

Six Meter Club of Chicago

HALO

www.k9ona.com

January 2017

COMING EVENTS

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| January | 13 | Six Meter Club Meeting, 7:30 p.m., St. John's Lutheran Church, SW corner of 47th and Brainard, LaGrange |
| | 22 | WCRA Hamfest, Kane Cty Fairgrounds, Route 38 & Randall Road, St. Charles |
| | 21-22 | ARRL VHF Contest, Club Participation – see article and <i>PLEASE OPERATE!</i> |

AWARDS PRESENTED AT CLUB'S HOLIDAY DINNER

Our annual holiday dinner meeting, which was held Saturday, December 17, was well attended with more than forty members and guests present despite the poor weather we experienced.

The Club's Founders Award was presented to two outstanding members, Dawn Hull, KA9ERS and Jim Hull, W9JGH, for their overall level of involvement in Club activities. They always find time in their busy schedules to work at our Hamfest and many of our public service activities too., and we congratulate and thank them for their support.

DUES PAYABLE FOR 2017 NOW

Third and final dues notice – dues are payable for 2017. Dues are \$20, except for second family members, students under the age of 18 or seniors 65 and older up to the age of 90, for which the fee is \$12. Members age 90 and above who have been Club members for five years or more are exempt from paying dues. Please see our Treasurer, Bob, AK9Y at the meeting or remit by check to Robert Sebonia, 5118 South Meade Avenue, Chicago IL 60638. Thanks for your continued support!

ARRL JANUARY VHF CONTEST SET FOR JANUARY 21-22

Please plan on participating to help the Club score in the ARRL January VHF Contest, beginning 1900 UTC Saturday Jan. 21 (1 p.m. Saturday CST) and ending 0359 UTC Monday Jan. 23 (10 p.m. Sunday).

There are various entry categories – full information is available on the ARRL web site, www.arrl.org. Logging can be done via computer using any of the popular contesting software such as N3FJP, CT, etc. Paper logs may also be submitted – we will have forms available at the January Club meeting.

Even if you can only operate for a short time, with a modest station, every little bit helps the Club aggregate score – please participate as much as you can!

Due to a rules change in 2016, 146.52 simplex will now be available for contesting, and can also be used during Field Day! Other simplex frequencies such as 146.55 can still be used – suggestion – look for members on 146.55 at the hour and half hour.

ELECTION OF CLUB OFFICERS FOR 2017 AT JANUARY MEETING

Nominations were accepted at our November meeting for positions of President, V.P./Recording Secretary, Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant-at-Arms, and one Member at Large, to provide leadership for the Club during 2017. Our by-laws provide that the second Member at Large is chosen by the person elected to that office.

Our current officers were all renominated for another term; additional nominations may be made prior to elections, which will be held at our January meeting. Please make certain that the prospective nominee regularly attends meetings and is willing to accept the nomination.

ARRL FOUNDATION ACCEPTING 2017 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

The ARRL Foundation, which administers our Six Meter Club of Chicago Scholarship as well as a number of other awards, is currently accepting applications for the 2017-2018 academic year.

Our Club scholarship, a \$500 grant funded by proceeds from our Hamfest, is available to any licensed Illinois amateur who is pursuing or will be pursuing an undergraduate two or four year degree at an accredited university, college, community college or technical school. Full details and a downloadable application form, which must be submitted to the Foundation no later than January 31, 2017, are available on the ARRL Foundation's web site, www.arrl.org.

NEXT SMCC BOARD MEETING SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 24

Our next Board of Directors meeting will be held at 7 p.m. Friday, February 24 in the Community Room, lower level of the La Grange Park Municipal Building, 447 North Catherine Avenue. We will not have a Board meeting in January.

DIGITAL SLOW SCAN TV NET THURSDAY EVENINGS

Don't forget that we have a Digital Slow Scan TV Net every Thursday evening for about an hour, beginning at 7:00 p.m., on our two meter repeater. We use EasyPal software which can be downloaded free from the Internet.

CLUB LOGO CAPS, PATCHES AVAILABLE AT MEETING

A limited quantity of white baseball-style caps with the Six Meter Club logo patch affixed are available from Jim, WA9FIH for \$6.00 each. The caps, with adjustable headband, are available either in cotton corduroy for cool weather wear, or in the lighter half mesh polyester style.

Iron-on embroidered club patches for application to shirts or jackets, 2-3/8" x 3-1/2", are also available from the Club for \$1.75 each. American Flag patches in the same size are available for 75 cents each. See Jim at the next meeting.

SIX METER ROUNDTABLE EACH TUESDAY AT 8 P.M.

Our Six Meter Roundtable Activity Net meets on 50.130 MHz USB Tuesday evenings at 8 p.m., usually for about a half hour. Help keep the band active and join in the ragchew – tell your friends about it too – everyone is welcome!

NEW DIGITAL MODES ANNOUNCED BY K1JT

In December, Joe Taylor, K1JT, released the latest version (1.7) of his *WSJT-X* software suite, designed to facilitate basic Amateur Radio communication using very weak signals (*WSJT* stands for "Weak Signal communication by K1JT"). Version 1.7 included the new modes *MSK144* and *QRA64*, as well as *ISCAT* (ionospheric scatter). *MSK144* and *QRA64* (and *QRA64A*) are finding a home within the VHF Earth-Moon-Earth (EME, or moonbounce) and meteor-scatter communities, but *QRA64A* signals also have turned up on 160 meters, which poses its own challenges to weak signals.

"*QRA64A* QSOs are being made nightly on 160 meters, of all places, and *QRA64* activity on 2-meter EME is becoming significant, especially on weekends," Taylor remarked in a January 9 update posted to the Moon-Net reflector, pointing out that *QRA64* is decoding signals down to about -28 dB signal-to-noise.

But Taylor does not advise a wholesale shift to the use of *QRA64* on the HF bands — at least just yet. "It's okay to play with and test *QRA64* at HF, if you wish," he commented recently on the *WSJT Development* discussion group. "Some of our earliest tests of the mode were done on the 20-meter and 30-meter bands." He suggested, though, that HF operators stick with *JT65*, "not least because, at present, we have included no 'multi-decode' capability for the *QRA64* decoder. It's made to decode just one signal in the passband."

In the *WSJT-X* Version 1.7 User Guide, Taylor pointed out *QRA64*'s several advantages over *JT65*, including better performance on the very weakest signals. "We imagine that, over time, it may replace *JT65* for EME use," he wrote. "*JT9* was originally designed for the LF, MF, and lower HF bands. Its submode *JT9A* is 2 dB more sensitive than *JT65*, while using less than 10% of the bandwidth."

Taylor told ARRL that he expects *JT65* and *JT9* to remain the preferred modes for making “minimal QSOs” at HF for some years to come. “*QRA64* is 1-3 dB more sensitive than *JT65* or *JT9*; this is important for EME, but much less so at HF, because one can usually run 20 W instead of 10 W, when the going gets rough.”

These modes use 1-minute timed sequences of alternating transmission and reception, so a basic contact can take up to 6 minutes — two or three transmissions by each station, one transmitting on odd UTC minutes and the other on even. Taylor said that *MSK144* “is quickly becoming *the* mode for meteor scatter,” at least in North America and Europe. “Unlike *FSK441* — the older standard mode for meteor scatter — *MSK144* uses strong error correction and *JT65*-like messages. Messages are displayed in complete form or not at all, and false decodes are rare. Last week, we introduced an ‘SWL’ feature that allows decoding of *MSK144* ‘Sh’ (short) messages directed to someone other than yourself.”

(tnx ARRL)

NORWEGIANS UPSET ABOUT SWITCH TO DIGITAL FM BROADCASTING

Norway is going forward with plans to replace its national FM broadcasting network with digital mode outlets by the end of 2017, the first nation to do so across the board. Norway's Ministry of Culture proposed the switch more than 5 years ago. The first official switchover to digital audio broadcasting was set for January 11 at 11:11 a.m. in Nordland, and the changes will take place state by state. Norway currently offers 25 national digital channels, with only five channels designated for analog FM broadcasting. Local radio stations outside of major Norwegian cities will continue to broadcast on FM.

The planned shift to digital broadcasting has caused a furor among radio listeners in Norway, who don't feel that they will have the time or money to keep atop the technological wave and may miss important information once the shift takes place. The situation is similar to when digital television broadcasting became the standard in the U.S. Millions of homes and vehicles in Norway are not yet equipped to receive digital broadcasts — a digital converter can cost upwards of \$200. Surveys show that a wide majority of Norwegians oppose the shift, which is advocated by those who contend that the shift will provide better quality signals and the option of multiple programming streams per channel.

(tnx ARRL)

UPCOMING 2016-2017 HAMFEST SCHEDULE

Listed below are all known hamfests and swap meets in the local area:

January	22	WCRA, St. Charles Kane County Fairgrounds
February	12	ARCI, Carol Stream
	25	Cabin Fever Hamfest LaPorte IN
March	5	Sterling-Rock Falls ARS
	19	Tri-County ARS Jefferson WI
April	30	ARCI, Carol Stream
May	7	Kishwaukee ARC, Sandwich
June	4	Starved Rock RC, Princeton
	18	Six Meter Club + ARCI DuPage Fairgrounds, Wheaton
July	8	South Milwaukee ARC Oak Creek WI
August	4-6	ARCI Radiofest, Addison
September	23	CFMC Radio Expo Belvidere IL
October	8	ARCI, Carol Stream
December	8	ARCI, Carol Stream

ARCI SWAP MEET FEBRUARY 12

The Antique Radio Club of Illinois will hold their next swap meet Sunday morning, February 12 at the American Legion Post in Carol Stream, 570 North Gary Avenue — a block north of Geneva Road. The indoor meet usually begins shortly after 6 a.m. and continues until about 10 a.m. No charge for admission, but due to limited space, sellers must be ARCI members. ARCI holds six meets each year, including their June meet at our Hamfest. For more information, check their web site, www.antique-radios.org.

HALOADS...

For Sale:

Dentron Clipperton-L Amplifier, Excellent Cond.
Local pick up only.....asking \$550

Dentron MT-3000A Antenna Tuner, good condition
Local Pick up only.....asking \$250

Drake MS-4 Speaker, Very good condition.....\$75

Heathkit SB-610 Monitor Scope, great condition....\$70

Rich Breckinridge, WA9BXB
3827 Kemman Avenue
Brookfield IL 60513
708-387-0245 days
Vincop@aol.com

For Sale:

ICOM 271A Multimode Two Meter 10 W
with hand mic.....\$250

ICOM 471A Multimode UHF w/mic 10 W.....\$250

Yaesu FT-901DM w/AM filter + desk mic \$500/ofr
Yaesu matching antenna tuner.....\$100 firm

Yaesu FT-767 HF + 6, 2, 432 + hand mic...\$600/ofr

Tom Dombrowski, K9BVQ
5426 South 72nd Court
Summit IL 60501
708-496-8982

For Sale:

Heathkit IM-28 VTVM, very good condition, copy
of schematic, with probe\$40 or best offer

1000 ft spool of CAT 5 Yellow Jacket computer
cable.....\$75 or best offer

Mike Huedepohl, WD9GJK
3532 Raymond Avenue
Brookfield IL 60513
708-485-5481
WD9GJK@arrl.net

For Sale:

Astatic 877HL Desk Microphone.....\$50

National HRO-60 Receiver with matching speaker,
Nine coil sets for shortwave bands including band-
spread on ham bands and cabinet to hold unused
coil drawers. Radio has been recapped and is in
excellent condition. Also includes a plug-in
SSB product detector from a QST article which
occupies space intended for a NBFM adapter (no
mods to the radio). Original manual included...\$400

Shure 404B Hand Mic, new in the box.....\$30

Multi MPA-250 Biamp, 250 Watt Public Address
Amp in rack cabinet, like new.....\$150

Ron Fitzgerald, K9ZWR
5555 South Neva Avenue
Chicago IL 60638
773-586-3276
ronfitz5555@yahoo.com

For Sale:

Crystals for 222 MHz Midland 13-509, Clegg FM-76
And Cobra 200 radios. Many repeater pairs and
simplex channels available. SASE or email for a list.
\$5.00 each, \$9.00 pair plus postage.

CASIO CT-700 Tone Bank Electronic Keyboard,
Excellent condition.....\$50

Motorola C54RCB MICOR UHF repeater on 440 ham
band, including unified chassis with revr, transmitter,
card cage, and power amplifier. Does not include 13.6
VDC power supply, cabinet, or ID/controller. Very
clean, excellent working condition when removed from
service. Club property surplus to our needs.....\$90

Tektronix 535A Classic Oscilloscope with several
plug-ins and matching cart, exc. cond.....\$100/offer

Jim Novak, WA9FIH
2335 South 2nd Avenue
North Riverside IL 60546-1308
708-442-4961
WA9FIH@arrl.net

SOMETHING TO SELL? LIST IT HERE!
EMAIL YOUR AD TO WA9FIH@AOL.COM

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NORTH RIVERSIDE IL 60546-1308**