

'SHOW AND TELL' NIGHT A SUCCESS

At the February meeting, STARS members were invited to bring something of interest for a "Show and Tell" session. Attendees were treated to a variety of items, mostly related to amateur radio.

Included in the display were a set of "jump kits" by **Keith Patterson, KC2DGC**. Each kit was enclosed in an "EMP" resistant case, and contained amateur equipment that could be grabbed quickly for an emergency response.

Pat Groom, KC2VWC, brought "captured lightning". A series of objects showed the results of large electrostatic discharges.

Dave Ludlow, KG4LQT, brought his military radio gear. Others brought old radio equipment, and even and the proverbial resistor cube. Photographs appear on page 7.

TRUNKED RADIO SYSTEMS EXPLAINED

What are trunked radio systems? No, they're not the kits shown on page 7. Instead they are systems designed to make more efficient use of the radio spectrum by combining several different services on one set of frequencies.

To make it happen without interference requires a coordinating influence. That is what a "trunked radio system" does. A control channel keeps track of which frequencies are in use and idle, and assigns them to a service as necessary. A service's frequency changes (an absolute nightmare for scanner enthusiasts).

The topic will be addressed at the March 1st meeting by **Jim Reville, N2QNG**.

A VISIT TO THE 2012 ORLANDO HAMCATION

By **Wayne Carpus, W2ZDP**

Late last year, September I believe, I decided to make an addition my personal "Bucket List". I had heard several fellow hams (both locally and regionally), talking about the annual Orlando Hamcation in February. Since I'm retiring on April 30th of this year, with vacation time to use, I decided to schedule a trip to Orlando and see if the Hamcation really would live up to all the hype.

So off we went, stopping first to see my brother and sister-in-law in Sebring. He's younger than me but retired first and now is a snowbird. We attended the

(Continued on page 5)

CLUB OFFICERS



President	Ken Pokigo, KC2AYK
Vice President	John Leitten, KA2RFT
Secretary	Keith Patterson, KC2DGC
Financial Sec'y	Judy Levan, N2TEZ
Treasurer	John Czuba, W2IV
Director (past pres.)	Wayne Carpus, W2ZDP
Director (1 yr.)	Jon Hall, KC2QKB
Director (2 yr.)	Pat Groom, KC2VWG

Clubhouse Chair	Pat Groom, KC2VWG
Telstar Editor	Tom Dean, KA2NXY
Webmaster	Marc Fruth, N2UBT

UPGRADE CLASSES

STARS wants to know whether or not there is enough interest in arranging upgrade classes.

If interested, let us know (general or extra) at:

wb2elw@verizon.net

NEW TECH CLASS

STARS in cooperation with the West Seneca CERT will conduct a technician class beginning at 7 PM on Thursday, March 8th, at the West Seneca Kiwanis Youth Center, 50 Legion Parkway. For more info, or to help, contact: **Keith Patterson, KC2DGC**, at

(716) 677-0119, or

kc2dgc@verizon.net

OPERATE FOR STARS

Come on down to the Nike Base Clubhouse on Saturday, March 3rd, from 10 AM until ?? and help operate in the ARRL DXCC International contest.

WE GOOFED!

"Hams and Eggs" at Peg's Place Restaurant, listed in the CLUB NETS section of last month's Telstar, should be listed for the 4th **Saturday** of each month.

The Sunday morning net should be **28.380 MHz**.

In the VE SESSION section of last month's edition, the name of a Volunteer Examiner was misspelled. The correct name is Scott **Barto**.

Thanx to Scott Barto, KB2KOL for correcting us.

If you see something we did not get right, let us know:

wb2elw@verizon.net

BLUE AND UNDERLINED

When you see something in Telstar in blue letters and underlined, that means it is an Internet link. Hold the "Control" key and click on it to open a link to an Internet site.

(control + click) [sample link](#)

GET POI ON GPS

Many people now have Global Positioning Systems (GPS). What you may not know is that Points of Interest (POI) are now available for these devices. These POIs can include any group of locations, such as repeaters, gasoline stations, parks, and other sites.

To get with POIs for your GPS, try one of these:

<http://www.poi-factory.com/>

For amateur radio related POIs::

<http://www.poi-factory.com/taxonomy/term/40>

What? Your GPS does not read .csv or .ov2 files? You can find converter programs here:

http://turboccc.wikispaces.com/Extra_POI_Editor

<http://www.poiedit.com/>

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Ken Pokigo, KC2AYK
President

Fellow members;

On behalf of the board of directors and myself, I'd like to welcome you to a new year for the Southtowns Amateur Radio Society. I'm looking forward to a great year for our club. I think we have assembled an excellent team to provide you with service and leadership for shaping the future direction of STARS. We are into a fresh new year and things are beginning to look very exciting for our membership. We are heading in a new direction and have plenty to be excited about. The leadership team is working hard at keeping us alive and well and making sure we move into the future. Not too long ago we were questioning whether or not it made sense to continue as a formal club. Membership was down, our antenna tower came down, we were all down. Even the future existence of our club station in Hamburg was in jeopardy.

Welcome to STARS 2012. We are pushing forward with new plans to move us forward. One of the greatest things working in our favor is that we now have a formal agreement with the town of Hamburg.

That means we are recognized as viable organization and the Town realizes that we have something to offer. This makes it much easier for us to feel comfortable with getting support from the town. In many ways we are lucky as a club to be able to have a club station building that does not cost us. It's allocated to us by the town for our exclusive use! We have also been formally allocated a piece of property surrounding our building at the Nike base location. We plan on making the most of it. One of our next major club projects will be to erect our tower once again. This will be challenging and fun project. We will be discussing how to go about this starting at our next board of directors meeting. We will create a game plan and get a committee formed to move forward and execute. We will be looking for help from the membership to be a part of this and support the efforts. We will be keep everyone informed as we begin and progress with this project.

We are planning improvements to our club station with some new hardware, computer equipment upgrades, and an updated library. We have an great Nike Base chairman, Pat Groom, who is technically capable and willing to help us make progress toward these improvements. Please support him as the year moves forward.

Our Telstar newsletter is alive and well. Tomm Dean is our editor and has been doing a great job. We want this newsletter to be an information provider to our membership as well as an enjoyable read providing learning and fun. Remember that this newsletter is one way we communicate to our members that do not regularly attend meetings and also should be made available to nonmember friends to promote interest in our club. We would love to spark interest in others Hams, non-Hams, or Hams to be. This newsletter is a vehicle which can be used to spread and share knowledge about Amateur Radio and our club. I know that we have a wealth of knowledge on various topics within our club. Please be willing to share some knowledge with others by offering suggestions for articles to our editor. You can submit an article or provide feedback to Tomm at anytime. I know he would greatly appreciate it.

Projects:

Last year we did a couple of small group projects. In particular, we built radio sound card interface kit. The project turned out to be a success. We plan on doing more of this in the future. I think group projects always provide a benefit to our members that get involved. Working in groups provides for interaction and shared learning. We plan to put together some group projects this. Your participation is important.

Study Groups:

I believe we should have a well educated club. Study groups are another way to learn together. This year we have plans to form some study groups for our members who would like to upgrade their Amateur Radio License. We will be planning a Tech to General upgrade study group as well as Advanced upgrades. If you're interested in upgrading, this will be an excellent opportunity for you

(Continued on page 6)

AREA VE SESSIONS

03/03/2012 [North Tonawanda](#)

Sponsor: ARA of the Tonawanda's
Location: Fire Headquarters Training Room
Time: 10:00 AM (Walk-ins allowed)

03/03/2012 [Jamestown](#)

Sponsor: CARS
Location: Prendergast Library
Time: 2:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed)

03/17/2012 [Hamburg](#)

Sponsor: STARS
Location: Hamburg Youth Center
Time: 9:00 AM (Walk-ins allowed)



03/25/2012 [Geneseo](#)

Sponsor: Genesee Valley ARA
Location: Livingston County Government Center
Time: 5:30 PM (Walk-ins allowed)

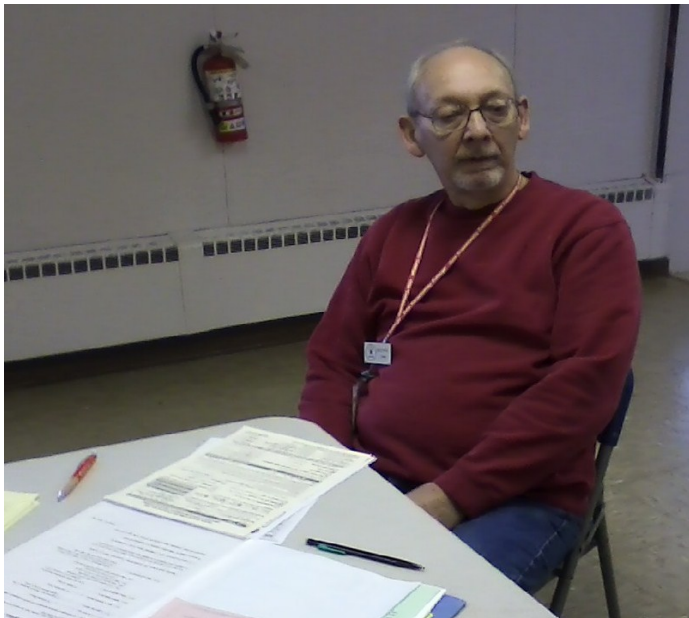
03/27/2012 [Lancaster](#)

Sponsor: Lancaster ARC
Location: Lancaster ARC- Club House Building
Time: 7:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed)

(control +click on City for more info)

THANX TO JOHN CRAWFORD, KB2VWC

For years, **John Crawford, KB2VWC**, has managed the STARS Volunteer Examiner team. As such, he has



scheduled numerous examinations with a staff of more than ten VE's. John's total session count is 63.

John is resigning his position as he will be moving to a new home in New Hampshire.

We wish John all the best, and want to thank him for many hours devoted to welcoming new amateur operators into the hobby.

TESTING NEEDS

- Legal photo ID
- Current license and/or CSCE documents, if any, and a non-returnable photocopy of each
- Federal Registration Number (FRN); if none, then Social Security Number (SSN)
- \$15 in cash, check or money order
- Two #2 pencils with erasers, and a pen

[\(more info\)](#)

VE MANAGER NEEDED

STARS has an opening for the position of VE (Volunteer Examiner) Manager. Duties include the scheduling of exams and personnel, and liaison activities with the ARRL/VEC. (STARS usually offers exams on the 3rd Saturday of each odd-numbered month, at 9:00 AM.)

The ideal candidate would be an amateur extra who is certified as a VE by the ARRL.

If interested, contact **Ken Pokigo, KC2AYK**; or **John Leitten, KA2RFT**.

(Continued from page 1)

ORLANDO HAMCATION

Hamcation on both Friday and Saturday.

The vendor building was quite large, with many local, regional and national retailers in attendance. The "Big Three" (Yaesu, Icom, & Kenwood) were also there. I was a little disappointed with the Kenwood display though, it seemed like a token appearance only. When I was in Dayton two years ago, it seemed that way also. I did purchase a few items, Anderson Power Pole connectors for the mobile, some Dacron line for antenna projects and an HP Laptop computer (been wanting one for some time).

Out in the flea market, like Dayton, just about anything electronic was for sale. I did see a few things that I really would have liked to purchase but there was only so much room in my luggage. Although I own a class "C" motorhome, time constraints dictated flying and some really good bargains had to be passed up.

On Saturday, I met up with our own **Don Niles, K2PMC**, who is wintering nearby. We spent the afternoon checking out the deals and meeting other snowbirds. It really turned into a nice social event.

The local Sheriff had the department mobile command post on display. I'm sure our local ARES/RACES group would like a similar one, an 18-wheeler with enough equipment to make W1AW jealous.

Having attended the Dayton Hamvention many times over the years, I use my experiences from there to measure all other hamfests. If Dayton was measured as a "10" (some may or may not agree), I would rank the Hamcation as an "8". It was an excellent hamfest in terms of commercial vendors, but the flea market was somewhat smaller, again using Dayton as the benchmark. But to be fair, the normally warm weather, mid 70's, took a downward turn into the lower to mid 60's, and that may have affected the flea market somewhat. But, walking around there was a lot better than walking through the snow up here.

So to summarize, as far as I'm concerned, the Orlando Hamcation, was a pleasant social get-away, and combined with all the other attractions in the Orlando area, it made for a nice time.



Wayne Carpus, W2ZDP (l.) and Don Niles, K2PMC (r.) at the 2012 Orlando Hamcation.

APRIL MEETING TOPIC IS RAILROAD CONTROL

If you still think railroad operations are controlled with semaphore signals, you are sadly out of date. Today's railroad operations use radio in very sophisticated ways.



In fact, you can listen in to hear where trains are, how switches are set, and whether or not any wheels on the cars are defective.

Join us on April 5th at 7 PM for a presentation by **Robert W. Korthals, KC2QHY**, on Automatic Train Control Systems (ATCS).

(Continued from page 3)

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Programs:

I want to place a special emphasis this year on meeting programs. I think it's an important part of our regular club meetings. We benefit by learning from others. The board is making an effort to make sure that we have meeting programs in 2012. We plan on having some good educational programs this year on various topics. We can use your help. I am also going to look to the membership to come up with ideas. If you have a topic of interest for a program idea, please let us know. If you can provide a presentation also let the board know and we can consider it for a future program. Last month we did a "Show and Tell" which I think worked out great. Thanks to everyone who contributed. This month we have a special presentation on "Trunked Radio Systems". Please make a point of attending the meeting.

Our club is certainly on the move and I think that this will be a great year for STARS. We are starting out on the right foot. Please help us keep the momentum going. Offer to serve. Get involved in projects. Let's recruit some new members. Invite those from other clubs. Invite friends to attend meetings, hams or anyone who may be interested in one of our programs. We welcome your ideas to help our club move forward. What ideas do you have? Communicate to our Telstar editor and let us know. Our club can only continue move and grow if we have active members willing to participate in the experience. Let's all have fun and enjoy the 2012 STARS club year together!

DAYTON HAMVENTION

The 2012 Dayton Hamvention opens May 18th at the Hara Arena for its 61st consecutive year. According to organizers, the hamfest is expected to bring more than 20,000 people to the greater Dayton area.

The three-day event includes exhibits, a flea market, forums and education sessions.

For more information about Dayton Hamvention -- scheduled for May 18-20, 2012 -- use the following link: [Hamvention website](#).

STARS MEETINGS

- The next STARS meeting is March 1st, at 7:00 PM, at the Hamburg Youth Center, 200 Prospect Avenue (near Hawkins Avenue) in Hamburg
- All are welcome,
- The next STARS board meeting is at 7:00 PM on Thursday March 29th at the Nike Base Radio Clubhouse near the Hamburg Town Arena at 2982 Lakeview Road in Hamburg.
- All members are welcome.

CLUB NETS

Saturdays	10:00 AM	3.925 MHz +/- QRM
Sundays	9:30 AM	28.380 MHz
Sundays	10:30 AM	147.09 MHz (repeater)
4th Saturdays	9:00 AM	Peg's Place Restaurant

PLAN FOR FIELD DAY

June is approaching. Where should STARS set up for this year's Field Day? Let us know:

wb2elw@verizon.net

SKYWARN TRAINING

SKYWARN is a volunteer program of the National Weather Service that trains observers to report dangerous weather. Upcoming training classes include:

Date: 3/19/12 Time: 6:15 PM
 Location: Erie Co. Fire Academy
 3359 Broadway
 Cheektowaga

Sponsor: Erie County SMART
 Register with: PatiAine.Guzinski@erie.gov

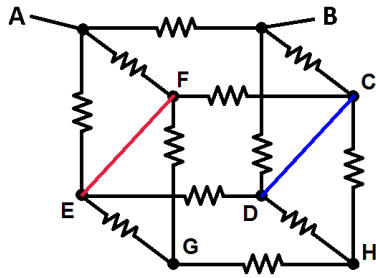
For more info: <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/buf/skywarn.htm>

SOLUTION TO LAST MONTH'S PROBLEM

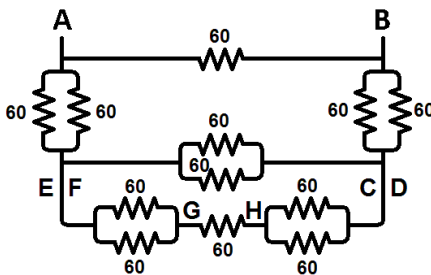
Because the cube has 12 identical 60 ohm resistors, points E & F are electrically equal with respect to A.

Also, points C & D are equal with respect to B.

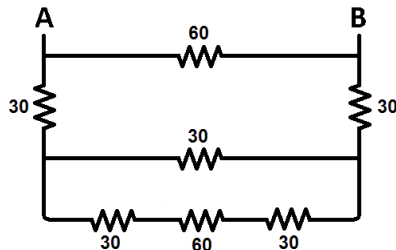
Each set of points can be considered one and the schematic may be redrawn as shown below



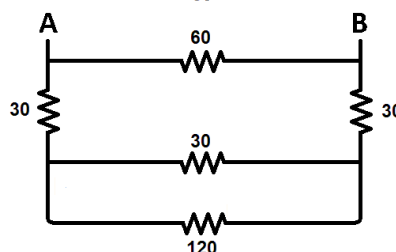
The five groups of parallel 60 ohm resistances are each combined into single resistors of 30 ohms.



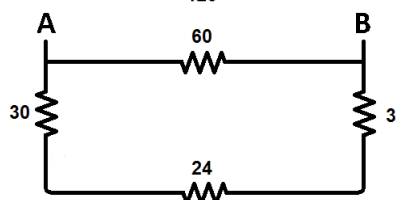
The three series resistors at the bottom are combined into one 120 ohm resistor.



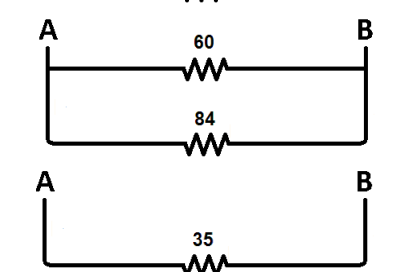
The 30 ohm resistor and a 120 ohm resistor in parallel are combined into one 24 ohm resistor.



The 30, 24, and 30 ohm resistors in series are combined into an 84 ohm resistor.



The final parallel resistors of 60 and 84 ohms are combined to form one **35 ohm** resistor.



SO, YOU WANNA BE A VOLUNTEER EXAMINER



Volunteer Examiners (VEs) are amateur operators who administer the certification examinations for amateur radio licenses. They work under the authority of a designated Volunteer Examination Coordinator (VEC), such as the ARRL. The VECs, in turn, work under the direct authority of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

VEs are not paid. They volunteer their services, often spending 2 to 4 hours per examination session.

To become a VE requires three steps:

- 1) Familiarize yourself with the VE Manual
- 2) Complete application paperwork
- 3) Take a test, to show you are knowledgeable about the examination process.

The good news is that the test is an open book test based upon the VE Manual. That doesn't mean it's a cake walk! The test is forty questions, and requires a candidate to answer some very specific questions regarding the examination process. The questions are designed to get you to search through the manual for specific answers.

Interested? Start with these web sites:

Description of the VE process:

<http://www.arrl.org/volunteer-examiners>

The VE Manual:

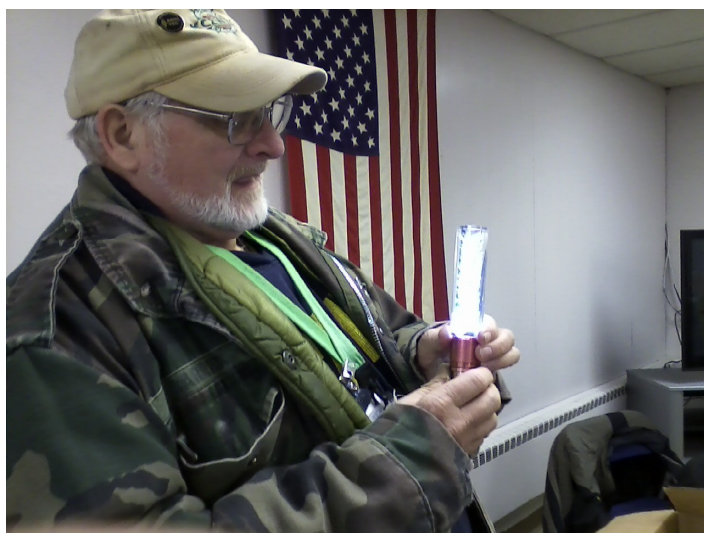
<http://www.arrl.org/ve-manual>

The VE application paperwork:

<http://www.arrl.org/become-an-arrl-ve>



Keith Patterson's (KC2DGC) "jump kits" being examined by John Czuba, W2IV.



Conrad Barrick, KC2WRY with Pat Groom's (KC2VWG) "captured lightning" cylinder (above) and sphere (right).



CONTEST CALENDAR



Start and Finish

Contest Title

Sponsor's Website

Mar 2 0200Z - Mar 2 0300Z	SNS and NS Weekly Sprints	www.ncccsprint.com/rules.html
Mar 2 0200Z - Mar 2 0330Z	QRP Fox Hunt	http://www.grpfoxhunt.org/winter_rules.htm
Mar 3 0000Z - Mar 4 2400Z	ARRL Int'l Phone DX Contest	http://www.arrl.org/arrl-dx
Mar 3 0000Z - Mar 4 2400Z	Worldwide EME Contest	www.dubus.org
Mar 3 2000Z - Mar 3 See web	Open Ukraine RTTY Championship	www.uarl.com.ua/openrtty
Mar 4 1100Z - Mar 4 1700Z	DARC 10-Meter Digital Contest	http://www.darc.de/referate/ukw-funksport/bild-und-schrift-wettbewerb/corona-maerz/teilnahmebedingungen/
Mar 4 1200Z - Mar 4 1400Z	SARL Hamnet 40m Sim Emrg Contest	http://www.sarl.org.za/public/contests/SARL_2011_Contest%20Manual_issue_9.pdf
Mar 5 1600Z - Mar 5 See web	OK1WC Memorial Contest	www.hamradio.cz/ok1wc
Mar 5 2000Z - Mar 5 2130Z	RSGB 80m Club Championship, Data	http://www.rsgbcc.org/hf/rules/2012/r80mcc.shtml
Mar 6 0200Z - Mar 6 0400Z	ARS Spartan Sprint	www.arsgrp.blogspot.com
Mar 6 1900Z - Mar 6 2100Z	YL CW Party	www.agcw.de
Mar 7 2300Z - Mar 8 See web	John Rollins Memorial DX Contest	www.antiquewireless.org
Mar 10 1000Z - Mar 11 1000Z	RSGB Commonwealth Contest	www.rsgbcc.org
Mar 10 1400Z - Mar 10 2000Z	AGCW QRP Contest	www.agcw.de
Mar 10 1500Z - Mar 10 1800Z	QRP ARCI HF Grid Square Sprint	www.qrparci.org/contests
Mar 10 1600Z - Mar 11 1600Z	EA PSK63 Contest	www.ure.es
Mar 10 1900Z - Mar 11 1900Z	Idaho QSO Party	www.nx7tt.com
Mar 11 0000Z - Mar 11 0400Z	North American RTTY Sprint	www.ncjweb.com
Mar 11 0000Z - Mar 11 2400Z	SKCC Weekend Sprint	http://www.skccgroup.com/sprint/wes/index-wes.php
Mar 11 1800Z - Mar 12 0100Z	Wisconsin QSO Party	www.warac.org
Mar 12 1800Z - Mar 12 2000Z	NAQCC-EU Monthly Sprint	http://naqcc-eu.org/SprintHelp/SprintRules.pdf
Mar 14 1100Z - Mar 15 See web	CWops Monthly Mini-CWT Test	www.cwops.org/onair.html
Mar 14 2000Z - Mar 14 2130Z	RSGB 80m Club Championship, CW	http://www.rsgbcc.org/hf/rules/2012/r80mcc.shtml
Mar 16 1600Z - Mar 18 1000Z	SARL VHF/UHF Ana/Dig Contest	http://www.sarl.org.za/public/contests/SARL_2011_Contest%20Manual_issue_9.pdf
Mar 17 12 PM - Mar 17 2 PM	Feld-Hell St Patrick's Day Sprint	www.feldhellclub.org
Mar 17 0001Z - Mar 17 2359Z	10-10 Mobile QSO Party	www.ten-ten.org
Mar 17 0200Z - Mar 19 0200Z	BARTG HF RTTY Contest	www.bartg.org.uk
Mar 17 1200Z - Mar 18 1159Z	CQIR - Ireland Calling	www.irts.ie
Mar 17 1200Z - Mar 18 1200Z	Russian DX Contest	www.rdx.org
Mar 17 1300Z - Mar 18 See web	Oklahoma QSO Party	www.k5cm.com/okqp.htm
Mar 17 1400Z - Mar 17 1759Z	AGCW VHF/UHF Contest	http://www.agcw.org/en/?Contests_and_CW-activities:VHF-UHF_Contest
Mar 17 1400Z - Mar 18 See web	Virginia QSO Party	www.qsl.net/sterling
Mar 17 1800Z - Mar 18 1800Z	North Dakota QSO Party	www.w0nd.com
Mar 19 0100Z - Mar 19 0300Z	Run for the Bacon QRP Contest	http://fpqrp.org/pigrun/
Mar 20 1700Z - Mar 21 See web	CLARA and Family HF Contest	www.claranet.ca
Mar 22 0030Z - Mar 22 0230Z	NAQCC Monthly QRP Sprint	naqcc.info
Mar 22 2000Z - Mar 22 2130Z	RSGB 80m Club Championship, SSB	http://www.rsgbcc.org/hf/rules/2012/r80mcc.shtml
Mar 24 0000Z - Mar 25 2400Z	CQ WPX SSB Contest	www.cqwp.com
Mar 26 0000Z - Mar 26 0400Z	QRP Homebrewer Sprint	http://www.njgrp.org/data/qrp-homebrewersprint.html
Mar 28 0000Z - Mar 28 0200Z	SKCC Sprint	http://www.skccgroup.com/sprint/sks/
Mar 28 1300Z - Mar 28 1400Z & Mar 28 1900Z - Mar 28 2000Z & Mar 29 0300Z - Mar 29 0400Z	CWops Mini-CWT Test	http://www.cwops.org/onair.html
Mar 31 0000Z - Apr 1 2400Z	Worldwide EME Contest	www.dubus.org
Mar 31 1800Z - Apr 1 0500Z & Apr 1 1800Z - Apr 1 2359Z	Missouri QSO Party	http://www.w0ma.org/mo_qso_party.htm

(Control + click to activate a link)



CONTEST LINKS:

<http://www.arrl.org/contest-calendar>

<http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/perpetualcal.php>



SELECTED SPECIAL EVENT STATIONS



03/09/2012

MARCH IS AMERICAN RED CROSS MONTH

Mar 9-Mar 10, 1300Z-2359Z, NE1R, Worcester, MA. American Red Cross of Central/Western Massachusetts. 21.327 14.327. Certificate. Ham Radio c/o Disaster Services, American Red Cross, 2000 Century Dr, Worcester, MA 01606. ARC of Central and Western MA will join other ARC chapters in special event to highlight March as American Red Cross Month. Follow us on Twitter @NE1R and Facebook for updates on frequencies and operating schedules. 9" x 12" SASE for certificate. ne1r@arrl.net

03/14/2012

PI DAY 2012 π

Mar 14-Mar 15, 1200Z-0000Z, NOS, Springfield, MO. Larry Grinstead, WA0JZK. 28.468 21.368 14.268 7.268. QSL. Larry Grinstead, 2469 E Montclair Ct, Springfield, MO 65804. The station will promote math education by discussing various topics, quizzes and oddities about the number pi during QSOs. Students are particularly encouraged to make contact and seek a Pi-related QSL card.

03/15/2012

AMERICAN LEGION'S 93RD BIRTHDAY

Mar 15-Mar 17, 1521Z-1521Z, K9TAL, Indianapolis, IN. The American Legion Amateur Radio Club. 14.270. Certificate. The American Legion Amateur Radio Club, TAL National Headquarters, 700 N Pennsylvania St, Indianapolis, IN 46204. www.legion.org/hamradio, or contact Joe March at (317) 630-1253 or jmarch@legion.org/hamradio

For more Special Events, 'control+click' on this link:

<http://www.arrl.org/special-event-stations>

USEFUL INTERNET LINKS

(control + click to use link)

CONTESTS:

<http://www.arrl.org/contest-calendar>

<http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/perpetualcal.php>

HAMFESTS:

<http://www.arrl.org/hamfests-and-conventions-calendar>

SPECIAL EVENTS:

<http://www.arrl.org/special-event-stations>

STARS WEBSITE:

<http://www.wb2elw.com/>

STARS REFLECTOR:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/STARS-WB2ELW/>

(The Reflector is the best source of current information about activity in the South Towns Amateur Radio Society.)

TELSTAR EDITOR

wb2elw@verizon.net