
SIGNALS

Rockwell
Collins **Amateur Radio Club**

Monthly Newsletter of the

Volume 28 Issue 08

Web Site <http://www.collinsclubs.com/rcarc/>

May 2007

RCARC Membership Meeting

Thursday
24 May 2007
1730 in
Rockwell Collins
Cafeteria

Subject: Field Day 2007 Planning and Preparation.

Upcoming Events and Public Service Ops



improvements have been added to the event. For complete information visit the web site at <http://www.hamcom.org/> and download the full-color "Ham-Com Flyer." It's "The Biggest Hamfest in Texas!"

Note that our very own President Bill Swan will be leading 2 sessions on Saturday (NTX ARES and EMCOMM) starting at 11 AM.

9-11 June 2007: ARRL June VHF QSO Party The object of this event is to work as many amateur stations in as many different 2 degree by 1 degree grid squares as possible using authorized frequencies above 50 MHz. Foreign stations work W/VE amateurs only. The event is on the second full weekend in June. Begins 1800 UTC Saturday, ends 0300 UTC Monday (**June 9-11, 2007**). More info at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2007/june-vhf.html>

23-24 June 2007: ARRL Field Day Field Day is open to all amateurs in the areas covered by the ARRL/RAC Field Organizations and countries within IARU Region 2. DX stations residing in other regions may be contacted for credit, but are not eligible to submit entries. The object is to work as many stations as possible on any and all amateur bands (excluding the 60, 30, 17, and 12-meter bands) and in doing so to learn to operate in abnormal situations in less than optimal conditions. A premium is placed on developing skills to meet the challenges of emergency preparedness as well as to acquaint the general public with the capabilities of Amateur Radio. The event is always the fourth full weekend of June, beginning at 1800 UTC Saturday and ending at 2100 UTC Sunday. More info at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2007/fd.html>

Local Club News

Meeting Notice This months meeting will be dedicated to Field Day planning.

Club Meeting Talk-In Each month, we have a Talk-In on the club repeater before the membership meeting on the night of the meeting. The Talk-In is from 1700 to 1730 hours, just prior to the meeting.

Armed Forces Day Cross-band Test The annual Armed Forces Day Cross-band Military/Amateur Radio Communications Test was on May 12, 2007. W5ROK had contacts with the following stations. Note all frequencies are outside the Amateur Bands. Amateurs called the stations inside Amateur Bands.

Cal	Frequency	Location
AAZ	14.402 MHz	Ft. Huachuca AZ
NAV4	14.467 MHz	Great Lakes IL
AIR2	13.993 MHz	Scott AFB, IL
AIR	13.985 MHz	Andrews AFB, MD
WAR	13.512 MHz	Pentagon
AAC	13.910 MHz	Lexington KY
NAV4	7.376 MHz	Great Lakes IL

Attention: All Hams! Ham-Com 2007 is scheduled for Friday, June 8 and Saturday, June 9 at the Plano Centre in Plano, TX. The online admission discount of \$3.00 is available through May 30. DX dinner tickets are still available and can be purchased online. This year's grand prizes are an ICOM IC706 MkIIIG and a Yaesu 857D. The online registration prize is an Alinco DR635T. The Ham-Com Board of Directors has announced that the event will give away \$100.00 in door prizes each hour during the event. The event runs 18 hours over two days so a total of \$1,800 will be awarded. Winners can use the cash-card door prizes at the event or at any merchant that accepts Visa or MasterCard. Recipients of cash-card door prizes will still be included in the grand prize drawings. There are over 80 hours of speakers, workshops and special interest group meetings scheduled at Ham-Com 2007. All parking is F-R-E-E and on-site. Eight hotels near the venue are providing special discounts for Ham-Com attendees. The tailgate market has been moved closer to the building and other

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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VE SESSIONS

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

Irving tests are held 3rd Sat. of each month at 09:00. 5th 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 17th St. East Plano. Check Repeater 147.180+ for announcements.

Greenville testing is on the Saturday after 3rd 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

Field Day is just around the corner and certainly that is an event that many look forward to as the BIG event of the year. Field Day is just plain fun but the fun somewhat hides another aspect of Field Day. That is the aspect of emergency preparedness. Going out to an unprepared site, putting up antennas, determining what type of power is needed, getting the logistics under control, making plans for operators, etc. are all valuable activities that prepare the amateur community to be more ready to lend a service to agencies and the general public when the need arises. It is simply not possible to quote any statistics but I expect that many of the amateurs who provided the valuable service during Hurricane Katrina probably drew on experiences learned in some Field Day operation. Have fun at Field Day and also be sensitive to how that fun is also a valuable lesson in preparedness.

The company has been for the past 6 weeks completely absorbed in working to resolve critical and high priority facility needs. As such the discussion concerning the potential move of the club radio room has simply been put on hold. The radio room in its current location has also gone to Kit Miller for his consideration and input into the final plan. This will certainly be a discussion item for the meeting.

The TS-950 Radio was offered For sale in an AS-IS condition as had been approved by the members. Bob Kirby bid the minimum of \$500 for the unit. He won the auction and now owns the TS-950. I have not talked with Bob directly but I am told that the unit seems to be working fine.

It is getting close to time to construct a nominating committee to develop a slate of candidates for next year. Once the committee is formed they will be seeking to fill the slate so please consider running for an office if a member of the committee approaches you.

Do you know someone that you work with that is an amateur radio operator or has expressed an interest in amateur radio? If so I hope that you will take a moment and let them know about the RCARC. Invite them to a meeting, take them down to the station and show them our web site. With the influx of new employees this should be an opportunity for us to grow the active employee membership base of the RCARC.

Well it is time to say 73s.

— · — · — · — · — · — · — ·
Bill Swan,
K5MWC, President

**SKYWARN
volunteers
are helping
the National
Weather Service**



Keep an eye on the SKY

If someone were to ask you to take your car out on a stormy spring evening, with every expectation that you could soon be in the midst of golf ball-sized hail pelting the finish, not to mention the possibility of broken glass and the danger to your own personal safety, what would you say? Now consider that in order to “enjoy” such an outing, you would have to take special training annually and spend many hours of your free time studying for a communications license as well.

If you say, “No thank you!” then you are among the people who benefit from the volunteers who say “Yes!” to the call to become severe weather watchers, more romantically referred to by the media as storm or tornado trackers, as part of the National Weather Services SKYWARN network.

“Simply put, the SKYWARN volunteer acts as our eyes and ears,” explains meteorologist Gary Woodall of National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) National Weather Service office in Ft. Worth, where all SKYWARN observations are reported. “The SKYWARN storm spotters are a valuable part of the severe weather detection and warning system. While our electronic tools, radar, satellite, etc., are important tools, they cannot show the visual aspects of a storm. Additionally, they cannot and do not tell us what is actually happening at the ground underneath a storm. SKYWARN spotters provide visual observations of storm structure and the near-storm environment. These observations complement the electronic data and allow us to have a more complete picture of a storm. This, in turn, allows us to issue the best possible warnings.

“Amateur radio operators (HAMS) make up the backbone of the Texas spotter networks. These groups have the traits most needed for successful spotter groups: efficient communications, dedication and a sense of community service, trainability, and ability to be integrated into the area-wide reporting system,” Woodall notes.

Every county has their own SKYWARN system, all linked in North Texas to the Ft. Worth weather service, as well as local

emergency managers. While each county does things slightly differently, usually dictated by budget constraints, the core system is designed so that a SKYWARN volunteer from Vermont or Missouri could perform well in Texas. The basic training, a one-day class that storm spotters must attend annually, is the key to the system’s flexibility. Secondary training in advanced weather spotting are also offered by the weather service every winter, which is historically the system’s most quiet period.

In some North Texas counties, emergency coordinators have installed ham radio gear in police dispatch centers, where a ham operator will respond when the SKYWARN system is activated. In another county, the hams themselves have installed a high-power remote camera system on a hilltop for observation, and in others hams have created their own Doppler radar systems for local reporting. All of these innovations get no federal support whatsoever. The two-way radio equipment the volunteers rely upon, even the cost of the gasoline they use, is paid for out of pocket. Yet the program maintains a robust volunteer cadre of well-trained spotters.

SKYWARN hams also spend a significant amount of time helping to train new volunteers to earn their Amateur Radio license from the Federal Communications Commission. Becoming a ham requires a basic understanding of electronics and radio theory, as well as FCC laws. And while there are now operator levels that no longer require Morse code proficiency as part of the testing procedure, the program still requires a commitment by both instructors and students to qualify. SKYWARN does not require that new volunteers be licensed radio operators to join; many nonlicensed volunteers begin their storm spotting careers riding the “shotgun” or “second seat” with licensed operators after taking the one-day SKYWARN schools.

As one volunteer notes, “Once you are out there, you want to work the radio, which is the only part of the job that requires an FCC license. Almost everyone makes the

transition quickly. It’s not all that difficult, and ham radio has a lot more to offer in addition to the SKYWARN activities.” In fact, the paid meteorologists with NOAA in Ft. Worth, like their counterparts in other hub weather service offices, have voluntarily become hams over the years.

The choice of the ham radio community to undertake this job from the beginning has sometimes come into question. At one recent SKYWARN training class, a member of the public asked a Weather Service representative, “Why are you trusting this important function to a group that willingly accepts the title ‘Amateur’ as their name?” The answer is simple. While the amateur radio operators are volunteers and their activities could be considered a hobby, they have the technical training behind them as a benchmark for admission.

In fact, when that civilian asked his question, what he really wanted to know was why the job does not immediately go to professionals, such as the police or firefighters. The answer is equally simple; in times of severe emergencies, the police and fire departments are already busy dealing with rescue and emergency response issues, and in a true emergency, have other important jobs to perform. The ham radio community is perfectly suited for the storm spotter job, with knowledge of communications and emergency radio traffic; and in most cases they will not be torn between their activities in SKYWARN and other emergency management needs.

In Collin County, SKYWARN has in excess of over 200 trained volunteers, both men and women ranging in age from teenagers to octogenarians, who responded to a half dozen potential weather-related emergencies last year. Directing these activities is Ted Best, the severe weather coordinator for the county through the Collin County Amateur Radio Emergency Service. He explains that an average year sees anywhere from six to 18 severe storms in our area.

Veteran news weatherman Troy Dungan, who routinely attends SKYWARN training sessions, notes, “Rule number one is that severe weather can happen anywhere – and will. It can hit an affluent suburb, a small country crossroads, or a major metropolitan area with equal devastation. Some volunteers have never seen a tornado; others have come face to face with one their first time out. The training prepares them to approach potentially dangerous super cells with a minimum of danger and to keep their distance, but sometimes you can’t predict a storm’s sudden turn. I guess the rule would be, if

you are getting hit with baseball-sized hail, you should quickly reevaluate your position and retreat.”

Ted Best explains, “SKYWARN relies on several ‘repeater sites’ that allow low-power mobile or hand-held radio units to communicate effectively over long distances. All of our repeaters are capable of maintaining communications with the National Weather Service Center in Ft. Worth. Our main site is in Plano, with another in Allen.

“Virtually all of our volunteers can operate in the field or man their own base stations throughout the county. Many have elaborate weather stations of their own and constantly feed back changing conditions to both the spotters and the weather service. In all, there are six affiliated clubs in Collin County that participate in SKYWARN, each with their own repeater systems available for our use. The network guarantees the best possible early warning system for the county’s residents and vastly improves the warning time given for an approaching storm.”

The storms that SKYWARN tracks are not limited to tornadoes – although they all have that potential. But the spotters are all eager to share the fact that more folks are killed each year by lightning and sudden flooding here in Texas than by twisters.

As one storm spotter says, “Any of these storms can produce direct line winds in excess of 100 miles per hour; there is no funnel cloud, just straight winds, but it will take down a house or barn just as easily. There is a hail potential, sometimes the size of a baseball or even a softball, that will destroy a car and break out windows, too. But the worst killer is the flash flooding. Every year somebody tries to drive through a flooded area and will pay with their life.

“The second largest killer associated with these storms is lightning. Every severe storm is associated with lightning and thunder. That is our signal to get out in the field – but that lightning can kill you. Lightning strikes the closest protruding object from the surrounding area. The safest place to be is in your car; cars are not ‘grounded’ because they are sitting on rubber tires, so they will not be hit. But wherever you are, get down low, close to the ground. You will have a better chance at survival lying in a ditch than standing on the patio!”

All of the storm spotters in SKYWARN stress that early detection and warning are the overall key to survival. To that end, if you are not listening to the weather warnings on TV or radio, and do not have an inexpensive NOAA Weather Radio to

hear a warning, the efforts of these volunteers are useless.

Troy Dungan adds, “Get a weather radio for your home, turn on the TV when you see the sky turning dark, and pay attention. You have to know where the ‘safe room’ is in your home – usually an interior bathroom without windows – and be prepared to go to it when the broadcast gives the word. A NOAA Weather radio cost about \$20 or less, the same as the average smoke detector. That is a small amount to pay for your safety, especially when you realize that the volunteers who are out there in the storm have invested hundreds, if not thousands, for their equipment to keep you safe. Remember, nature never does it the same way twice. There are few common denominators, which is why SKYWARN is so important to all of us!”

Reprinted permission of Journalist Rick Moran K2NYP, a SKYWARN volunteer.

Secretary's Report

Bill Swan, K5MWC, opened the meeting at 1739 (04-26-07), in the RCI Cafeteria. Present at the meeting were:

Don Aragona	KD7WXH
Dennis Cobb	WA8ZBT
Kathy Cobb	
Bill Fell	KK5PB
Bob Kirby	K3NT
John McFadden	K5TIP
Jim Skinner	WB0UNI
Bill Swan	K5MWC
Joe Wolf	N5UIC

The following business was conducted:

1. Officer Reports
 - a. Treasurer report: Jim Skinner, WB0UNI, passed out the April Treasurer’s report
 - b. Bob Kirby, K3NT, thanked Joe Wolf, N5UIC, for new membership roster.
 - c. Dennis Cobb, WA8ZBT, announced that the annual Armed Forces Day Cross-band Military/Amateur Radio Communications event will be on May 19. He also stated that W5ROK operated in the 432 MHz Sprint on April 25, 2007, and made 5 contacts in 4 grid squares, the contact with K5LLL being the longest, down in EM10, which is about 200 miles from here.
2. Old Business
 - a. Bill Swan, K5MWC, briefed the membership on the results of the

E Board meeting about the possible radio club room move.

- i. The first preference is to leave the radio room where it is.
 - ii. Bill sent a letter to Kit Miller about our preferences.
 - iii. The first alternate preference would be to move the radio club directly below the opening from the penthouse.
 - iv. The membership discussed the pros and cons of moving the radio room to the penthouse.
 - v. The question was then posed, if none of these are accepted by the company what or where does the radio club go?
 - b. The company has donated two computers to the club. One is up and running and the other needs to be hooked up.
 - c. The TS-950 auction was conducted by Jim Skinner, WB0UNI. Bob Kirby, K3NT, had the winning bid at \$500.
3. New Business
 - a. Bob Kirby, K3NT, took over meeting for Bill Swan, K5MWC, who had to leave.
 - b. Field Day: Joe Wolf, N5UIC, will check on using a company tower for Field Day, should a radio room move be in process.
 - c. Bob Kirby, K3NT, volunteered to be Field Day champion.
 - d. Jim Skinner, WB0UNI, is going to look into it the testing of the 30S-1 amplifier.
 - e. Bob Kirby, K3NT, suggested the club start looking into an HF solid state amp. There was some discussion about the pros and cons.

Bob Kirby, K3NT, closed the business meeting at 1853 Hours and the members went to the club room to see the new radio.

Classified Ads

Radio Repair, Kit Building, Antenna and Computer Help. Free Estimates; Contact Bob Kirby K3NT at k3nt@arrl.net

DRAFT

Rockwell Collins Amateur Radio Club Field Day

Field Day is an American Radio Relay League (ARRL) sponsored operating event intended to test emergency preparedness. The two day event is held on the last weekend of June with literally thousands of individuals and clubs "heading for the woods" to set up amateur radio stations operating on emergency power. It is a great way to introduce the fun that is happening in today's "Wireless Communications".

Field Day 2007

CQ Field Day, CQ Field Day, this is W5ROK, Whiskey Five Radio Oscar Kilowatt calling CQ and listening.

Yes, it is that time of year again, when many amateur radio operators think about the great outdoors and emergency operations. The RCARC is sponsoring Field Day (<http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2007/fd.html>) again this year. The dates are June 23th and 24th. The Field Day period starts 1800 UTC Saturday and ends at 2100 UTC Sunday. The new W5ROK clubroom will be the site of our club's operations and we will be using emergency power. Our goals are to have fun. All operators or interested parties, both new and experienced, are invited.

Setup starts Saturday at morning 11:00 am local time with preparing the power, antennas and radios. Operations start at 1:00 PM CDT, and continue to 4 PM CDT Sunday. Again, all with interest are invited to join in the fun. The club has a full array of radios; antennas and equipment that covers the high, very high and ultra high frequencies. All licensed operators are invited to operate the radios. Control operators will also be available for those interested. Tear down starts Sunday at 4:05 PM CDT. Beverages and snacks provided, folks won't go hungry or thirsty!

At 6 PM CDT Saturday night, we will have a meal with club members immediate families invited. A dish to pass from each family would be appreciated. This has been a fantastic time to fellowship with our significant others, and have great time. Please RSVP to Jim Skinner @ 972-690-9612 so we can get a headcount.

Field Day needs many volunteers. Take a look at the ARRL web site, and you can see how many things we can do. Here is a list of tasks/positions, which already have volunteers. In addition, I'm listing some items that don't have volunteers yet. Accuracy of this list is open to question, and if I've goofed, please let me know (K3NT@arrl.net or 972-612-4094).

2007 Field Day chairman's – Bob Kirby-K3NT & Dennis Cobb-WA8ZBT

Food Captain – Jim Skinner-WB0UNI

HF Station Captain- Dennis Cobb-WA8ZBT & Bob Kirby-K3NT

VHF Station Captain– Open

Natural Power (Generator) – Dennis Cobb-WA8ZBT (securing resources)

Contacting News media - Open

Traffic operator?

Copy W1AW Message – Open

Operator Signup – Dennis-WA8ZBT, Bob-K3NT (Saturday afternoon, Sunday morning)

Public Media Relations- Open

Computers Log Program Setup – Dennis Cobb-WA8ZBT, Bob-K3NT

Other things? (Please let us know)

More than anything else we need operators. Through the day, through the evening, through the night, into the wee hours of the morning. Let's keep the RF spectrum full, and put W5ROK on the map yet again! To add your name to the schedule for operators please contact Dennis Cobb @ 972-705-1457 or Bob Kirby (k3nt@arrl.net or 972-612-4094). We want to see a number of the new and upgraded hams join us. We have a friendly bunch here that will show you the ropes.

Directions to the site: US75 to Renner Rd east, to corner of Shiloh Rd. Plant will be just a block ahead on your right . Turn into plant north gate entrance from Renner Rd and into parking lot. Visitors and retirees will need to sign-in at the guard shack.

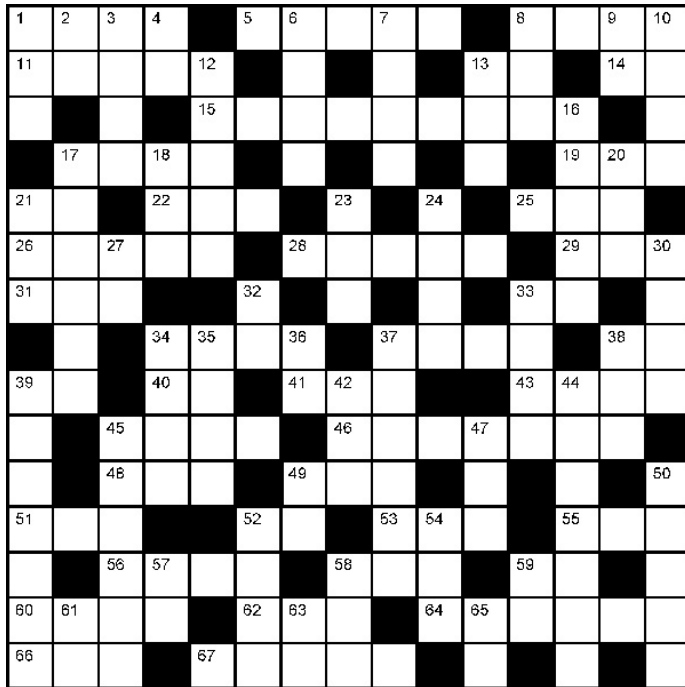
For those interested, I'd like to generate a mailing list to keep you all up to date as to our W5ROK Field Day developments. Please send a note to Bob, K3NT@arrl.net and I'll send any updates I receive to the group. Any and all ideas welcome, lets all make this a great club outing!

73, Bob

K3NT, RCARC 2007 Field Day chairman,

PS - All volunteers and ideas welcome!

The Amateur Radio Crossword Puzzler



- 46. These radios hold boats in place
- 48. Not mine (CW abbr)
- 49. Period in time when things were done a certain way
- 51. One section of a sales booth or stand
- 52. One thousandth of a liter (abbr)
- 53. Logarithmic unit of power (abbr)
- 55. The real reason we go to ham-fests
- 56. The Great Lake that borders Dayton's state
- 58. Gotta make this while the sun

- 30. Fine tuning adjustment
- 32. Abbreviation for telephone call
- 33. Home state to Dayton Hamvention
- 34. Rip
- 35. Ham position reporting system (abbr)
- 36. Sunflower state (postal code)
- 37. Our northern neighbor
- 38. Say this when the price is right
- 39. Place together as a unit
- 42. Smells bad when a transformer is overheated
- 44. Messages
- 45. Who should beware
- 47. This would be us
- 49. Type of backlight for LCD displays (abbr)
- 50. Often really "I want" (two words)
- 52. Small or miniscule
- 54. See ya later!
- 57. Abbreviation for a street or byway
- 58. Worn to prevent sunburn on the noggin
- 59. Many transistors in one package
- 61. The two fields of a radio wave
- 63. Prefix meaning to cause or promote
- 65. Size of a tee-shirt

Across

- 1. Look through a large number of small things
- 5. What English does from left to right
- 8. A seller that cheats
- 11. Precious old equipment
- 13. AM and TV stations
- 14. Live or operating
- 15. Integer multiples
- 17. Place of entry
- 19. Bill
- 21. Amplifier whose output is the transmitted signal (abbr)
- 22. Month of CQ WW SSB contest (abbr)
- 25. Handy for carrying purchases
- 26. What happens when 25 Across is overloaded
- 28. The last offer
- 29. A group of things sold as one unit
- 31. Added to the sales price
- 33. Too much current or power (abbr)
- 34. What most customers seem to do best
- 37. Works for any purchase
- 38. Prefix of hams in Iraq
- 39. Prefix of long, skinny SA country
- 40. Prefix of hams next door to Iraq
- 41. You have to get this from the FCC to operate in a non-standard way (abbr)
- 43. One piece of gear
- 45. Where most hamfest stuff has apparently been stored

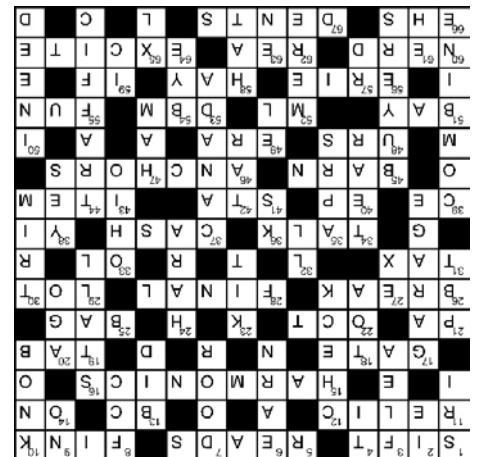
shines

- 59. Where a superhet gets its gain (abbr)
- 60. Overly technical individual
- 62. Rural electric utility (abbr)
- 64. Get interested or animated
- 66. Type of tower guy wire (abbr)
- 67. Dimples

Down

- 1. Apology (CW abbr)
- 2. Abbreviation that provides and explanation (Latin)
- 3. Type of market that's the same as a hamfest
- 4. Prefix of Costa Rican hams
- 6. How money is made the old-fashioned way
- 7. Hamfest prize
- 8. Our regulatory agency
- 9. If it's too expensive, just say this
- 10. Attached to controls for convenience
- 12. Sometimes taken in payment
- 13. Make an offer
- 16. Seller's area
- 17. Where hamfest purchases often go
- 18. How steeply RF leaves an antenna (abbr)
- 20. In the past
- 21. Adjusts width of IF filtering (abbr)
- 23. Parts assembled by the buyer
- 24. Building in which Hamvention occurs
- 27. Prefix meaning "no longer"

Solution to this month's Puzzler



Rockwell-Collins

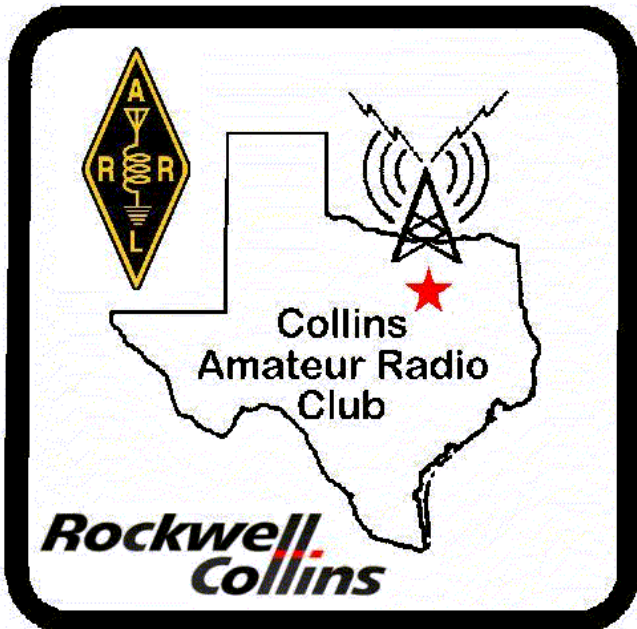
Amateur Radio Club

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 24 May 2007

17:30

Rockwell Collins Cafeteria

**NEXT SIGNALS DEADLINE:
18 June 2007**