



# The Ellwood Echo

Volume 14 - Issue 1

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### ELLWOOD CITY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, INC.

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**2010 DUES  
ARE NOW  
DUE**

**Please contact Dennis  
KB3IUU**

**To get them paid  
The form is on  
The last page**

**Help Dennis with this be-  
ing his first full year in  
this position**

**Next Test Session to  
be held  
3rd Sunday of  
January, 2009**

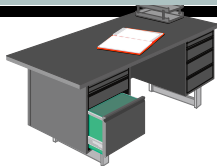
Anyone wanting to take a test or  
classes, please contact Don  
Cripe, KE3MM, and he can direct  
you to the proper people.

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**HEALTH & WELFARE**

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Just sitting here working on the first News Letter of this new year the weather outside is very bad with ice and rain. This is a good time to think about what you want us to have in this year's news letters. Please let us know if you want something special and we can work that way. Emergency communication is a very important part of

amateur radio so I will try to do all I can to keep you all up to date on what is going on. With all of the people that we have in silent keys and the loss of their family and other we are losing to health issues I don't know how we can keep going it is a shame that the members don't seem to have the interest in the hobby any more. I will no longer

snail mail any news letters and will try and get the e-mail list so that I can still send that list out . If anyone wants to help with the staff please let us know. N3ZJM Jim

## MEETING NOTES

Meeting was held on December 5, 2009. Seven people were present. Post office and Safety deposit are paid for another year. Dennis offered his Kettle Korn machine for fund raisers. We will not be having the Festival due to lack of people to work.

Next meeting  
is on

## ARRL - JOIN OR RENEW THROUGH US

This is a great time to think about joining or renewing your membership with the ARRL. If you are already a member, you can renew your membership through the club, even though we no longer get rebates for renewals. If you are not a member of the ARRL currently, but are considering it, please join through us. We get a \$15 rebate for all new members who join

through the club, and \$2 rebate for renewals has been reinstated. we'd like to pass the savings on to you. If you are interested, please contact our Membership Committee in care of **Dennis Neese, KB3IUU 412 Smiley Street** you can email him at [kb3iuu@arrl.net](mailto:kb3iuu@arrl.net) or [ecara@qsl.net](mailto:ecara@qsl.net). As an ARRL affiliated Special Ser-

vice Club, we encourage all of our members to consider joining. We are Special Service club affiliated with the ARRL, and we are very proud of that, but we need to keep at least half of our membership as members of the ARRL. So please help us keep up our good standing!

# Monthly Western Pennsylvania Section News

## Summary

I just returned from a vacation in Florida and what a shock coming back to the frosty cold weather here in W. Pa. I honestly enjoy the winters here for the most part but it was quite a shock going from 86 to 22 degrees here. I guess with the holidays coming in the next two weeks I should expect the colder weather. Now with the cold blustery winter upon us we all are aware of the old adage that antennas perform bet when installed in foul weather so perhaps now is the time to do some antenna work. After the high winds last week I checked my antenna and connections and did a little repair work. This might be a good time for us all to take a look at the dipoles and the coax and tighten things before we can no longer get to them. I want to remind everyone that on December 31 is the annual straight key night. Those of us that operate CW should probably dust off the key and connect it to the rig for this fun operating event. Throughout the year I have the paddles and keyer on my rig but I look forward to this event to go back to the days when I had a simple rig with just a straight key attached. Funny how technology can spoil

us and make us forget the fun of the hobby when we first started. I was checking the ARRL website and noticed that we already have 6 hamfests scheduled and approved for our area. This first will be on February 14, 2010. Check the hamfest schedule at <http://www.arrl.org/hamfests.html> often for upcoming dates and locations. Another area we should be aware of with the possibility of storms is our potential need for emergency communications. Make sure you check the conditions of your HT batteries and that they are fully charged. Also consider battery backup or a similar device for your HF station if you can. Operation during emergencies can often continue for several days. I am now scheduling club meetings and events to attend. Any group wishing to have me attend one of their functions should submit a request and a couple of possible dates for me to fit into my calendar. I will try to accommodate all requests. Get your requests in early for the best chance to have me visit and speak to your group. I want to take this opportunity to thank all the individuals that help throughout the year in various volunteer positions. Without you there is no ARRL. Each of you as a member

makes the league it is not just a place in Connecticut. We need your help in the upcoming year as well. There are positions open that need filled so our programs can continue. One important area is the Section Traffic manager position. Without a leader we will soon be in danger of losing this important function. I cannot do this as well as my position as section manager. As always I encourage you to join traffic net and help deliver messages to individuals in your community and throughout the country as we continue to keep the keep this activity running strong. The section net is on 3983 every evening at approximately 4:45 PM local time due to poor band conditions. Join the nets and lets all get Radio Active. Wishing each of you and your families a very happy safe holiday season and a new year filled with sunspot activity. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year  
73  
John V. Rodgers, N3MSE  
W. Pa. Section Manager

## The 2009 ARRL Spectrum Defense Campaign Needs Your Support

Chief Development Officer Mary Hobart, K1MMH, reports that the ARRL has raised more than \$221,000 toward the goal \$310,000 for the 2009 Spectrum Defense Fund. "The messages I receive from the ARRL members and hams who contribute to this much needed fund are heartening," she said, "expressing appreciation for all the work ARRL does for the Amateur Radio community to protect our frequencies. And we can all be proud of the successes that have come from the work of ARRL leadership -- the Board and staff here at HQ. But there is always more to do." Hobart said that year after year, ARRL members tell her that the League's representation of radio operators -- both in Washington and on the international stage -- is one of, if not the most important activities that the ARRL does. "The cost of that representation at meetings in Washington, at ITU gatherings and working party meetings to prepare for world telecommunications conferences is the key to the continued success of our defense efforts," she said. "Spectrum Defense is one of those areas that is not covered completely by member dues. So we ask ARRL members to do what they can to help cover those expenses." Amateurs wishing to make a contribution may do so easily online, via postal mail or by calling the ARRL Development Office at 860-594-0397.

*+ Now You Know!: Santa's a Ham!  
By ARRL News Editor S.  
Khrystyne Keane, K1SFA*

For 37 years, Mickey Hicks, WO6T, played Santa Claus to hundreds of children. These children never sat on Santa's lap to tell him that they had been good boys and girls and what they wanted for Christmas. They did it in a much more simple way -- they picked up a microphone and told Santa on the air. Each year, Hicks, a ham for almost 50 years and a long-time Amateur Radio instructor, would get on the air for 10 days each December as W6S (Whiskers-6-Santa). Unfortunately, Hicks became a Silent Key earlier this year Hicks said that the first year he operated as W6S was a hit with the operators -- and their children. Most children, he noted, are a bit apprehensive of talking over the radio, let alone to Santa. One of the most challenging parts of operating was when he heard a parent say "This one is shy and won't talk." That was never a problem for Hicks -- after a few warm-up questions, such as "Can you say hello to Rudolph?" -- he said he could strike up a conversation that lasted a few minutes. He had even heard back from parents that they weren't able to get the microphone away from the kids afterward! Back in 2001, Hicks told the ARRL that his Santa's Workshop was a great ham radio recruiting tool. One of his most memorable experiences was when a young girl he'd once spoken with on the air as Santa came by with her ham ticket in hand to thank him in person for getting her interested in Amateur Radio. "I had tears in my eyes, of

course," he said. One of the most enjoyable moments of Hicks' Santa career occurred when he was speaking with a young child and realized he had spoken with their parents and grandparents when they were youngsters! Mark Slater, WI6J, was Hicks' QSL manager. With the blessing of Hicks' wife, son and daughter-in-law, Slater will carry on the W6S tradition for 2010 and beyond. "Mickey's shoes are so much bigger than I could ever hope to fill," he told the ARRL, "but I know Mickey would have wanted Santa to keep getting on the air and speaking with the children." Slater said you can find him most evenings, as well as the weekend of December 19-20, on 14.270 MHz, Santa's favorite frequency. Santa is a ham -- *now you know!*

## Amateur Radio Bill Passes Senate, Moves to the House

On Monday, December 14, S 1755 -- *The Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Enhancement Act of 2009* -- passed the Senate by unanimous consent; the bill now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration. Sponsored by Senator Joe Lieberman (ID-CT), and Senator Susan Collins (R-ME), S 1755, if passed, would direct the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to undertake a study on emergency communications. S 1755 points out that "There is a strong Federal interest in the effective performance of Amateur Radio Service stations, and that performance must be given -- (A) support at all levels of government; and (B) protection against unreasonable regulation and impediments to the provision of the valuable communications provided by such stations."

Members of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee considered S 1755 on December 10. After it passed through Committee, it was placed on the Senate's calendar to be voted on. "We are grateful to Committee Chairman Lieberman and Ranking Member Collins for sponsoring the bill and arranging for its swift consideration and passage by the Senate," said ARRL Chief Executive Officer David Sumner, K1ZZ.

Similar in language to HR 2160 (also called *The Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Enhancement Act of 2009* that was introduced this past April by Representative Sheila Jackson-Lee [D-TX-18]), S 1755 calls on DHS to undertake a study on the uses and capabilities of Amateur Radio Service communications in emergencies and disaster relief and then to submit a report to Congress no more than 180 days after the bill becomes law. The study shall:

- Include a review of the importance of Amateur Radio emergency communications in furtherance of homeland security missions relating to disasters, severe weather and other threats to lives and property in the United States, as well as recommendations for enhancements in the voluntary deployment of Amateur Radio licensees in disaster and emergency communications and disaster relief efforts and improved integration of Amateur Radio operators in planning and furtherance of the Department of Homeland Security initiatives.
- Identify impediments to enhanced Amateur Radio Service communications, such as the effects of unreasonable or unnecessary private land use regulations on residential antenna installations; and make recommendations regarding such impediments for consideration by other federal departments, agencies and Congress.

In conducting the study, S 1755 directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to "utilize the expertise of stakeholder entities and organizations, including the Amateur Radio, emergency response and disaster communications communities."

S 1755 makes note of the fact that Section 1 of the Joint Resolution entitled *Joint Resolution to Recognize the Achievements of Radio Amateurs, and To Establish Support for Such Amateurs as National Policy* -- approved October 22, 1994 (Public Law 103-408) -- included a finding that stated: "Reasonable accommodation should be made for the effective operation of Amateur Radio from residences, private vehicles and public areas, and the regulation at all levels of government should facilitate and encourage amateur radio operations as a public benefit." The bill also pointed out that Section 1805(c) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 757 (c)) directs the Regional Emergency Communications Coordinating Working Group of the Department of Homeland Security to coordinate their activities with ham and Amateur Radio operators among the 11 other emergency organizations, such as ambulance services, law enforcement and others.

# Hams Help Out with Sea Rescue

commercial When Dave Nicholson, N2AWE, was stranded at sea earlier this month off the Bermuda Triangle, he had no fuel and his 47 foot sailboat had sustained severe damage in a storm. When they learned of his predicament, hams with the Maritime Mobile Service Net (MMSN) helped to coordinate with the US Coast Guard to bring fuel and a tow boat to guide Nicholson safely to port. On December 1, Nicholson contacted the MMSN seeking weather information, telling the Net Control Station he had sustained damage to his boat during some foul weather the previous night. "His sails were damaged beyond usability, a fuel tank had busted loose and numerous other problems were at hand, including the remaining fuel had been contaminated," Richard Webb, NF5B, told the ARRL. "The net provided him with weather guidance and forecasts for his part of the world -- between Bermuda and the Bahamas -- and he went on his way."

Nicholson again contacted the MMSN each day on the next two days. On December 3, he asked for some weather routing, not just a forecast. "I then ran a phone patch to a recognized weather router in Florida for him," Webb recounted. "We also queried him as to his status, food and water availability and such. He told us his wife, who was with him, was a bit battered and bruised during the storm [that damaged their boat]." The next day, the MMSN arranged for Herb Hilgenberg, VE3LML, a marine weather router, to be on frequency to offer assistance to Nicholson.

Bill Sturridge, K14MMZ, telephoned Fred Moore, W3ZU, asking for Moore to come on 40 meters to assist with getting the Coast Guard in touch with Nicholson. "We made several phone patches between the US Coast Guard in Miami and Nicholson," Moore said. ""We also established a radio watch to maintain regular communications with the vessel until the band went long, due to the fact that Nicholson was too near Florida." Coast Guard officials spoke with Nicholson, but he still was not ready to declare an emergency. "He just wanted to make the Coast Guard aware of his situation," Moore said.

According to Moore, the Coast Guard asked him to maintain a watch on 2182 kHz until shorter skip returned the next day. "Over Saturday evening, the Coast Guard attempted to have a vessel rendezvous with Nicholson to transfer some fuel, but Nicholson refused to take any fuel, as he wasn't sure if he could store it or utilize it at this point," Webb said. "On Sunday afternoon around 1700 UTC, I conducted a phone patch to the Coast Guard from Nicholson. During this patch, we discussed possible fuel deliveries. The Coast Guard said they would put out a request for nearby commercial vessels to provide some diesel fuel for Nicholson."

Webb said that Nicholson "could only rely on a solar panel to charge his batteries to operate his radio equipment and what other electronics had survived [the storm]. He had no autopilot, no navigational computer, no Winlink or other capability. He had the ham bands and the VHF marine channel 16 available, but with limited battery power."

Because of Nicholson's precarious situation, Webb said that MMSN decided to "guard on 40 and 80 meters for the nighttime hours and we arranged with operators to guard those frequencies. Nicholson did not make any of the nighttime schedules, which followed the regular two hour pattern set up over the previous days. Even if Dave did not make the other daytime schedules, he always made the 1700-1800 time slot on 14300 kHz to get the weather and update us on his position."

On December 7, Webb conducted another phone patch between the Coast Guard and Nicholson. The Coast Guard said they would send out another message for vessels to assist with a fuel delivery. "Later that afternoon," Webb told the ARRL, "we relayed a message to Nicholson from the Coast Guard that a tanker would endeavor to rendezvous with him to transfer some diesel fuel." Moore said that the Coast Guard had located a Swedish commercial merchant ship that was willing to provide Nicholson some much needed diesel fuel. "In the wee hours of the morning," he said, "the captain of the vessel advised me that he had delivered the fuel but the engine on Nicholson's boat was not functioning, was dead in the water without lights and was, in his words, a 'hazard to navigation.'" Webb relayed that the commercial vessel's captain had advised Nicholson to "abandon [the boat] and turn in a claim to the insurance carrier right away." Later that day, the Coast Guard located a seagoing tug to go on site and meet up with Nicholson. The tug then towed his family and boat to Nassau, arriving 36 hours later, around 2000 UTC.

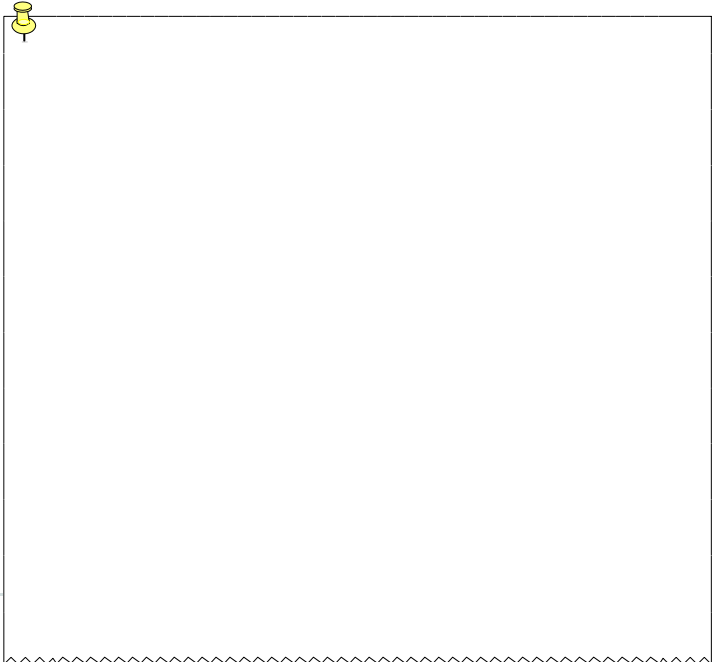
Steve Carpenter, K9UA, told the ARRL that he kept Nicholson's father informed of the rescue via landline, per Nicholson's request: "The father -- who is 88 years young -- was very thankful for all the effort taken by the ham radio operators involved and for the time it took to keep him informed until the final report that his son and family aboard were taken into port safe and sound."

," he said, "the captain of the commercial vessel advised When Dave Nicholson, N2AWE, was stranded at sea earlier this month off the Bermuda Triangle, he had no fuel and his 47 foot sailboat had sustained severe damage in a storm. When they learned of his predicament, hams with the Maritime Mobile Service Net (MMSN) helped to coordinate with the US Coast Guard to bring fuel and a tow boat to guide Nicholson safely to port.

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## WHAT'S COMING UP?



# RED HOT

FAMILY RESTAURANT  
Hot Dogs & Family Dining

6th Street & Factory Ave.  
Ellwood City, PA

Phone 724-752-9717



## VISIT OUR WEB SITE !!

Stop by and visit the ECARA online! Keep in touch with fellow members on the Members' Page or browse through the Photo Album. Visitors are WELCOME!

<http://www.qsl.net/ecara>

Please stop in and sign our Guest Book!

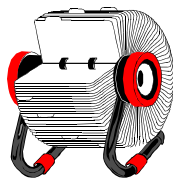
Web site created and maintained by Marian Oliastro, W3MHO  
for the ECARA  
© 2002 - 2009

Sometimes we need an angel for ourselves.

Sometimes we are destined to be an angel for others.

## Member email addresses

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Keith Wright - kb3daw@verizon.net

## YESTERDAY

Imagine there is a bank account that credits your account each morning with \$86,400. It carries over no balance from day to day.

Every evening the bank deletes whatever part of the balance you failed to use during the day. What would you do?

Draw out every cent, of course?

Each of us has such a bank. It's name is TIME.

Every morning, it credits you with 86,400 seconds.

Every night it writes off as lost, whatever of this you have failed to invest to a good purpose.

It carries over no balance. It allows no over draft. Each day it opens a new account for you. Each night it burns the remains of the day.

If you fail to use the day's deposits, the loss is yours. There is no drawing against "tomorrow."

You must live in the present on today's deposits. Invest it so as to get from it the utmost in health, happiness and success! The clock is running!! Make the most of today.

To realize the value of one year, ask a student who failed a grade.

To realize the value of one month, ask a mother who has given birth to a premature baby.

To realize the value of one week, ask the

editor of a weekly newspaper.

To realize the value of one hour, ask the lovers who are waiting to meet.

To realize the value of one minute, ask a person who just missed a train.

To realize the value of one second, ask someone who just avoided an accident.

To realize the value of one millisecond, ask the person who won a silver medal at the Olympics.

Treasure every moment that you have!

And treasure it more because you shared it with someone special, special enough to spend your time with. And remember time waits for no one.

Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. That's why its called the present.

It's a new year and many losses have already occurred to our club. It is time to look ahead to those members and friends that are left. Time waits for no man and as our group decreases in size and patients, it is time to renew bonds and share the time we have with each other. Getting to know each other again, our desires for radio, our needs as family and friends. Amateur radio was once about helping others and we need to be about doing this very thing. We need to be communicating with one another more and so lets take this year to be about the communicating business.

Have a happy and prosperous new year.

## Newsletter and Club Information

The "Ellwood Echo" is published monthly. It is the voice of the Ellwood City Amateur Radio Association, Inc. of Ellwood City, PA. Information contained in this newsletter (unless copyrighted) may be reprinted with credit given to the author and the ECARA. Contributions to the newsletter must be submitted by the 15th of the month prior to publication. Material submitted will be used at the discretion of the editor. Letters for the "FEEDBACK!" column, please mark ATTN: FEEDBACK on the envelope. Views and opinions that are a part of articles or letters in the newsletter are not necessarily those of the ECARA.

### Editorial Staff

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Ellwood City, PA 16117  
kb3iuu@arrl.net

### Address mail to:

ECARA  
PO Box 25  
Ellwood City, Pa. 16117  
ecara@qsl.net

The ECARA meets monthly at the Tree of Life Wellness Center in Ewing Park. The meetings are on the first Sunday of each month from 7:00 to 8:00 pm. Visitors are welcome. E-Board meetings are currently combined with the regular meeting unless a special meeting is called.

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### E.C.A.R.A. OFFICERS

President	Keith Wright—KB3DAW	724 944 2725
1st Vice President	Jim Klingensmith — N3ZJM	724 752 3367
2nd Vice President	Carol Klingensmith—N3ZLF	724 752 3367
Secretary	Linda O'Conner—KB3IQP	724 752 9087
Treasurer	Debbie Read-KB3IEQ	724

### TRUSTEES

Station Trustee:  
Butch McGee — K3YO  
Trustee:  
Elmer Brewer — W3ELB  
Carol Klingensmith — N3ZLF

### Ellwood City Amateur Radio Association, Inc. Membership Application

	1st qtr	2nd qtr	3rd qtr	4th qtr
___ FULL	\$20	\$15	\$10	\$5
___ FAMILY	4	3	2	1
___ ASSOCIATE	\$15	\$11.25	\$7.50	\$3.75
___ JUNIOR (to age 21)	Free	Free	Free	Free
___ SENIOR (65 and over)	\$10	\$ 7.50	\$5.00	\$2.50

DATE \_\_/\_\_/\_\_ NAME \_\_\_\_\_ CALLSIGN \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ ARRL Y ( ) N ( )  
BIRTHDAY \_\_/\_\_/\_\_ ANNIVERSARY \_\_/\_\_/\_\_ SPOUSE'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to receive the newsletter each month by \_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_ Regular Mail

Is this application for a \_\_\_ New Member \_\_\_ Renewal

DUES PAID: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ METHOD OF PAYMENT: \_\_\_ Cash \_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_

### PLEASE MAIL TO:

**ECARA Membership Committee**  
Dennis Neese, KB3IUU  
412 Smiley Street  
Ellwood City, PA 16117

**ELLWOOD CITY AMATEUR  
RADIO ASSOCIATION, INC.**

**Contact Us!**

PO Box 25  
Ellwood City, PA 16117

Phone: 724-752-3367  
Email: [ecara@qsl.net](mailto:ecara@qsl.net)

**N3EC**

Repeater  
145.170 MHz  
100 Hz PL



**MISSION STATEMENT**

The Ellwood City Amateur Radio Assoc., Inc. was founded in August of 1997 to provide an Amateur Radio presence in the Ellwood City area. It is our desire to serve our community where we can and to teach young people, or anyone who is interested, the benefits and advantages of becoming a "ham radio" operator. We are a Special Services Club affiliated with the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). Many of our members belong to Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and Skywarn, helping the National Weather Service. It is more than just a hobby!

**The ELLWOOD ECHO  
Editorial Staff  
P.O. Box 25  
Ellwood City Pa. 16117**

**"SERVICE THROUGH COMMUNICATION"**