



# The Feedline

## Zen and the Art of Radiotelegraphy

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

One thing that I find amusing about Morse Code is that the more people claim that it's dead, the more people there are that rise up to defend and promote it. Note that I said "defend and promote it," not actually use it, but that topic is for another column.

Having said that, let me direct you to a new tome on our ancient art, Zen and the Art of Radiotelegraphy by Carlo Consoli, IK0YGI. This book is available as a free download in the original Italian

([http://www.qsl.net/ik0ygi/enu/ZART\\_ita\\_v2\\_0100826.pdf](http://www.qsl.net/ik0ygi/enu/ZART_ita_v2_0100826.pdf)) and in an English translation ([http://www.qsl.net/ik0ygi/enu/ZART\\_r2010\\_1008m.pdf](http://www.qsl.net/ik0ygi/enu/ZART_r2010_1008m.pdf)).

What makes this book different from others is that instead of concentrating on the mechanics of learning and using Morse Code, the author spends a good deal of time talking about the psychology of learning this skill. To succeed in learning Morse Code, Consoli advises that we need to change our approach to learning:

"When learning CW, therefore, we must establish a new component in our self-image and, when doing so, we need to be relaxed. Always practice during the same time of day and in a place where you can experience positive feelings of comfort and pleasure. When we make a mistake we are always ready to blame our-

selves. This is the way we learnt from our environment during childhood, often accepting any fault as our own error or weakness.

This potentially destructive mechanism can be used to build a positive self-image, rather than demolish it. A mistake must be considered a signal, pointing us in the right direction. If you fail, let your mistake pass away, with no blame or irritation. Learn CW in a relaxed mood, enjoy the pleasure of learning something new, repeat your exercises every day and be confident in the self-programming abilities of your self-image. Just a few minutes a day: you can take care of your 'more serious' stuff later on."

*Continued on Page 5*

### Upcoming Program

The November meeting of the Northern Kentucky Amateur Radio Club will feature a Show'n Tell. Bring any radio-related item that you feel might be of interest to fellow club members. Please join us at 7:30 p.m. on **Monday, August 9**, at the [Hilltop Church of Christ](#) in Taylor Mill.

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### Dates to Remember:

- Nov. 8 – NKARC membership meeting
- Nov. 13,14 – [Kentucky QSO party](#)
- Dec. 4 – Deadline for Feedline submissions
- Dec. 11,12 – [ARRL 10-meter contest](#)
- Dec. 13–NKARC Christmas dinner

# NKARC Directory

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**Repeaters (K4CO):** 147.255+ and 444.350+ Edgewood (PL 123.0), 147.375+ Walton, 146.895+ Highland Heights. The 147.255 repeater is a linked Echolink node, accessible via N4IJS-R.

**NKARC Net:** Tuesdays, 8:30 PM on the 147.255 repeater

**VE Testing:** Testing sessions are held by appointment only on the 2nd Monday of each month, prior to the NKARC membership meeting. Testing begins at 6:00 pm. To make an appointment, contact Lyle Hamilton at [ab8sh@arrl.net](mailto:ab8sh@arrl.net) or tel. 513-315-4032

**NKARC Web Site:** <http://www.k4co.org>

**NKARC Membership Meetings:** 2nd Monday of each month at 7:30 pm at the [Hilltop Church of Christ](#), 5300 Taylor Mill Rd (Ky. 16), Taylor Mill, KY. Visitors are always welcome!

The Feedline is published monthly by and for the members of the Northern Kentucky Amateur Radio Club. It is distributed via direct email to current NKARC members. **If you are a member in good standing but are not receiving your copy, please notify the Feedline editor.** Permission is hereby granted to any non-profit amateur radio group to quote or reprint from this publication provided appropriate source credit is given. Submissions, ad-

dress or call changes and circulation problems may be sent to the Feedline editor:

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# Top of the Tower

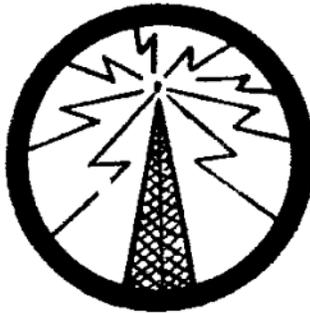
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## *Apologies*

Please accept our apologies for not getting the Top of the Tower ready in time for the Feedline publication. Time just seemed to get away from us the last couple of months and we will do our best to prevent that going forward!

## *Remember*

Unfortunately, we lost one of our own over the last few weeks. Fred Eastabrooks, KE4ESN, became a Silent Key on Sunday, 10/17 at 12:45 p.m. He passed away with his family surrounding him and is in a better place now. We will all miss him. If you would like to pay last respects, please visit <http://www.colonialfuneralhome.com/index.cfm>.



## *Is your station ready for the winter?*

After a long and hot summer, fall is finally arriving. As I write this, the temperature outside is a balmy 32 degrees. But, that is still the low, and not the high, for the day!

Fall usually brings with it some new chores – getting the lawn mowers prepped for winter and stowed away, get the snow blower out and ready for the season, winterize the cars, caulk around the house, etc. For me, I also add some Ham Radio “chores” as well (I use that term lightly as I actually enjoy these! – HI!)

This is the perfect time to make sure your station is ready for the upcoming seasons. I, for one, do not want to be out in the middle of a snow storm, with -15 degree wind chills, trying to fix my antenna so that I can sit down and enjoy using my radio. So, I try to get as much done before that kind of WX settles in.

If you have an existing outdoor antenna, when is the last time you inspected it? If it has been more than a couple of years, you may want to take it down and

really work with it. For me, I have an MFJ-1798 vertical which I just love. Last year, I decided to heed my own advice and brought it down to really check it out (I often perform a visual inspection from the ground and everything looked FB). Well, to my surprise, there were a number of loose connections, screws that were missing, etc. With my antenna tuner, I never noticed the changes that must have been there, but wow – I never would have thought. Well, I re-paired and replaced were needed, re-tuned it, and put it back up. It has worked even better after that and continues to provide great results. With my luck, if I had not taken it down when I did, it would have probably failed over the winter when ice, snow, and heavy winds all happened together to be the last straw for some part of it. And, with me being as stubborn as I

am – just ask my wife, she will be happy to tell you all about that — I would have been out there in the frozen arctic fixing the antenna (and probably getting a cold, too).

With the extremes we have here in WX (between the heat, cold, snow, winds, and ice), it is always good to maintain your outdoor equipment. It doesn't take that long to do and you get the feeling of satisfaction of working on your own equipment. Don't have an outdoor antenna, but want one? This, too, is a perfect time to design, build, and install it.

With this ounce of prevention (or ounce of initiative to put up that antenna or any other outdoor activity), you will be able to enjoy this wonderful hobby of ours while looking out at all of the wild WX that winter can bring in a couple of months, sipping your hot cocoa, and talking to some tropical island somewhere!

Hope to catch you on the air soon.

73 for now,

Robert Kluck – N4IJS

# October Meeting Minutes

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## MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 11, 2010 MEETING OF THE NORTHERN KENTUCKY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Call to order

Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll call

### Treasury Report

- Expenses – \$32.55 (Pizza, pop, etc), \$100 repeater bills.
- Income – \$128.30 (\$40 in dues, \$18.30 challenge, and \$70 donation)
- Motion to accept: Ron, KG4HMO
- Second: Robert, KJ4FZS
- All in favor: All
- All opposed: None

### Approval of minutes from last meeting

- Motion by: Roger, WB8ZHQ
- Second by: Greg, W4TSA
- All in favor: All
- All opposed: None.

### Old business

#### Raising membership update

- Any new Member will get the balance of this year plus all of next for one membership fee.
- Had two new/renewal memberships in the last month.

#### Fund raising committee update

Dann, KI4AVO, challenged the Club:

Can you commit to some monetary amount per day to support the Club? Some have stepped up the challenge!

- Rob, KI4YWJ, volunteered to help getting the

Club to be recognized as a non-Profit.

- VE Testing: Two upgrades were earned (both to General).
- 147.255 Repeater update

The new company, American Tower Corporation, has made contact with us regarding the use of the tower. They are very interested in continuing to work with us and have bent over backwards to accommodate our needs.

There is one antenna that is problematic for them (which we have there as an extra one and is not currently in use). They want to move it to another location on the tower.

Robert, N4IJS, will follow-up with ATC and Brian, K4BRI.

- Don't forget the Halloween Sprint this month!

### New business

- Remember Fred, KE4ESN. He will be greatly missed!
- Christmas dinner will be held on the same night as the December meeting (Monday, 12/13). Planning on the Golden Corral on 3L Highway. If we cannot secure a room for the Club, we will look at the Florence location.

#### Nominating committee update

Notice was sent out via email and on the web site. Please contact the Nominating Committee if you have any interest in running for either an elected or appointed position. (NominatingCommittee@k4co.org).

If interested, please contact the Nominating Committee by 10/31. The elections will be held during the November meeting.

- VHF Contest:

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Date: Last Sunday of every month at 8:30 PM. (starting September)

Freq: 144.255

Formal net – Net Control will be N4IJS (to start with)

- We need monthly presentation ideas! Please contact Robert Kluck if you have any suggestions and/or would like to present.

November will be “Show and Tell” – bring in anything you want to share with the Club.

### Adjournment

- Motion by: Dave, KI4QH
- Second by: Tony, AI4IP
- All in favor: All
- All opposed: None
- Time: 19:41

Respectfully submitted by Robert Kluck, N4IJS.

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### *Zen, continued from Cover*

Consoli also has some interesting things to say about getting faster. He agrees with me that it's essential to abandon pencil and paper and start copying in one's head. We also agree that at this point, you need to start using a paddle instead of a straight key.

He has analyzed the situation a lot more than I have, though. When hams ask me how I learned to copy in my head, all I can do is to relate my own experience, which is that one day, I just went cold turkey. I put down the pencil and paper and never copied letter-by-letter ever again.

Unfortunately, that doesn't seem to work for a lot of operators. If that doesn't work for you, Consoli says that what you need to do is to program yourself to copy in your head. You do this, he says, by relaxing and visualizing. Visualize yourself as a high-speed operator, and one day, you will be one.

That seems to have worked for him. He is a member of the Very High Speed Club (VHSC), First Class Operator's Club (FOC), and has been clocked at copying over 70 wpm.

Will it work for you? I'm not sure, but if you haven't been successful with other methods to improve your code speed, then Consoli's methods are certainly worth a try.

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*When not pondering the psychology of operating CW, Dan actually operates CW. You'll find him almost every day on either 40m, 30m, and as we transition to winter here in North America, 80m. You can e-mail him with comments or questions at [cwgeek@kb6nu.com](mailto:cwgeek@kb6nu.com).*

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## October NKARC Net Report

DATE	NCS	CHECKINS	TIME (MINS)	TRAFFIC
October 5	AJ4DK (Don)	9	21	0
October 12	KB4VKS (Mike)	13	31	0
October 19	N4IJS (Robert)	8	27	0
October 26	KB4VKS (Mike)	14	28	0
TOTALS:		44	107	0

# Mark's Mutterings

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## Antenna Adventures

As I write this, my K3 is tuned to the 15-meter phone band, and I am hearing strong signals coming in from across the globe. It's the CQ World Wide (CQWW) DX Contest weekend, and it's great to hear this band come to life after years of being stuck in the sunspot doldrums. It is also a good test for my recently re-installed HF antenna. You see, we finally decided that it was time to replace our 22-year-old roof, so two weeks ago I took down my Cushcraft MA5B antenna, which was installed on a 5-foot mast on the peak of our roof. The roofers postponed the installation until Wednesday of this week, so I was beginning to doubt that I could have the antenna back up in time for CQWW. The roofers volunteered to re-install my mast for me, and I gladly accepted their offer. Friday afternoon, Lylah and Angie (my wife and daughter) helped me to haul the antenna



back onto the roof and install it on the mast. It was the first time either of them had been on the roof, and they were real troopers! Lylah had actually been

urging me to get the antenna back up — she was concerned that it might get damaged where I had temporarily stored it in the backyard. Am I a lucky ham, or what?!

These events brought back a memory that I had long forgotten, or perhaps suppressed. When I was eighteen, I lived in a small community in New Brunswick, Canada. Cable TV was not yet available, and we could receive only two local stations over the air. I desperately wanted to be able to watch quality American TV (think: Charlie's Angels), but the closest U.S. stations were in Bangor, Maine, some 100 miles distant. Rabbit ears just didn't cut it.

I found a book at the public library that contained a formula for designing a 4-element Yagi antenna for any frequency. I picked 57 MHz — the midpoint between the picture and sound frequencies for channel 2. Not having access to aluminum tube stock, I built my antenna from 1x2 and 2x2 lumber “salvaged” from my Dad's workshop. I then stapled wire elements to the wood frame, and soldered everything together. I decided to mount my creation on the chimney of our house. I came up with a clever mounting scheme that involved inserting a couple of wooden plugs into the flue, each having a small hole drilled in it to accept the antenna mast.

I aimed the antenna at Bangor, ran 75-ohm coax down to the TV, and with palms sweating with anticipation, turned on the TV. Snow. Once in a while, a ghost of an image would briefly appear and then fade away. Oh well, it was an interesting experiment, but the lesson I learned is that even the best antenna cannot capture a signal that isn't there!

Fast forward several months: I was away at my first year of college, making my weekly phone call home. Mom and I chatted for a bit, then she turned the phone over to Dad.

“Is there something you forgot to tell me, son?”, he asked in his baritone voice.

Uh-oh, had he somehow found out that I was flunking calculus?

“Umm, I don't think so Dad. Why do you ask?”

“Well, this week it got chilly and we decided to use the fireplace. I could hardly start the fire, and within a few minutes, the house was full of smoke!”

It hadn't taken him long to figure out what the problem was. Fortunately, he had a great sense of humor, and he would rib me about this for years afterwards. I [miss](#) Dad a lot.

73,  
Mark Volstad, AI4BJ

# Weaver's Words

## Boo!

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**Jim Weaver, K8JE**  
Great Lakes Division Director, ARRL  
E-mail: [k8je@arrl.org](mailto:k8je@arrl.org); Tel.: 513-459-0142

### ARRL is on Facebook

In case you Facebook aficionados failed to find this fabulous fact, ARRL is on Facebook. Go to <http://www.facebook.com/ARRL.org?ref=ts#!/ARRL.org?v=info> and enjoy.

### Nominations Open for International Humanitarian Award

Nominations are open for the 2010 ARRL International Humanitarian Award. The award is made to an amateur or group of amateurs who demonstrate extraordinary service to human welfare, peace and international understanding through Amateur Radio. Nominations for the award are reviewed by a committee appointed by the President of ARRL and the proposed recipient is recommended to the ARRL Board of Directors. The Board makes the final decision.

Nominations for the Award should include a summary of the actions that qualify the nominee(s), and statements from at least two people who have first-hand knowledge that confirm the actions. Nominations and materials to support them should be sent to ARRL International Humanitarian Award, 225 Main St., Newington, CT 06111. Nominations are due by December 31. For additional information on the award, go to <http://www.arrl.org/international-humanitarian-award>.



### WA4SWF and KY4Z Receive Dukes of Hazard Awards

I typically don't mention most awards received by members; however, this one is a bit unique.

The place: National Guard Armory, Hazard, KY.  
The event: Hazard Hamfest.  
The occasion: ARRL Forum.

What happened: Jim Brooks, KY4Z and Fred Jones, WA4SWF received the "Dukes of Hazard Award." The Award was given by, Bill Gorman, Mayor of Hazard, for outstanding service to the community and area in re-establishing a viable ARES organization throughout Eastern Kentucky.

Congratulations, Jim and Fred. You each fully deserve the honor. My only surprise is that the award came in the form of a very nice plaque instead of a full-size "General Lee" 1969 Dodge Charger.

The award was presented by John Farler, K4AVX on behalf of the mayor who died only days earlier. Jim, of course, is Kentucky SM. Fred is a Kentucky Assistant SEC and John is a DEC. Both are Assistant Directors in the GLD and have provided excellent service to Amateur Radio. John was chairman of the hamfest which was sponsored by the Kentucky Mountains ARC.

### Results of the Recent Division Survey

The results of the recent Great Lakes Division Survey continue to be reviewed. Here are a few results.

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One item that came through 599 or 59, depending on your choice of modes, is that respondents to the survey want ARRL to place its primary effort on representing Amateur Radio at the government level. I do not interpret this to indicate this is the only job you want the League to do, but that making certain we amateurs continue to have frequencies to use, are able to install antennas and remain capable of operating is your first priority. Seventy four percent of the 262 who took the survey said this was their top need for ARRL. Promoting EmComm (9.2%) and promoting Amateur Radio to the public (6.9%) came in second and third. "Other" comments (3.4%) included reducing the emphasis on EmComm and the preference for combining two or more of the options I had presented.

Answers to Question No. 2 (your favorite ham activity) were split primarily three ways with Emergency/Public Service communications coming in first (27.4%). The second and third vote getters were DXing (22.1%) and Building/Experimenting (21.4%). Ragchewing came in fourth with (15.5%) of the vote. The "Other" comments mostly embellished on one of the above answers or stated that all activities are important.

Question No. 3 asked about the frequency with which you experience QRM from contests or DX pile-ups in your on-air activities. I sometimes receive rather strong comments to this effect. Answers to this question, however, indicate that QRM does not interfere with your operations (56.5%) and that interference occurs only occasionally (36.3%). The remaining survey-takers (6.9%) said they experience interference no more than one day every two-four weeks or at least one day a week. This would seem to say that interference from contests and DX pile-ups is not a significant problem.

The answers to Question No. 4 (the number of contests ARRL sponsors annually) were fairly

well spread over the 6, 9, 14 and 27 given as possible answers. The answer is 14, excluding Field Day and the Simulated Emergency Test. This means that League-sponsored contests are relatively few. Considering that some ARRL contests occur only on 160M, or on 10M and even higher frequencies, the likelihood of frequent interference from ARRL-sponsored contests to non-contest operation is rather low.

To view all results of the survey, go to [www.arrl-greatlakes.org](http://www.arrl-greatlakes.org). Click on the Surveys/Feedback link at the left of the page and then on View Results near the middle of the next page that opens.

Thanks to everyone who took the time and thought to complete the survey. I will have further comments on the survey results in coming newsletters. Expect another survey soon.



### **Attorney Volunteers offer Free Advice to Radio Amateurs**

Several years ago, the ARRL established an appointment for attorneys who are willing to offer initial, free advice to amateurs who encounter legal problems with their Amateur Radio operation. These Volunteer Counsels are available to help direct hams troubled with tower ordinances or other forms of legal disruption of their ham activities. They may also be available to represent amateurs in legal action; however, such representation is not part of the Volunteer Counsel Program and may be subject to professional fees

An up-to-date list of Volunteer Counsels in the Great Lakes Division can be found on the GLD website — [www.arrl-greatlakes.org](http://www.arrl-greatlakes.org). Click on the Staff icon at the left of the opening page and then on Volunteer Counsels to reach the lists.

Attorneys who would like to become a Volunteer Counsel are invited to click on the To Become A

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Volunteer Counsel link to the left of the VC list. There, one can review details of this position and sign up for it if they choose.

I understand that Past GLD Director Len Nathanson, W8RC was involved in developing the VC Program. Len remains a VC.

### **ARRL Website Management Changes**

General management for completing the new ARRL website has shifted to Dave Sumner, K1ZZ our CEO. Daily operation of the project is under the direction of Jon Bloom, KE3Z, Manager of the ARRL IT department.

### **GLD Assistant Directors**

Each ARRL Director is authorized to appoint amateurs in his Division to serve as Assistant Directors (ADs). The tasks ADs perform are determined in discussion between the person who is offered an appointment and the Director. Generally speaking, I have asked GLD ADs to take messages I send to them to members at club meetings they attend. I also have asked them to let me know of any confusion or displeasure over ARRL operations and policies. This is another way I am trying to share information with members as well as to learn what you think.

### **Kentucky QSO Party is This Month**

Don't forget the Kentucky QSO Party in November. It runs from 1400 UTC Saturday, November 13 through 0200 UTC Sunday, November 14. Full rules and information are at <http://www.wkdx.com/mainsite/>. Click on 2010 Ky QSO Party Rules at left of page. KYQP is sponsored by the Western KY DX Association.

### **The Problem Last Month**

The difficulty with getting the entire issue of last month's Words to you was caused by a period -- i.e. a little old ".". It seems that at one time, the ARRL system used a "." in an otherwise empty line as a command to indicate the end of a message. I'm told this command has not been used for quite some time, but that no one had thought to remove the command from the system. I inadvertently had put just such a command near the middle of the e-newsletter last month. This was doubly difficult to solve because I was on the road at the time and had little time to deal with sending or receiving e-mail. I understand the IT crew at HQ has removed this command from the system. I apologize for the confusion that resulted.

### **QSL Field Checkers Available**

This is just a reminder that most QSL cards can be checked in the field without sending them to HQ. There are several volunteers in this Division who can check cards for you. These fall into three different categories. The categories are:

- ARRL DXCC QSL Field Checker (see <http://www.arrl.org/card-checkers>).

These volunteers can check cards for DXCC, WAS, VUCC and WAC

- ARRL HF Awards Manager (see <http://www.arrl.org/card-checkers>): HF Awards Managers can check WAS QSLs.

- ARRL VHF/UHF Awards Manager (see <http://www.arrl.org/card-checkers>). These managers can check VUCC cards.

I have contacted each DXCC Card Checker and have learned each of them is available to come to

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hamfests to check cards. They also are available to meet with amateurs individually to do this. The same should be true of most HF and VHF/UHF Awards Managers.

Discussion of Field Checking QSL cards is at <http://www.arrl.org/card-checkers>.

### **Tentative Travel, Hamfest and Activity Schedule**

Hamfests in the following list have received ARRL sanctioning as of press time. Hamfests and other events for which a Great Lakes Division representative is scheduled to attend are identified with the representative's name. The schedule can be expected to be fine-tuned from time to time.

Patronize ARRL-sanctioned hamfests. Hamfests, conventions, symposia and similar events sponsored by ARRL-affiliated clubs may be eligible to be sanctioned by the League. For information on sponsoring and sanctioning a hamfest or convention, go to [www.arrl.org/hamfest-sponsor-support](http://www.arrl.org/hamfest-sponsor-support). To have your hamfest sanctioned, go to <http://www.arrl.org/hamfest-convention-application> to apply on line. Hamfests are already being sanctioned for 2012!. Please be sure to read the requirements for having an event sanctioned before submitting a request.

Hamfest Chairmen, please remember to order your free handouts that are available from ARRL. These handouts are to be displayed on the ARRL table you provide. These replace the box of assorted goodies HQ previously sent automatically. The reason for the change is to allow you to select only those materials you believe will be of value and interest to your attendees.

2010

6 Nov: Grant ARC Georgetown, (OH) Hamfest - Jim  
20 Nov. A&F Committee meeting, Newington - Jim  
5 Dec: LCARC Swap/Hamfest, Harrison Twp., MI

2011

16 Jan: 45th Hazel Park Hamfest, Hazel Park, MI - Jim\*  
16 Jan: SCARF Hamfest, Nelsonville, OH  
20 Jan: A&F Meeting, Newington, CT - Jim  
21-22 Jan: ARRL Board Meeting, CT - Gary, Jim  
30 Jan: Tusco ARC Hamfest, Strasburg, OH  
6 Feb: NOARS Winter Hamfest, Lorain, OH  
13 Feb: IARC Mid-Winter Hamfest, Mansfield, OH - Jim\*  
20 Feb: Livonia ARC Swap-N-Shop, Livonia, MI - Jim\*  
19 Mar: Crossroads Hamfest, Marshall, MI - Jim\*  
2 Apr: ARGYL Hamfest, Lowell, MI  
9 Apr: 55th Cuyahoga Falls ARC Hamfest, Cuyahoga Falls, OH  
14 Jul: Committee Meeting, Newington, CT - Jim  
15-16 Jul: ARRL Board Meeting, CT - Gary, Jim  
6 Aug: Voice of Aladdin Hamfest, Columbus, OH - Jim  
21 Aug: Warren ARC Hamfest, Cortland, OH

\*Driving conditions permitting.

Return to:  
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NKARC Feedline November 2010  
Volume 2010 Issue 11