

OSCAR Newsletter March 2013

OSCAR Meeting

The next OSCAR meeting is the 13th April @ 9:00 AM, the second Saturday of the month. The meeting this month is being held in the back room at “The Kitchen” downtown on Cedar Ave. by the light on Rose & Cedar Streets. We are giving that a try for April and we shall see if it becomes our permanent home...

Items of interest from last meeting...

1. RACES/ARES Update

- RACES and ARES are both Amateur Radio organizations that formally support the communities we live in. The RACES organization is part of Steele County Emergency Management and serves at the direction of the Steele County Emergency Management Director. ARES is organized by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) and supports community groups outside of the Emergency Management domain.
- Steele County operates a combined RACES/ARES organization in conjunction with OSCAR. This format allows the local Amateur Radio community to respond to a wide array of situations with the least amount of confusion. Tom N0UW serves as the RACES Radio Officer and ARES Emergency Coordinator for Steele County.
- Tom N0UW is updating the list of individuals who will answer the call for assistance. Anyone who wants to be included in RACES/ARES notifications should contact Tom N0UW through the OSCAR email address.
- New RACES credentials are being issued. Previously issued Steele County badges with CERT, SKYWARN, RACES, ARES, OSCAR, or combined designations are no longer valid. Tom will take new pictures along with your current information to obtain a new RACES badge. Information and pictures can be updated at any OSCAR or SKYWARN meeting.

2. Update on Club “145.490” Repeater

The ARCOM controller was received. Dale WB0PKG and Tom N0UW have been busy making interface cables and reading the instructions and programming the controller. Dennis N0RPJ donated a 12 amp rack mount power supply to the repeater. Bill AE0BR is working on configuring the radio will use for the control link. Once all of the pieces are complete, we'll sneak into the site and install it. We'll publish what new features will be available once everything is debugged and operational.

3. Mike N0MDC is our Field Day Coordinator for this year... please put June 22-23, 2013 in your calendar and come out to join us!

SKYWARN Meeting

The next SKYWARN meeting is – April 15th @ 7:00 PM, the third Tuesday of the month. Meetings are held in the 3rd floor meeting room at the Owatonna Fire hall.

CERT Class

Steele Co. CERT has announced the 2013 class is canceled due to lack of participants. They may schedule a class later in 2013 if interest grows sufficient.

OSCAR Tech Class & VE Session

We had two participants in the 2013 Technician class:

- * Congratulations to Ryan Thompson passing his Technician Exam.
- * Congratulations to Lee Sackett achieving his General license.

Many thanks to the instructors & VE Team:

Randy KD0NUV, Larry KR0K, Dale WB0PKG, Dennis N0RPJ, Jeff KC0UOW, Tom N0UW.

There were also four upgrades to General at the VE session:

Bill WA0GMG, Lowell KD0RGH, Dan KD0TLI, and Scott N0FDY.

We all appreciate the continued support from the OSCAR membership. When the current OSCAR group formed about 10 years ago, there were about 60 hams in Steele County. A search on the FCC data base now shows over 120 Amateur Radio licenses in Steele County and another 130 in the surrounding area including Medford, Faribault and Waseca, something OSCAR should be proud of.

Viking Amateur Radio Society – Extra Class Study Group

Location: Waseca County EOC, 122 3rd Avenue N.W. Waseca, MN 56093

Start/End Dates: 01/07/2013 - 04/15/2013

Times: 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. **# of Sessions:** 15

Pre register required: No **Morse code offered:** No

Fee: \$29.95 for Manual

Contact: Merlin Williams KD0V **Phone:** (507) 835-2344

Email: merlin@mewai.com

ALARC (Albert Lea Amateur Radio Club) - VE Test Session

Wednesday, March 20th at 7pm at the Glenville Fire Hall in Glenville, MN

Walk ins welcome...

Minnesota ARES Section Activation Status Board

No Section-level activations at this time.

Official ARES Section activations are state-level activations authorized by the Section Emergency Coordinator, as requested by the Minnesota State Duty Officer, Minnesota Volunteer Agencies Active in Disaster (MNVOAD) or by local agencies.

Minnesota ARES Digital NET

Thursdays at 20:00hrs on 3.583.5Khz

The first Minnesota ARES Digital Net on 3.583.5khz using FLDigi software.

Join us every Thursday night at 20:00hrs central time on 3583.5 kHz USB, center audio frequency 1000 Hz +/- QRM using Olivia 8/500.

Ham Radio Items of interest:

FYI... from "Jr." Baseman NX0P

The (146.685 - 100Hz) repeater is back and on the air. Echolink node number is **513917**

If the repeater is linked into the Handihams and you want to use the repeater without being linked in to it, all you need to do is key up the repeater, press # # It will drop the link and the repeater will just be local again.

FOR SALE:

Austin Radios:

The Austin ARC has 8 more Johnson Challenger radios for sale. Price is the same --- \$35.00. Al NØRZO checked them out and retuned them for 2 meters. Average output of 40 watts and they are 8 channel. They are programmed with local repeaters and 52 simplex, but can be programmed to anything the purchaser wants. Contact John KBØSPM at 507-433-9654.

HAM Radio News:

RADIO IN SPACE: SCIENTISTS OFFER SUPPORT FOR NASA'S NEXT MARS ROVER

(Amateur Radio Newsline)

Scientists have applauded a NASA decision to send another rover to Mars in 2020. At the same time they are stressing that the mission should pave the way to return Martian rocks to Earth.

The new Mars rover mission was announced last December 4th by NASA's Associate Administrator for Science John Grunsfeld. This, at the annual meeting of the American Geophysical Union in San Francisco.

At that time it was announced that the next rover will share some design features with NASA's Mars Science Laboratory Curiosity rover, which landed on Mars in August to begin at least a two-year mission. Now, in a pair of statements released January 28th and 30th, two well-respected groups of researchers have shared their views on the plan to send another robotic

explorer to the Red Planet in seven years. The Planetary Society and the American Astronomical Society's Division for Planetary Sciences applauded the announcement that NASA plans another mission to the Red Planet in 2020. At the same time both strongly suggested that the mission should have the capability to collect and store Martian rock samples as recommended by the National Research Council's Planetary Science Decadal Survey.

NASA has released very few details on the proposed new rover plan. Because of this it's still unclear whether the robot will be able to collect Martian rock samples intended to be brought back to Earth.

WORLDBEAT:

THE VK0RTM 6M BEACON ON AIR FROM NEAR THE SOUTH POLE (VK3PC, QRZ.com)

A new 6 meter propagation should now be on the air from near to the South Pole. Craig Hayhow who is signing VK0JJJ from Mawson Base in Antarctica is reported to have brought with him a beacon transmitter with the call VK0RTM that is now operational on 50.300 MHz.

The VK0RTM transmitter runs 50 watts. It was donated for this very special operation by David Craig, N3DB, who is the Secretary and Treasurer of The 6 Meter Beacon Project.

But the beacon will not be the only 6 meter signal coming to the air. While at Mawson Station for about 12 months, Hayhow plans to be active on all bands from 80 through 6 with priority given to 6 meter operation.

VK0JJJ is a senior telecommunications engineer from West Australia. He is a member of the Antarctica Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition due to return home in January 2014.

RESCUE RADIO:

AMERICAN RED CROSS TO PHASE-OUT ECRV OPERATIONS (ARRL)

The ARRL reports the American Red Cross will be phasing out its Emergency Communication Response Vehicles also known as ECRV's. According to American Red Cross Disaster Services Technology Manager Keith Roberatory, KG4UIR, every communication capability of the Emergency Communication Response Vehicles already exists, or will soon exist as a rapidly deployable kit. These says Roberatory can be loaded on any vehicle that is owned or rented by the American Red Cross, providing more flexibility in shaping its response to match the disaster.

Roberatory told the ARRL that retrofitting the decade old vehicles with new equipment is not a good use of donated funds, as the long-term strategy is to move to more portable systems. This says KG4UIR is consistent with the trends in the telecommunications and technology industries.

As to the ham radio gear currently installed in these vehicles, it is not going away. Rather it will be removed and will either become part of the deployable inventory or provided to the local American Red Cross chapter to build local capacity. A more in-depth look at this decision by the Red Cross and its impact on ham radio can be found on line at www.tinyurl.com/b84tn88

TWO GLOBAL SIMULATED EMERGENCY TESTS IN APRIL (Amateur Radio Newsline)

There will be two Global Simulated Emergency Tests taking place on the Saturdays either side of World Amateur Radio Day which is slated for Thursday April the 18th.

Greg Mossop, G0DUB, is the International Amateur Radio Union Region 1 Emergency Coordinator. He says the first Global Simulated Emergency Test will happen on Saturday April 13th will repeat the format of 2011 using 'local time' for each station. This will give a good chance of messages moving towards the regional Headquarters Stations to be delivered. The second Saturday, April the 20th, will see answers to those messages, starting from the Headquarters Stations and being sent back to the countries that originated them.

According to Jim Linton, VK3PC, the Global Simulated Emergency Test also known as GlobalSET is an opportunity to increase the common interest in emergency communications, create practices for international emergency communications and the relaying of messages. Linton who is the Chairman of the IARU Region 3 Disaster Communications Committee says that GlobalSET is open to all three IARU regions and will be held on or near the emergency Center of Activity frequencies on the 80, 40, 20, 17 and 15 meter bands. VK3PC adds that the full rules concerning this emergency training operating event are available to those who register through their IARU Regional Coordinator.

Again those dates are April 13th and 20th for the twin edition of the 2013 Global Simulated Emergency Test. It will be followed June 25th to the 28th by the Global Amateur Radio Emergency Conference or GAREC 2013 in Zurich, Switzerland.

RADIO READING:

CQ LAUNCHES ONLINE PHOTO GALLERY (CQ)

CQ magazine has announced the launch of the online CQ Photo Gallery to supplement photos published in the magazine.

According to Editor Rich Moseson, W2VU, the magazine shoots photos at many events. It also receives many photos from readers that it does not have space to put in the magazine. But CQ still wants to share these with its readers and the new CQ Photo Gallery will allow it to do just that.

Moseson says that the new photo gallery is on the flickr.com web site and is organized into albums called sets. Initial sets include CQ cover images; the CQ Garage featuring ham radio license plates; news photos from the FCC's field hearing on communications lessons learned from Superstorm Sandy, and reader-submitted photos. New pictures will be added regularly.

The CQ Photo Gallery may be accessed at www.flickr.com/photos/cqphotogallery/sets but you can also reach it using the shortcut www.tinyurl.com/cq-photos-online

RADIOSPORTS:

ALASKA QSO PARTY MARCH 23 – 24 (KL7YK)

From the radiosports file, remember to mark down March 23rd as the date of the 2013 Alaska QSO party. The event runs from 18:00 UTC and continues to 23:59 UTC on the 24th. This is an H-F only contest on 160, 80, 40, 20 and 10 meters using CW, SSB, PSK31 and RTTY. A similar event for the VHF bands will be held July 15th through the 16th with the same hours. More information on both QSO party's is on line at www.kl7yk.us/akqso.htm

DX ON THE AIR:

CELEBRATING THE RESTORATION OF GREY POINT FORT IRELAND (GI4RNP)

And a group of hams who are working to restore Grey Point Fort will be operating a special event stations from 1700 UTC on May 31st to 1700 UTC on June 2nd. Grey Point Fort is a World War One Coastal Defense Fort located in Helens Bay, Northern Ireland. The special event operation will be using three yet to be announced special event call signs. More information will be posted on-line at www.tinyurl.com/greypoint-2013 or by e-mail to greypointfort@ hotmail.co.uk.

SAIPAN / MARIANA ISLANDS ACTIVATION

In DX, word that JQ2WTT and JE1XUZ who are KH0XH and KH0XW respectively will be active from Saipan, in the Northern Mariana Islands through April 1st. Both are university undergraduates. QSL via each operator's home callsign either direct or via the J-A Bureau.

An international team of seven operators are currently on the air from the Solomon Islands signing H44G. Several stations will be operating simultaneously on various bands between 160 through 6 meters using CW und SSB, RTTY, PSK31 and SSTV. It all comes to an end on March 25th. QSLs go via DL7DF

GM3WOJ and GM4YXI will be active from Cocos Keeling Island from March 30th through April 13th using the new callsign of VK9CZ. They plan to be on SSB and CW, with some RTTY and hope to have a real-time logging system and daily Logbook of the World updates. More updates on this operation will be found on-line at www.vk9cz.com

Lastly, a group of Italian operators along with members of the Association des Radio Amateurs Tunisiens and the Engineering University of Gabes are planning a DXpedition to Djerba Island using the call TS8TI between April 29th and May 6th. Operation will be on all HF bands plus 6 meters using CW, SSB, RTTY and several digital modes. More information on this operation is on-line at www.qrz.com/db/TS8TI

HAM TOOLBOX:

<http://www.timesmicrowave.com/cgi-bin/calculate.pl>

The calculator above can be used to estimate the attenuation (dB loss), power handling capability, and transmission efficiency for some of the more popular Wireless Communications and MIL Spec cables at the frequency of interest (below Cutoff Frequency)

Actual measured values may vary somewhat from the calculated numbers based on manufacturing tolerances, cable length, connectors, operating frequency, and measurement accuracy.