

# M.C.W.A.

Vol. 17, No.10

Since 1978

October 2017

Our 39th Year

## VE TESTING

Contact: Steve Maresso, KB9OLD at 847/ 477-3518

Testing is conducted quarterly at 7:00 PM on the third Tuesday for the months of February, May, August, and November. Walk-ins are welcome until 8:00 PM. No appointment is necessary. Testing requirements:

1. Cost for 2017 is \$15.00 (Cash or check made payable to ARRL). If initial test element is passed, the person testing may continue take the next test element(s) at no extra charge during the given session. Retesting of an element failed during the same testing session will require payment of an additional \$15.00 test fee.
2. Must show original and provide copy of Amateur Radio license and/or CSCE (if upgrading).
3. Must show a valid Government Issued Photo ID (Passport, Driver's License or State ID card) for identification.
4. Social Security or FRN number required.
5. Location: Free Methodist Church, 934 N. Seminary, Woodstock, IL 60098

\*\*\*\*\*

## Wednesday Night 6 Meter Net

Just as a reminder the 6 meter net/forum is held every Wednesday at 7-9:00 pm on 50.180 USB. Earlt check-ins at 6:45

See you on Frequency.  
Pierre K9EYE  
Net Control

\*\*\*\*\*

Saturday Breakfast Oct.7th 8:15 AM at Green Street Cafe in McHenry. Meet in rear dining room.

## MEETING NOTICE

October 3, 2017

Socializing: 6:30 PM  
Meeting: 7:00 PM

Crystal Lake Bank  
5100 Northwest Hwy (Rt. 14)  
Crystal Lake, IL 60014

### PROGRAM: RTTY

Jack W9MU volunteered to do a program on RTTY and RTTY contesting.

Former member Robert Tirk, KE9FG has donated a Kenwood TM221 2 meter radio and an Alinco DX70 HF radio to the club. President John suggested that the equipment be considered part of the library and be temporarily loaned out to members or new hams having a need for it.

Ex-President John also reminded the group that a Program Chairman is still being sought, and encouraged members with program ideas to email them to a board member. Tom, W9NBG offered to co-chair if another member would assist.

Jeff, KC9WSJ, custodian of the club library, reported that the new books donated last month by K9JKM will be inventoried and made available for loan.

Treasurer Joe, N9OK reported a balance of \$4575.72 in the club treasury, including \$272.29 paid on field day expenses. Paid membership for 2017 stood at 90 at the beginning of the meeting. Jim, N7US made a motion to accept the treasurer's report, seconded by Mike ND9G. The motion passed by voice vote.

# M.C.W.A.

October 2017



## I MUST AND WILL WORK DX!

I see a pattern developing. When I sit down to write this article each month, the solar numbers and propagation improve. But I will not write an article each day to ensure good propagation. Sooner or later this magic will fade. Currently the numbers look good and I won't take credit for it. Tonight I see an SFI of 90 and an SN of 36. The A index is 4 and the K is 2. These are not stellar numbers but the bands are reciprocating with decent conditions. Some weeks ago no sunspots were detected. So for this stage of the "cycles" we will be glad and give thanks. I say cycles because some experts have said that we are seeing shadows of cycle 25 already. Others are speaking of cycle 24 declining. Whatever it is, we'll take it. It's nice at the moment.

Regardless of the solar numbers, I look for DX when I get a yearning to talk with someone far away. I start with a view of cluster spots before I get to the shack. When I arrive to the shack, I often listen to the WWV signals. It is especially useful to listen to WWV on 15 and 20 Mhz. This will give one a preview of band conditions. Then we start with a listen to the higher HF bands and work our way down. Upon doing this last evening, I worked Central America 59 on 17m and South America 59 on 20m. When the solar numbers were much lower in early and mid September, I worked DX with Brazil on 12m with no difficulty. As September continued I worked Europe and South America on these bands. On the 21st, I worked the Dxpediton 5T5OK on 40m. This Dxpediton of European operators did a favorable job of working the bands with the limited 100w law of that land and some modest antennas. Again, the propagation wasn't stellar but they used the various bands and conditions wisely.

The fact that we Dxers expect to work DX at any time is reflected in the many announced DX operations for October. Look for such calls as 4W6RR, XT2AW, H40GC, S9YY, S9CQ, VK9XI, VK9XGJ, T32AZ, 8Q7BI, VK9CI, A52SJ, XW4XR, E44WE, VK9CZ and ZC4MK. This list is just a sample of the DX that will be available as we continue into Fall. Along with these calls will be Special Event stations and the usual Fall contests. Fall DX contests provide times to pad the DX logs like picking apples from trees this time of year.

Let me also say that 40m has been quite good. This will continue from 40m and down as the nights grow longer. Make sure your lower band antennas are in good shape before the snow and ice come.

Now say it after me, "I must and will work DX!" 73 Dave KA9OZP

## Rockwell Collins to be Sold to United Technologies

09/19/2017

United Technologies has announced plans to acquire avionics maker Rockwell Collins in a \$30-billion deal set to be consummated in 2018. United Technologies said it wants to further enhance its role in aviation for both its military and commercial customers in the area of new aircraft connectivity systems.

Collins Radio and later Rockwell Collins for many years manufactured top-tier Amateur Radio equipment. Art Collins, W0CXX, founded Collins Radio Company in 1933.

The Cedar Rapids, Iowa-based firm initially built shortwave and AM broadcasting gear as well as the military and scientific communities, and Collins provided the radio equipment to keep in touch with Admiral Richard Byrd's South Pole Expedition in 1933.

During World War II, Collins became the principal supplier of military radio and navigation equipment, and Collins later produced Amateur Radio equipment and provided communication gear for early NASA missions.

Collins Radio Company was purchased by Rockwell International in 1973. In 2001, the avionics division of Rockwell International was spun off to form Rockwell Collins. In its Amateur Radio heyday, the Collins S-Line was considered the king of the hill. Vintage Collins gear remains popular, and Collins mechanical filters are still widely used.

### Officers & Staff

President.....	Mike Metroka, WB8BZK
	wb8bzk@arrl.net
Vice President .....	Mike Ricketts, ND9G
	mike.nd9g@gmail.com
Secretary .....	Dan Larson, KD9AHQ
	Dan@dreamfactorymedia.com
Treasurer .....	Joe Robin, N9OK
	n9ok@arrl.net
Programs .....	Volunteers ???
Past President.....	John Dewey, KA9CAR
Director .....	Jack Hudson, W9MU
	jack@w9mu.net
Director.....	Pierre Berube, K9EYE
News .....	Jerry Heien, N9AVY
	n9avy@arrl.net
Webmaster .....	Ken Farver, KB9I
Librarian .....	Jeff Schmidt, KC9WSJ
VE Commander .....	Steve Maresso, KB9OLD
Social Media Director .....	Dave Whaley, NT9E

\*\*\*\*\*

STRAY Ad says: For Sale Transceiver. Works great but I don't have a microphone or power cord. Was my backup rig. How did they test it? [W4KVV](#) de eham

STRAY It's all relative. Ham radio is actually a very inexpensive hobby my gear about \$7000, some new and some used). Compare that to high-end audio gear used by "audiophiles" In the hundreds of thousands of dollars!

[K4IIE](#) de eham





## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Years ago the choices for operating modes were simple : SSB, CW, RTTY and possibly some AM that was left over from the 'good ol' days'. Today the choices are far greater with the advent of digital modes.

The list is is large: AMTOR, PACTOR, G-TOR, PACTOR II, CLOVER, RTTY, PSK31, PSK63, PSK125, HF PACKET, HELLSCHREIBER, MT63, THROB, MFSK16, JT65, OLIVIA, DOMINOEX, CONTESTIA, FT-8, SSTV, PACKET, JT6M, DRM, EASYPAL, THOR, WSPR, ROS, SITOR, CHIP, ALE, PAX, PAX2, STANAG, HF DL, NAVTEX, SYNOP, COQUELET and probably others I may have missed.

There are a lot of choices out there and it might be confusing. Fortunately, most sound different from each other. There are web pages where one can go to hear the sounds each make on the air. Stateside there is WB8NUT's site which offers .mp3 files and brief descriptions of modes. On the other side of the pond is G4UCJ's website which offers a bit more.

[http://hfradio.org.uk/html/digital\\_modes.html](http://hfradio.org.uk/html/digital_modes.html)

<http://wb8nut.com/digital/>

Still we have the usual SSB/CW/RTTY modes which are still popular, but many of the digital modes are more popular than others like PSK31, JT65, MFSK16 to name a few.

The good news is that most require a good transceiver, a computer and some sort of interface. Best of all some are low power modes and work well with QRP and up to about 25/50 watts of power. The big plus is that you don't need a big antenna system; people are running verticals and dipoles! Some are even running indoor antenna.

Those who already have radios and antennas probably won't need to do more than find a decent interface unit like the Tigertronics USB which are around \$100 new and cheaper used (hamfest/Ebay/)

I got hooked on PSK31 back in 2005 or so and have had a lot of fun. PSK31 can be whatever you want... just making contacts, ragchewing, working WAS/DXCC or contesting (many PSK31 contests are 6 hour sprints; so you're sitting in front of radio for 2 days!). So far, I've work 157 DXCC entities, but there are others who have worked 170 or more; so there is DX to be had.

The main organization for PSK31 is PODXS 070 ([www.podxs070.com](http://www.podxs070.com)) which is almost 2600 members now. They offer membership certificate and there are endorsement for working various things like Canadian Provinces, Central America, South America, and so on. When an endorsement is completed they send you a sticker (free!). The best part of the endorsement program is that there is checker software which keeps track of everything as long as your log (adif file) is uploaded periodically. There is also another checker program that scores contests automatically when logs are submitted (adif).

There is also a European version (EPC) which seems to me to be run now by the Russians. I joined years ago, but never did anything with it. Seems too complicated although if you qualify for wall paper they will send it as an attachment via email.

Have dabbled with Hellschreiber, Olivia, and some other digital modes, but keep coming back to PSK31 as there seems to be active operators on that mode.

Think if people are so inclined they should check out various digital modes just to expand their horizons. Why be stuck on 1 or 2 modes? They say: variety is the spice of life... whomever "They" is.

