran stations. Signals remain at five stations because of agreements with Russia and Canada, but the Coast Guard expects those stations to be decommissioned by June after the United States receives verification that those countries have been notified of the change.

The five stations that temporarily remain on line are at Attu, in Alaska's Aleutian Islands, and Caribou, Maine; Nantucket, Massachusetts; Shoal Cove, Alaska; and George, Washington. –ARRL Letter

ARECIBO DISH TO BE ACTIVATED ON AMATEUR RADIO EME

Echoes of Apollo EME 2010 or World Moon Bounce Day, is scheduled for the weekend of April 16, 17, and 18. This year, EOA has been graced with a special opportunity to use the Arecibo Dish as the ultimate "big gun" station on 432 MHz SSB & CW. EME operation on 1296 MHz may also be possible. Arecibo has more than 50 dbi gain on 432 MHz so the team thinks it can be heard with modest equipment. This will provide hams with a unique opportunity to utilize modest UHF and 1296 stations to copy EME signals. –ARRL Letter

WILMINGTON, NC SERVES AS A TESTING GROUND FOR MUNICIPAL NETWORK USING WIFI IN WHITE SPACES

Wilmington, N.C., that first made the news during the Digital TV Transition as the first market to switch from Analog to Digital TV is now serving as the test ground a municipal WiFi network using the "white spaces" between those DTV channels.

The network became operational in January and is the handiwork of Spectrum Bridge and TV Band Service. The latter comprises private investors and is locally based. The former, which is supplying the database to make sure the network does not interfere with TV stations in Wilmington.

The "smart city" network, as they have coined it, will not be competing directly with the wireless carriers for subs, the companies say, but will be demonstrating uses such as energy monitoring, government services, and public safety. Those are the sorts of "national purposes" uses of broadband the FCC will be promoting in its National Broadband Plan, due to Congress next month.

The network provides wireless cameras for traffic and general surveillance, monitors water level and quality testing and provides public WiFi to a park and school and is using the network as backhaul to provide wireless hotspots. In the park it is being used to control and monitor the ball field lighting and to turn the lights off after the last team has finished playing.

TV Band Service holds the 18 month experimental FCC license, but said they expect to reevaluate the test in April, including doing some cost-benefit analysis and developing case studies.

This test will allow Spectrum Bridge to test its database and showcase it to the FCC and others. Testing in the real-world is a great opportunity to learn how it interacts with other devices and how to keep it from interfering with other protected users. So far there have been no interference issues, either in this test or an earlier one in October in Virginia.

USA ARDF CHAMPIONSHIPS MAY 21 – 23 IN CINCINNATI OHIO

The 10th USA ARDF Championships, taking place near Cincinnati, Ohio on the weekend of May 21-23, 2010. This is one week after the [Dayton Hamvention®](#), where the annual Foxhunting Forum will be led by the championship's organizers.

The championship's headquarters will be in Franklin, Ohio -- halfway between Dayton and Cincinnati. Formal activities begin on Friday with a practice and equipment testing session. The championship 2 meter competition will start early on Saturday in a nearby forest, followed by a banquet that evening. On Sunday, the 80 meter competition and medal award ceremony will take place in a different location.

Organizers of the 2010 championships are members [of OH-KY-IN Amateur Radio Society](#), Orienteering Cincinnati ([OCIN](#)) and the [Butler County VHF Association](#) (led by Bob Frey, WA6EZV, and Dick Arnett, WB4SUV). These are the same folks who put on the very successful [2003 USA and IARU Region 2 Championships](#), although the 2010 competitions will take place in different forests. Bob and Dick have won medals at previous USA championships and have been on USA's team to the World Championships four times.

USA's ARDF Championships are open to all, regardless of radio-orienteeing skill level or ham radio licensing status. Medals will be awarded for the top three finishers on each band in 11 age categories: six for males and five for females.

Registration is now open. For the second year, there is no entry fee for first-time participants and for persons coming from outside North America. The form is available for download at the championship's official Web site. That site also has lodging suggestions and information about two optional days of intense ARDF training just before the championships.

W1AW ANNOUNCES NEW SCHEDULE FOR DIGITAL BULLETIN TRANSMISSIONS

Beginning Monday, March 15, [W1AW](#), the Hiram Percy Maxim Memorial Station, will alternate the digital modes used for its digital bulletin transmissions. While Baudot, PSK31

and MFSK16 still make up the digital mode complement, W1AW Station Manager Joe Carcia, NJ1Q, says that the schedule will be altered to give more exposure to PSK31 and MFSK16. "Because of time constraints and the varying lengths of digital bulletins, there were many instances where only Baudot was used," he said. "With the new schedule, amateurs preferring either PSK31 or MFSK16 will no longer find these modes secondary."

The new digital schedule is as follows:

- Monday: Baudot, PSK31, MFSK16
- Tuesday: PSK31, MFSK16, Baudot
- Wednesday: MFSK16, Baudot, PSK31
- Thursday: Baudot, PSK31, MFSK16
- Friday: PSK31, Baudot, MFSK16

Read more <http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2010/02/16/11343/?nc=1> --ARRL Letter

THE COOLING OF HAM RADIO

Stan Horzepa's Surfin' column for Feb. 12, 2010... The weather outside is rightful for mid-February -- white precipitation with temperatures dipping below zero Centigrade. So what better time than now to consider some cool new ham radio applications for the coolest gadget that fits in your palm of your hand.

According to the kids, nothing is cooler than the iPhone, so it is nice to discover some brand new ham radio iPhone apps. Which reminds me of my most embarrassing moment as a kid. I was about 11 years old when my family visited App's restaurant in West Haven. My parents and sister ordered lobsters for dinner. Not being a shellfish kid, I ordered pizza. When dinner arrived, the pizza was so big that they moved me and my pizza to my own booth. I was so embarrassed that I lost my appetite and did not eat one slice.

By the way, [App's](#) is still in business; I wonder if there's an iPhone app for App's?

Getting back to ham radio apps, visiting the iTunes store, I was surprised how many ham radio apps there are -- and about a quarter of them are free! Among the free apps are a [satellite tracker](#), an [EchoLink app](#), [ham utilities](#), an [APRS app](#), a [Maidenhead converter](#), a [direction finder](#), a [HF beacon app](#), a [VHF/UHF/SHF contest rover logger](#) and a bunch of ham radio exam preparation apps, including [some in partnership with the ARRL](#). If you are willing to part with a buck or two, there are a slew of "unfree" ham radio apps, too.

If you visit the iTunes store to search for ham radio apps, be sure to search on both "ham radio" and "Amateur Radio," since the search results are slightly different -- some apps only show up in one or the other search results. There are also some pertinent apps that turn up when you search on "radio," but that search also turns up a lot of apps not related to ham radio that you will have to wade through.

By the way, I offer no URL for the iTunes Store. If you have iTunes installed on your computer, you click on the "iTunes Store" button in iTunes and iTunes proceeds to access the store via the Internet. In other words, iTunes acts as your Web browser, but its browsing is limited to the iTunes Store. If you don't have iTunes installed on your computer, you can [download it for free](#). Thank you, Gerry Jurens, N2GJ, for alerting me to the EchoLink app. -ARRL

SHORTS

GUIDE ON LIGHTNING PROTECTION AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOADING -- The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) has released a new lightning protection guide: How To Protect Your House and Its Contents From Lightning: IEEE Guide for Surge Protection of Equipment Connected to AC Power and Communication Circuits By: Richard L. Cohen, Doug Dorr, James Funke, Chuck Jensen, and S. Frank Waterer. This is a 52 page illustrated guide written by the IEEE Surge Protection Device Committee. It covers lightning hazards, integration of the various components of a lightning protection system, AC and signal surge protectors, multi-port protectors for equipment connected to signal and power lines, and grounding methods. It is written in plain technical language, and is an excellent guide for all amateurs concerned about protecting their antennas, shack and homes from the effects of lightning. The guide is available at no cost as a 1.1 mb pdf file (61 pages) from the following URL: http://www.lightningsafety.com/nlsi_lhm/IEEE_Guide.pdf -- BRATS

HERBERT "PETE" HOOVER III, W6ZH SK -- The grandson of Herbert Hoover, the 31st President of the United States, and the son of former IARU and ARRL President Herbert Hoover Jr, W6ZH (ex-W6APW) at the age of 82 passed away February 4, 2010. A resident of San Marino, California, Hoover was active in ARRL activities, serving as a Director of the [ARRL Foundation](#) in 1976 and as a member of the ARRL Long Range Planning Committee from 1978-1981. In the 1970s, Hoover, along with EIMAC's Bill Eitel, W6UF (SK), established a matching fund to encourage contributions to the amateur satellite program. Hoover served as Vice President and Trustee of the Pasadena (California) Radio Club and was also a member and former President of the Southern California DX Club. In 1978, he was elected to the National Red Cross (later the American Red Cross) Board of Governors.

HEIL SOUND TO AGAIN HOST HAM RADIO RECEPTION AT NAB --- Heil Sound Limited and BSW will again co-host the annual Amateur Radio Reception at the 2010 National Association of Broadcasters Convention to be held this spring in Las Vegas, Nevada. The event is slated for Wednesday, April 14th from 6 to 8 PM Pacific time at the Hilton Las Vegas Convention Center Hotel. The hotel is right next door to the Convention Center. Just bring your NAB badge to get in.

VIDEO OF HO-68 OPERATIONAL MODES -- Henk PA3GUO has produced a video showing all the modes available on the Amateur Radio satellite Xi Wang 1 (HO-68). This 2 minute video features the launch of the satellite and shows its various modes of operation - Beacon, FM, AX.25 Packet and SSB/CW linear transponder. Callsigns heard during the video include M3PQQ, N1AIA, KC9ELU, VA3FM, WA3CZY and I6IBE. You can find the video at <http://tinyurl.com/ycjp4dg> NZ3M has put a video of SSB contacts via the new Amateur Radio satellite HO-68. This video can be viewed at <http://tinyurl.com/ya2uyzs> Piraja, PS8RF reported that a contact between Dean, ZD8DC on Ascension Island and Michel, F6HTJ, in France was completed via HO-68. --BRATS

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