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# SIGNALS

Rockwell Collins Amateur Radio Club

Monthly Newsletter of the

Volume 30 Issue 3

Web Site <http://www.w5rok.us>

December 2008

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**RCARC**  
**Membership Meeting**  
 Thursday, 18 December 2008  
 1700 Social      1730 Meeting  
 Rockwell Collins Building 462  
 Dallas Conference Room

**Subject: New Antenna Systems—Portable and Sophisticated, By Budd Drummond, W3FF**

donation ticket drawings for pretty nice consolation prizes for those who did not win the cash drawing. For example, new radio books, etc.

This quarter we have a **SPECIAL DRAWING**. The tickets from each meeting, will be used again in a final drawing in December. What are the prizes in this special drawing? We are still working on that, but so far they include a modern crystal radio receiver kit (donated by Tony Spiegel KC8UR), a battery charger / rejuvenator kit (donated by John Champa, K8OCL), and there is more to come, so **SAVE THOSE DRAWING TICKETS!**

**Using the W5ROK Repeater** Our repeater has several capabilities of which many of you may not be aware. It is capable of making phone patches, telling you your signal strength, telling you the time (which I recently updated to be within a minute of accurate), and allowing you to test your touchtone pad.

Here is a rundown on how to use these features. Identify yourself first before doing any of these (e.g., say "Yourcall testing"):

1. Signal strength. While transmitting, press the "8" key on your touchtone pad and then release the transmit button. You should hear the repeater tell you a signal strength in "S" units and dB over S9 (if strong enough).
2. Time of Day. While transmitting, press the "3" key followed by the "9" key. The repeater synthesized voice will say "good xxx, the time is yyy" where xxx is morning, afternoon, or evening and yyy is the 12 hour format time.
3. Touchtone pad test. While transmitting, press the "5" key followed by any other keys. Then release the transmit key and the synthesized voice will speak the keys you pressed after the "5".
4. Phone patch. This is a little more complex. First identify yourself and say you are accessing the patch. Then press the "1" key followed by the 10 digit phone number (including area code). Only local area codes (972, 214, 469) are allowed to pass through. Note that the phone line used is an "inside line" for the facility, so the internal PBX limits outgoing calls to local ones should a number in one of those area codes NOT be local.

To use the phone patch, after entering the number as specified above, you must press the transmit key for at least a second during one of 2 intervals or the patch will not activate.

- a. The repeater will beep and say "autopatch" followed by a pause.

(Cont. on page 4)

## Local Club News

**Meeting Notice** This month's meeting is coming exactly one week earlier than usual because of the Christmas holiday. Come hear about the famous "Buddipole" antenna. Budd was first licensed in 1954 in Punxsutawney, PA. His main interest is in portable HF radio. One of the first members of [HFpack](#), he is very active with that fine portable [HF Yahoo! group](#). Try 14342.5 Khz to see who's out portable! He loves operating from his bicycle (soon to be a recumbent trike) and golf carts, picnic tables, and while walking with a pedestrian mobile setup. The homebrew version of the popular HF portable antenna can be seen on [QSL.NET](#) and the commercial version at [Buddipole.com](#).

**Club Meeting Talk-In** Each month, on the night of the membership meeting we have a Talk-In on the club repeater. The Talk-In is from 1645 to 1730 hours, prior to the meeting.

**RCARC 50/50 Drawing (Important Announcement!)** *By John Champa, K8OCL and Jim Skinner, WB0UNI*

Our club's monthly 50/50 drawing has become an integral part of every meeting. The drawing makes available fresh coffee (regular and decaffeinated), water, and some snacks for those who come directly from their work to the Dallas Conference Room.

Raffle tickets are \$2 each, or 3 tickets for \$5. These donations are accounted for separately from other club funds. The donations collected are divided between our club's refreshment fund, and the winner of that meeting's drawing. We have additional

## RCARC OFFICERS

<b>PRESIDENT</b> Bob Kirby 319.360.0500 k3nt@arrl.net	<b>K3NT</b>	<b>VICE-PRESIDENT</b> Ross Terry 972.705.3667 k5srt@arrl.net	<b>K5SRT</b>
<b>SECRETARY</b> Dwight Ramsey 972.705.1841 suhermano@tx.rr.com	<b>KE5SAS</b>	<b>TREASURER</b> Jim Gaston 972.705.3369 jrgaston@rockwellcollins.com	<b>KD5GYD</b>
<b>ACTIVITIES CHAIRMAN</b> John Champa 972.333.9478 k8ocl@arrl.net	<b>K8OCL</b> 460-100	<b>WEBSITE MANAGER</b> Wayne Hughes 972.705.1406 wa0tgh@arrl.net	<b>WA0TGH</b> 461-258
<b>STATION TRUSTEE</b> Steve Phillips 972.517.3332 k6jt@arrl.net	<b>K6JT</b>	<b>NEWSLETTER EDITOR</b> Jim Skinner 214.535.5264 wb0uni@arrl.net	<b>WB0UNI</b>
<b>CLUB STATION</b> 972.705.1349		<b>W5ROK</b> 461-290	

## VE SESSIONS

**Dallas** tests are held 4<sup>th</sup> Sat of each month at 10:00. 13350 Floyd Rd. (Old Credit Union) Contact Bob West, WA8YCD (972) 917-6362

**Irving** tests are held 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat. of each month at 09:00. 5<sup>th</sup> and Main St. Contact Bill Revis, KF5BL 252-8015

**McKinney** VE test sessions are held at the Heard Museum the first Sunday of the month. The address is 1 Nature Place, McKinney TX. The time of the testing is 14:30, ending no later than 16:45. **Note: no tests given on holiday weekends.**

**Garland** testing is held on the fourth Thursday of each month, excluding November, and begins at 1930 sharp. Location is Freeman Heights Baptist Church, 1120 N Garland Ave, Garland (between W Walnut and Buckingham Rd). Enter via the north driveway. A HUGE parking lot is located behind the church. Both the parking lot and the Fellowship Hall are located on the east side of the church building, with big signs by the entrance door. Contact Bill Reynolds, K8DNE, 972-475-3854.

**Plano** testing is on the third Saturday of each month, 1300 hrs at Williams High School, 1717 17<sup>th</sup> St. East Plano. Check Repeater 147.180+ for announcements.

**Greenville** testing is on the Saturday after 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, 1000 hrs at site TBA, contact N5KA, 903.364.5306. Sponsor is Sabine Valley ARA. Repeater 146.780(-) with 118.8 tone.

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## President's Message

MERRY CHRISTMAS  
A JOYOUS HOLIDAY  
SEASON TO ALL

Understand that Radio Santa is planning to bring many of you new radio toys on December 25<sup>th</sup>. Hope you find just what you have been wishing for under the tree this year. Be that a new CW key, Transceiver, antenna tuner, speaker, atomic clock, radio modem, electronic software, call sign plaque, hand held, handbook, Das Loud-en boomer Amplifier, mobile antenna, radio operator table, electronics workbench, tower, microphone, software defined radio, Dummy Load, SWR Meter, RFI filter, electronic tools, Magnifying light with LED's, beam antenna, that special QSL needed for DXCC, Satellite Handbook, Oscilloscope, network analyzer, RC Airplane, or what ever else you have been wishing for.

TX Amateur Radio and Santa: Did you know that the Santa USA program (<http://www.santa-usa.org/>) began in northeast Tarrant County, Texas about 30 years ago? Last year, 15 operators provided net control out of the city of Bedford, TX emergency operations center.

Joe Wolf, N5UIC, RCARC Data Base Manager, requests when sending a postal letter to him for your membership renewal or other related club membership roster business, address it:

Rockwell/Collins Amateur Radio Club  
ATTN: MEMBERSHIP  
M/S 461-290  
P.O. Box 833807  
Richardson, TX 75083-3807

This helps to get those big buck renewal's to Joe and also keep them separated from the hundreds of QSL cards arriving to the club's W5ROK station.

A reminder that Straight Key Night happens each New Years Eve. This operating event is a lot of fun, providing an opportunity to communicate with others using an old telegraph straight key. Last year, I used a number of WWII keys that had been collected over the years. I also use some radio row, Lafayette, RCA, Olson and Radio Shack keys. I ended the night using a very smooth Nye-Viking straight key. In addition to the old CW keys you will hear and work many of the old radios of yesteryear as they are dusted off and brought back to life for this interesting operating event. QST has a nice article on tuning up your straight key on page 61 of the December 2008 issue.

Repeater maintenance has begun. Dennis Cobb, WA8ZBT and myself were able to lug up a donated 72" rack cabinet to our repeater site on top of building 462. We also cleared the area of some of the cobwebs and bug juice but there is still a lot to be done. The current packet station and UHF repeater power supplies, radio's control management, TNC, power strips, and duplexer needs cleaning and preventative maintenance performed. The new rack cabinet needs to be cleaned and a number of shelves need to be acquired and mounted along with power strips. Then the equipment needs to be transferred, re-wired and properly grounded. A new packet antenna needs to be installed. Preventive maintenance needs to be performed on the UHF repeater antenna. Any additional help would be appreciated. Once these tasks are complete, we will start to design the plans for the new 1.2 Ghz repeater installation.

By the time you read this we hope to have received the club's new Elecraft K3 transceiver ordered back in October. We elected to purchase this radio in kit form to save a few dollars. I have offered to build the radio and will be providing ongoing status. If you wish to join in the fun of this club project please let me know.

Company news: In late November, Rockwell Collins, Inc. completed its acquisition of SEOS, a leading global supplier of highly realistic visual display solutions for commercial and military full flight simulators. SEOS will operate under the Rockwell Collins name and will become part of the Simulation and Training Solutions organization.

2009 RCARC Planning: RCARC 2009 Field Day (Leader needed), FCC Radio License test preparation Classes (Leader + schedule needed), Fun Days RCARC Operation (Leader & Plans needed), EFTRT(Leader/status needed), Station maintenance and improvements (WA8ZBT, KC4UAI, K3NT), Special Events Operation (Leader/status needed), Monthly programs (K8OCL). If there is member interest in learning more about a particular area of Rockwell Collins, let an officer know. With enough interest, we will have short presentations at our monthly meetings.

If you work with technical folks that you believe would enjoy or benefit from an RCARC presentation, tell them about your club. Invite them to a monthly meeting and give them a tour of our station and website <http://www.w5rok.us/>

Final FY2009 Notice: Have you completed and sent in your FY2009 RCARC membership renewal form to Joe Wolf, N5UIC? This is a reminder to return your completed membership form with any changes, such as a new mailing or e-mail address, along with your dues payable to RCARC.

#### November RCARC Activities:

- Collins 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Collins Radio Special Event followup.
- Meeting Refreshments Setup Volunteer – Jim Skinner, WB0UNI (**more helpers please**)
- RCARC Marketing – Joe Wolf, N5UIC; Mike Hollingsworth, W5QH
- Station Tour - Dennis Cobb, WA8ZBT; Bob Kirby, K3NT
- Repeater Maintenance Project - Dennis Cobb, WA8ZBT; Bob Kirby, K3NT
- RCARC Digital project - Robert Diepenbrock, KC4UAI; Bob Kirby, K3NT
- Yet Another Great SIGNALS Newsletter – Jim Skinner, WB0UNI
- Treasurers Report – Jim Gaston, KD5GYD
- Club Librarian - Stephanie Keese, AC5NF
- Website Updates - Wayne Hughes, WA0TGH
- November Program - John Champa, K8OCL, Steve Ford, WB8IMY
- November Program Recording – Ken Piletic, W9ZMR
- RCARC Membership Applications & Database - Joe Wolf, N5UIC
- Secretary Report –Dwight Ramsey, KE5SAS
- Station Trustee – Steve Phillips, K6JT
- Vice President Report – Sidney Ross Terry, K5SRT
- CRARC (W0CXX) - Club News

Hope to see or hear you at the meeting,  
Best Regards (73),  
Bob Kirby, K3NT  
[K3nt@arri.net](mailto:K3nt@arri.net)  
<http://w5rok.us>

## Secretary's Report

Ross Terry opened the meeting at 1732 (November 20<sup>th</sup> 2008), in the Dallas Conference Room. Present at the meeting were:

Charles Chadwick	W5UYA	John Champa	K8OCL
Loney Duncan	W0GZV	James Gaston	KD5GYD
Jon Jacobson	K5KRF	Doug Kilgore	KD5OUG
James Pellegrino	KE5SAR	Steve Phillips	K6JT
Dwight Ramsey	KE5SAS	Chuck Samuel	K&NWM
Mike Schmit	WA9WCC	James Skinner	WB0UNI
James Sturges	KC5QGK	Bill Swan	K5MWC
Ross Terry	K5SRT	Charles Williams	WD5IRX
Joseph Wolf	N5UIC		

### 1. Officer Reports

*President's Report:* There was no Presidents report—Bob Kirby, K3NT, was unable to attend due to work.

- a. *Vice-President's Report:* Ross Terry, K5SRT, indicated that the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary QSL cards were still in work. He discussed and asked for suggestions on ways to improve membership participation and new members. The Elcraft K3/100 should be arriving in less than the 3 months originally quoted. Suggested the members utilize the 70cm club repeater more often in the morning and evening traveling to work. Jim Skinner will include in the next newsletter the special feature codes that the repeater will accept for member use.
- b. *Secretary's Report:* The Secretary's report was not available.
- c. *Treasurers Report:* Jim Gaston KD5GYD, reviewed the club's financial balance sheet.
- d. *Station Trustee's Report:* There was no Station Trustee's report.
- e. *Activities Chairman Report:* There was no Activities Chairman report.

### 2. Old Business

- a. There was no old business.

### 3. New Business

- a. The 50/50 drawing was won by Ross Terry K5SRT. These funds support refreshments at RCARC meetings and other club activities.
- b. *SkyWarn Training Available:* Bill Swan K5MWC, announced SkyWarn training is coming up. It is planned for Saturday January 24 2009. The admission to the two classes is free. The Basic class starts at 8 AM with the Advance class in the afternoon. The classes will be held at the Spring Creek campus of Collin County Junior College.

Ross Terry introduced Steve Ford, WB8IMY QST QST Editor in Chief, who delivered a presentation on "What Happened To Sun Spots ?" The presentation covered historical and current data and what we can expect for propagation.

**Activities Corner** *By John Champa, K8OCL,*  
RCARC Activities Chairman

***New Antenna Systems—Portable and Sophisticated*** When Budd Drummond, W3FF, envisioned the design of the his new antenna systems, his vision for the Buddipole™ from the beginning has been to provide hams with antenna systems where you could mix and match parts and change

configurations to experiment with optimizing performance. "It grew out of my frustration of working out of my garage trying to piece together parts from antennas I've collected over the years.

I wanted an antenna system that was modular and that allowed me to change configurations as needed. It had to be lightweight and compact for portable operations. But most importantly, it could not compromise on performance.

The initial design was made out of PVC and other commonly available parts from local hardware stores. It was cheap, easy to build, and effective. Thousands of people around the world have built and used the antenna with great results.

The new Buddipole™ improves on the original design in just about every way. After nearly a year of work to come up with a commercial product to be proud of, I am finally able to say that I am satisfied with the quality, design, and performance of the new Buddipole™".

We are pleased to have Budd and his son Chris talk with us about their entire new line of antenna products at this month's club meeting. Hope you can make it!

Next month, January 2009, we will be hearing about the fascinating history and products of The Collins Radio Company. You won't want to miss this one either!

Hope to see you there! Until Thursday, 73 and stay well!  
Vy 73, John K8OCL

## Upcoming Events and Public Service Ops

**1 January 2009 ARRL Straight Key Night:** The object of this friendly event is to enjoy some good old-fashioned QSO fun, using straight keys. The emphasis is on rag-chewing rather than fast contest-style exchanges. It starts at 7:00 p.m. EST December 31, 2008 and runs for 24 hours through 7:00 p.m. EST January 1, 2009 ( **0000 – 2400 UTC January 1, 2009**). To participate, simply send "CQ SKN" or listen for CQs that have SKN in them. More info at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2009/skn.html>

**3-4 January 2009 ARRL RTTY Round-Up:** The object of this event is for Amateurs worldwide to contact and exchange QSO information with other amateurs using digital modes (Baudot RTTY, ASCII, AMTOR, PSK31, and Packet—attended operation only) on 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meter bands. Any station may work any other station. The event starts at 1800 UTC Saturday, and ends 2400 UTC Sunday (**January 3-4, 2008**). All stations operate no more than 24 hours. The six hours of off time must be taken in no more than two blocks. More info at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2009/rtty.html>

**3 January 2009 Kids Day:** More info at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/calendar.html?year=2009>

**9-10 January 2009 Cowtown Hamfest:** The Cowtown Hamfest will be held in the Lockheed Martin Recreation Area, 2400 Bryant Irwin Rd, Ft. Worth TX 76109. Programs include High Altitude amateur radio projects and demo, Weather seminar, RACES/ARES, Microwave, DX Satellites, ARRL, Boy Scout Merit Badges Antennas, VE and Emcomm testing. More info at <http://www.cowtownhamfest.com>.

## 17-19 January 2009 ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes:

The object of this event is To work as many amateur stations in as many different 2 degrees x 1 degree grid squares as possible using authorized frequencies above 50 MHz. Foreign stations work W/VE amateurs only. The event starts at 1900 UTC Saturday, ends 0400 UTC Monday (**January 17-19, 2008**). More info at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2009/jan-vhf-ss.html>

### Using the W5ROK Repeater *(Cont. from page 1)*

- b. Key up for a second (and release) at this point to avoid having the number read back. The call will then be initiated.
- c. If you do not key up here, the repeater will read back the number you entered (usually a good thing to verify it went in properly) followed by another pause.
- d. During that pause, if the number is the one you intended, then key up for a second and release.
- e. The repeater will then dial the number, using generic tones rather than touchtones over the air to indicate it is doing so.
- f. If you do not key up within a couple seconds after the number is read back, the repeater will NOT dial the number and you will just hear the normal "beep" courtesy tone.
- g. To terminate the call after it is dialed (you cannot interrupt the dialing sequence, but you can terminate it any time after the called phone starts ringing), press the Pound Sign (#) key, which is the hang-up code.

That's all there is to it. Upon entry of the hang-up code, the repeater will say "autopatch complete" and hang up the phone. Note that there is a call timer that limits a phone patch to a few minutes (nominally 5). The repeater will say "30 seconds" (when you stop transmitting and are listening) to let you know you only have that much time remaining.

The "reverse patch" and "autodialer" are both disabled.

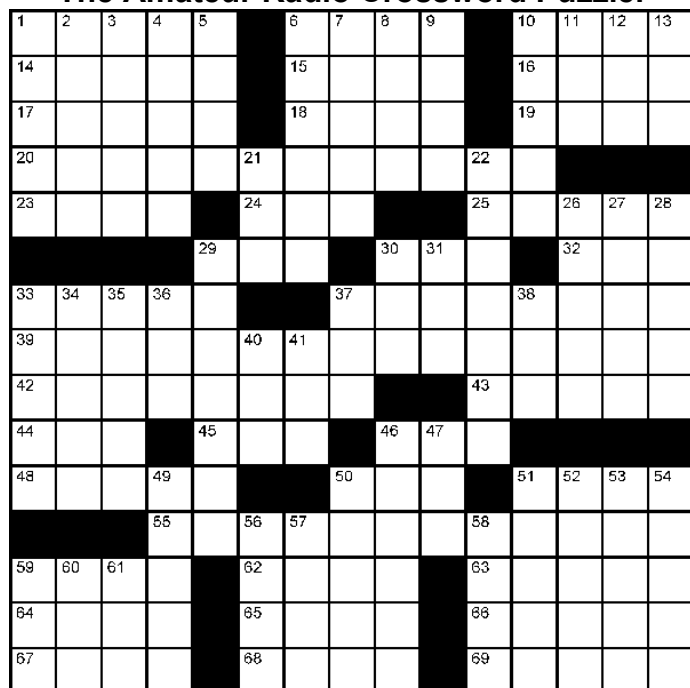
Note that there are several "macros" used with the internal calendar/clock to change announcements at specified times. These consist of a large group of configuration parameters for the repeater. They cannot be read back out to see what is in them and they cannot be reprogrammed without entering ALL of the parameters correctly in sequence with minimal pauses. So for now they will remain as-is.

I configured the repeater so it would send out a tone over the air while you were talking, but evidently one of the "macros" that gets switched in turns that off and it remains off when another macro switches back. I have decided not to fight with it and reprogram the macros (a difficult and error-prone process). Thus, your voice WILL be sent over the air. Naturally, the called number party voice always comes through for you to hear once you stop transmitting.

The only other "glitch" is that the phone patch is inadvertently disabled by the macro that switches in on club meeting days. It gets turned back on when that macro is replaced by another following the club day. In the future, I will try to remember to manually turn on the patch on the morning of a club meeting.

**Revival of Hamfeast a Success** by Frank Krizan, KR1ZAN The one thing Hams like to do besides talk is "eat". Way back in the early days of the Rockwell-Collins Amateur Radio Club, the Club found that getting together over a meal was a great social event to gather for rag-chewing and food-chewing. The Hams of the RCARC wanted more "easy" get-togethers besides the monthly meeting. *(Cont on page 5)*

The Amateur Radio Crossword Puzzler



Across

- 1. How puzzle ends
- 6. Suffix with hard- or soft-
- 10. Radio personality K2ORS
- 14. Improvised
- 15. Suffix with radi- or modul-
- 16. Put in stitches
- 17. Whinny
- 18. Sailor's rum drink
- 19. Partner of FIGS
- 20. Outfit for dancing?
- 23. Dozen dits
- 24. Mo. for VHF QP
- 25. Legislate
- 29. Mo. for ID, OK, VA and WI QP's
- 30. HZ pilgrimage
- 32. US Army station
- 33. TA bigwig
- 37. Barren
- 39. Newington bar order?
- 42. NE to ZL from W0
- 43. They got 11 in '58
- 44. Tack on
- 45. Nav. rank
- 46. Classic rcvr maker from IL
- 48. Celebrate
- 50. Sat. type
- 51. Flex's
- 55. Shakespearean wireless dance?
- 59. Maker of the "seven drifts three"
- 62. RSGB is a member
- 63. W5 capital last name
- 64. Function on an HT, say

- 10. OP lead-ins
- 11. DXCC item (abbr.)
- 12. Hams are on it
- 13. Nets make it up
- 21. KH6 is in it, but not for DXCC
- 22. Celebrate
- 26. Normal operator state in a contest, hopefully
- 27. Provide food for
- 28. Low cards
- 29. HK0 place
- 30. HHS, predecessor
- 31. Fire remnant
- 33. Route to VU from W9, e.g.
- 34. Tube cap
- 35. Test, on 7.002 MHz, perhaps
- 36. Hardly a beauty
- 37. T
- 38. Mode on 7.178 MHz, probably
- 40. W6 area net
- 41. Sm. radios
- 46. Decline
- 47. Jersey call
- 49. Moldova prefix
- 50. Large-eyed lemur
- 51. Lifted, so to speak
- 52. Crushes, as in a contest
- 53. Scoundrel
- 54. Flower towers?
- 56. Phone op's need
- 57. Countess's husband
- 58. With 5 down, ultra short wave moon-bounce signal?
- 59. Brainwave radio?

- 65. \_\_\_ Kringle
- 66. Classic vinyl
- 67. Combustible heap
- 68. If follower, to a programmer
- 69. C's low in the bands

Down

- 1. Unchecked items on a DXCC list, for example
- 2. Brainstorms
- 3. Adds water to latex, say
- 4. DXing LIDs, slangily
- 5. See 58 down
- 6. DL opera composer
- 7. Take \_\_\_ (travel)
- 8. Tripod place
- 9. "Cogito \_\_\_ sum"

- 60. Like yagi elements in winter
- 61. Shack on wheels

This month's Puzzler Solution



Revival of Hamfeast a Success

(Cont from page 3) The tradition was slowly decaying until a few years back, the Hams of the Telecom Corridor came up with the idea of the "Hamfeast". All you can eat catfish was the fare of the early Hamfeasts. As time has gone on, barbecue joined the ranks of shrimp and fish. The Hamfeast was a monthly event, but, it takes a little planning to make that happen. RIFs and retirements took a lot of the wind out of the sails of the TC Ham clubs. But, the Hamfeast has continued ... even though not a regular event.

A few of us keep the 'spirit' alive by giving out a CQ on local email reflectors and announce a day, time and place to get together to break bread. Clarence Sebesta, K5YO, and I have become the unofficial committee. If we get a hankerin' for some grub and gab, we find out if we're both available and put out the call. The Hamfeast on November 19th at Dickey's BBQ on 14th St, in Plano was the first since the spring. But, our attendance was the best in several years. We had 10 in attendance ... one of them a first timer (Chuck Samuel, K7NWM, of Lucas). Glad to have you join us Chuck.

So, what's next? A number of the group thought it would be fun to have a Sunday brunch. This is a hectic time of year with the holidays and all. We're looking at a Sunday brunch at Sneaky Pete's on Lake Lewisville. We'll watch the weather and talk it up and send out an announcement after the first of the year. We'd love to have a good turnout.

# Rockwell-Collins

Amateur Radio Club

Mail Station 461-290

P.O. Box 833807

Richardson, TX 75083-3807

TO:



### CLUB STATIONS

(972) 705-1349

### W5ROK REPEATER

441.875 MHz +5 MHz Input

131.8 Hz PL - RX and TX

### W5ROK-1 PACKET BBS ROK Node

145.01 MHz

### MEETING

Thursday 18 December 2008

1700 Fellowship

1730 Meeting

Rockwell Collins Building 462

Dallas Conference Room

**NEXT SIGNALS DEADLINE:**

**12 January 2009**