

RCA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

JANUARY, 2015

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

INDIANAPOLIS, IN

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE RCA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB WILL BE
TUESDAY, JAN 13th, 6:30 PM AT [G.T. SOUTH'S](#),
5711 E. 71st STREET, INDIANAPOLIS, IN

RCA ARC NEWS

SUMMARY OF THE DECEMBER MEETING – Thanks to all who attended the December meeting! Repeater update: Some minor problems with Echolink related to the sound card and random key-ups have been increasing as well as spurs from some unknown source which drifts across our 146.28 input frequency. The repeater is likely to be in PL mode most of the time. Yaesu is offering a special on their Fusion repeaters for \$500. This repeater can operate on FM or Yaesu's digital system which apparently is not compatible with other existing digital modes. We understand that the 146.16/76 group has ordered one. We don't think it would be easy to integrate into our repeater with the voter. The Indianapolis Radio Club Christmas will have their 100 year Anniversary dinner on December 12th. The W9JP/W9RCA Field Day effort placed second in Indiana for the 2A division. The ARRL VHF contest is January 25 and 26th. K9RU suggested that the RCA ARC enter the Indiana QSO party club competition. The club's score is the cumulative score of all the members submitting a log for the RCA ARC. The INQP is in May, the same day as the Mini Marathon, but that is not really a problem since most of the INQP activity is in the afternoon and evening.

THE JANUARY ARRL VHF CONTEST – The ARRL VHF Contest Begins 1900 UTC Saturday, ends 0359 UTC Monday (January 24-26, 2015). They have added a class for FM only (6m-446 MHz, 100W or less on all bands), operation is allowed on 146.52 MHz.

NEXT TEST AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE TEST SESSION --

Time: Saturday, January 10, 12:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed)
Location: Integrated Public Safety Commission
8468 E. 21st St.
Indianapolis, IN
Contact: Rhonda Curtis, 317 363-7457, ws9h@arri.net

THE IRCC “BUILDING A BETTER CLUB” WORKSHOP - MARCH 7, 2015 – The Indiana Radio Club Council (IRCC) is having a “Building a Better Club Workshop” on March 7, 9 AM to 12 PM at the Salvation Army EDS, 4020 Georgetown Road, Indianapolis, IN.

The workshop will share information about amateur radio clubs, including tips from speakers, and feedback from attendees to improve your radio club. It will also provide an avenue for attendees to share what has worked and what has not worked for your club. The workshop will help identify concerns in clubs and offer initiatives to support or enhance existing club programs.

All Indiana Amateur Radio Clubs are invited to attend. You don't need to be an IRCC member club or an ARRL affiliated club to attend.

Speakers: Jack Parker, W8ISH Chairman, IRCC and Doreen Everett, AE5QM, Workshop Coordinator and Activities Committee Chairman, IRCC.

The first series of Club Workshops were held in 2000 around the state during the year and proved to be very popular. You can check them out at: <http://www.inarri.org/workshop.html>

Early Registration - email: ircc@inrcc.org. Website: <http://inrcc.org/c.org>

HAMFESTS, OPERATING EVENTS, VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- Jan 17-19 [Purdue Outing Club Adventure Race \[POCAR\] jgeberle@hotmail.com](#)
- Jan 25-26 ARRL VHF Contest
- Feb 14 Hendricks County Hamfest, Brownsburg, IN <http://www.hcars.org/>
- Mar 7 IRCC Building a Better Club Workshop <http://www.inarri.org/workshop.html>
- Mar 21 Sam Costa Run (Hamilton County)
- Mar 28 Columbus ARC Hamfest, Columbus, IN <http://carcnet.net>
- Apr 18 [Carmel Marathon \(Hamilton County\) KF9ZA@kremer.com](#)

UNEXPECTED GEOMAGNETIC STORM COULD DISTURB HF BANDS, ENHANCE 6 METERS

01/07/2015

[Spaceweather.com](#) reports that a **G2-class** geomagnetic storm erupted during the early hours of January 7, sparking bright auroras around the Arctic Circle. "The interplanetary magnetic field (**IMF**) near Earth tipped south, opening **a crack** in our planet's magnetosphere," Spaceweather explained. "Solar wind poured in to fuel the storm."

With the A index at 20 and the K index at 7 (as of 1430 UTC), HF conditions are predicted to be poor today and tonight. Joe Reisert, W1JR, told [The Daily DX](#) that there "could be lots of disturbances today [and] depressed HF conditions with aurora tonight, if the storm stays at this level." Reisert advised keeping an eye on 6 meters, where radio amateurs have been taking advantage of F2 transatlantic openings. --ARRL

"AMATEUR RADIO PARITY ACT" CAMPAIGN WILL RESUME IN NEW CONGRESS

Largely as the result of a grassroots campaign, "The Amateur Radio Parity Act of 2014" ([H.R. 4969](#)) attracted the support of 69 members of the US House of Representatives in addition to that of its sponsor, Rep Adam Kinzinger (R-IL). While 113th Congress did not enact the bill, the effort to gain passage of the legislation will resume anew when the 114th Congress convenes in January. Introduced with bipartisan support last June, H.R. 4969 called on the FCC to apply the "reasonable accommodation" three-part test of the [PRB-1](#) federal pre-emption policy to private land-use restrictions regarding antennas. The limited PRB-1 pre-emption currently applies only to state and municipal land-use ordinances. The FCC has indicated its reluctance to provide the same legal protections from private land-use agreements — often called covenants, conditions, and restrictions or CC&Rs — without direction from Congress. ARRL Regulatory Information Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND, this week stressed that the fight is not over.

"While we are disappointed that the bill did not make it through the process during the session, the effort was extremely energized by the efforts of thousands of ARRL members who participated in our grassroots lobbying effort," Henderson said. "In just 6 short months we gained tremendous traction for the Amateur Radio Parity Act."

Henderson explained that sometime after the new Congress is called into session in January, a new "Amateur Radio Parity Act" bill with a new number will be introduced into the US House. "Once this happens, the ARRL will gear up for a fresh effort to push this legislation forward," he added.

In a note to ARRL Section Managers this week, ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, thanked Section leaders and Field Organization volunteers on behalf of the ARRL Board of Directors and Headquarters staff for their help in garnering legislative support for H.R. 4969. "We had hoped to gain 30 co-sponsors for the bill and ultimately ended up with 69, plus the sponsor," Sumner noted. "The overwhelming majority of these 70 supporters are returning in January, which gives us a good base on which to grow additional support."

Sumner said the objective for 2015 is to continue the momentum, gathering enough support to move the bill through the Energy and Commerce Committee. "We have received expressions of interest from the Senate side and are hoping to have the bill introduced there as well," he added.

Henderson said the bill would not have attained its current level of support in the US House without

the thousands of letters and phone calls made by ARRL members to their congressional representatives. “The success of this crucial issue relies on the efforts of *all* radio amateurs and ARRL members,” he said. “We know you will step forward in the new year, when we renew our efforts on Capitol Hill.”

The ARRL has developed an H.R. 4969 web page that provides [additional information](#) on this subject.

HAMVENTION CHAIR: “THE SHOW WILL GO ON” AT AGING HARA ARENA

Despite financial struggles dogging the owners of [Hara Arena](#), site of the [Dayton Hamvention®](#) since the 1960s, the 2015 Hamvention General Chairman Jim Tideman, N8IDS, has told ARRL that he expects the world’s largest Amateur Radio show to continue there — this May and in the years ahead. Tideman was reacting to recent media accounts detailing the fiscal woes of the aging Hara complex in Trotwood, Ohio. He said Hamvention’s sponsoring Dayton Amateur Radio Association ([DARA](#)) and Hamvention officials have been in conversation with Hara’s owners, the Wampler family, regarding the future of the 165,000 square foot, six-building complex.

“Both Hamvention and DARA have absolute confidence in [the Wampler family’s] guiding their corporation through the steps in the plans in place to keep Hara operating for years to come,” Tideman said. “Given the time frame they are working with right now, we simply stand by them and repeat, ‘The show *will* go on.’” Last year, Dayton Hamvention attracted nearly 25,000 visitors.

Dayton TV station WDTN-TV [reported](#) last month that the 50-year-old Hara Arena was facing financial problems and had cut back on its full-time staff to save money. Karen Wampler, Hara’s Director of Marketing, has told the media that it’s become difficult for Hara Arena to compete with other Miami Valley venues, such as the Nutter Center at Wright State University and the downtown Dayton Convention Center. The Hara complex needs money for renovations and deferred maintenance, she said, and “the ownership model needs to be changed.” Wampler [told](#) the *Dayton Daily News* in December that while the family cares about the facility, it is limited in what it can afford. In addition to flagging revenues, the *Dayton Daily News* reported, some \$395,000 in back property taxes are owed on the two land parcels that make up the Hara Arena complex.

Wampler said the arena has been working with [VenuWorks](#), which specializes in restoring event venues, and that she hoped to have some good news to report this year. Dayton Hamvention takes place May 15-17. --ARRL

DAYTON HAMVENTION 2015 AWARD NOMINATIONS DUE BY JANUARY 16, 2015!

Time is running short to submit nominations for the 2015 [Dayton Hamvention®](#) Amateur of the Year, Special Achievement, Technical Excellence and Club of the Year awards. Completed nomination forms and supporting documentation are due by January 16. All Amateur Radio operators (and clubs) are eligible. Winners will be recognized at the 2015 Hamvention®, which takes place May 15-17.

The [Amateur of the Year Award](#) goes to an individual who has made a long-term, outstanding commitment to the advancement of Amateur Radio.

The [Technical Excellence Award](#) is given to an individual who has made an outstanding technical advancement in the field of Amateur Radio.

The [Special Achievement Award](#) honors someone who has made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of Amateur Radio, typically by spearheading a significant project.

The [Club of the Year Award](#) is presented to a club that has made a significant contribution to the advancement of Amateur Radio.

The Hamvention® Awards Committee makes its decisions on all awards based upon the information it receives and not on the number of nominations submitted.

Documentation that informs the Awards Committee of a nominee’s accomplishments may include magazine articles, newsletters, newspaper clippings, and even videos. These materials become the property of Hamvention® and will not be returned.

[Additional detail and a nomination form](#) are available on the Dayton Hamvention® website. [Submit](#)

nominations via e-mail or mail them to Dayton Hamvention Awards, PO Box 1446, Dayton, OH 45401-1446. — *Thanks to Dayton Hamvention*

REGISTRATION OPENS FOR 2015 DAYTON CONTEST UNIVERSITY

Registration is now open for the 2015 Dayton Contest University ([CTU](#)) classes. According to CTU Chairman Tim Duffy, K3LR, CTU sessions will take place all day on Thursday, May 14, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in downtown Dayton. Duffy said that 2015 will mark the ninth year in a row that CTU sessions have been held in Dayton, in conjunction with Dayton Hamvention.®

Over the years, in addition to the US, seven countries have hosted CTUs — Australia, Russia, Germany, Italy, England, Brazil, and Finland. More than 3700 students have attended these classes, and more than 80 CTU instructors have shared their contesting experience and expertise. Duffy noted that [CTU Caribbean](#) will take place January 23-25 during the ARRL Puerto Rico Convention in Hatillo.

The 2015 lineup of classes and instructors is still being finalized, but the CTU website shows the 2014 complement. Anyone who has given a talk about Amateur Radio contesting to any club, hamfest or group since May 17, 2014, qualifies for a \$10 registration fee discount. Choose the “Registration w/Discount” option to get the discount.

CTU sponsors include Icom America, DX Engineering, CQ Magazine and INRAD. --ARRL

ARRL’S LOGBOOK OF THE WORLD TOPS 100 MILLION QSL RECORDS!

The ARRL’s Logbook of The World ([LoTW](#)) online “card-less” contact-confirmation service this week recorded a new milestone — 100 million QSL records out of some 630 million uploaded contacts. That’s an increase of more than 18 million QSL records since the end of last year. First described conceptually in the October 2001 *QST* “It Seems to Us...” editorial, Logbook of The World launched in September 2003. Since then, it has become an accepted Amateur Radio institution — perhaps not at the same level of traditional QSL cards, but close and gaining. The 100 million contact confirmations, ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, pointed out, is the equivalent of 200 million QSL cards.

“If placed end to end, that many QSLs would reach more than 17,000 miles — not quite all the way around the world, but enough to qualify as a ‘long-path’ QSO,” he quipped. ARRL COO Harold Kramer, WJ1B, pointed out that using LoTW can mean a considerable saving in postage for DXers and others over the expense of exchanging QSL cards.

LoTW was an instant success. Within 2 weeks of its debut, the service already had some 2200 registered users and had confirmed some 51,000 contacts out of more than 8 million uploaded. The number of users today number more than 72,000 — up by nearly 10,000 this year alone.

Over LoTW’s 11-year lifetime, many logging programs have incorporated features to enable them to interface smoothly with LoTW. Several awards programs, starting with the ARRL DX Century Club ([DXCC](#)) award, now rely largely on LoTW to determine whether an applicant has met the award’s requirements. It’s also made it easier for award seekers to track their progress. LoTW is the primary means to confirm ARRL [Centennial QSO Party](#) contacts. The service also supports [VUCC](#), [WAS](#), and [WPX](#).

LoTW is open to all; ARRL membership is not required in order to use LoTW. [Applying](#) for a digital certificate is the first step toward taking advantage of the system. The digital certificate authenticates the user’s identity. The digital certificate is free, and LoTW only charges when users apply credits toward an award.

Once they have registered and have a valid certificate, users can digitally sign log uploads via the Internet. If the information in a submitted QSO matches the information submitted to LoTW by the other station, LoTW credits both operators and will display the submitted QSO as [confirmed](#).

A call sign certificate authenticates a specific, registered user as the source of each submitted contact, and other users may not see information submitted by other operators. This combination maintains the integrity of the contact verification process that has long been the hallmark of ARRL awards programs. --ARRL

K1N NAVASSA DXPEDITION TEAM IS READY TO ROLL FOR EARLY FEBRUARY START

The [K1N Navassa Island](#) team has announced that it will hit the airwaves in about 4 weeks. While the team's exact departure date from its staging area depends on the weather and the availability of US Fish and Wildlife Service ([USFWS](#)) transportation, it appears that K1N will be up and running during the first 2 weeks in February. It's been more than 22 years since Navassa Island (KP1) was last activated, and, according to the team, the USFWS will not allow another operation for at least another decade.

"This is a *once in 32 years* opportunity to work Navassa!" the team stressed in a December 30 media release. "Everyone can make the most of this opportunity by *listening* to the operator's instructions and following the cadence of the operator."

The team has estimated that it will take 2 full days of helicopter shuttles to transport everything needed to begin operations. "Because of the helicopter logistics, this will be a no-frills, minimum-comfort operation for the team," the team said. "Meals will be MREs [military 'meals ready to eat']. The [shipping] container has been organized for a quick camp setup and quick radio/antenna setup to take advantage of every moment."

[ClubLog's DXCC Most Wanted List](#) puts Navassa Island at #1 on phone, #5 on CW, and #4 on digital modes. K1N will not be operating on all modes on all bands, the team's statement noted, but plans to limit most bands to a specific mode, "so that we can work the pileups down to the last little pistol."

According to the media release, a small team of USFWS personnel will accompany the radio amateurs, and the contingent will include "armed federal law enforcement officers."

The K1N DXpedition is the recipient of an ARRL [Colvin Award](#) grant. Team members have contributed about one-half of the total budget and is accepting donations through the Northern California DX Foundation ([NCDXF](#)). The team has a presence on Facebook and Twitter ([@navassa2015](#)).

The DXpedition's organizer, [The KP1-5 Project](#), received word from the USFWS in October that it would be allowed to activate Navassa Island in early 2015, taking advantage of a time of year when bird nesting activity is minimal.

Headed by KP1-5 Project President Bob Allphin, K4UEE, the team includes 15 experienced operators. Navassa is more than 100 miles from the nearest helicopter staging point, and as many as 10 round trips may be needed at the start and finish of the operation. --ARRL

ARRL LAB RECEIVES A MAJOR UPGRADE – THANKS TO TEKTRONIX

Alan Wolke, W2AEW, Senior Applications Engineer for Tektronix Corporation, visited ARRL Headquarters in Newington, Connecticut on January 6, 2015 to introduce the ARRL Laboratory Engineers to their new Tektronix Mixed Domain Oscilloscope, model MDO4104B-3, which is being donated to the ARRL by Tektronix.

Alan, an ARRL Life Member, arranged for the donation. The dual function instrument has a bandwidth of 1 GHz, 5 GS/s for time domain measurements and can make frequency domain measurements up to 3 GHz. The MDO4104B-3 replaces the ARRL Lab's Tektronix TDS-3052B, a 500 MHz storage oscilloscope. This new addition substantially upgrades the Lab's measurement capabilities.

Bob Allison, WB1GCM, ARRL Test Engineer, said, "This oscilloscope is a huge benefit to us. It will be particularly important considering the fast paced evolution of digital technology. The ARRL Lab is grateful to Tektronix, to Alan Wolke, and Tektronix Public Relations Manager, Amy Higgins, for this generous contribution."

It is interesting to note that Alan has personally produced a large number of quality training videos. Each video is a valuable tool for the radio amateur who wishes to learn more about the many practical applications of test instruments. Check out Alan's YouTube page at <https://www.youtube.com/user/w2aew>. --ARRL

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON: MICHIGAN HAM WRAPS UP GRID MASTER AWARD

Satellite enthusiast Doug Papay, KD8CAO, of Zeeland, Michigan, has worked all 488 US grid squares via satellite and has been granted Grid Master Award #2. He worked N2COP operating portable in FM13, via SO-50 on December 15 for his final grid. His father, John Papay, K8YSE, of N Royalton, Ohio, holds Grid Master Award #1.

In a recent AMSAT-BB e-mail exchange with Damon Runion, WA4HFN, the awards manager of the [Star Comm Group](#), which sponsors the Grid Master Award, Doug Papay credited his father and several other satellite ops for making it possible to activate "so many rare grids" needed for the award. "Special recognition goes to my father K8YSE, Jim, ND9M, Patrick, WD9EWK, and Ted, AA5CK, for having been major contributors over the years to this accomplishment," he added.

He said that his father forwarded a text from Star Comm Group President Rick, WA4NVM, that N2COP was active from FM13.

To qualify for the Grid Master Award, you must complete and confirm satellite contacts with all 488 grids in the US. [More information](#) on the Grid Master and other Star Comm Group awards is on the Star Comm Group website. — *Thanks to AMSAT News Service via Star Comm Group and KD8CAO*

SHORTS

NEW ELEMENT 3 (GENERAL CLASS) QUESTION POOL RELEASED – The Question Pool Committee of the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators ([NCVEC](#)) has released the 2015-2019 Element 3 (General Class) question pool. The new question pool becomes effective for all Element 3 examinations administered on or after July 1, 2015, and it remains valid until June 30, 2019.

The question pool files are available in [PDF](#), Microsoft [Word](#) (.doc), and ASCII [text](#) formats. Section G7A requires the use of one illustration, a schematic identified as G7-1. This drawing file is [published](#) separately. — *Thanks to Roland Anders, K3RA, NCVEC Question Pool Committee Chairman*

DX ENGINEERING HAS ACQUIRED SOME FAMILIAR ANTENNAS - The Bencher Skyhawk (20-15-10 meters) and Skylark (17-12 meters) along with the Butternut vertical antenna line; HF9V (80-6 meters), HF6V (80-10 meters), and HF2V (80 and 40 meters). The Bencher line of CW paddles will still be sold by Bencher. All of the accessories and add-ons for the antennas will continue to be available, including replacement parts.

SCOTT N3FJP HAS RELEASED NEW VERSIONS OF ALL [N3FJP contesting software](#) - plus the *Amateur Contact Log* program. There are too many details to relate here but if you browse to Scott's [Dec 5th news release](#), not only do you get the full story but the section "CW Encouragement for the CW Challenged!" Good stuff!

EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY'S NEW SATELLITE TRACKING WIDGETS ARE LIVE - thanks to [Chip Sufitchi N2YO](#). The widgets are fed with the latest orbital tracks for [ESA missions](#), or missions with significant ESA participation. The default track shows the ISS but there are 17 other tracks to explore! (From [AMSAT](#) News ANS-355)

THE SPACEWEATHER SERVICES - we've all grown to love have changed as of December 9th! The two websites [www.spaceweather.gov](#) and [www.swpc.noaa.gov](#) now link to [origin-www.swpc.noaa.gov](#). SWPC's [legacy website](#) will be available to all users for a transition period of at least 60 days (with the exception of POES satellite products which will be discontinued December 31). Bookmarks or automatic links to pages on the old website will no longer work. Most of the content will be available on the new site under new links and lots of new links there are (look at the bottom of the page). The ham's eye view of R (Radio blackouts), S (Solar Radiation Storm Impacts), and G (Geomagnetic Storm Impacts) at the top of the page (maximum, now, and predicted) are easy to read at a glance. Is this like a new solar cycle?

Part of the Spaceweather makeover is a new [map display](#) for the aurora forecast. Now the aurora is shown in green, and there is a gray line overlay as well. Neat!

THE *RCA ARC MONTHLY NEWSLETTER* IS COMPILED AND EDITED BY JIM RINEHART, AND JIM KEETH. ALL MATERIAL CONTAINED HEREIN IS OBTAINED FROM THE SOURCES CREDITED AND EDITED FOR THIS NEWSLETTER. EMAIL TO <mailto:WebMaster@w9rca.org>. Check our web site at <http://www.w9rca.org/>