

telstar



THE NEWSLETTER OF STARS (SOUTHTOWNS AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY)

MARCH 2009

VOL 42 Issue 7

ARRL DX PHONE CONTEST BRINGS DX IN FULL FORCE TO HF BANDS

With the 2009 ARRL International DX CW Contest now history, the first full weekend in March brings the next round of competition: [The 2009 ARRL DX Phone Contest](#). Like its CW predecessor, this event focuses on DX station working all US states and Canadian provinces, while US and Canadian amateurs try to work as many DX countries as possible over the 48 hour contest period.

"While the origins of the ARRL DX Contest go back to 1927, the first Phone weekend wasn't until 1937," said ARRL Contest Branch Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X. "AM was the voice mode used at that time. The rules may have changed since the event was held back in the 1930s, but the premise remains the same: How many contacts with stations in far-away locales can you make?"

Just as in the CW contest a couple of weeks ago, US and Canadian stations send a signal report and their state or province, while DX stations send a signal report and their transmit power. Remember that for this contest, Alaska and Hawaii are considered DX stations -- this means stations in KH6 and KL7 focus their efforts on working Stateside and Canada.

How can you participate? Kutzko said you're only limited by your imagination and willingness to get on the air: "Even though we are at the bottom of the 11-year solar cycle, there will be plenty of chances to work DX, even for stations running 100 W and a dipole or vertical antenna. If you live in an area where antenna restrictions exist, take your contest effort on the road! Operate from your car, set up a portable an-

MARCH MEETING

This month's club meeting will begin at 7:00 PM on Thursday March 5 at the NIKE Base Clubhouse. All interested in amateur radio are invited to attend. Neither club membership nor an amateur radio license is required.

Hope to see you there!



tenna in a park or campground or see if a friend's station is available. If you have a station and won't be using it, consider opening your doors to members of your club to try their hand at working some DX. If you make 100 QSOs, you're eligible to purchase a commemorative pin for your efforts."

The ARRL International DX Phone Contest runs from 0000 UTC Saturday, March 7 to 2359 UTC Sunday, March 8. Complete rules and forms are available online. Why let all this DX pass you by? Get on the air and have some fun!

—ARRL Website

HAPPY MARCH BIRTHDAY!

- 5th KC2QKB Jon Hall
- 10th KB2KOL Scott Barto
- 18th W2ZDP Wayne Carpus
- 20th KB2KVA Ed Taublieb
- 23rd W2PIP Paul Perlman
- 24th KC2TPX Mike McCrossan



CLUB MEETINGS

Club meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month at 7:00PM at either the Hamburg Youth Center (Prospect and Hawkins Avenues) or the NIKE Base Clubhouse. Everyone is welcome. Board meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month at the Nike Base Club Station at 7:30PM and are open to all club members.

CLUB HF STATION

The club Nike Base HF station is located on Lakeview Road 1.75 miles east of Route 20 next to the Hamburg Town Arena.

CLUB NETS

STARS club nets are open to all to exchange information on local amateur radio activities.

STARS WB2EZU Memorial HF net meets at 10AM local time on Saturdays on 3.925 MHz +/- QRM. Bob Lehning WA2YSJ is usually the net controller.

STARS Sunday morning RagChew Net at 9:30AM on 28.380 Mhz.

STARS Board of Directors

President	Keith Patterson KC2DGC
Vice President	Scott Barto KB2KOL
Treasurer	Jack Cullum KB2ESM
Finc. Secretary	Judy Levan N2TEZ
Secretary	Wayne Carpus W2ZDP
Director	John Crawford, Sr. KB2VWC
Director	Ken Pokigo KC2AYK

FIELD DAY STATION LOCATOR SERVICE ONLINE FOR 2009

First introduced in 2008, the ARRL's Field Day Station Locator Service was a popular addition to the Field Day toolbox. This service --



an interactive map that helps amateurs or those interested in Amateur Radio find a Field Day site near them -- is free to clubs or individuals who will be operating public Field Day stations. Stations can also be listed by state or province. ARRL Field Day is the most popular on-the-air operating event in Amateur Radio. On June 27-28, join tens of thousands of Amateur Radio operators as they gather for a public demonstration of our Service.



Thanks to Scott KB2KOL for making STARS the first club listed in western New York!



STARS has been designated a Special Service Club by the ARRL.

3900 SATURDAYS

The older I get, the more I enjoy Saturday morning. Perhaps it's the quiet solitude that comes with being the first to rise, or maybe it's the unbounded joy of not having to be at work. Either way, the first few hours of a Saturday morning are most enjoyable.

A few weeks ago, I was shuffling toward the garage with a steaming cup of coffee in one hand and the morning paper in the other. What began as a typical Saturday morning turned into one of those lessons that life seems to hand you from time to time. Let me tell you about it:

I turned the dial up into the phone portion of the band on my ham radio in order to listen to a Saturday morning swap net. Along the way, I came across an older sounding chap, with a tremendous signal and a golden voice. You know the kind; he sounded like he should be in the broadcasting business. He was telling whomever he was talking with something about "a thousand marbles." I was intrigued and stopped to listen to what he had to say.

"Well, Tom, it sure sounds like you're busy with your job. I'm sure they pay you well but it's a shame you have to be away from home and your family so much. Hard to believe a young fellow should have to work sixty or seventy hours a week to make ends meet. It's too bad you missed your daughter's dance recital," he continued; "Let me tell you something that has helped me keep my own priorities." And that's when he began to explain his theory of a "thousand marbles."

"You see, I sat down one day and did a little arithmetic. The average person lives about seventy-five years. I know, some live more and some live less, but on average, folks live about seventy-five years.

"Now then, I multiplied 75 times 52 and I came up with 3,900, which is the number of Saturdays that the average person has in their entire lifetime. Now, stick with me, Tom, I'm getting to the important part. It took me until I was fifty-five years old to think about all this in any detail," he went on, "and by that time I had lived through over twenty-eight hundred

Saturdays. I got to thinking that if I lived to be seventy-five, I only had about a thousand of them left to enjoy. So I went to a toy store and bought every single marble they had. I ended up having to visit three toy stores to round up 1,000 marbles. I took them home and put them inside a large, clear plastic container right here in the shack next to my gear."

Every Saturday since then, I have taken one marble out and thrown it away. I found that by watching the marbles diminish, I focused more on the really important things in life.

There's nothing like watching your time here on this earth run out to help get your priorities straight. Now let me tell you one last thing before I sign off with you and take my lovely wife out for breakfast. This morning, I took the very last marble out of the container. I figure that if I make it until next Saturday then I have been given a little extra time. And the one thing we can all use is a little more time.

It was nice to meet you Tom. I hope you spend more time with your family, and I hope to meet you again here on the band. This is a 75 year old man, K9NZQ, clear and going QRT, good morning!"

You could have heard a pin drop on the band when this fellow signed off. I guess he gave us all a lot to think about. I had planned to work on the antenna that morning, and then I was going to meet up with a few hams to work on the next club newsletter.

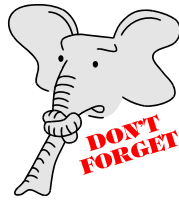
Instead, I went upstairs and woke my wife up with a kiss. "C'mon honey, I'm taking you and the kids to breakfast."

"What brought this on?" she asked with a smile. "Oh, nothing special, it's just been a long time since we spent a Saturday together with the kids. And hey, can we stop at a toy store while we're out? I need to buy some marbles."

—I received this story in an email the other day. I don't know who wrote it, but it sure is something to think about. Judy N2TEZ

HAVE YOUR RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

It's last call for your membership renewal! After this month, mailing lists will be amended to only those that have renewed.



STARS dues are \$21 for individual members, \$27 for a family, and \$8 for student members.

A renewal application is available for download on our website at www.wb2elw.com

Send the completed application along with your dues check made payable to STARS to:

Judy Levan N2TEZ
120 University Blvd.
Depew, NY 14043-2874

Can't remember if you'd renewed?

If you have a "VALID THROUGH 2009" sticker for your laminated nametag, you're all paid up. Don't have one? You haven't renewed yet.

OMAHA POLICE BLOW UP HAM RADIO EQUIPMENT

Omaha, Nebraska police evacuated a midtown neighborhood on February 26th and blew up what they thought was a homemade bomb found inside the home. It turns out the "bomb" was ham radio equipment.



At a home which had suffered a fire last week, a cleaning crew found the equipment and called the police, thinking it was a pipe bomb. Officers briefly cleared the neighborhood and detonated the equipment. No one was injured.

VE SESSIONS

STARS will be holding a VE Test Session on Saturday March 14th. The session will be held at the Hamburg Youth Center (corner of Prospect and Hawkins Aves.)



All candidates should arrive by 9AM. Walk-ins will be allowed, but pre-registering will help speed up the processing the day of the test.

Bring the following to the test session:

1. An original photo ID or two other original forms of ID, plus a photocopy of the ID(s) to be turned in to the examiners for their records.
2. Your current amateur radio license (if any) plus a photocopy of it.
3. The original copies of any applicable Certificate of Successful Completion of Examination (CSCE) plus a photocopy of each.
4. A test fee of \$15.00 (Note price increase)
5. Your Social Security Number (SSN) or your FCC Federal Registration Number (FRN). Your application for a new or upgraded amateur radio license will be rejected by the FCC if you do not provide one of these numbers.

For more information, or to register for the test, contact John Crawford KB2VWC 649-5933.

LARC will be holding a VE session at the Buffalo Hamfest on Saturday March 7th.

ARATS holds test sessions on the first Saturday of the month starting promptly at 10AM at the North Tonawanda Fire Headquarters at 495 Zimmerman Street. Walk-ins accepted, pre-registration is highly recommended. For information on or to pre-register for ARATS exams, call Bill Klepser WB2AIV at 839-3525 or email wb2aiv@arrl.net.

PROS holds test sessions as needed at 585 North Star Road, East Aurora. For information, contact Pat Murray NW2I at 652-8178

ARRL ANNOUNCES SECOND HOMEBREW CHALLENGE

The first ARRL Homebrew Challenge, announced in the August 2006 issue of QST, offered a prize for the best 5 W, 40 meter CW and voice transceiver our readers could build. The only requirement was that the rig had to be built for less than \$50 of new, readily available parts. In 2009, ARRL ups the ante in the Second Homebrew Challenge by upping the power limit to 50 W. All entries are due no later than February 28, 2010.

"Low power (QRP) operation is fun, but often a little more power is even more fun," said ARRL Technical Editor Joel Hallas, W1ZR. "For our new challenge, we are asking readers to design, or adapt a published design (with appropriate credit), and build a 50 W amplifier to follow a 5 W/40 meter transceiver. This could be used behind one of the radios from the original challenge, or from other QRP radios at similar power level." There will be two cash prizes for this challenge. In addition to the prizes, the winners will receive the usual QST page rate for published articles.

The amplifier must operate on 40 meters. It must operate as a linear amplifier capable of accepting a QRP input signal and putting out a minimum of 50 W PEP into a 50 ohm load. It must meet all FCC requirements for spurious emissions. The amplifier must include control circuitry to switch from transmit to receive through a single contact closure and provide a path from antenna to receiver during receive mode. Hallas suggested taking a look at the two part series by Rick Campbell, KK7B, "Designing and Building Transistor Linear Power Amplifiers," in the February and March 2009 issues of QST.

Hallas listed some basic requirements for the Homebrew Challenge:

1. It must meet all requirements while operating from a 13.8 V dc power supply.
2. It must put out 50 W PEP on 40 meters with a 5 W PEP input.
3. It must be a linear amplifier with third order and higher intermodulation products must be below -28

dBc (28 dB below the carrier) as measured using the procedures described in the ARRL Lab product review Test Procedures Manual

4. It must be capable of key down operation at 40 W CW output for 5 minutes without more than a 5 percent reduction in output level.
5. Single contact transmit/receive switching is required.
6. Parts must be readily available either from identified national retailers or by mail order. No "flea market specials" allowed.
7. The total cost of all mechanical and electrical parts required for duplication of the amplifier cannot exceed \$125.

All entries must be received at ARRL Headquarters no later than February 28, 2010. The amplifier that meets all the basic requirements at the lowest cost will receive a prize of \$200.

An additional prize of \$300 will be awarded for an amplifier that meets all the basic requirements and, in the sole judgment of the reviewers, provides the most useful mix of the following additional attributes within the \$125 cost limitation:

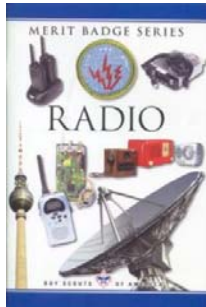
1. Full output with an input lower than 5 W, perhaps as low as 2 W, to allow operation with other popular radios.
2. Use of aluminum oxide or other types of power transistors rather than beryllium oxide.
3. Operation on additional bands besides 40 meters.
4. Operation in support of full break-in (QSK) mode.

Each entrant must submit the fully operational amplifier, as well as a documentation package. This package should include a draft QST article with a discussion of the design considerations and tradeoffs and a description of the construction techniques. The article will also include test and alignment steps, operating instructions, along with a readable schematic with a list of all parts used, their source and price.

The basic rules and evaluation criteria are available on the web at <http://www.arrl.org/qst/hbc/>



BSA UPDATES RADIO MERIT BADGE REQUIREMENTS



The Boy Scouts of America have updated the requirements needed to earn the Radio merit badge. The new requirements became effective with the publication of Boy Scout Requirements 2009. While no new content has been added to the program, the new merit badge pamphlet features lots of new information -- including color pictures and updated charts and text -- that reflects the changes in the Amateur Radio Service since the last pamphlet update in 2002. Approximately 4000 Radio merit badges are earned each year.

According to ARRL ad hoc Scouting Committee member Larry Wolfgang, WR1B, the new Radio Merit Badge pamphlet had been in the works for some time. "BSA has been replacing all merit badge pamphlets with new booklets using color graphics and more modern presentations," he said. "With attractive color photos and clear text explanations of the requirements, the new merit badge pamphlet is a pleasure for the Scouts to read. The new text is due in large part to the efforts of longtime Radio Merit Badge Counselor and K2BSA National Jamboree Staff member Mike Brown, WB2JWD. I am looking forward to using the new pamphlet to teach Radio merit badge at our Council's Merit-Badge-O-Ree this spring, and to having a supply of the new books available for Scouts during the 2009 summer camp season."

ARRL Rocky Mountain Division Director and Chairman of the League's ad hoc Scouting Committee Brian Milesosky, N5ZGT, called the Radio Merit Badge "a perfect avenue to introduce Scouts and Scouters to the wonderful world of ham radio. Ham clubs across the nation should locate a local Boy Scout Troop, secure permission from their Scoutmaster and/or committee to teach the merit badge and deliver an exceptional Radio merit badge class. What the boys -- and their leaders and parents -- will learn in the process is a fair amount of what is part of the Technician li-

cense exam, so the next logical step after a merit badge class is an all-out recruiting effort to get that Troop involved in Amateur Radio. They'll meet new friends and have a great way of communicating while in transit to and from the field, as well as additional peace of mind through an effective means of emergency communications while in the backcountry."

FIRE DESTROYS HOME OF FELLOW HAM

On February 17th fire destroyed the house of Dana Laurie K2SIT. According to the Buffalo News, Buffalo firefighters responded to a van fire and found that the fire had spread to the nearby home, causing a total of \$45,000 damage.

A collection for Dana and his family will be taken up at the March meeting.

WITH SINCERE SYMPATHY

Silent Keys:

John Jarnot KB2BSI
Ted Waclawski N2PZY

We extend our most sincere condolences to
their families.

DID YOU KNOW?

Why are clean hands important? During the cold and flu season it is important to keep your hands clean when you or others around you are coughing and sneezing. Do you know how to tell if you're washing your hands thoroughly? First, wet your hands, apply soap and scrub for 20 seconds to remove stubborn germs. Then, rinse well and completely dry your hands. How long is 20 seconds? About the time it takes you to sing (presumably to yourself!) "Happy Birthday" twice.

MARCH SPECIAL EVENTS

Mar 1-Mar 31, 0000Z-2359Z, Ocean County, NJ. Old Barney Amateur Radio Club, N2OB/150. Relighting and 150th Anniversary of the Barnegat Lighthouse "Old Barney". All bands. QSL. www.obarc.org

Mar 2, 1700Z-2359Z, Orange, CA. Orange County Communications Employees ARC, W6OCC/75. 75th Anniversary of Orange County Communications. 14.320 7.230 3.960 146.895(-). QSL. w6hk@ocraces.org

Mar 7-Mar 21, 0000Z-2359Z, Charlotte, NC. Mecklenburg Amateur Radio Society, W4B. 60th Anniversary of the Mecklenburg Amateur Radio Society. Also operating 20 m portable from 2009 Charlotte Hamfest March 14-15. www.W4BFB.org

Mar 14-Mar 15, 1400Z-2300Z, Robbinsville, NJ. Delaware Valley Radio Association, W2R. Robbinsville, NJ 150 Year Anniversary. 14.270 7.200. QSL. www.qrz.com/ab2io

Mar 21, 1600Z-2359Z, San Diego, CA. USS Midway (CV 41) Museum Radio Room, NI6IW. Commemorating the establishment of Naval Security Group in 1935, and Navy SEABEES in 1942. QSL. USS Midway (CV 41) Museum Radio Room, 910 Harbor Dr, San Diego, CA 92101. af6ha@yahoo.com

Mar 23-Mar 29, 0000Z-2359Z, Camden, SC. Kershaw County Amateur Radio Club, W4U. 77th Running of Carolina Cup Steeplechase Races. 14.260 7.235 3.905 CW up 37 kHz. QSL. Leon M. Morgan Jr, 2304 Moultrie Rd, Camden, SC 29020. n4lm@arrl.net

GREATER BUFFALO HAMFEST

Saturday March 07, 2009

Ismailia Shrine Center

1600 Southwestern Blvd RT 20

West Seneca, NY 14224

Talk In 147.255 + pl 107.2

Hamfest Web Site: gbhamfest.hamgate.net

Admission: only \$7

Sponsored By:

The Lancaster Amateur Radio Club

Large Indoor Hamfest ◇ Breakfast & Lunch

ARRL Talks / Forum & Demos

Hourly Drawings ◇ VE Test Session



SSB March 7-8

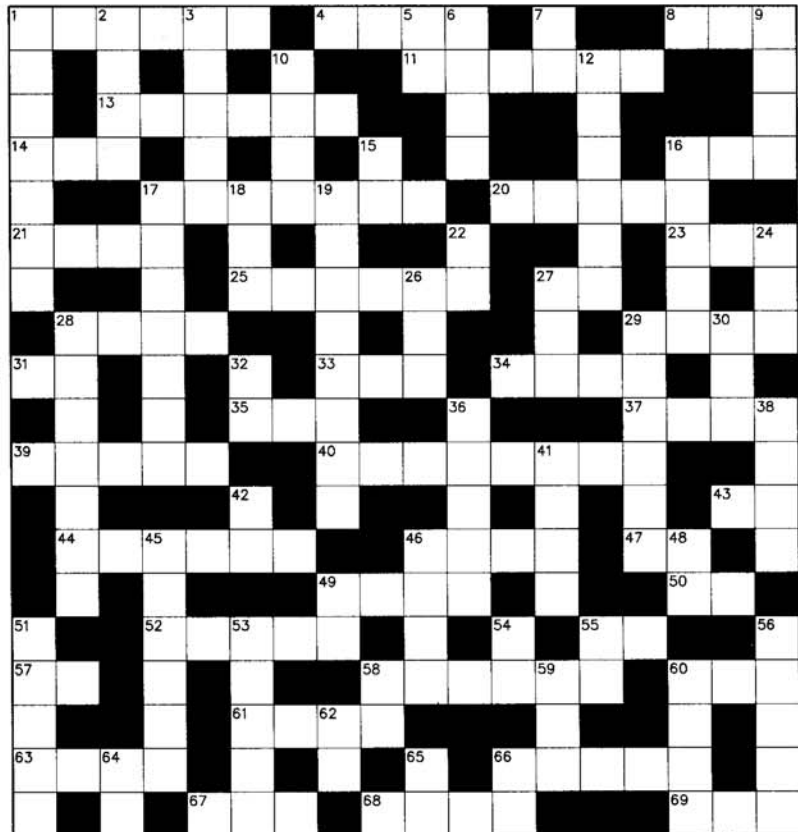


Lights! Pencils! Action!

This puzzle focuses on what makes ham radio so much fun. A sense of humor will be a definite asset.

ACROSS

- 1. Mechanically connect
- 4. Field Day award
- 8. Universal Coordinated Time (abbreviation)
- 11. Save audio for replay
- 13. Change from one to another
- 14. A filament is...
- 16. Speak
- 17. Listen to a signal
- 20. Educate
- 21. Become slowly weaker
- 23. Pose a question
- 25. Response to a question
- 27. End of message (CW abbreviation)
- 28. Attempt to contact
- 29. Supply power to
- 31. Arrange, make just...
- 33. Record of contacts
- 34. QRP transmitter: _____ Tin
- 35. Power (abbreviation)
- 37. Look for the best price
- 39. Opposite of over
- 40. Send a signal
- 43. And (CW abbreviation)
- 44. Make different
- 46. Take a break
- 47. Northeast (abbreviation)
- 49. Opposite of under
- 50. East-West (abbreviation)
- 52. Small adjustment
- 55. Transmit (abbreviation)
- 57. Signals go _____ to the ionosphere
- 58. Change a setting
- 60. Best conditions for antenna work
- 61. Associate with a club
- 63. Add power
- 66. A teacher helps you _____
- 67. For your information (abbreviation)
- 68. Cover
- 69. Remove water



DOWN

- 1. Make louder
- 2. Determine quality
- 3. Clocks do this on the hour
- 5. No response (abbreviation)
- 6. Transmit a message
- 7. Official Observer (abbreviation)
- 9. Receive a message
- 10. Dull soreness
- 12. Fix
- 15. Audio-Visual (abbreviation)
- 16. Make available to a friend
- 17. Substitute a new unit
- 18. PC video mode (abbreviation)
- 19. Prevent electric current from flowing
- 22. Transmit/Receive (abbreviation)
- 24. Joke
- 26. Tiny unit of energy
- 27. Automatic Tuning Unit (abbreviation)
- 28. Join together
- 29. Make secure
- 30. E-I-_-_-
- 32. Alaska (abbreviation)
- 36. Go into
- 38. Succeed at a test
- 41. Join matching connectors
- 42. Mercury (chemical symbol)
- 45. Go to a club meeting
- 46. Understand written text
- 48. Electrical Engineers (abbreviation)
- 49. Everything is A-__
- 51. Construct
- 53. Be entertained
- 54. Gold (chemical symbol)
- 55. Indefinite article
- 56. Observe in order to learn
- 58. An indefinite article
- 59. Observe visually
- 60. Coil on a spool
- 62. Input-Output (abbreviation)
- 64. Alternating current (abbreviation)
- 65. Unit of time (CW abbreviation)
- 66. Low power (abbreviation)

