
SIGNALS

Rockwell Collins Amateur Radio Club

Monthly Newsletter of the

Volume 32 Issue 5

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

February 2011

RCARC Membership Meeting

Thursday, 24 February 2011
1700 Social 1730 Meeting
Program 1800

Methodist Richardson Medical Center
At Bush/Renner/Shiloh Intersection
Second Floor Conference Room 200

Subject:
K3NT/V73 KWAJALEIN Island DX Operations by
Bob Kirby K3NT

"We showed that this was real and you could insert men in uniform and it was solid," said Dave Fluegeman, director of marketing and business development for Rockwell Collins Simulation and Training Solutions (STS). "We demonstrated that our LVC approach is mission-ready."

Also in this month's issue of Training and Simulation Journal is an interview with Ken Schreder, vice president and general manager of STS, who discusses the significance of LVC training capabilities for STS. SOURCE: Tuesday, Feb. 15, 2011 – Today at Rockwell Collins

Why Ham Radio Endures in a World of Tweets

By [David Rowan, Wired UK](#) | February 7, 2011 | 7:00 am |
Categories: [Future Shock](#), [Letter From the UK](#), [Media](#)



Somehow it makes little sense that amateur "ham" radio continues to thrive in the age of [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [iPhones](#). Yet the century-old communications technology — which demands such commitment that you must generally pass an exam to receive a license — currently attracts around 350,000 practitioners in Europe, and a further 700,000 in the [United States](#), some 60 per cent more than 30 years ago.

What is it about a simple microphone, a transmitter-receiver and the seductive freedom of the open radio spectrum that's turned a low-tech anachronism into an enduring and deeply engaging global hobby? (Continued on page 5)

Local Club News

Meeting Notice. Make plans to attend the RCARC membership meeting this month. After the business meeting, Bob Kirby, K3NT, will present a program on his DX operation experience at Kwajalein Island last month. You don't want to miss this!

Airman completes recertification in Rockwell Collins trade show booth

— An airman in need of recertifying his nighttime joint terminal attack controller (JTAC) skills before deploying to Afghanistan found exactly what he needed in the Rockwell Collins booth at the recent Interservice/Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference (I/ITSEC) in Orlando, Fla.

After watching our demonstration of live, virtual constructive (LVC) training, Tech. Sgt. Ben Santiago of the U.S. Air Force approached Rockwell Collins representatives about the possibility of doing his recertification on the trade show floor the same evening.

According to an article in this month's issue of Training and Simulation Journal, cooperation between The University of Iowa Operator Laboratory, the U.S. Naval Warfare Center, and Rockwell Collins turned our virtual exercise into real mission.

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VE SESSIONS

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

Irving tests are held 3rd Sat. of each month at 09:00. 5th 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 17th St. East Plano. Check Repeater 147.180+ for announcements.

Greenville testing is on the Saturday after 3rd 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



New General – Please join me in a warm congratulations to K5MDK. Michael upgraded to general and is enjoying his new privileges'.

Downsizing – Help! RCARC continues to lose space. We must down-

size our excess equipment. There will be a box or two at the monthly meeting with items for sale and/or donations. Excess items will also be announced at times on the clubs repeater. Special excess items will be listed at times and sent to current RCARC members in good standing.

Volunteers – Your radio club has many tasks that have needed done too long to list here. But no leader and crew have been available to perform one or more of these tasks. Those that continue to support the club are overwhelmed and need help. The station needs to be put back together. The vertical antenna (MFJ or "IT") needs to be completed. The repeater and packet station needs more PM along with many other items. Please let me know what tasks you can help with. You may be working on your own with little direction, unless you can pull a crew together (which is required on some of these tasks like the antenna).

New Locks – Joe, N5UIC took a task to obtain new combination locks for our radio cabinets. Five new locks have been received. Thanks Joe. Now we need member(s) to obtain and install hasps on the cabinets. Can you help?

Facilities Efforts – Information, received from Peet Brothers Inc., related to the Weather station was forwarded to Rockwell Collins facilities as requested. Maintenance work requests (MWR) have been submitted to: Move light switch, Install 220VAC and 110VAC power drops, and to move RCARC Storage cabinets (We will need help with packing on cabinet moves).

Till next month, 73 from Ross, K5SRT
k5srt@arrl.net

Secretary's Report January 27, 2011.

A regular monthly membership meeting was held tonight at the Richardson Methodist Medical Center Bush Renner campus on the 2nd floor conference room. Those in attendance were as follows:

1. Charles Beis – K5UWD
2. Ira Blum – K5IRA
3. Loney Duncan – W0GZV
4. Hernando Garcia – KC5FDW
5. Michael Ketchum – K5MDK – Club Secretary
6. John McFadden – K5TIP
7. Dwight Ramsey – KE5SAS – Club Vice President
8. Mike Schmit – WA9WCC
9. Jim Skinner – WB0UNI – Newsletter Editor
10. Ross Terry – K5SRT – Club President
11. Paul Veenstra – KC0TEG
12. Joe Wolf – N5UIC – Marketing

a. Opening

Ross Terry – K5SRT, the club President, opened the meeting at 17:37 with a flag pledge. He had everyone present introduce themselves.

b. Old Business

There were several items discussed in OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Meeting Location** has been arranged for this next calendar year with the Methodist Richardson Medical Center. It was mentioned that MRMCM is also a sponsor of the Richardson Wild Ride, each year. Mike Schmit – WA9WCC, was asked to describe this special event and how our club participates.
2. **Christmas Party** was reported.
3. **“IT” MFJ antenna** needs to have another work day to finish tuning and installing this antenna.
4. **W5ROK Station Stuff** was brought up as a significant need right now. Due to the station door being moved to the other side, we had to move everything out of the station office. The stuff is gradually being brought back. However, there will not be enough room to hold everything in the shack.

The shack has been cleaned up and the radios returned, for the most part. If anyone has time to work on this project, please help yourself. More will be discussed about this.

5. **Weather Station** is purchased and installed. The station is operational and Ross gave a presentation on how it works and where everything is installed. A major project need is to get the weather data to various destinations: (a) A web page, much like what Cedar Rapids club is doing. (b) Historical data captured. (c) Possible display outside of the club station. (d) Alerts to be created based upon value thresholds that will alert various people and Richardson Facilities team to pending danger. (e) Possible APRS connection either via the internet or through a radio.

The internet connection to the W5ROK station was discussed again as being a significant need at this time.

6. **Air Handler** was brought up for discussion as a question to still being a problem. Ross reported that there was little noise at this time, however there are other air handler units in the building that are generating plenty of noise. It is that these other units are not close enough to any antennas at this time.
7. **Remote Control Radio** was discussed. A reference to the wonderful article by Steve Phillips – K6JT in this month's *Signals* newsletter was made for everyone to check out.
8. **W5ROK station phone goes digital.**
9. **Antenna Switch in W5ROK station may be going bad.**

c. Officer Reports

1. **President's Report** – none was given

Secretary's Report January 27, 2011

A special meeting was called between the officers of the Rockwell Collins Amateur Radio Club and members of the facilities leadership. The meeting was organized by Michael Ketchum, the club secretary, for 3:00pm in the Simpsonville conference room. Those in attendance were as follows:

- Layne Brooks – Facilities & Maintenance Manager
- Ross Terry – K5SRT – Club President
- Michael Kertis – Sr. Facilities Engineer
- Bob Diepenbrock – KC4UAI – Club Treasurer
- Michael Ketchum – K5MDK – Club Secretary

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss some benefits being added to the general population by the radio club as well as some new concerns being generated as a result of the recent adjustment to the club station.

a. Weather Station

The club announced to facilities leadership that we have purchased and installed a weather station. A brief presentation was given for the purpose of this weather station and its possible use as a tool in aiding the members of the radio club in their work with the National Weather Service in SKYWARN activities. The detail specifications of the weather station were given and presented as benefits to the facilities team for the safety and welfare of the employee population located here in Richardson.

The current project to automate the data gathering and display of the weather data and synopsis was discussed, as well as possible interest by the facilities team to gain access to this data and possible threshold alerts, to be added at a later time.

b. W5ROK Station Storage

The dilemma of stuff accumulated by the club was presented. After the recent change in the club station door arrangement, additional storage space is needed to hold stuff that will not fit in the club station proper. The first concern about the current location was expressed. Layne Brooks informed the club officers that there is no agenda for the PACE area other than for storage space at this time. All FY2011 projects for lab space have been addressed and there will be no designs on the current PACE area.

The issue of the current array of cabinets and boxes being strewn about with no clear security of the material was discussed. Layne Brooks offered to provide labor at his cost to move and arrange cabinets and / or provide additional cabinets as needed, in order to secure all of the stuff. There were a couple of prerequisites that will need to be done as follows:

1. All stuff located into a cabinet.
2. A layout, or floor plan, of how the cabinets are to be positioned is provided.
3. A Work Request is made to move the cabinets.

c. W5ROK station electrical for amplifier

An old request to provide 200 VAC or high current 110 VAC to the W5ROK club station was presented. The electrical requirements are for the Collins S-Line Amplifier, which is inoperative due to the lack of electrical provision. A presentation of the need was made by Ross, the club President, and

Layne Brooks offered to look into this matter provided the old work request is resubmitted in the new system.

d. W5ROK station electrical for the light switch

Due to the recent move of the door inside the W5ROK club station, the light switch is now out of position with the door to the shack. This problem was presented to the facilities team and was agreed to be included in the request for the electrical power requirement for the Collins S-Line Amplifier.

e. Weather Station Temperature Sensor Box

One current need for this weather station was presented. This need for a protective structure to cover the temperature sensor was explained. Such a structure would shield the direct sunlight from the sensor as well as provide proper ventilation to get a more accurate reading. The need for the procurement of this structure was presented. Michael Kertis, involved with facilities safety, asked the club to provide details of what is needed for procurement by his group.

f. Conclusion

The meeting concluded within 30 minutes.

Why Ham Radio Endures in a World of Tweets

(Continued from page 1)

For a start, there is that thrill in establishing a magical person-to-person long-distance radio conversation that no commodified internet communication can compete with. In a world of taken-for-granted torrents of e-mails, instant messages and [Skype](#) video-chats, there is a purity and a richness in the shared experience of exchanging “73s” during a live “QSO” with strangers on another continent.

What is it about a simple microphone, a transmitter receiver and the seductive freedom of the open radio spectrum that's turned a low tech anachronism into an enduring and deeply engaging global hobby?

Why, the very ham slang that defines the community — 73 translating as “best regards”, and QSOs as two-way conversations — tells practitioners that they belong to a special, mutually curious and highly courteous club. And the fact that DXers (long-distance amateur operators) take the trouble to acknowledge received transmissions and conversations by sending their new contacts custom-designed postcards through the analog postal service ... well, that is charm itself in a world where it's considered excessive to end a communication with anything more effusive than a “bestest”.

You only need study a handful of these cards to understand, even today, the old-fashioned excitement of connecting with a stranger who might be many thousands of miles away. The postcards — known as QSL cards — can be as quirky and personality-filled as the senders themselves. At times humorous and characterful, at others terse and geographically factual, they have naturally inspired their own subculture that has spurred DXers to collect and display them much as they would colorful foreign postage stamps.

The cards invariably display as a minimum some basic factual information about the sender. This will generally include the radio operator's individual call sign, his (there are not too many “hers”) location, and a few details about the signal detected. And just to show that the Twitter generation did not invent the linguistic con-

tractions exemplified in text-message speak, QSL cards too rely on slang and abbreviations to pack information into a tight space.

So cards will display the “RST” — the received radio station's readability, signal and strength; perhaps details of the sender's “XMTR” (transmitter) and “ANT” (antenna); and occasionally a request to reciprocate, expressed as the shorthand “PSE QSL TNX” (please send an acknowledgement card, thanks) or the more chatty “hw abt a crd om?” (How about a card, old man?) Old man, by the way, is not a reference to the recipient's age — just as, on the rare occasions when the DXer is female, she is referred to as a “YL”, a young lady, whatever her chronological age.

DXers have been exchanging QSL cards since at least 1916, when Edward Andrews of Philadelphia — call sign 3TQ — recorded the receipt of a card from 8VX of Buffalo, NY. Over the next decade, the hobby took off — so much so that, by 1928, Paul Segal (W9EEA) had formulated an “amateur's code” setting out six key qualities to which practitioners must adhere: “The radio amateur is considerate... loyal ... progressive ... friendly ... balanced ... [and] patriotic.” Segal specified, always ready for service to country and community.

Since then, the hobby has captivated royalty and celebrities alike. Among the most celebrated DXers have been the late King Hussein of Jordan (call sign JY1), Queen Noor (JY1H) and Juan Carlos, King of Spain (EA0JC). Had you picked the right moment, you could have chatted to Morocco's King Hassan II (CN8MH), the former Sultan of Oman (A41AA) or Bhumiphol Adulayadej, King of Thailand (HS1A).

If monarchs have never appealed, you could instead have shot the breeze with Marlon Brando (FO5GJ), prime minister Rajiv Ghandi of India (VU2RG) or the CBS anchorman Walter Cronkite (KB2GSD) — not forgetting the singer Cliff Richard (W2JOF), Joe Walsh of The Eagles (WB6ACU) and genuinely beyond-this-world DXers such as Yuri Gagarin and Helen Sharman.

It's little wonder that collectors describe the buzz of receiving a new exotic foreign card as akin to that of philatelists discovering a rare commemorative stamp. That explains why the late Jerry Powell, a New Jersey ham between 1928 to 2000 (W2OJW), proudly displayed the 369 cards he had gathered from Okinawa to Papua.

Another obsessive collector, Thomas Roscoe of Brookfield, Ohio (K8CX), has created an awe-inspiring QSL museum where he displays his trophies from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe. (You can see his individual cards at hamgallery.com). Take a journey with Roscoe to Wallis & Futuna Island and Western Kiribati, to Kyrgyzstan and Kerguelen Island; visit “states” whose international status is somewhat contentious, such as the Republic of Ichkeria and the Principality of Sealand; celebrate one-off events such as Operation Desert Storm in Saudi Arabia, or the *Queen Mary's* last voyage.

But it's not simply the romance of card-collecting that continues to inspire DXers, nor the blunt urge to communicate. Instead, hams talk proudly about belonging to a global “brotherhood,” with few rules and little bureaucracy and the ability to transcend language, religion and race — while never quite knowing who they might come in contact with.

Plus, of course, the chance to be a genuine real-life hero. Days after a magnitude 7.3 earthquake devastated [Haiti](#) in January, amateur radio operators were busy at work connecting rescuers within the country and contacting survivors' families. When a magnitude 8.8 earthquake hit Chile the next month, and the phone network collapsed, a radio operator named Alejandro Jara broadcast the first information from the ground.

Hams stepped in on September 11, 2001, and during Hurricane Katrina. Then there was Tony Pole-Evans, a bird lover with a short-wave radio on Saunders Island, who famously risked his life during Argentina's 1982 invasion of the Falkland Islands to radio the first news back to Britain that 1,000 soldiers had landed on Goose Green.

How exciting it must have been to intercept that particular radio call. And boy, what a QSL card to top one's collection. You can tweet all you like, but this is the way to communicate.

(Reprinted from *WIRED* magazine) *Photo: Gary Soup*

Events and Public Service Ops

19-20 February 2011—International DX Contest-CW. W/VE amateurs work as many amateur stations in as many DXCC countries of the world as possible on 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meter bands. Foreign amateurs (also including KH6, KL7, CY9, and CYØ) work as many W/VE stations in as many of the 48 contiguous states and provinces as possible. Contest Period: 48 hours. Starts 0000 UTC Saturday; ends 2359 UTC Sunday.

20 February 2011: 2 Meter Challenge Collin County and surrounding areas. The Collin County area 2 Meter Challenge is setup for February 20, 2011 from 2:00PM - 5:00PM. This year we will have new rules and procedures for the contest. Larry Essary – K5GX will be leading the effort this year. For more information about this contest, check out this link I found at <http://www.ke6lou.info/2M%20FM%20Simplex%20Challenge.pdf>.

26 February 2011: APRS Training Class – Collin County ARES. Saturday, February 26, 2011, 8:00AM - 5:00PM will be a training class on APRS. This event will be hosted by John Galvin – N5TIM and Chad Stelzl – KD5UMO. The location for this training class will be at the Lucas Fire Department, training center, just north, next to the fire station in Lucas. Additional parking is available in the rear of the fire station. Contact Chad at kd5umo@yahoo.com for more information.

26–27 February 2011: Cowtown Marathon 2011. Cowtown 2011 is only a little more than a month away and it is totally new this year. The location has changed from Sundance Square to the Will Rogers Complex, the courses are new, and it is now a two day event. The short events – 5K and 10K – are on Saturday and the Marathon events – ½ Marathon, Marathon, and Ultra Marathon – are on Sunday. We will not need as many folks on each day as before but the total will be at least as large. Some jobs will be the same both days but others will be different. We will definitely need more operators on Sunday for the longer events. The Saturday assignments should last from about 5:00 AM until about Noon. The Sunday assignments will go

from about 5:00 AM until about 3:00 PM. As in years past, your assignment may not last for the whole period. Of course you can work both days if you want to. Contact Keith Pugh at 817-292-5633 or w5iu@swbell.net.

5-6 March 2011—International DX Contest-Phone. Same rules as CW Contest above.

12 March 2011: The 9th Annual Irving ARC, Inc. Hamfest. The Irving Hamfest will be in full swing again this year at the Betcha Bingo Hall, located at 2420 W. Irving Blvd. #125, Irving, TX 75061 at Story Road. Check out the web site at <http://www.irvingarc.org/iarchamfest.html>. The doors will open at 8:00am and will close at 2:00pm. Look for a ton of door prizes. Your admission will include one door prize ticket. Additional tickets can be purchased for \$1.00 each. Talk-In frequency is 146.72 (-) 110.9Hz PL. Advanced tickets \$3.00, \$4.00 after March 6th.

12 March 2011: The 2011 National Storm Conference. The National Storm Conference is a full day of presentations from some of the top severe weather experts in the country. Storm spotters, chasers, forecasters, researchers, emergency managers and others gather at the conference for a day of learning and fun. It's free and open to the public, so come and join us for the biggest event in Tornado Alley! The National Storm Conference is free and open to the public. Registration is not required. Arrive early, seating is limited. The location will be at the Colleyville Center - Colleyville, Texas from 9:00am till 5:00pm, Saturday, March 12th. For more information, contact Martin at info@tessa.org.

26 March 2011: ARC of Parker County Hamfest. This year's hamfest will be held at Coutts Methodist Church, 802 North Elm Street, Weatherford, TX. The web site had more information at <http://www.w5pc.org/hamfest>. Plan on attending Saturday, March 26th from 7am till 1pm. There will be door prizes all day and a \$500.00 grand prize. Tickets are \$5.00 with the talk in on 147.04 PL 110.9 (Primary) and 146.90 PL 110.9 (Secondary). Free Parking. Food and drinks at the snack bar. Bake-sale cakes, pies and cookies. Visit with friends and make new ones. Many bargains, both old and new.

30 April – 1 May 2011: Sam's Club MS 150 Frisco to Fort Worth Bike Tour. Mark the date. More info to come. Contact KB5ZDG, James Marple for more info at j.marple@verizon.net. For Amateur Radio Operators wanting to operate as SAG communicators contact Brett, N5ANM at n5anm@yahoo.com. Amateur Radio Volunteers need to sign up at Ham Radio Sign Up at <http://www.nationalmssociety.org/chapters/sams-club/volunteer-information/amateur-radio-ham-operator/index.aspx>. This gets your information in the system and inputs your T-Shirt order. More information about this event can be found at <http://www.nationalmssociety.org/chapters/sams-club/index.aspx>.

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

Thursday, 27 January 2011

1700 Social 1730 Meeting

Methodist Richardson Medical Ctr
At Bush/Renner/Shiloh Intersection

Second Floor Conference Room 200

NEXT SIGNALS DEADLINE:

→→→ 13 March 2011 ←←←