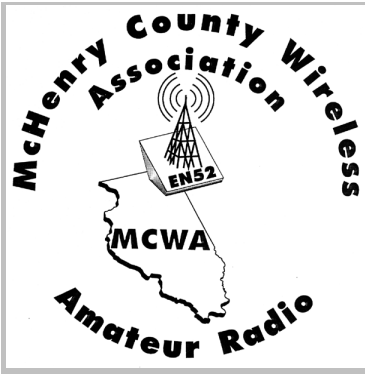


MCWA NEWS

Since 1978



Vol. 12, No.10

October 2012

AMATEUR RADIO



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VE TESTING

Testing by
appointment only

7 PM 3rd Tuesday every other
month

Resumes in September

Cost is \$15 one time charge for
session; no matter how many
elements taken. Must show original
license and/or CSCE if upgrading.
Valid photo ID needed. SS#.

Steve, KB9OLD
847/477-3518

Meeting Notice

Tuesday, October 2

7:00 -- Socializing

7:30 - Meeting

Program: Ken, KB9I, has a program on antenna hardware & installation problems. Ken has been doing antenna installs for many years and will share his expertise on this subject... maybe even some secrets !

New Meeting Place

September 4, 2012

Crystal Lake Bank

5100 Northwest Hwy
Crystal Lake, IL

This will be our new home for the next year. The meeting room is in the basement. Use stairs or elevator at entrance from parking lot. Lots of parking, nice room with good acoustics and no noisy coke machine ! There is a coke machine in kitchen, but kitchen has a door which can be closed. When you attend meeting you will see how it makes the other place look like roach motel.

Treasurer's Report



Its my pleasure to take over the role of Treasure of the MCWA. A big thanks to the former Treasurer Mr. Barry Nelson K9YVT who did a great job in that capacity. The club accounting books/paperwork were all found to be in good order.

Next years (2013) dues will be \$10, and I plan to start officially collecting them at the December meeting. If you need to pay in advance see me and we can make it happen. Also, if you cant make a upcoming meeting and wish to pay dues by mail. Please fill out a application form at <http://mcwa.org/join.htm> and mail it to me.

Of note, we recently received a refund check of \$50 from Nunda Township for the unused portion of our rent on the meeting hall. We also had one new Member join the club; Mr. Todd Hoover N5TJH. Please feel free to contact me about any Treasurer related issues,

Opening Bal.	\$3997.67
End Bal.	\$3998.01

Bob, NZ1B

8/31/12

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Wide

Open !

If you hear the dentist say, “Wide open, please,” the next minutes in the chair may not be especially enjoyable. But if you are in your shack in the chair and hear those glorious words, “Wide open,” on 10m-12m-and15m, you will have a wide smile on your face. Well, start smiling (at least for now) because the upper HF bands have been wide open for the last few days. We wondered if we would see it in Cycle 24 again. Although the current sunspot number is 57, the solar flux index is a pleasant 135. Hopefully, these numbers will continue to rise.

Just in a little bit of time, I worked PY5PDC, EA8DO, FO4BM and F1PVR on 10m. All were near or above 5/9! During this same time period I worked some other nice DX catches on 12m and 15m. These bands stayed open past sunset. With the shortening days, the upper bands will close earlier. Let's hope they stay open into and past 2013 for a long time.

Prior to the last few days, conditions were minimal. There certainly was DX, but the lower “noise indices” were much higher with tons of QRN. We also experienced a couple of damaging solar flares that diminished activity above 17m, but for now conditions are promising. Perhaps Cycle 24 will give us some additional surprises.

With lengthening night time conditions make sure your antennas are ready for the lower HF bands. Already there have been some decent conditions on 30m, 40m, 60m and 80m. 160m is also starting to take on Fall-like characteristics.

As mentioned, DX was available across September. NH8S had a good crew working the DXpedition. A number of club members were able to work them in various modes on several bands. I worked them on 10m, 12m and 17m even before before the more favorable conditions arrived.

As we go into October, look for DX operations from such stations as TT8TT Chad, 5X1NH Uganda, and P29VCX Papua New Guinea. During the CQ WW DX Contest (Oct 27 - 28), the same group in Papua New Guinea will operate as P29NI. By the way, expect to catch some good DX during that contest at the end of the month.

Let's hope that current conditions hold up for hundreds of days to come--- “Wide open, please!”
73 Dave KA9OZP



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From The Editor's Desk

Proposed McHenry County Ordinance

This has been flying back and forth on the K9RN reflector since September 20. If you are reading this and are not on the K9RN reflector at yahoo groups.com, you should be to track important news in McHenry county. K9RN is the official MCWA reflector as well as the MCWA club call. It was also the call of Bob Nielsen (SK) who was active in MCWA Field Days for many years.

Z60K, Kosovo Was the callsign used by a group of well-known DXers from Kosovo. Unfortunately, there were a bunch of Serbian pirates using the same call in protest of Kosovo becoming a DXCC entity. Official word from Bill Moore at the DXCC Desk says it will not happen in foreseeable future. The U.N. failed to admit Kosovo due to vetoes by Serbian, China and Russia.

Coming Meeting Programs

November: Cornel, KK9DX will talk about working contests from home.

December: Jack, W9MU, will talk about "Key Clicks" and other things you don't want on your signal.

January: Dave, K9RUF, will talk about his tower installation.

Note: These are tentative scheduled program and are subject to change.

Sean Smith, KG4WSS, Killed in Consulate Attack:

Sean P. Smith, KG4WSS, of Falls Church, Virginia, was killed when the US Consulate in Benghazi, Libya, was attacked on September 11. He was 34. Smith was one of four Americans, including Chris Stevens -- the US Ambassador to Libya -- who was killed in the attack. Smith, a native of San Diego, enlisted in the Air Force in 1995 at age 17. He served six years as a ground radio maintenance specialist, including a deployment to Oman, before leaving the service in 2002 as a staff sergeant. He was awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal. Smith, who had worked at the State Department for 10 years, was in Libya on a temporary assignment when he was killed. Prior to his temporary assignment to Benghazi, Smith served for the State Department in Brussels, Baghdad, Pretoria, Montreal and The Hague. Read more here <http://www.arrl.org/news/sean-smith-kg4wss-killed-in-consulate-attack>.

K1MAN - One of ham radio's "bad boys"

Order in the long-running K1MAN enforcement case, the FCC Chief Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) described Mr. Baxter's demands and motions as "outlandish", "bullish", "foolhardy", "unprecedented abuse of process", and a "theatre of the absurd." K1MAN's "frivolous motions that waste the Commission's time and resources will not be tolerated," he said.

The ALJ also took some pains to point out that all FCC-licensed amateurs must keep their license information and address current with the Commission.

A link to this PDF document at the FCC website appears below.

http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2012/db0907/FCC-12M-42A1.pdf

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Last Man Standing Plans Special Event Station:

The crew of the hit ABC comedy Last Man Standing <http://www.arrl.org/news/em-ham-radio-in-hollywood-em-amateur-radio-makes-its-debut-on-em-last-man-standing-em> is planning a radio event on Sunday, October 28 to kick off the show's second season. Last Man Standing features Tim Allen as Mike Baxter, KA0XTT. According to Last Man Standing Producer John Amodeo, NN6JA, Mike's station is back this year with even more gear. In addition, all the antennas that were in the catwalk last year have been relocated to the studio's roof.

Using special event call sign K6T, the show's crew will operate on HF, VHF, UHF, D-STAR, EchoLink and IRLP to communicate with fans of the show; 12 members of the Last Man Standing crew are licensed amateurs. Members of the Los Angeles-based PAPA System <http://www.papasys.com/> will assist the crew with running the event. The crew will use several PAPA System repeaters to run analog VHF, UHF and D-STAR communications. They will also be monitoring the Disney Amateur Radio Interconnect repeater system, which has repeaters in New York City (W2ABC <http://w2abc.org/index2.php>), Florida (WD4WDW <http://www.wd4wdw.org/> and WD4WDW-B/D-STAR <https://dstargw.wd4wdw.org/>) and California (KB6AJE <http://www.qrz.com/db/wb6aje>), as well as EchoLink capability. A list of frequencies and an operating schedule will be posted on the KA0XTT Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/KA0XTT?ref=ts> and on Amodeo's Twitter feed <https://twitter.com/nn6ja> in the next few weeks. A special QSL card will be sent to all hams who contact K6T; hams do not need to send a self-addressed, stamped envelope, nor do they need to send postage or "green stamps."

Last Man Standing <http://beta.abc.go.com/shows/last-man-standing> begins its second season on Friday, November 2 at 8/7 Central.

RACES/ARES Meeting September 25

Jim, N7US, and this editor attended this month's meeting with specific aims of discussing the proposed McHenry county tower ordinance. John, W9ZE, presided over the meeting and the first item discussed was the tower ordinance. There was a bit of discussion on the subject which ended with John, W9ZE, saying he's having a one-on-one meeting with the head of the county board to see what is intended and how Amateur Radio may be cut some slack. John seems to be the best man for the job with his speaking skills.

Other subjects covered were Settlers Day, Oct. 6, in Marengo where ARES will again provide communications. On October 13, there will be a SET (Simulated Emergency Test) from 8 am to noon. The group will be testing their skills on 800 MHz.. simplex, and a couple of digital modes to see how well they can cover the county. without the infrastructure.

On October 20 there will be an EMA drill for RACES members. Also discussed was an open position for a net manager. A brief discussion about the Peoria Hamfest where John, W9ZE, said it was very cold and windy ; many people left early due to weather. The Belvidere Hamfest may have better. Wendell, N9REP, mention that his contest group will be out at "the farm, for this year's Sweepstakes and invited operators out to learn contest operating. This SS is a great contest for learning traffic handling. Contact N9REP for more info.

This editor had not been to a RACES/ARES meeting in a very long time. It was good to see many MCWA members there as well as some new faces. John, W9ZE, is to be complimented on a well-run meeting.



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Zombie Apocalypse Survival Gear: Ham Radios

Monday, September 24, 2012

The zombies are coming! Quick: What should you scavenge together for the impending attack?

Baseball bat, check.

First aid kit, check.

Ham radio equipment? You better hope so.

Earlier this week, Dragon Con — the annual sci-fi, fantasy and comic book convention — hosted a panel covering communication in a post-apocalyptic world. According to Wired's coverage of the conference, several attendees may have been disappointed by the panel's primary topic of discussion: amateur radio.

While amateur radio may not be as exhilarating as fighting zombie hordes, it may be the most effective tool during an apocalypse. So why invest in amateur radio equipment for a potential zombie apocalypse (you can never be too prepared!)? Like most investments, amateur radio's success depends on diversification.

The amateur radio community has millions of members worldwide and several hundred thousand licensed operators in the United States. This fact combined with the dedication of local radio clubs makes ham radios one of the best communication systems during a zombie attack.

Amateur radio operators can send out signals from their personal stations either in their homes, on the road, or even from the International Space Station. If these operators send their signals on the right frequency, local radio repeaters can detect the signal and re-broadcast them.

Repeaters receive signals on a certain frequency and then transmit those same signals on a different frequency. Additionally, these stations have more powerful antennas that allow for broadcasts across a greater range. Connecting multiple repeaters allows for even greater distance broadcasts.

Local radio clubs or individual operators maintain these repeaters, and they allow others to transmit on them. So why might this work better than traditional communication channels during a zombie apocalypse?

Downed telephone lines and cell towers without power can lead to spotty or nonexistent coverage during a disaster. A huge network of amateur radio repeaters can utilize pockets that still have power, and generators can keep them running as well.

Amateur radio's not just for zombie attacks, however. Ham operators have been instrumental in several real-life emergencies, including search and rescue efforts during Hurricane Katrina.

There's even a group of amateur radio enthusiasts and horror film buffs who started their own "Zombie Squad" dedicated to emergency preparedness.

So if you're gearing up for a zombie battle, don't forget your radios. Finding safety among this huge amateur network may prove more useful than shotguns and baseball bats.

