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SIGNALS

Rockwell Collins

Monthly Newsletter of the

Amateur Radio Club

Volume 37 Issue 02 **Web Site** http://www.w5rok.us **November 2015**

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RCARC
Membership Meeting

Tuesday 24 November 2015
1700 Social 1730 Meeting
1800 Program

Methodist Richardson Medical Center
At Bush/Renner/Shiloh Intersection
Second Floor Conference Room 200

Subject:
Program TBD

Local Club News

Meeting Notice

The program for this month was not finalized when the newsletter was published; Bob Kirby K3NT was still working on it. But the meetings are always great, so be sure to be there on Tuesday, 24 November!

RCARC Community Service Activities

Siren Testing Dennis Cobb WA8ZBT, Chris Havenridge KF5GUN, Frank Krizan K5HS, John McFadden K5TIP and Jim Skinner WB0UNI participated in the Richardson emergency siren testing on 7 October 2015. All sirens tested operated normally. The siren testing is performed at 12:00 on the first Wednesday of each month. The sirens are monitored by amateur radio operators and reports made using the Richardson Wireless Klub (RWK) repeater at 147.120 MHz.

Crime Watch Patrol Jim Skinner WB0UNI participated in Richardson Duck Creek Crime Watch Patrol (CWP). CWP members, after successful completion of Richardson Police Department Training, patrol their neighborhoods and report all suspicious activities to the Police Department.

New Location for Monday Ham Lunch

Starting Monday, Nov 9, we will be trying a new eating place in Richardson named Southern Recipes Cafe located at 1381 W. Campbell Road (slightly East of Coit near Mimosa Dr.) They have a broad menu of offerings at reasonable prices (Drinks are $1.70). Here is a web link to their menu http://www.allmenus.com/tx/northeast/304944-southern-recipes-cafe/menu/. See you there at 11 AM on Monday.

(Contributed by Larry Essary K5XG)

A New Heathkit! So, Why Am I Not Excited?

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

A couple of weeks ago I got an e-mail from Heathkit. Yes, the NEW Heathkit. you might remember that a couple of years ago, there was all this hype about a “new” Heathkit and how they were going to start designing new kits as well as revive popular old designs.

Then, nothing. They went completely quiet-—until a couple of weeks ago. In an e-mail sent to their “insiders,” they say:

"Dear Heathkit Insider,

'What I really hope Heathkit will produce,' a Silicon Valley colleague recently told me, 'is a new radio kit with a beautiful finish, maybe in rosewood.' Something great to enjoy building and learn from, and also visually stunning, so he could put it in his living room and keep it forever.

"Today, my friend gets his wish.

They then go on to explain all of the work they’ve been doing in relocating Heathkit to Santa Cruz, CA, acquiring a second company, and securing all the intellectual property rights to the old Heathkit manuals and logos (meaning no more bootleg copies on the Internet). The e-mail continues:

"That’s a lot, but there’s more. We’ve designed and developed a wide range of entirely new kit products. We authored the manuals for these kits, complete with the beautiful line art you rely on, preserving and respecting our iconic historic Heathkit style. *(Continued on page 3)*

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VE SESSIONS

Dallas tests are held on the fourth Saturday of each month at 1000 hrs. 13350 Floyd Rd. (Old Credit Union) Contact Bob West, WA8YCD 972.917.6362

Irving tests are held on the third Saturday of each month at 0900. Fifth and Main St. Contact Bill Revis, KF5BL 252-8015

McKinney VE test sessions are held at the Heard Museum the first Sunday of the month. The address is 1 Nature Place, McKinney TX. The time of the testing is 1430, ending no later than 1645. ***Note: no tests given on holiday weekends.***

Garland testing is held on the fourth Thursday of each month, excluding November, and begins at 1930 sharp. Location is Freeman Heights Baptist. Church, 1120 N Garland Ave, Garland (between W Walnut and Buckingham Rd). Enter via the north driveway. A HUGE parking lot is located behind the church. Both the parking lot and the Fellowship Hall are located on the east side of the church building, with big signs by the entrance door. Contact Janet Crenshaw, WB9ZPH at 972.302.9992.

Plano testing is on the third Saturday of each month, 1300 hrs at Williams High School, 1717 17th St. East Plano. Check Repeater 147.180+ for announcements.

Greenville testing is on the Saturday after the third Thursday, 1000 hrs at site TBA, contact N5KA, 903.364.5306. Sponsor is Sabine Valley ARA. Repeater 146.780(-) with 118.8 tone.

Richardson The Richardson Wireless Klub (RWK) VE team hold license testing on the third Thursday of each month at St. Barnabas Presbyterian Church, 1220 West Beltline Rd. Testing begins at 1900 hrs in room 12. Enter through the Northern most door on the east side of the church building. For further information contact Dave Russell W2DMR, at 972.690.9894 or E-mail warhog4@tx,rr.com.

President and VP Messages

Fellow RCARC members:

This month I would like to recognize one of our members who does a super job behind the scenes, our Membership Officer, Joe Wolf N5UIC. Joe takes charge and keeps track of the membership data base, and we are really glad that he is doing a great job. Here's to Joe!

Joe passed his general class just before field day. He made about 50 QSO's. He is working to get a small HF antenna up at his home QTH.

Here is some exciting news: The RCARC is scheduled to be featured at the next Vice President's all hands meeting. We need to put together a few slides, any volunteers? Guys, don't leave me hanging, I'm not that good at public speaking!

Let's all have a safe and healthy holiday season, and hit the ground running in the new year.

73
Chris Havenridge
President, RCARC

Secretary's Report

27 October 2015

The meeting was called to order by President Chris Havenridge KF5GUN at 1731.

The following were present at the meeting:

Jim Brown	AF5MA
Dennis Cobb	WA8ZBT
Don Crawford	N5MWG
Gene Duprey	K1GD

Chris Havenridge	KF5GUN
Kenny Keese	KD5EVW
John McFadden	K5TIP
Steve Phillips	K6JT
Mike Schmit	WA9WCC
Jim Skinner	WB0UNI
Joe Wolf	N5UIC

Officers and Committee Reports:
There were no formal reports other than the Secretary's Report, which is contained in this newsletter.

Newly-elected President Chris Havenridge KF5GUN reported on an officers' meeting held on 8 October. That meeting addressed issues affecting the future of the club and suggestions for action to overcome a long-term downward trend in club membership. His written notes were distributed to members present to encourage further ideas and discussion.

Old Business:
There was no old business.

New Business:
Gene Duprey K1GD proposed purchase of a Hy-Gain TH2 Mark 2 antenna for use at Fun Days demos and other club operations. This purchase, at a cost of approximately $390, was approved by a vote of members present.

Purchase of an antenna analyzer (RigExpert AA-1400) at a cost of $1,195 was discussed but no action taken.

Dennis Cobb WA8ZBT mentioned annual operations of radio station W0O from Frankenstein, Missouri on Halloween for those seeking a unique QSL.

Joe Wolf noted that the current club roster is now posted on the website.

Mike Schmit WA9WCC pointed out that the Dallas Marathon, a volunteer opportunity for local hams, is planned for the second Sunday in December.

Adjournment:
The meeting was adjourned at 1836.

A New Heathkit! So, Why Am I Not Excited?

(Continued from page 1) We developed many new inventions and filed patents on them. We built the back office infrastructure, vendor and supply chain relationships, systems, procedures, operations methods, and well-thought-out corporate structure that a manufacturing company needs to support its customers, to allow us to scale instantly the day we resume major kit sales. All this effort enables us to introduce a fleet of new kits and helps ensure Heathkit can grow, prosper, and continue to bring you great new products for a very long time."

So, what's the exciting news? A new QRP transceiver? Maybe a shortwave radio? A new 100-in-1 experimenter kit for Makers?

Uh-uh. Sorry. The "exciting" news is a tuned radio frequency (TRF) AM band (yes, I said AM band) radio kit that costs $150 (https://shop.heathkit.com/shop/product/explorer-jr-trf-am-radio-receiver-kit-black-case-gr-150-bk-16.). Not only is that crazy expensive for an AM radio, it doesn't even come with a speaker. On top of that, there's no soldering. You screw all of the components to the board. I'm speechless (well, figuratively, not literally).

I'm not sure what the target market is for this product. It's certainly not amateur radio operators, who expect a lot more (in terms of both functionality and "fun") for their money. Nor is it the "Maker" folks, who want something more challenging than an AM radio. I think that if I took this to show off at the local Ann Arbor Maker group, they'd laugh me out of the place.

I really hope that they have something better up their sleeves. A strong Heathkit would be good for the Maker movement and for ham radio.

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When not thinking about what kit to build next, Dan, KB6NU, operates CW on the HF bands (mostly 40m and 30m). His #1-rated amateur radio blog can be found at KB6NU.Com, and you can e-mail questions, comments, or complaints to cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

(Contributed by Frank Krizan K5HS)

Understanding Antennas For The Non-Technical Ham - Part 15

*Each month, we continue including in **SIGNALS** excerpts of a book by Jim Abercrombie – N4JA (SK) on antenna design. This book is available online for free and can be located at http:// www.hamuniverse.com/basicantennas.pdf.* And now for the final part of the series.

XVI. GAIN VERSUS FRONT-TO-BACK

As we have said before the front-to-back ratio of a multiband cubical quad can be maximized by careful tuning to achieve about eighteen to twenty decibels front-to-back ratio. A properly designed yagi can achieve a front-to back ratio of better than thirty decibels. A two-element quad has about the same gain as a three-element yagi. You can tune a yagi or quad to either maximum front-to-back or maximum gain. You can also tune them to compromise settings somewhere in between. The question arises as to which maximum should either antenna be tuned? It is our opinion that either antenna should be tuned for maximum front-to-back ratio. In that case the maximum gain will be deteriorated by only a fraction of a decibel. Let us explain why we reached that conclusion with an example.

Today we were on 17 meters to work VP8TD on Pitcairn Island in the South Pacific Ocean. He is a visitor to the island and will be there for about two more months as of this

writing. A resident of the island, VP6TC, Tom Christian hasn't been heard from in months. I suspect he is getting elderly and doesn't get on much anymore. Anyway VP6TD had an enormous pileup going. We were using a three element SteppIR yagi up sixty-five feet on our tower. Also, the amplifier puts out about 1490 watts on 17 meters. We make up for a lack of antenna forward gain with the amplifier. We worked him with one call through the pileup. The SteppIR replaced the two-element Lightning Bolt Quad about 10 months ago. When VP6TD answered us I could hear him over the pileup. From the rear of the antenna were several very loud Italian hams calling him, one of which continued to call even when VP6TD answered someone. The Italians were 180 degrees from the front of our antenna, or directly off the back of where we were beaming. Because of the superior front-to-back of the yagi, I could hear the Pitcairn Island station over the Italians. Had we been using the quad, the Italians would have been at least 10 dB louder and we could have found it impossible to make the contact.

Today, we were in contact with N4XPZ, Joe, on 75 meters while several more hams were talking about the VP6TD on 17 meters last evening. Joe said he tried to work the VP6TD station using a single wire antenna. He complained he could not copy the VP6 because of the Italians who continued to call even when the VP6 answered someone. That illustrated the point we are making in this section. The old adage is true: "You can't work em if you cant hear em!"

XVII. FEED-LINES COMMONLY CALLED TRANSMISSION LINES

Always use the best feed-line you can afford. Resist the urge to be penny wise and pound-foolish. This is particularly true of coax. Better (less lossy) coax will cost more. This cable is carrying your precious RF signal to and from your antenna.

The most common feed lines used by amateurs are 50-ohm coaxial cables. There are many types of 50 ohm coax such as RG-174, RG-58, RG8-X, RG-8, RG-213, RG-8 foam, and 9913. In this book we will only discuss these types. A suffix letter such as an "A or "U" may be attached to the "RG" numbers such as RG-8U or RG-58A. All these cables have a center conductor surrounded by a plastic insulating material, called the dielectric, and a copper braided shield covering it. There is a plastic covering on the outside of the shield to protect the conductors from water. The center conductor and the shield carry RF currents.

These are the common 50-ohm cables:
RG-174 has a very small diameter, 0.101 inches. This cable is used to carry small amounts of RF between circuits in equipment. RG-174 has the highest loss and the least power handling capability of any coax. It is useless as an antenna feed-line because of its loss and low power handling ability.

RG-58 is larger coax having a diameter of 0.195 inches. It can handle low power and can be used on the lower bands to feed antennas a one hundred feet or so away. It is not recommended to use RG-58 on 10 meters because it has a loss of 3dB per hundred feet on that band and half your power will be lost in the coax.

The next larger cable is RG-8X, sometimes referred to as mini-8. Its diameter is 0.242 inches. The dielectric surrounding the center conductor is foam rather than the solid dielectric used in the most coax. Making cables with foam insulation can reduce the loss. Some hams are successfully feeding a kilowatt of power into RG8-X on the lower bands. You will lose 2 dB of power by using one hundred feet of RG-8X on 10 meters. On 80 meters the loss of this cable is negligible.

You will want to use RG-8 or RG-213 if you are planning to use a kilowatt or more of power from 160 to 10 meters or for short runs on VHF and UHF. RG-213 is RG-8 made to military standards. Both have diameters of 0.405 inches. This cable has lower loss and can handle higher power because it has larger conductors and a larger diameter dielectric. RG-8 can handle 4000 watts peak envelope power on the broadcast band. RG-8 has only about 1dB loss on 10 meters per 100 feet. The loss becomes greater and the power handling rating of any coax decreases as the frequency of RF is increased.

There is a lower-loss version of RG-8. It is called RG-8 foam. Belden's number for this product is 8214. Because of the dielectric being foam, a larger center conductor has to be used to keep the impedance 50 ohms. The loss resistance of the larger conductor is less than the smaller conductor used in regular RG-8. In addition, the foam having many air pockets has less dielectric losses. Other manufacturers also make RG-8 foam. One hundred feet of RG-8 foam has a loss of 0.9 dB on 10 meters. Many amateurs will not use RG-8 foam because they mistakenly believe the foam will soak up water. Cut off a piece of this foam material and put it into a container of water. It will continue to float ad infinitum, because it doesn't soak up water. Most of the water seen in coax gets between the dielectric and the plastic outer covering and within the braid shield. Water has also gotten into the strands of the center conductor. Water will get into any coax if the ends are not properly sealed.

Solid conductors have less loss at radio frequencies compared to stranded conductors. Braid has more loss than a solid conductor used for the coax shield. A much lower loss coax, especially for higher frequencies, is available. The Belden 9913 is this product. This coax has a solid center conductor and the shield consists of a coating of aluminum foil covered with braid. The aluminum foil is a solid conductor. The braid over the foil is used to make a good solder connection because you can't solder aluminum. The mostly air dielectric material used in this product requires the center conductor to be larger to make the impedance 50 ohms. Air dielectric also has less dielectric loss than solid. There

are a few manufacturers making 9913 look-alike products. One hundred feet of 9913 will have a loss of about 0.66 dB on 10 meters. There is a coax that looks like 9913 but has a stranded center conductor to make it flexible. It has a little more loss. If you are going to use 9913 on an antenna that rotates, flexing the cable as the antenna turns will cause the center conductor to break. Run the 9913 to the top of the mast, and using a barrel connector, connect the 9913 to a short run of RG-8. Run the RG-8 across the rotor to the antenna.

Coax cables of other impedances are available such as 70-ohm cable. RG-59 and RG-11 are common 70 ohm cable. Hams, except to make quarter wave matching sections, do not use these cables much anymore. There are many other types of cable other than the ones described here.

Open wire feeders, ladder-line, or window-line have much lower loss than coax. The three types are essentially the same except for the method of insulating the two wires from each other. When making open wire feed-line, you should use solid conductors, as large a conductor as possible, and as little dielectric as possible. These factors make open wire have less loss. There is so-called ladder-line for sale, which is really window line, which is made with 16 gauge solid conductors. The solid conductors make for low loss. There is another grade of the same feed-line that has 14 gauge-stranded conductors.

XVIII. ANTENNA SAFETY

1. Erecting Antennas on Masts

Erecting antennas pose some danger especially if they encounter power lines. Never erect an antenna near a power line. Make sure to leave enough clearance so if the antenna supporting structures fall they will clear the power lines. There are many cases of metal masts being raised accidentally encountering power lines, electrocuting the person or persons raising the masts. To raise a mast can expose you to a large force called leverage, which appears to increase the weight of the mast. Exerting oneself to raise a heavy mast can result in painful muscle and back injuries. Never try to raise a mast without sufficient help.

2. Tower Safety

A tower is a wonderful device for supporting wire and beam antennas, but a person who has never put up one should seek advice of people who have experience in erecting towers. The obvious danger is falling off the tower. It should never be climbed without a climbing belt. Most people falling off a tower do so because of some kind of equipment failure or the tower collapses because of overload.

In erecting a tower, a gin pole strong enough to support the weight of the tower section being raised should be used. Do not use improvised gin poles, as the strength of them may not support the weight of the tower section and the force from the other end of the rope being pulled by the ground crew. To hold a 50-pound tower section stationary requires a hundred pounds of force, which is the weight of the tower section and 50 pounds of force of the ground crew. The ground crew must exert more than 50 pounds of force to cause the section to be raised. There would be no greater tragedy than the gin pole breaking dropping the tower section on the ground crew. Then there is the possibility of the person on the tower being knocked loose by the falling, broken gin pole.

Another problem can arise if under-sized guy cables and clamps are used to support the tower. We have seen tower failure when guy cables broke in a windstorm, or an insufficient number of clamps holding the guy cable allowed the cable to pull through the clamps. Professional tower people do not use cable clamps. They use "preformed tie-wraps" that grip the guy cables tighter as the force in the guy cables increases. Preformed tie-wraps are available from Texas Towers. Never tie the ground end of a guy cable to a tree. A tree swaying in a heavy windstorm can put enough force on the cable to cause it to break or to pull the tower over. Screw-in anchors available from mobile home suppliers make adequate anchors. Do not anchor a guy cable where a tree can fall across the guy cable. This could break the guy cable and cause the tower to fall. Never place a tower near a house, where if it falls, it could hit the house. Remember Safety First!

TABLE 1 Quarter Wave Matching Sections of 70-ohm Coax

These lengths are for coax having a solid dielectric with a velocity factor of 0.66 and foam dielectric with a velocity factor of 0.78. , You can use odd multiples like 3, 5, 7, etc. of the lengths below if those lengths are too short for your installation

Solid dielectric cable	Foam dielectric cable
160 meters	85ft 6in 106ft 4in
80 Meters	43ft 4in 51ft 9 in
40 Meters	22ft 6in 27ft 6 in
30 Meters	16ft 0in 19ft 6 in
20 Meters	11ft 5in 13ft 10 in
17 Meters	8ft 11 in 10ft 9 in
15 Meters	7ft 7 in 8ft 4 in
12 Meters	6ft 6in 8 ft 0in
10 Meters	5ft 8 3/8 in 6ft 11 in

Contesting as EMCOMM Training?

Deconstructing the Myth

An Editorial by James Wades, WB8SIW

In recent months, the "ARES E-letter" and the “ARRL Letter” have both featured articles suggesting that contesting can serve as training for emergency communications. Over the years, this old yarn has taken on a life of its own and it now periodically surfaces in various magazine articles, newsletters and the like. Like "urban legends," some ideas, if repeated often enough, can

serve to effectively communicate a belief that may or may not be true.

Perhaps it's natural for the proponents of contesting to want to believe that their preferred operating activity is somehow superior to other operating activities. Some in the contest community are undoubtedly tempted to believe that the spectrum and operating time consumed by their favorite operating activity is somehow justified by a higher and more noble purpose. This rationalization can then be used to justify the periodic displacement of competing interests by the overwhelming number of contests, sprints and similar events, which now dominate not just the Amateur Radio spectrum, but the narrative of Amateur Radio.

Like all myths, it is wise to occasionally take a step back and deconstruct a belief system to see if it is rational. The thinking person might start by asking this one question:

> *How does repeating an unrealistic and nearly always identical signal report and serial number or name over and over again for hours train one to provide meaningful third party communications and connectivity in time of emergency*?

The honest man or woman will likely arrive at the correct answer, whereas the few immersed in self-delusion or exercising a hidden political agenda have likely already stopped reading at this point in order to sharpen their pitch forks and boil their tar!

One might argue that contesting has no inherent superiority or training value above that of any other operating interest. As a matter of fact, one could construct a fairly sound argument suggesting that contesting actually inculcates habits and approaches, which are detrimental to emergency preparedness. For example:

- Contesting encourages participants to "squeeze" other participants by pushing hard against adjacent frequency users. Such behavior would be quite counterproductive in an emergency communications situation during which frequency rationalization, message/circuit prioritization and similar *cooperative* (as opposed to competitive) techniques are absolutely essential to efficiency.
- Emergency communications requires that one convey third party traffic on behalf of served agencies and the general public. The content of such message traffic is highly variable and perhaps even quite technical. The argument that shouting "59" and a serial number or similar brief exchange over and over and over again into a microphone for hours prepares one to handle complex emergency communication is patently ludicrous on its face. *Worse yet, the "contesting is training" argument implies that real training during traffic nets, ARES activations and public service events is perhaps less important or even unnecessary for the contester.*
- The argument is often made that contesting encourages one to build a high-grade station. Yet, a station set up for excellent performance in the ARES and NTS environment should be configured in a much different manner than that of the typical contest station. From the choice and positioning of the radio equipment at the operating position to basic antenna design, the emergency communicator must design his station in a manner that is often much different than the requirements of a "big gun" contester.
- The argument that contesting helps one develop such skills as copying weak signals through interference also applies to other operating activities, including QRP operation, portable and mobile operation, or even using vintage ("boat anchor") receivers.
- Over the years, a variety of wide coverage, independent "public service nets" have emerged on 20-meters. When a disaster occurs, those attempting to access these nets often emulate contest techniques, the result being "pile-ups," interference, and an embarrassing inefficiency. In other words, these users operate in the emergency in the same manner in which they "practice" and the results are often abysmal.
- Real emergency communications demands that one apply solid administrative skills, such as keeping detailed radio logs with concise summaries of all important communications recorded against time, files of ICS-213 messages or radiograms arranged and available for quick reference against serial number and/or time, the ability to type clearly and use word processor programs and the like efficiently. Contesting merely requires that one record brief, predictable exchanges in a single, repeatable and fairly simple logging program. Only active traffic handling can exercise these more complex administrative skills BEFORE an emergency happens.

Now...don't start the tar and feathering yet! The goal in this article is not to be "anti-contest." Contesting deserves the same level of courtesy and access to spectrum and operating time as any other operating activity. However, balancing competing operating interests in order to allow everyone fair and equitable access to the spectrum is essential to a diverse and healthy Amateur Radio Service. Unfortunately, one can take this deconstruction process even further to argue that the constant promotion of contesting in our publications degrades diversity and ultimately squeezes other potential operating interests to the margins of the hobby/service.

Examine the contest calendars and one could conclude that Amateur Radio is no longer an investigative, educational and public interest activity and is instead little more than "radio sport." Most weekends are now dominated by not just one contest, but often by multiple contests. Most contest organizers seize the weekends....and much of the HF spectrum from Friday night through Sunday afternoon, which may be convenient for the contester, but which is also very inconvenient for the non-contester who may only have an occasional hour on a Friday or Saturday night to enjoy his hobby.

Consider these arguments:

- Many contest organizers give little or no thought to sharing spectrum with other users who may not have the time (or interest) to dedicate to a contest. Few contest promoters place frequency limits on sub-bands to contain a contest, thereby affording a bit of limited access for the non-contester. Admittedly, the WARC bands are non-contest, but this is not always practical for those who might operate nets or want to maintain a schedule on a weekend evening.
- No International body exists to harmonize the contest schedule. The result is often several competing contests, sprints and similar activities occurring on the same day.
- Little meaningful officiating occurs during contests, as might happen with any "real" sporting event. Few contesters have been disqualified or penalized for stepping on existing QSOs, which suffered the misfortune of being in progress when the "radio sport" event kicked-in. No one appears to be disqualified for calling "CQ TEST" atop nets, existing QSOs or the like. One could argue that contesting is like a baseball game without an umpire or a football match without officiating.

So let's step out on that very dangerous and shaky limb and argue that

> *Contesting offers no intrinsic superiority over other operating activities nor does it offer any meaningful EMCOMM training value beyond that of other common operating interests.*

In reality, there are only two activities that prepare the radio amateur for service in time of emergency; traffic nets and ARES (or similar organizations such as MARS, SATERN, etc.).

Ultimately, one could assume that the contest myth is designed to deflect possible criticism of an operating interest that has developed a certain cultural hegemony that now dominates the politics of our national Amateur Radio associations. By suggesting that contesting is somehow more beneficial than other operating interests, one can, at the very least, deflect the criticism of a silent, disorganized majority, which chooses not to participate but whose voices are squelched by the lack of a specific, common interest and the sometimes petty politics of ham radio.

The time has come to drop the "contesting is training" myth and accept the fact that contesting is just another operating activity with no inherent superiority over any other operating interest.

Contesting is a fun and worthwhile operating activity and a pleasure to thousands of radio amateurs. Most contesters are courteous, first-class operators, who promote an activity that has its benefits. However, if one wants to learn how to communicate in time of emergency, join a traffic net, participate in ARES or a similar EMCOMM group and practice handling third party message traffic.

Enjoy contests, but just don't fool yourself into believing it constitutes meaningful training for emergency communications.

(From QNI—The Newsletter, Volume 4, Issue 4, December 2015. Contributed by Steve Phillips K6JT)

Upcoming Events

NOVEMBER

21-23 **NOVEMBER SWEEPSTAKES—PHONE** The objective is for stations in the United States and Canada (including territories and possessions) to exchange QSO information with as many other US and Canadian stations as possible on 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meter bands. Begins 2100 UTC Saturday and runs through 0259 UTC Monday. More info at http://www.arrl.org/ sweepstakes.

28-29 **EME 50-1296 MHz** The objective is to work as many amateur stations as possible via the earth-moon-earth path on any authorized amateur frequency above 50 MHz. 48-hour periods (0000 UTC on Saturday through 2359 UTC Sunday). More info at http://www.arrl.org/eme-contest.

DECEMBER

4-6 **160 Meter** The objective is for Amateurs worldwide to exchange information with W/VE amateurs on 160-meter CW. Starts 2200 UTC Friday, ends 1600 UTC Sunday. More info at http://www.arrl.org/160-meter.

12-13 **10 Meter** The objective is for Amateurs worldwide to exchange QSO information with as many stations as possible on the 10 meter band. Starts 0000 UTC Saturday; runs through 2359 UTC Sunday. More info at http://www.arrl.org/10-meter.

20 **Rookie Roundup—CW** This is a great way to try out contesting in an event designed for newcomers. To pre-register teams or submit your score after the event, please visit the Rookie Roundup page hosted by Bruce Horn, WA7BNM. "Old Timers" should also take note of this event. Consider opening your station up to a rookie (or two) and become an Elmer. Remember, the more operators are on the air, the more fun the 'Roundup will be for everyone. The third Sunday of December from 1800 UTC through 2359 UTC. More info at http://www.arrl.org/rookie-roundup.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

Daily DFW Early Traffic Net (NTS) at 6:30pm 146.88 – PL 110.9Hz

Daily DFW Late Traffic Net (NTS) at 10:30pm 146.72 – PL 110.9Hz

Daily Texas CW Traffic Net (NTS) at 7:00pm on 3541 KHz and at 10pm on 3541 KHz www.k6jt.com

1st Wednesday Richardson Emergency Siren Test. At noon using the Richardson Wireless Klub (RWK) repeater at 147.120 MHz.

2nd Wednesday ARES North Texas HF Net Every month—3860 KHz at 8:30 pm—9:30pm

Rockwell-Collins

Amateur Radio Club

Mail Station 461-290

P.O. Box 833807

Richardson, TX 75083-3807

TO:

CLUB STATIONS
(972) 705-1349

W5ROK REPEATER
441.875 MHz +5 MHz Input
131.8 Hz PL - RX and TX

W5ROK-1 PACKET BBS ROK Node
145.05 MHz

W5ROK-N1, W5ROK-N2 & W5ROK-N3 HSMM-MESHNET Nodes 2.4 GHz

Tuesday 27 October 2015

1700 Social **1730 Meeting**

Methodist Richardson Medical Ctr
At Bush/Renner/Shiloh Intersection

Second Floor Conference Room 200

NEXT SIGNALS INPUTS DEADLINE:
➔➔➔ 11 December 2015 ➔➔➔