

Vol. 2011, #12
December 2011



NORTHERN KENTUCKY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

The Feedline



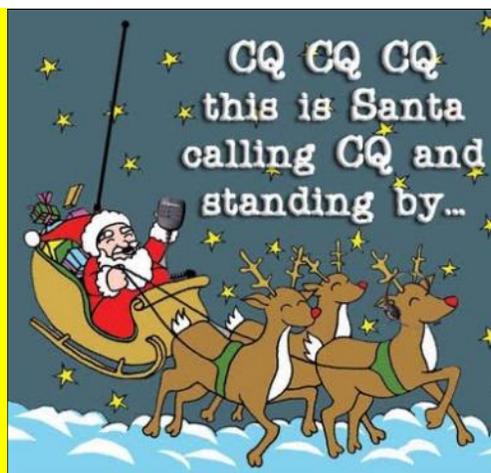
Greg May, W2ORO, answers questions following his informative presentation on several battery chargers he designed and built himself, during the

November meeting of the Northern Kentucky Amateur Radio Club.

Photo by Mark Volstad, AI4BJ.

NKARC/KD7ARET Christmas Dinner

Northern Kentucky Amateur Radio Club and KD7ARET members and their guests are invited to attend the annual Christmas dinner Monday, December 12 at 7:00. The dinner will be held at the Golden Corral at 4770 Houston Rd. in Florence, in front of Lowes.



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Dates to Remember:

- Dec 10,11 – [ARRL 10 Meter Contest](#)
- Dec 12 – NKARC Christmas Dinner
- Dec 31 – Deadline for Feedline submissions
- Jan 9 – NKARC membership meeting

NKARC Directory

Vice-President

Dann Fox, KI4AVO

dfox03@fuse.net

President

Robert Kluck, N4IJS

n4ijs@k4co.org

Club Trustee & Historian

Brian DeYoung, K4BRI

k4bri@arrl.net

Director at Large

Dave Core, K8WDA

daveacore@yahoo.com

Feedline Editor

Mark Volstad, AI4BJ

Tel: 859-689-4234

mvolstad@insightbb.com

Webmaster

Robert Kluck, N4IJS

n4ijs@k4co.org

Repeater Committee Chair

Tony White, AI4IP

ai4ip@arrl.net

Net Manager

Robert Kluck, N4IJS

n4ijs@k4co.org

Field Day Chair

Greg Lamb, W4TSA

w4tsa@yahoo.com

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 VETesting@k4co.org 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:

Mark Volstad, AI4BJ
6098 Tosha Dr., Burlington, KY 41005
Email: mvolstad@insightbb.com
Tel: 859-689-4234

Top of the Tower

Where did the year go?

Wow, hard to believe that Thanksgiving is over, the annual Christmas Dinner is next week, Christmas is just around the corner, and the New Year is less than a month away. Where did the year go?

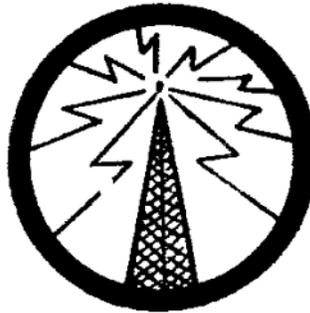
2011 was a good year for our Club. We had some great presentations by several folks, acquired a new D-Star repeater, chartered and started the Repeater Committee, started the process to have an accounting of all of the Club's assets, and the list could go on. Had a rewarding Field Day, helped many people get their upgrades and helped many more become newly licensed Hams. We also learned some things as well, such as preparing a better plan for Field Day, improving our attracting new members for starters. And, we will continue to grow our Club in 2012 and beyond!

Remember our Christmas Dinner coming up on Monday, 12/12 (more information can be found elsewhere in this Feedline or online at www.k4co.org). We will be having door prizes, some awards, and, most importantly, a great time.

We need you!

There are many, many functions that take place in order

to help our Club run every day. And, we could use your help! We need more Net Control operators, presentation Ideas and presenters, and the list could go on. And, of course, we also need volunteers to help run the organization. If you are interested in any of the above functions or positions, please let me know.



D-STAR

If you are interested in purchasing any D-STAR equipment at a discounted price from Ham Radio Outlet, please let me know. This may be a great time to get some new equipment!

In closing...

I would like to hear from you as well. How are we doing? Is the Club meeting your needs? Do you have some ideas to improve the Club? Please let me know your thoughts and how we could make our Club the premier Amateur Radio club in the Cincinnati area.

May you and your family have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

73 for now,

Robert Kluck – N4IJS
n4ijs@k4co.org
(513) 919-6672 (cell)

November NKARC Net Report

By Robert Kluck, N4IJS

DATE	NCS	CHECKINS	TIME (MINS)	TRAFFIC
November 1	AJ4DK (Don)	8	17	
November 8	KB4VKS (Mike)	5	13	
November 15	KJ4VKV (Tyson)	6	20	
November 22	KJ4VKV (Tyson)	5	13	
November 29	W4TSA (Greg)	6	15	
TOTALS:		30	78	

November Meeting Minutes

MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 14, 2011 MEETING OF THE NORTHERN KENTUCKY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

The November 2011 meeting of the Northern Kentucky Amateur Radio Club was called to order by President Robert Kluck, N4IJS, at 7:33 PM, November 14th, 2011.

Robert led the Pledge of Allegiance and 18 members and friends present introduced themselves.

A motion to accept the minutes of the October meeting as presented in the Feedline was made by Tyson, J4VKV, and seconded by Lyle, AB8SH. Motion carried.

Lyle, AB8SH, reported that 2 candidates passed the license exam prior to the meeting. Brian, K4BRI, also reported that 20 Dixie Heights High School students recently passed the VE exam.

The Repeater Committee is still awaiting official confirmation of the frequency pair assigned to the new D-STAR repeater according to Tony, AI4IP. As soon as confirmation is received from SERA, the duplexer will be tuned and

the equipment installed at NKU. The D-STAR repeater remains on the air, although low profile in N4IJS's basement.

Robert, N4IJS, reiterated that Ham Radio Outlet has offered a discount to club members who want to purchase a D-STAR transceiver. Anyone interested should contact Robert for more information.

Robert invited everyone to the annual club Christmas dinner meeting. This year the dinner meeting will be at Golden Corral, 4770 Houston Rd., Florence, near Lowe's. It will be at 7pm on December 12.

Representing the Nominating Committee, Tony, AI4IP, presented a slate of nominations for 2012 club office as follows:

- President – Robert, N4IJS
- Vice President – Lyle, AB8SH
- Director at Large – Don, AJ4DK

John, KY4JD, made a motion to accept the nominations. It was seconded by Dave, KI4QH. The motion passed and the slate was elected unanimously. Congratulations were extended to the new officers.

Dann, KI4AVO, suggested a yard sale next summer as a fund raising opportunity for the club. He suggested that as club members clean out storage areas this winter they set aside items that could be donated for a sale. Dann volunteered to host the yard sale next year if the club is interested.

A motion to adjourn the business meeting was made by Dave, KI4QH, and seconded by John, KY4JD.

Split the Pot was won by Robert, N4IJS.

Greg, W2ORO, presented an interesting program on his battery charger construction projects which use PIC micro-controllers. Greg should never be charged with assault on a battery.

Respectfully submitted by Dave, K8WDA.

Mark's Mutterings

CQ Sweepstakes!

With the bands as hot as they've been this Fall, I was really looking forward to the ARRL November Phone Sweepstakes. I was not disappointed!

One of the reasons that Sweepstakes is one of my favorite contests is that there are enough categories that I actually stand a chance of winning! Last year, I competed in the low power (100 watts or less) category and ended up with the fifth-highest score in the Kentucky section. This year I decided to compete in the QRP (5 watts or less) category. There were no entries in this category last year, so I reasoned that my chances of placing first would be rather good!

When the high bands (10 and 15 Meters) are open, QRP can be surprisingly effective. Part of the reason is that antennas are typically more efficient at these frequencies, and also band noise tends to be lower.



Many people participate in Sweepstakes with the single objective of attaining the coveted “sweep”. The ARRL has divided Canada and the U.S. into [80 sections](#). States with relatively few hams, such as Kentucky, are sections unto themselves. States with many hams are subdivided. California, for example, is split into 10 sections. (These same sections are used during Field Day.) If you are fortunate enough to work all 80 sections, you are said to have “made a clean sweep”. Last year I came within 6 sections of a sweep, but I did not expect to do as well this year running only QRP power.

Scoring in Sweepstakes is very simple: Each QSO is worth two points, and each section worked acts as a multiplier. So, if you make a total of 80 contacts

during the contest, and you manage to work 50 different sections, your total score would be $80 \times 2 \times 50 = 8,000$ points. Each station can be worked only once during the contest.

I anxiously counted down the minutes until the 4:00 p.m. start time Saturday afternoon. At the appointed hour, the bands burst into activity. The first few hours of a contest seem to be the most chaotic, so I opted to start out on 10 Meters where I expected that there would be plenty of elbow room. Fat chance! The band was more congested than I've ever seen it since becoming a ham in 2003.

Being a “little pistol”, I stuck to search and pounce, which means you work a station, then move up or down the band to the next station, and so on. Activity on 10 Meters usually peters out above 28.500 MHz, but on this day I was still finding stations crowded cheek by jowl all the way to 29.000 and beyond. If you have never experienced so much activity on single ham band, you don't know what you are missing!

All the stations I was hearing were west of the Rockies, so I pointed my mini-beam west and started racking up QSOs and sections in 6 and 7-land. Hawaii and Alaska went into the log without breaking a sweat. I easily worked a station in Puerto Rico who had started late and had not yet been spotted on the spotting networks. A short while later he had a big pileup. When I ran out of stations to work on 10, I dropped to 15 and found that band just as densely occupied.

The contest exchange for Sweepstakes is rather complicated: The first element is a consecutive serial number (your QSO number), followed by a single letter precedence (“Q” for QRP), followed by your call sign, followed by the last two digits of the year you were first licensed, followed by your ARRL section. So, if I was making my fifth QSO, my part of the exchange would be “Please copy number 5, Quebec, AI4BJ, check 03, Kentucky”. The only part of the exchange that changes is the QSO number.

As with Field Day, a signal report does not form part of the exchange. Nevertheless, quite a few of

my contacts responded with comments like “Nice QRP signal”, or “You’re S9 plus 10 here in Oregon”. I was rarely asked for repeats, so I knew my signal was getting out just fine.

There are certain sections that are notoriously difficult to work because A) few hams in that section participate in the contest, and B) the few that do participate tend to search and pounce, making it nearly impossible for another “search and pouncer” to work them! If you are lucky enough to find one that is “running a frequency”, they are usually working a pileup. I make a note of the frequency and come back later when (hopefully) the crowd has thinned. Such was the case with NT (Northern Territories). This year I found two strong stations on 15 Meters. They were too busy to work on Saturday but I came back on Sunday and worked one of them without any trouble.

Oddly enough, it’s the sections that are close to Kentucky that I often have the most trouble with. That’s because they are too close to work on 10, 15 and 20, and on 40 and 80 my antenna (a low sloper) is sub-optimal and the higher noise level makes it much harder for the other station to hear my puny signal.

By the time I stopped for supper on Saturday, every section west of the Rockies was in my log, with the exception of East Bay (Oakland area). I usually find EB to be toughest west coast section to find.

Before heading to bed, I turned the radio back on and worked a handful of stations on 80 and 40 Meters. This was much harder work!

The rules stipulate that you cannot operate more than 24 hours during the 30-hour contest. I don’t come close to reaching this limit — I’m a casual contester!

I woke up at 7:30 on Sunday, turned the radio on again and worked a few more close-in sections on 80 and 40 Meters. I switched to 20 Meters and started filling in all the sections from the northeast that I had not heard the previous day.

I’m a fan of N3FJP’s contest logging software. He is best known for his Field Day log, but he makes custom versions of his log for each of the major

contests. They don’t have the bells and whistles that serious testers require, but I like them exactly because they have a simple, easy-to-read interface. They do have one serious flaw — more about that in a moment.

By late afternoon Sunday I had reached my last year’s total of 74 sections. Could I complete the sweep? Slowly, agonizingly slowly, the missing sections appeared in my log. South Dakota: check. Iowa: check. East Bay: check. Western PA: check. I was still missing Quebec and South Carolina. I dropped to 40 Meters, and eventually found both of them. They were both weak, and despite my best efforts, I couldn’t bust the pileups they had generated. If I had been running 100 watts instead of 5 watts — who knows?

So, I ended up with fewer QSOs in the log (171) than last year, but I came closer than ever to making a clean sweep! My final calculated score was 28,236, compared with 37,000 last year. It’ll be a few months before I learn if that was good enough to win my category in KY.

The final step was to email my log to the ARRL. The contest robot immediately responded with the unwelcome news that two of my log entries were invalid, because I had recorded their call signs with a letter “O” instead of a zero. Remember the serious flaw in the N3FJP logging program? Fortunately both of these contacts were in sections that I worked more than once, so I didn’t lose any multipliers.

All in all, it was a great experience, and I can’t wait until next year to once again answer the call of “CQ Sweepstakes”. In the meantime, there is this weekend’s [ARRL 10 Meter DX contest](#) to enjoy. All you Techs out there, this is your contest! You have phone privileges between 27.300 and 27.500 MHz. A simple wire antenna will net you plenty of stations. If you’re interested, but have questions or are not sure where to start, feel free to give me a call or drop me an email. Once you’ve tried it you’ll be hooked!

73,

Mark Volstad, AI4BJ

Weaver's Words

First Snow of Season in Cincinnati

Jim Weaver, K8JE
Great Lakes Division Director, ARRL
E-mail: k8je@arrl.org; Tel.: 513-459-0142

New 5 MHz Band Rules to be Effective

As reported on the ARRL web site, on 21 November the FCC announced new rules for Amateur Radio operators when using the five, 5 MHz (60 meters) frequency channels. As is customary, the new rules will become effective 30 days following their publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER. Watch for the effective date of the new rules on arrl.org and in announcements from ARRL.

To summarize, with the new rules, one channel presently assigned for amateur use will be exchanged for a different, more useable channel.

There will still be five channels in this band allocated for sharing by hams. Additional changes include increasing transmitted power from 50 w. PEP to 100 w. PEP and authorizing the use of two additional emission forms. The new forms are Data (e.g., PACTOR III), RTTY (e.g. PSK-31) and CW. The CW carrier must be set to the center frequency of the channel. USB may still be used.

A few special requirements are as follow:

- The 5368.0 kHz channel (carrier frequency 5366.5 kHz) is withdrawn and a new channel of 5358.5 kHz (carrier frequency 5357.0 kHz) is authorized. The remaining four frequency allocations remain unchanged.
- The effective radiated power limit in the 60 meter band is raised from 50 W PEP to 100 W PEP, relative to a half-wave dipole. If another type of antenna is

used, the station licensee must maintain a record of either the antenna manufacturer's data on the antenna gain or calculations of the antenna gain.

- Automatic Control may not be used on Data and RTTY. A control operator must be able to control the station either locally or remotely.

- Data and RTTY may operate only on the center frequencies specified.

This may be done by following the same practice as on USB.

- CW signals must be set to the center frequency of the channel.

It is very important to know that the 5 MHz frequencies are shared with US Government communications services. As a result, it is critical that the rule regarding prompt cessation of amateur operations is observed when this is requested. Transmissions should be kept relatively short and ham operators should cease operation promptly if requested to do so by a Federal operator.

The changes in the 5 MHz allocation for amateurs came about through a petition filed by the ARRL in October 2006. The US National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) concurred in the petition.

The ARRL VHF Band Plan Committee chaired by ARRL 2nd Vice President Bruce Frahm, KOBJ, will report a recommended plan for use of the 60M band at the January meeting of the Board of Directors.

The 60M band is open to use in the US to General, Ad-



vanced and Extra Class licensees, only. Before using 60M (or any amateur band), please be certain to understand the rules and regulations for its use. The FCC Report and Order is summarized more fully at <http://www.arrl.org/news/fcc-releases-new-rules-for-60-meters> .

I Nearly Messed Up . . . Royally

The comments I am about to discuss are intended to be a "service to the community." You see, I have become something of a "poster child." I do not ask for sympathy for myself. Rather, I hope my comments will result in others who have acted similar to me waking up before it is too late.

For you who have not seen me, as well as for you who I have somehow fooled into thinking I'm a younger guy, I am 76 years young. I had my first and only colonoscopy about a month ago. This is the exam where a medical specialist passes a small viewing device up where the sun doesn't shine and looks for pre-cancerous or cancerous growths. When found early enough, they can be "scraped" away and life goes on as usual until the next test is due. Depending on family history, the present state of medical art and other factors, these exams should be done every five to 10 years beginning at 40 to 50 years of age.

The bottom line to this story is that I finally had a test done. A friend of mine who learned I had not been tested — ever — got on me about this like fat on a hog. I had the test, It disclosed a growth that needed to be removed surgically before it perforated the wall of my intestine. This growth (polyp) also proved to be an early stage cancer.

When done, the small inconvenience of having the tests is proven to reduce fatality and serious disease from colon cancer, tremendously.

These days, having these tests is truly a no-brainer.

No-brainer or not, no one is eager to have the testing

done. It is not the most pleasant thing to do, admittedly, but it really isn't all that bad. Believe me. And, I had used nearly every excuse that floated my way to postpone having one done. Obviously, I was pretty good at procrastinating.

As I write this item, I am sitting in a hospital room. This is the third day after my surgery. The surgery these days is pretty simple if a problem that requires surgery is found early enough. I'm a little sore in spots, but not much. There is a great likelihood I will go home tomorrow and be able to resume most of my normal activities within a couple of weeks. I'll be back to normal, but without the invasive and cancerous polyp; ready for a few more years before I have my second colonoscopy . . . and thankful for a friend who goaded me into having the first one.



The message I'm trying to get across is that if I had only started this testing when it should have been started, I would not be sitting here, waiting to go home. I would not have missed Thanksgiving with my family. The polyp that caused the surgery would have been caught early enough to be removed very easily without causing further inconvenience, or worse.

If you are in your 40's, check with your physician to see if it is time to begin this testing. Don't let a no-brainer situation catch you by surprise. By the way this is not just a guy thing.

P.S. It is now a week after surgery. I am home, feeling very great and living nearly normally. Full return to normalcy should come a week from now when I have a follow-up check-up with my surgeon.

Amateur Radio Dying? No Way!

According to FCC statistics, the number of active Amateur Radio licenses in the US has risen to 700,314. This is the highest number of US licensed amateurs . . . ever. This deserves repeating. This is the highest number of US licenses amateurs . . . ever.

ARRL as well as Amateur Radio is growing again. At the end of October, there were 156,347 League members. In neither instance are the growth numbers large, but they are increasing.

There is no reason to believe that Amateur Radio is dying. As is true of many things we hold dear in our lives, it is changing. Whether this is good or bad largely depends on us who nurture new hams and who get on the air and operate. Amateur Radio has not been the hobby "our fathers" new for decades.

Michigan will get a New Section Manager

With Michigan Section Manager Dale Williams, WA8EFK moving on to become Great Lakes Division Vice Director at noon on January 1, the Michigan Section will receive a new Section Manager at the same time. As announced from ARRL HQ, Larry Camp, WB8R, has been appointed as the Interim Michigan Section Manager starting on January 1.

Camp is a lifelong resident of Coldwater, Michigan and has been an Amateur Radio operator since 1978. He has wide experience in the ARRL Field Organization as Emergency Coordinator for Branch County, as a past Section Traffic Manager and as a past QMN Net Manager. He is also a past multi-year president of the Branch County Amateur Radio Club and enjoys teaching Amateur Radio licensing classes for new hams.

Congratulations to Larry for this appointment. Thanks, as well, for his willingness to continue to serve Wolverine amateurs.

Obviously, I look forward considerably to serving Great Lakes Division amateurs alongside Dale.

Ron Moorefield, W8ILC, Receives top Ohio Award

Ron Moorefield, W8ILC of Dayton, OH has received

the top award presented by the Ohio Section ARRL. Ron was awarded the coveted Al Severson, AB8P Award for lifetime achievement in Amateur Radio by Ohio Section Manager Frank Piper, KI8GW. The award is named for former Ohio SM and Great Lakes Division Director Al Severson, AB8P SK. Ron served in the ARES and its predecessor, Amateur Radio Emergency Corps, for several decades. His service has included not only the Dayton area and Ohio, but he has travelled to major disaster sites throughout the Eastern US. He served as EC, DEC and Assistant Director and only recently retired as DEC.

Ron also is a top-notch DXer.

Congratulations on a well-deserved recognition, Ron.

K4V Special Event Station Honors Supreme Court Chief Justice

The Big Sandy ARC of Louisa, Kentucky will operate Special Event station K4V on January 21, 2012 to honor the memory of the US Supreme Court's 13th Chief Justice, Frederick Moore Vinson. The station will be active from 9 AM - 4 PM EST on 7.225 MHz and 14.280 MHz +/- . The station will be located in Louisa/Lawrence Co.'s historic jail where Vinson's father was County Jailer at the time of his birth.

QSL to: Big Sandy Amateur Radio Club, c/o C & K Barber Shop, 114 N. Main Cross Street. Louisa, KY 41230. Send a QSL to receive a QSL or send a QSL and a S.A.S.E. to receive a special certificate for the QSO.

Former or current Officers of the Courts are requested to indicate their position when making contact.

WRC-12 Nearly Here

The World Radio Conference 2012 (WRC-12) is scheduled for January 23-February 17 in Geneva, Switzerland. This conference is a function of the Interna-

tional Telecommunications Union (ITU) -- itself, an agency of the United Nations. The conference will review and consider changes in International telecommunications treaty to recommend to the world's governments.

As usual, US interests will be represented by the US Department of State. US amateurs will be represented to State and the conference by ARRL. The following proposals related to Amateur Radio have been discussed beforehand for action at the conference:

- Agenda Item 1.23 will consider a secondary allocation to the Amateur Radio Service of about 15 kilohertz somewhere in the range of 415-526.5 kHz. As noted at www.arrl.org/news/the-arrl-needs-your-to-protect-our-amateur-radio-spectrum "three regions have made affirmative proposals (ed., To make the allocation) as of press time: CITEL, representing the Americas; ATU, representing Africa, and CEPT, representing Europe. Conversely, at least two regional organizations -- ASMG, representing several Middle Eastern countries, and RCC, several nations of the former Soviet Union -- are recommending no change (ed., In representing the current treaty), as is the International Maritime Organization. While the affirmative proposals differ somewhat, they do overlap in the frequency range considered, and provide a welcome counterweight to the opposition of maritime interests."

- Also noted in the web story, "Some proposals are much more mundane, but are welcome nonetheless. For example, Agenda Item 1.1 invites countries to delete their names from various footnotes in the Table of Allocations in the ITU Radio Regulations. A number of countries permit operation of other services on Amateur Radio frequencies by an applicable footnote. Moldova has asked to be removed from footnotes 5.93, 5.98 and 5.277, permitting radio amateurs freer use of 1800-1830 kHz and 430- 440 MHz by removing authorization to the fixed and mobile services."

"As the last weeks before WRC-12 pass, the number of proposals submitted to the ITU will increase significantly, requiring ARRL staff and IARU volunteer analysis."

ARRL "legislative" effort on behalf of Amateur Radio very clearly is not limited to work within the US. ARRL staff members and other amateurs are intimately involved in planning for WRC-12. A number serve directly on WRC-12 committees. ARRL work in preparing for WRC-12 has been ongoing essentially since the last WRC concluded. Thought is already being given toward WRC-15.

Honk, Wave

I just put a new set of license plates on what had been my wife's car. It no longer seemed appropriate for me to be driving around with "TOPMOM" tags. If you should see a 2007 Buick with Ohio license plates "ARRL GLD," honk or wave. The driver most likely will be me.

The GLD? In case this isn't apparent, it stands for Great Lakes Division.

Scheduled Hamfests and Travel

The following is the current hamfest schedule for the Great Lakes Division as well as travel plans by pending Vice Director Dale Williams, WA8EFK beginning January 1, 2012. Travel plans for the coming year are being made. If you would particularly like to have Dale or me attend your hamfest or other event, please contact us.

Jan 15 - Hazel Park 46th Annual Hamfest, Hazel Park, MI
Jan 15 - SCARF Hamfest, Nelsonville, OH
Jan 19 - Administration & Finance Committee Meeting, ARRL HQ - Jim
Jan 20-21 - ARRL Board of Directors Meeting, ARRL HQ - Dale & Jim
Jan 29 - Portage ARC, Randolph, OH
Feb 4 - HARA Swap & Shop, Negaunee, MI
Feb 5 - NOARS Winterhamfest, Lorain, OH
Feb 19 - Livonia ARC, Livonia, MI
Mar 17 - Crossroads Hamfest, Marshall, MI
Apr 7 - ARGYL Hamfest & Computer Show, Lowell, MI
Apr 14 - Cuyahoga Falls ARC, Cuyahoga Falls, OH

Return to:
Northern Ky. Amateur Radio Club
P.O. Box 18215
Erlanger, Ky. 41018

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