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# SIGNALS

Rockwell Collins Amateur Radio Club

Monthly Newsletter of the

Volume 30 Issue 6

Web Site <http://www.w5rok.us>

March 2009

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**RCARC**  
**Membership Meeting**  
 Thursday, 26 March 2009  
 1700 Social      1730 Meeting  
 Rockwell Collins Building 462  
 Dallas Conference Room

*Subject: Come and See!*



## 2009 W5DXCC DX Dinner

### Local Club News

**Meeting Notice** The subject of our program at the next meeting was not finalized at the time of the newsletter publication. But don't let that stop you from coming to see what the program is. Its always good!

**Club Meeting Talk-In** Each month, on the night of the membership meeting we have a Talk-In on the club repeater. The Talk-In is from 1645 to 1730 hours, prior to the meeting.

**Amateur Radio License Training Material** Bob Bytheway, K3DIO, has informed RCARC that he has prepared PowerPoint presentations license training. He has training presentations for both Tech and General class licenses. The link for online access to the presentations is <http://www.K3DIO.com>.

**Article Credit Omission** The January 2009 newsletter contained a very interesting and informative article titled **Signature of the Father**, which was enjoyed by many of our readers. Regrettably, no credit was given to the author, for which we offer our sincerest apology. The author is John Casale, W2NI. In addition to writing historical articles on telegraph history, John enjoys operating and maintaining several pieces of Collins ham gear. The copyrighted article can be read at the following website: <http://www.telegraph-history.org/samuel-morse/signature.html>.

As the newsletter editor, I ask that in order to prevent this from ever happening again, that any articles which are contributed by our membership for publishing in Signals, be accompanied by information identifying the author so proper credit can be given.

**Buy, Sell and Trade is Back**...See page 7. The ads are free to RCARC members.

The Lone Star DX Association is pleased to sponsor the 2009 W5DXCC DX Dinner in conjunction with Ham-Com. The dinner will be Friday evening, June 12, at the Plano Centre in the Windhaven Room. This is the same location as 2007.

The evening will begin with a cash hospitality bar in the Plano Centre from 5:00 to 6:30. Dinner activities will begin promptly at 6:30.

This year we will have a served meal of Char-Broil Prime Rib with salad, rolls, baked potato, seasoned vegetables, and cheesecake for desert. A vegetarian option will be available upon request. Reserved seating for groups will be available. Please email requests for group seating and/or the vegetarian option to n5ty <at> arrl <dot> net.

The DX dinner program for the 2009 W5DXCC will be the 2009 K5D Desecheo DXpedition ([www.kp5.us](http://www.kp5.us)). Desecheo is very rare being the 6<sup>th</sup> most needed DXCC entity worldwide. On October 1, 2008, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) selected the KP1-5 Project team led by K4UEE and W0GJ to be the first USFWS-approved DXpedition to Desecheo Island in fifteen years. DXpedition co-leader Bob Allphin, K4UEE will present what promises to be a very interesting program.

Several major door prizes will be given away again this year. A list will be available on the LSDXA website ([www.dxr.org](http://www.dxr.org)) as soon as prizes are firmed up.

Ticket price is \$40 and can be purchased via the "Admission" link on the Ham-Com Website, [www.hamcom.org](http://www.hamcom.org). Because of the banquet room capacity, a maximum of 200 tickets will be sold. Tickets must be ordered before midnight, May 30 and can be picked up at the Lone Star DX Association booth.

## RCARC OFFICERS

<b>PRESIDENT</b> Bob Kirby 319.360.0500 k3nt@arrl.net	<b>K3NT</b>	<b>VICE-PRESIDENT</b> Ross Terry 972.705.3667 k5srt@arrl.net	<b>K5SRT</b>
<b>SECRETARY</b> Dwight Ramsey 972.705.1841 suhermano@tx.rr.com	<b>KE5SAS</b>	<b>TREASURER</b> Jim Gaston 972.705.3369 jrgaston@rockwellcollins.com	<b>KD5GYD</b>
<b>ACTIVITIES CHAIRMAN</b> John Champa 972.333.9478 k8ocl@arrl.net	<b>K8OCL</b> 460-100	<b>WEBSITE MANAGER</b> Wayne Hughes 972.705.1406 wa0tgh@arrl.net	<b>WA0TGH</b> 461-258
<b>STATION TRUSTEE</b> Steve Phillips 972.517.3332 k6jt@arrl.net	<b>K6JT</b>	<b>NEWSLETTER EDITOR</b> Jim Skinner 214.535.5264 wb0uni@arrl.net	<b>WB0UNI</b>
<b>CLUB STATION</b> 972.705.1349		<b>W5ROK</b> 461-290	

## VE SESSIONS

**Dallas** tests are held 4<sup>th</sup> Sat of each month at 10:00. 13350 Floyd Rd. (Old Credit Union) Contact Bob West, WA8YCD (972) 917-6362

**Irving** tests are held 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat. of each month at 09:00. 5<sup>th</sup> and Main St. Contact Bill Revis, KF5BL 252-8015

**McKinney** VE test sessions are held at the Heard Museum the first Sunday of the month. The address is 1 Nature Place, McKinney TX. The time of the testing is 14:30, ending no later than 16:45. **Note: no tests given on holiday weekends.**

**Garland** testing is held on the fourth Thursday of each month, excluding November, and begins at 1930 sharp. Location is Freeman Heights Baptist Church, 1120 N Garland Ave, Garland (between W Walnut and Buckingham Rd). Enter via the north driveway. A HUGE parking lot is located behind the church. Both the parking lot and the Fellowship Hall are located on the east side of the church building, with big signs by the entrance door. Contact Bill Reynolds, K8DNE, 972-475-3854.

**Plano** testing is on the third Saturday of each month, 1300 hrs at Williams High School, 1717 17<sup>th</sup> St. East Plano. Check Repeater 147.180+ for announcements.

**Greenville** testing is on the Saturday after 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, 1000 hrs at site TBA, contact N5KA, 903.364.5306. Sponsor is Sabine Valley ARA. Repeater 146.780(-) with 118.8 tone.

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## President's Message

"If you are planning for a year, sow rice;  
if you are planning for a decade, plant trees;  
if you are planning for a lifetime, educate people."  
*Chinese Proverb*

One of the benefits of being a member of RCARC is the continuing education we have received through our monthly meeting programs. We know that this does not just happen but requires detail planning and effort lead by our activities chairman. A few of you are aware that John, K8OCL has been in a battle of fighting excruciating hip and back pain. Looks like the mending is going to take a while so John has decided to go on disability and will not be able to attend meetings. The RCARC Activity Chairman position is currently open. Please contact a club officer if you have interest in filling this position.

We also need a new treasurer as Jim Gaston, KD5GYD has accepted a new career position. We wish Jim well in his new endeavors and are very thankful of his kind offer to continue his RCARC office while we locate a new treasurer. Please contact any of the club officers ASAP if you can fill this position.

A big thank you to member Jim Skinner, WB0UNI, who quickly responded to help me with an antenna emergency at K3NT. High winds and very little time before reporting to work required some quick action to protect the QTH.

Steve, K6JT, was unable to prepare a second review of his CW testing of RCARC's Elecraft K3 HF transceiver due to being called to Cedar Rapids again to work day and night. A summary of the findings were verbally presented at the last meeting. Bob, KC4UAI, has been testing the digital capabilities of the K3 as his heavy work schedule permits. KC4UAI's testing will be followed by Chuck, K7NWM, and Jim, KD5GYD.

Justin, KC5QNJ, visited our repeater one morning and requested help with his packet setup and WINLINK software. Steve, K6JT, provided Justin with three articles he had written for the SIGNALS newsletter some time ago. Part 3 dealt specifically with Winlink.

We understand that member Mike Schmitt, WA9WCC, has placed his order for an Elecraft K3 transceiver. Mike intends to mainly focus on the digital modes and will start with PSK-31.

Member Ross, K5SRT, has been building his mobile station which consists of HF, VHF, and UHF capabilities. He has installed a automatic antenna tuner that is driving a 102" whip antenna. Watch out for those low hanging branches Ross.

Member Dennis, WA8ZBT has been very active on HF in the CW mode with his Elecraft K3 transceiver. He told me he was able to break several DX pileups on 30 meters using his vertical antenna. His secret weapon to this low angle radiator is his excellent ground system.

Member John McFadden, K5TIP has been busy with his other hobby and is the star in a video presentation. Curious? Check this out: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-1EUL0rt6A>

RCARC provided technician class training materials to member Ian DiFranco, KE5FOM, for an upcoming amateur radio class in the city of Rowlett

A volunteer is still needed to work on our W5ROK station that has been plagued with wideband noise that is very bad on 80, 40

and 20 meters. This noise is coming from a new energy controller installed for an air handler in the same penthouse where our main HF/VHF/UHF antennas are located. Help is still requested in capturing the noise data as viewed on the Yaesu Spectrum display and formatting this information for presentation to the manufacture of the controller for a solution to this RFI.

W5ROK Repeater maintenance still needs volunteers. Our packet BBS issue is priority. I was able to donate two 19" X 7" shelves, which are currently located in the radio room.

Mike Schmitt, WA9WCC, had offered some time ago to help with design of a shirt for our club members. So far, Mike has received little input and help. All Rockwell Collins radio clubs need to contact Mike and get this show on the road.

Mark your calendar on March 29, 2009, the International Broadcasters are supposed to vacate 7100 to 7200 Khz of the 40 meter band. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/40\\_meters](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/40_meters)

#### February RCARC Activities:

- Vice President Report – Sidney Ross Terry, K5SRT
- W5ROK contest operation.- Dennis Cobb, WA8ZBT
- Meeting Refreshments Setup Volunteer – Jim Skinner, WB0UNI (more helpers please)
- RCARC Roster/Database/Applications/Marketing – Joe Wolf, N5UIC
- Station Tour - Bob Kirby, K3NT
- RCARC Digital project - Robert Diepenbrock, KC4UAI; Bob Kirby, K3NT
- Yet Another Great SIGNALS Newsletter – Jim Skinner, WB0UNI
- Treasurers Report – Jim Gaston, KD5GYD
- Club Librarian - Stephanie Keese, AC5NF
- Website Updates - Wayne Hughes, WA0TGH
- February Program - John Champa, K8OCL, Doug Loughmiller, W5BL
- Secretary Report –Dwight Ramsey, KE5SAS
- Station Trustee – Steve Phillips, K6JT

Hope to see or hear you at the meeting,  
Best Regards (73),  
Bob Kirby, K3NT  
[K3nt@arrl.net](mailto:K3nt@arrl.net)  
<http://w5rok.us>

## Secretary's Report

Ross Terry (K5SRT) opened the meeting at 1748 (February 26 2009), in the Dallas Conference Room with the Pledge of Allegiance. Present at the meeting were:

Charles Beis	K5UWD	James Gaston	KD5GYD
Robert Kirby	K3NT	Doug Loughmiller	W5BL
James Pellegrino	KE5SAR	Steve Phillips	K6JT
Dwight Ramsey	KE5SAS	Chuck Samuel	K7NWM
Mike Schmit	WA9WCC	Jim Skinner	WB0UNI
Ross Terry	K5SRT	Joseph Wolf	N5UIC

#### 1. Officer Reports

- a. **President's Report:** Bob (K3NT) communicated that the Elecraft K3 was still in evaluation. Currently Bob (KC4UAI) is testing the unit's data capabilities (PSK-31, RTTY, AMTOR, Packet, etc.). Several other club members have volunteered to further test this new club radio in it's other modes of operation. Bob is managing this testing activity and should be contacted by interested parties.

- b. **Vice-President's Report:** Ross Terry K5SRT shared his impression and national pride that he experienced during the E-6B roll out this past week in Waco.
- c. **Secretary's Report:** Dwight Ramsey, KE5SAS. The report was accepted as published in the January Signals newsletter.
- d. **Treasurers Report:** Jim Gaston KD5GYD, Reviewed the club's financial balance sheet. Jim indicated that the report does not include the corporate funding that is expected. The report was accepted.
- e. **Station Trustee's Report:** There was no Station Trustee's report.
- f. **Activities Chairman Report:** There was no Activities Chairman report, as John Champa was unable to attend.

#### 2. Old Business

- a. **Elecraft K3:** Steve Phillips (K6JT) provided additional comments on his test results using the club's new transceiver. Steve's comments were oriented toward the unit's CW performance. In summary he had discovered that the extreme drop off characteristics of the filters hampered copying of CW at narrow bandwidths. His discussions with the manufacturer indicated that they were aware of the problem and would be developing SW to correct it in the future. Note: Previous tests by club members indicated that the unit's SSB performance was great.

#### 3. New Business

- a. **50 / 50 Contest:** The 50/50 drawing was won by Joe Wolf N5UIC. These funds support refreshments at RCARC meetings and other club activities.

Ross Terry (K5SRT) introduced Doug Loughmiller (W5BL), a co-leader and promotional arm of the ARBONET organization. The presentation titled "ARBONET-3 Is Coming" was interesting and informative. Doug briefly reviewed the Acronyms (e.g., Amateur Radio Balloons Over North East Texas) and the early history, successes and the items discovered leading up to ARBONET-3. Their next objective is to provide a larger payload than previously and yet exceed the current record for altitude (130,000 feet !). Doug reviewed the technical constraints and challenges involved in accomplishing this feat. He discussed the current designs, trajectory determinations and tracking and retrieving plans. Besides promoting the technology of Amateur Balloons, Doug shared with us several personal stories as to how these activities had enriched the lives of young people. The program has been a low budget, but highly successful and technically rewarding activity to date, and Doug is looking for volunteers to help in numerous ways. ARBONET is also open to individual or Club donations. Doug encouraged the audience to obtain more information on their WEB page ([www.arbonet.net](http://www.arbonet.net))

**Dallas Regional Science Fair Winners** The following Special Awards have been announced for student projects demonstrating Science in the ARRL Handbook:

Laurel Toupal of the Hendrick Middle School, Plano ISD, for her project "How does Antenna Length Affect Wireless Reception?" She also won a Special Award from Rockwell Collins.

Calvin Williams of the Lancaster High School, for his project "Electromagnetic Waves and Radiation Help Develop Forms of Energy with Radio Waves Using the Power from Light." The project also received an award from the Society of American Military Engineers.

Photos of these projects have been posted on the ARRL North Texas web page: <http://www.arrl.org/sections/NTX.html>.

## An Idea Who's Time Has Come *by Larry Essary K5XG*

Greetings to my fellow amateur radio operators. I send this communication to you in the hopes that it finds you well and that it finds you still very much in love with amateur radio.

Some of you know me and to the others that do not, you will know me very well by the time you finish reading this communication. My hopes are that after you have completed your reading that you will be once again filled with the excitement, awe, and love of amateur radio that I have known for over 40 years.

For the last several years there has been something eating away at me and I have not been able, until most recently, to bring it to the forefront and verbalize just exactly what was stirring around in my head. As you know amateur radio is multifaceted and an ever changing thing. There are operators who are holding on to the tried and true basics of amateur radio and operators who are embracing new technology. What is true of both of those skilled operators is they are rapidly diminishing in numbers.

Newly licensed operators today suffer from lack of technical training, lack of basic operating skills and practices, and an almost complete lack of a living knowledge source. It's not their fault. It's just the way we have all let amateur radio slide into a comfortable and dusty corner.

I tried to fill this void of basic operating skills and technical knowledge by suggesting mentoring programs at local radio clubs. That effort was met with indifference to limited interest to no interest at all.

Those who know me know that I'm not one to sit around and wait so I started a series of mentor classes over the past several months at my home. Those classes have been met with good participation and enthusiasm. However, after the classes had finished most of the operators filed away their new skill sets and knowledge learned.

### Two things have become clear to me...

1. Most amateur radio "club meetings" have turned into entertainment venues sourced from a small catalog of presentations that are making the local club circuit with some presentations not even about amateur radio related topics.
2. The only way to get amateur radio operators interested in doing "hands-on" projects is to make the project itself the reason to get together.

The last thing we need is another cookie-cutter amateur radio club. Don't take me wrong. Most of the local ham clubs do amazing things in terms of public service and our country needs all of the trained service related operators that we can get. However, that's not enough.

We need operators that have different skill sets and knowledge bases that go way beyond public service participation.

We need to associate with like-minded operators who want to learn and build. We need to get back to the birth of amateur radio with similar mindsets of those with names like Maxim, Tesla, Armstrong, Fleming, de Forest, and Marconi.

We need to associate with operators who still have the love of amateur radio and with those who yearn to embrace it.

We need to associate with those who want to share and pass on their life-long experiences and knowledge base to those who so want to learn and do.

We need to come together as a group, not a club, and promote the great things that can be produced from this combined effort.

We need to form a radio user group to sustain a knowledge base for the future and to guarantee that we do not lose past skills and experiences to the march of time.

What will it take? A commitment to meet once a month with several other operators who have similar interests and desires.

What will we do? Create, build, learn, and have fun!

What do we need? We need people like you to jump up and rise to the call to help make this happen.

If I have wetted your desire; if I have peaked your interest; if I have awakened something in you; then look at the next section and decide if you are ready to make that jump.

### The Amateur Radio User Group (RUG)

Purpose – To bring together amateur radio operators of similar interests who want to be actively involved in one or more of the technical and/or operating facets of our hobby to:

- A. Promote the passing and sharing of amateur radio knowledge and experiences to other interested amateur radio operators.
- B. Promote the discovery and enjoyment of amateur radio.
- C. Turn our learning and sharing efforts into practical working applications.
- D. To have fun

If this idea is for you then contact me by email or by telephone. The first gathering was on Tuesday, March 3, 2009, at 7 PM, at my home located at 21 Pecan Grove Circle in Lucas, Texas. That is the second house on the left side of the street. There will be sodas and cookies and lots of ideas.

*(Editors Note: If you missed the first meeting, check out the information below about the next one.)*

Larry Essary – K5XG  
214 495-8066 #202  
[larry@pulse.net](mailto:larry@pulse.net)

Our regular gathering will be on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 PM at the Lucas City Annex/Fire Station located at 151 Country Club Road. Corner of Lucas Road (Bethany) and Country Club (Hwy 1378). This will start on March 17, 2009.

**Squirrely Antenna** I was in the master bathroom minding my business when I heard this strange vibration radiating through the corner of the house that I was at that particular moment. I thought, "Not another plumbing problem!" Then the sound stopped. And started again. And stopped again. After listening carefully, I decided that the sound appeared to be coming from the corner of the house, like maybe the gutters. So, as quickly as I could, I got to the patio area to investigate and discovered a squirrel sitting on the counterpoise of my Gap Titan DX antenna.



I dashed back inside to get my camera, but when I returned, the squirrel, or one of his brothers, was sitting on the roof. I was disappointed, but I took a picture of him (we will assume male for the purposes of this article) anyway.



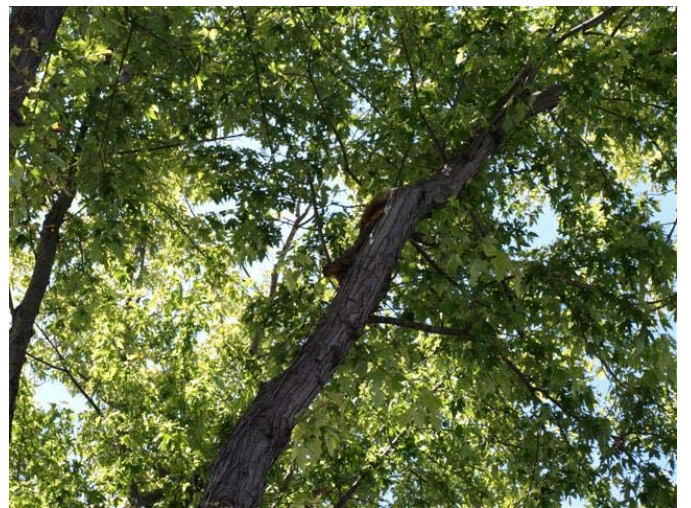
Then, as if he could read my mind, (I know he can read my dog's mind—if she had one), he leaped back on the counterpoise again. Clicky! Clicky! I love my new digital SLR.



But then he did something I really didn't know squirrels could do. He began showing off by running up the slippery aluminum vertical as if it were a tree trunk.



He went one camera click at a time all the way to the top.



Then, before I could capture him on "film" at the tippy-top, he turned around, upside down, and ran down to the top stub support and leaped into a nearby tree, and sat there grinnin' at me.



# ARRL Arkansas 2009 State Convention

Sponsored by

**Benton County Radio Operators**

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**Saturday, April 25th, 2009  
8:00 AM to 2:30 PM**

**Location**

Rogers First Church of the Nazarene  
4911 W. Pleasant Grove Rd.  
Rogers, AR

**Talk-in**

145.290MHz Standard Negative Offset, PL Tone 110.9

**Admission**

\$5.00 per person in advance  
\$6.00 per person at the door

**Tables**

\$5.00 each in advance  
\$6.00 at the door

Food and Drinks will be available

**Many Great Vendors Attending  
Hourly Door Prizes**

**Forums**

**VE Testing**

Walk-ins are welcome

**For More Info Contact:**

Jay Harrison - KCØCNB

479.631.7727 Phone

479.644.6646 Cell

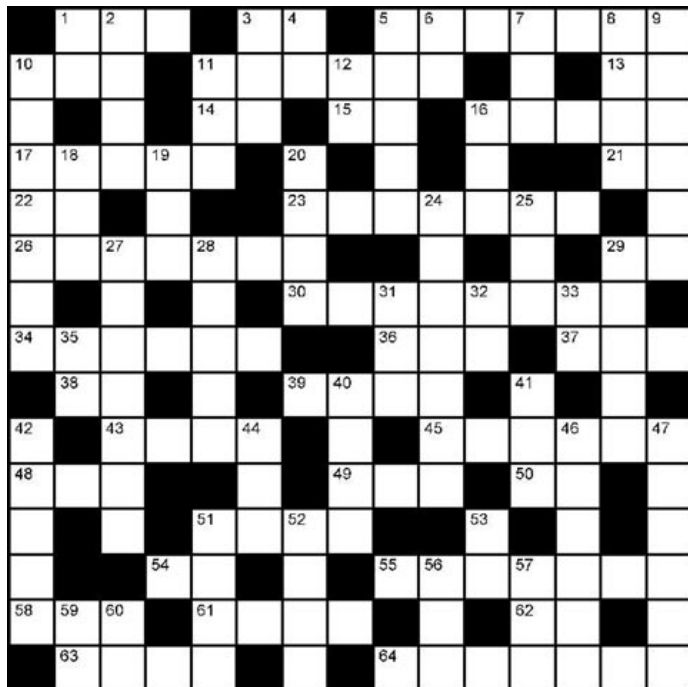
E-mail: [Texgun19@cox.net](mailto:Texgun19@cox.net)

For up to date information and to download a registration form:

[http://bentoncoradiooperators.org/BCRO\\_Hamfests.htm](http://bentoncoradiooperators.org/BCRO_Hamfests.htm)

<http://bentoncoradiooperators.org/registration.htm>

The Amateur Radio Crossword Puzzler



Across

- 1. Hams chew it
- 3. Type of FT1000
- 5. A lot of cars
- 10. Holds small parts
- 11. Sellers need these
- 13. Spanish prefix
- 14. Commercial message (abbr.)
- 15. Symbol for Titanium
- 16. The alternative
- 17. Worst kind of hamfest weather
- 21. Local prosecutor (abbr.)
- 22. Going (CW abbr.)
- 23. Presents a program
- 26. Its age is its attraction
- 29. Macintosh model
- 30. Buy extra to get this
- 34. Same as five for a quarter
- 36. Three Greek letters move the boat
- 37. The head topper
- 38. Works fine
- 39. State of the Hamvention
- 43. Equal
- 45. Sells chances to win
- 48. Taken from a container
- 49. Type of FET
- 50. Complement to AND
- 51. Nickname of the Ham of the Year
- 54. Wire thickness (abbr.)
- 55. Radio fleamarket
- 58. A change in the wiring
- 61. If it's all gone, you're too ....
- 62. Prefix meaning reverse or not

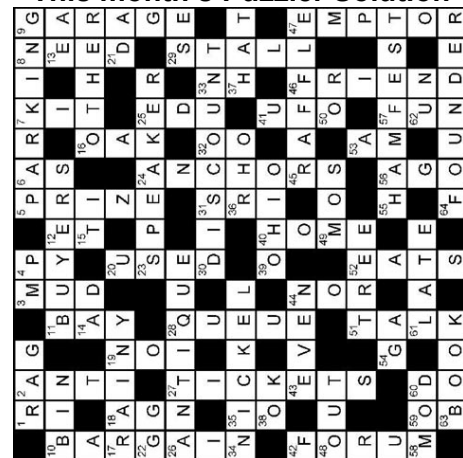
- 12. Phoned home
- 16. Hardwood for cabinets
- 18. Again (CW abbr.)
- 19. Bad letter from FCC (abbr.)
- 20. Pre-owned
- 24. Old radios are boat-.....
- 25. Email abbreviation for colleges
- 27. Buy these to get in
- 28. A line
- 29. Delay
- 31. Sorry (CW abbr.)
- 32. Official Observer (abbr.)
- 33. Another New England state (abbr.)
- 35. Input Output (abbr.)
- 40. Take purchases back here
- 41. Flying saucer
- 42. Group discussion of a topic
- 44. Opposite of 50 Across
- 46. An acquaintance
- 47. Who must beware
- 51. The "in" frequency
- 52. Slang for food
- 53. Phone mode on a Globe King
- 56. Time past
- 57. Enjoyment
- 59. Old Boy (CW abbr.)
- 60. Act

- 63. Bound volume
- 64. Person who starts an organization

Down

- 1. New England state (abbr.)
- 2. Prefix meaning opposite
- 3. Wet dirt
- 4. Prefix of largest South American nation
- 5. What is won
- 6. Stand by (CW prosign)
- 7. Built from parts
- 8. Often confused with want
- 9. Where the extra stuff goes
- 10. A good deal
- 11. Opening for system components

This month's Puzzler Solution



(Puzzler by H. Ward Silver, NOAX courtesy of ARRL.org.)

BUY, SELL AND TRADE

**ICOM IC-756PROII** I am selling the IC-756PROII which has been my backup HF rig. I haven't used it much since I got the FT-2000D so it is for sale. The IC-756PROII is in mint condition with manual, power cable, hand mic, and box. Local pick-up buyer also gets homebrew computer interface and homebrew external voice and CW memory keyer control similar to the I-Mate. **\$1,500 firm**

Dave Jaksa, WOVX  
972-495-0048  
w0vx@arrl.net

# Rockwell-Collins

Amateur Radio Club

Mail Station 461-290

P.O. Box 833807

Richardson, TX 75083-3807

TO:



### CLUB STATIONS

(972) 705-1349

### W5ROK REPEATER

441.875 MHz +5 MHz Input

131.8 Hz PL - RX and TX

### W5ROK-1 PACKET BBS ROK Node

145.01 MHz

### MEETING

Thursday 26 March 2009

1700 Fellowship

1730 Meeting

Rockwell Collins Building 462

Dallas Conference Room

**NEXT SIGNALS DEADLINE:**

**13 April 2009**