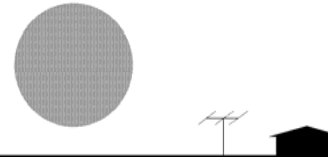


# Twin City Amateur Radio Club

Champaign-Urbana, Illinois

March 2008

Milt Forsberg K9QZI, Editor



## Hamfest Calendar

Mar 8 Terre Haute, IN  
9 Sterling IL  
28-29 Amateur Electronics Superfest  
Apr 12 TCARC Auction  
19 Stoughton, WI  
26 Godfrey, IL  
27 Arthur, IL  
May 4 Sandwich, IL  
16-18 Dayton, OH

## VE Exams

08-Mar-2008 WVARA HAMFEST  
11:00AM (No walk-ins) ARRL/VEC  
D STEVEN SHORTER (812)240-6988  
WABASH VALLEY FAIRGROUNDS (Hamfest0  
3901 S US HIGHWAY 41 TERRE HAUTE, IN

05-Apr-2008 SANGAMON VALLEY RADIO CLUB  
9:00 AM (Walk-ins allowed) ARRL/VEC  
JAMES STEVE UPCHURCH (217)529-3218  
AMERICAN RED CROSS-IL CAPITAL AREA CHAPTER  
1045 OUTER PARK DR SPRINGFIELD, IL

06-Apr-2008 WABASH VALLEY ARA  
1:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed) ARRL/VEC  
RAYMOND N ANDREWS (812)535-3222  
GLAS-COL ANNEX NE CORNER OF 7TH & IDAHO ST.  
1730 S 7TH ST (REAR OF BLDG) TERRE HAUTE, IN

20-Apr-2008 TWIN CITY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB  
1:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed) ARRL/VEC  
DEBRA J FLIGOR (217)244-4446  
UNIV OF IL FIRE SERVICE INST  
11 GERTY DR CHAMPAIGN, IL 61820

## Meeting March 11

Our next meeting of the Twin City Amateur Radio Club is Tuesday, March 11 at 7:00 p.m. at the UI Fire Institute. Our March program is a presentation on D-Star, the new digital amateur radio mode. Kermit Carlson, W9XA, will explain the D-Star system. Kermit is a former member of the Synton Radio Club when he attended the University of Illinois in the 1970s. He has installed D-Star systems in the Chicago area and is considered to be one of the most knowledgeable D-Star experts in the United States. Plan to attend this enlightening and informative meeting. Please see the inside pages for a short explanation of D-Star.

be available. We need help from all club members to assist with the auction. Areas are setup, tear down, moving equipment, and checking in items. Since this is our main fundraiser, everyone is needed to help. Please contact Ralph, W9PGE, for coordination. The auction is always a fun event. Be sure to talk it up on the air and to all of your friends. Steve Zahos, KR4S, will bring his Amateur Accessories mobile store to the auction is in the past.

**Membership** If your dues are not paid, you will no longer receive this newsletter. Please check your address label for the expiration date of your membership.

The Board meets the Thursday prior to the club meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the UI Fire Institute. All members are welcome to attend.

## TCARC Officers and Board Members

**President** Ralph Cox W9PGE 396-5111  
**Vice President** Dr Mike Trautman 356-4302  
**Secretary** Chris Anderson W9CMA 403-1599  
**Treasurer** Milt Forsberg K9QZI 352-5075

## Board Members

Al Wolfe K9SI 688-2790  
Wayne Hamilton AB9FJ 384-4310  
Jeremy Lamb KC9KGJ 621-8036

## VE Coordinator

Debbie Fligor N9DN 244-4446

## Website

www.w9seh.org

## Auction is a Month Away! April 12

Our annual auction is only one month away. We are making plans for another excellent event. The location is the same as last year, the Windsor Road Christian Church at 2501 W Windsor Rd in Champaign. That's between Mattis and Duncan on the south side of Windsor. The doors open at 11 a.m. and bidding starts at 1 p.m. We were blessed with many donations of equipment to the club last year – let's see if we can top that this year! If you have any equipment you don't want, please bring it to the auction and donate it so the club will receive the proceeds. You can bring items to auction as well. For sales to individuals, the club retains 10% of the sale price. You may buy back your own item at no charge if bidding is too low. Food service will

## Amateur Accessories

"Our name says it all"

Steve Zahos KR4S

Hamfests Internet Mail Order  
MFJ, Heil, Maha, Diamond, Ramsey, Battery-Tech, ARRL

PO Box 7333 Phone 217-352-1725  
Champaign, IL 61826 Fax 217-352-1781  
E-Mail: kr4s@msn.com  
www.amateuraccessories.com

**TCARC**  
**PO Box 2061**  
**Champaign, IL 61825-2061**

## D-Star – The New Mode

A new mode of Amateur communications is growing rapidly world wide. D-Star is a digital voice mode that is used on VHF and UHF frequencies. Being digital, the sound is quiet and easy to understand. The range is comparable to our normal FM mode, maybe a little better. However, the best part is the backbone attached to D-Star systems. Each system can be linked to all other systems through the Internet. Individuals may be contacted directly, no matter where they are located as long as they are in range of a D-Star system. The backbone is intelligent enough to recognize calling stations and locate called stations. As a user travels, the system tracks the user to the last repeater they used. Individual radios may be set to “call sign squelch” which means that they only hear calls directed to that callsign. Repeaters may be linked by individual users by programming their radio. Data may be transmitted through the system at the same time as voice. D-Star systems operate on 2 meters, 70 cm (440 MHz), and 1.2 GHz. The latter will handle high speed data and provides Internet browsing capabilities to users. Individual radios may be connected to computers to provide keyboard to keyboard chatting between users. No modem or external equipment is required other than a cable. This can be done in direct communications or through the backbone.

D-Star digital voice is growing rapidly every day. It was developed in Japan for Amateur Radio. Icom is the only manufacturer offering D-Star radios at present. There are several mobile units and 2 hand- held units available. The cost varies from about \$350 to \$1,000, depending on the radio and accessories. It is easy to get on the air using a \$350 radio. Many have asked why not use APCO 25 (P25) digital modulation as do our public service groups. There are many difficulties in creating the backbone service for Amateur Radio with P25. P25 is designed for individual systems to communicate with their own radios. Some systems are large, but there is no easy way to interconnect systems as we can with D-Star. There is proprietary information related to

P25 systems, and software is difficult to create that will match the functions of D-Star.

We are close to setting up a D-Star system in the Champaign-Urbana area. It will be on 70 cm to start. Several have pledged contributions to the purchase of equipment. We can use more to ease the burden on a few individuals who have pledged large amounts. Please contact Wayne, AB9FJ, or Milt, K9QZI, if you wish to contribute.

Our March meeting is devoted to D-Star. You can learn a lot about the subject at the meeting from Kermit Carlson, who is an expert on the subject. We will have some radios to demonstrate and there will be lots of PowerPoint slides in his talk. D-Star offers some exciting possibilities, so come to the meeting and learn all about it!

## Hamfest Report

February is a fairly quiet month for hamfests. However, there is one huge bright spot – the Orlando HamCation. Held February 8-10, the HamCation boasts of being the second largest hamfest, only behind Dayton. Attendance was up this year, surpassing 10,000. There were over 300 motor homes and fifth wheels in the HamCation camping area. Most major Amateur related manufacturers and vendors were there. Our club was well represented by Steve, KR4S, Milt, K9QZI, and Zane, KB9LCJ. Don Allen, W9CW, from Urbana represented CQ magazine. Jack Clark, W9HJM, formerly from our area was the prize chairman. He now lives in Orlando. A couple of faces from the past appeared as well. Joe Goggin, K9KNW, now from Naples, Florida, and Al Saldeen, WB9BSX, from Deltona, Florida were there as well. Joe was very active in our club and provided a huge amount of service and equipment for our repeaters when he owned the Motorola radio shop in Champaign. Al managed the electronics shop for the Chemistry department of the University of Illinois for many years before moving to Florida. The weather was outstanding, with temperatures in the mid-80s the whole week. A major highlight for some of us was the spectacular viewing the space shuttle STS-122 launch from the Kennedy Space Center.



Joe Goggin, K9KNW, and Al Saldeen, WB9BSX at the Orlando HamCation

This weekend there is a hamfest in Terre Haute, IN on Saturday, and Sterling, IL on Sunday. Terre Haute is fairly small and Sterling is moderate sized. The MARK hamfest at Arthur is April 27. Dayton is creeping up on May 16-18.

The **Amateur Electronics Superfest** is March 28-29 in Milwaukee. This is not a hamfest, but a show by many manufacturers along with informative seminars. The 2 day event is held in the warehouse area of Amateur Electronics Supply. You can visit with manufacturers, ARRL dignitaries, and local clubs. The seminars are always informative and well worth the trip. There is no cost for Superfest. Forums include Digital Modes, D-Star, Modulation, Ham Legal Issues, Telescopes, and Gordon West. There is a 2 meter fox hunt Saturday morning.

<http://www.aesham.com/superfest.shtml>

## Champaign County 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

February 20 was the date of the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Champaign County. Patrick Twigg, N9OQT, arranged to use the call of W9C to commemorate this event. He set up an HF station in an apartment complex office in east Urbana. Several TCARC members visited and operated the station during the day. If you worked the station, you can QSL through N9OQT.

## FM Challenge

Once again, the FM Challenge is on the horizon. This is our 2 meter one hour contest. The date is Sunday, March 30, from 7 to 8 p.m. It is on 2 meters only, using only simplex frequencies. One point is given for each unique contact. Some stations may be “rovers” which means they will travel from town to town in the surrounding area. For each different town contacted, a multiplier is given. Rovers can be contacted once in each town, while fixed stations can be contacted once. The multiplier will multiply the total number of contacts. In other words, if 4 contacts were made, the score is 4. If 3 of those contacts were in different towns, (Savoy, Pesotum, etc), then the score is 4 x 3 or 12. All of the rules are linked to the TCARC web page at [www.w9seh.org](http://www.w9seh.org) Click on the 2 Meter FM Challenge. This is always a fun event. We hope many will participate.

**TCARC  
Annual Auction  
April 12, 2008  
Windsor Road Christian Church  
2501 W Windsor Road  
Champaign, Illinois**

Between Mattis and Duncan on the South Side of Windsor

Doors open at 11:00 A.M.  
Auction Starts at 1:00 P.M.  
Food Service Available

Everyone is invited to bring electronic items to sell. Radio Equipment, Computers, Software, most other electronic related items are welcome - no television sets or stereos please!

Bidder numbers to participate are \$2.00  
Many Door Prizes to Bidder Number Holders  
This is our annual fundraiser. The club retains 10% of the selling price of items sold to anyone but the original seller. No guarantee of serviceability is expressed or implied. All sales are final.

NSF Checks will be assessed a \$35 charge.  
*Donations of equipment where the proceeds are kept by the club are greatly appreciated.*

Talk In on 146.76 and 444.1 Repeaters  
(162.2 tone)