

Lunch with the Director

On Wednesday, September 28, we had the opportunity to have lunch with Dick Isely, W9GIG, our ARRL Central Division Director and his wife. We met at the Olive Garden for the meal. Just over 20 attended, which was a great turnout! Since Dick's wife is not into ham radio as much as he is, she enjoyed hosting a separate table for the wives of our members. They enjoyed not discussing radio. This was an informal meal, with no after dinner speech. Dick did voice his comments on a few items, making clear his feelings on our hobby and the future. He is much in favor of making the exams more comprehensive in the operating, procedure, and rules areas, as we fade away from the code. All welcomed his comments. Dick and his wife made the stop on their way to a commercial pilot retiree convention in Nashville. Dick is a retired Northwest Airlines pilot, as well as a former Navy pilot. He indicated he would be happy to return and spend an evening at one of our club meetings where he can give an informative talk on our hobby. We hope to arrange this for one of our future meetings.

Repeater Report

The new tower is up, some of our antennas are on it, but the feedline is not. That is to be done soon. There is some paperwork and FCC approval that must precede the final move for the station. Our feedline will go up with all of the rest with one pull-up. Then we will be ready to make the change to the new tower and antennas. We hope this will be in the next few weeks.

The Illinois Repeater Council has strongly suggested that all repeaters in Illinois be equipped with tone access by January 1, 2006. Our 146.76 repeater currently transmits a CTCSS tone, but none is required on the input. We plan to install the tone access by December. Testing will begin in November. Al, K9SI, researched the databases of tones in our area so we can avoid duplication. He determined that a tone of 162.2 will be the best. Other local

repeaters may consider changing to that tone, just for consistency. Currently, our tone of 103.5 transmitted on 146.76 is the same as Peoria uses on their 146.76 repeater, thus we hear them when our repeater is inactive. And, we key up their repeater if we have our tone on when we transmit to our repeater, if band conditions are enhanced. The new tone avoids that conflict. Users of the .76 repeater should be ready to transmit with the tone in November.

Cook Out

Our September meeting was rearranged by the hurricane! Sunday, October 25, was a day of rain from the hurricane. We decided a couple of hours prior to the scheduled event to move it to Monday, the 26th. Since several had prepared a dish to bring, we wanted to hold the cook out as soon after the scheduled date so they could still bring their dishes. Monday was a nice day, so we met at Burwash Park for an evening meal. We understand some could not make it with the date change, but others who had conflicts on Sunday were able to attend on Monday. We send our apologies to those who were unable to participate due to the date change. Our meetings from now on should be at the Fire Institute, or touring a facility locally.

Hamfests

September winds down our busy hamfest season. Peoria was well attended by TCARC members, as always. The weather was excellent the whole weekend, after a few showers prior to the opening on Friday. Some flea market spaces were flooded. The hamfest committee moved those affected. The crowd was smaller this year, as has been the case with most recent hamfests. Many found the bargains they were in search of, and vendors were mostly happy with sales. Luck was with TCARC members this year. Mark, KA9SZX won a merchandise certificate from the ARRL, Pat Butler, KB9PAT, won an antenna and soldering iron, and Bill, WB9KMD won an Icom HT. Congratulations to all! The committee announced that next year,

the hamfest will be on Saturday and Sunday only. No more Friday afternoon flea market.

Radio Expo was held the same weekend at Grays Lake. Attendance was lower there as well. Some reported it was down more than expected. We had heard that this was the last time for that location, but the sale of the fairgrounds was set such that the hamfest will be held there again next year before demolition of the fairgrounds. It will, again, be on the same weekend as Peoria. Radio Expo has made it clear that after next year, their first priority is to change weekends. We had hoped they might choose to relocate to Peotone, but many attend from Wisconsin, so it will probably stay north of Chicago. It was interesting that many attending Peoria were from the Chicago area, with one stating that he lives in Gurnee.

Thursday Night Net

Each Thursday evening at 9:00 p.m., our Champaign County Two Meter Net operates. The Synton Amateur Radio Club of the University of Illinois, and the Twin City Amateur Radio Club sponsor this net jointly. It is a net that includes for sale items, wanted items, swap listings, announcements of interest to the local Amateur community, and the weekly edition of Newsline. Newsline is a 20 to 30 minute newscast of Amateur Radio related items. It is a great way to hear what is happening around the country and around the world with our hobby. This net is a tradition that has continued for many years. The coordinator of the net is K9QZI, with assistance from AB9FJ. Mark, KA9SZX, provides Newsline. He downloads it each week rebroadcast it during the net. The net is held on the 146.760 repeater, W9SEH.

ARRL Renewal Through TCARC

Because we are affiliated with the ARRL, you can renew your membership through the club and we receive a commission from the renewal. If you are not a member of ARRL, you may join through the club and we receive a large commission. You pay the same to renew

through us as you do sending it direct to ARRL. To join or renew, fill out the form required and make a check payable to TCARC and send it to our PO Box address on the return of this newsletter. We will process it quickly, forwarding it on to the ARRL. If you wish to deliver the form and check personally, please give it to Milt, K9QZI, our Treasurer, who processes the applications. Every little bit of income helps the club!

Vanity Processing on Hold

From ARRL News

The FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (WTB) has suspended the processing of Amateur Radio vanity call sign applications. A WTB staff member, speaking to ARRL on background, said the FCC halted vanity processing on or about September 23 after realizing that filing and regulatory deadline extensions for hurricane-affected licensees in certain states could adversely impact the vanity system. The WTB staffer pointed out that the filing extensions announced this month also apply to Amateur Radio's two-year "grace period."

"Because these extensions apply to the grace period, it could affect vanity processing," the WTB staffer told ARRL. "We stopped processing when it came clear that some call signs could be affected." No decision has been made on when vanity processing will resume.

Under Part 97, Amateur Radio licensees have two years from the date of license expiration to renew their tickets without having to retest or risk losing their call signs to a vanity applicant. The staffer confirmed that WTB had disabled the "auto-termination" feature of the Universal Licensing System (ULS) so that it will not automatically cancel licenses that have not been renewed by the end of the grace period.

In the meantime, the FCC is encouraging radio amateurs to continue filing vanity applications as they normally would. "Everything will be held in queue," the WTB staff member said.