
SIGNALS



Monthly Newsletter of the

Amateur Radio Club

Volume 30 Issue 2

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

November 2008

RCARC
Membership Meeting
 Thursday, 20 November 2008
 1700 Social 1730 Meeting
 Rockwell Collins Building 462
 Dallas Conference Room

Subject: The Current State of the Solar Cycle, By Steve Ford, WB8IMY

15-17 November 2008 ARRL November Sweepstakes (Phone): The object of this event is for stations in the United States and Canada (including territories and possessions) to exchange QSO information with as many other US and Canadian stations as possible on 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 meter bands. **Date and Contest Period:** November 1-3, 2008. Begins 2100 UTC Saturday, ends 0300 UTC Monday. More info at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2008/novss.html>.

23 November 2008 North Texas Microwave Society Garage Sale Al Ward, W5LUA, We have quite a bit of surplus parts and assemblies and some equipment from the estate of W5FF, Fred Fish, a well known 6 meter DXer that lived in Albuquerque, NM. His widow, Lee Fish, was kind enough to donate the surplus to the NTMS. We are having a garage sale this Sunday the 23rd starting at about noon. There is some good stuff here plus a few pieces that just need a good home. I also have some stuff from the estates of W5HN and W4HHK. **Just remember the proceeds go to NTMS to help pay for meeting rooms and more beacons, etc.** Al Ward W5LUA, 2306 Forest Grove Estates Rd, Allen, Texas 75002

5-7 December 2008 ARRL 160 Meter Contest: The object of this event is for amateurs worldwide to exchange information with W/VE amateurs on the 160-meter band CW only. DX-to-DX QSOs do not count for contest credit. Stations located in overseas and non-contiguous U.S. Territories may be worked by DX stations. This includes Alaska KL7, the Caribbean US possessions KP1-KP5, and all of the Pacific Ocean territories KH0-KH9, including Hawaii KH6. These stations can work BOTH domestic stations (US and VE) as well as DX stations around the world. Check your software *before* the contest to be sure it will accept these QSOs. **Date and Contest Period:** December 5-7, 2008. Starts 2200 UTC Friday, ends 1600 UTC Sunday. This is a forty-two hour period with no time limitation. More info at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2008/160-meters.html>.

13-14 December 2008 ARRL 10 Meter Contest: The object of this event is for Amateurs worldwide to exchange QSO information with as many stations as possible on the 10-meter band. All stations operate no more than 36 hours out of the 48-hour period. Listening time counts as operating time. **Date and Contest Period:** Second full weekend of December. Starts 0000 UTC Saturday; ends 2359 UTC Sunday (**December 13 – 14, 2008**). More info at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2008/10-meters.html>

Local Club News

Meeting Notice This month's meeting is coming exactly one week earlier than usual because of the Thanksgiving holiday, and it is not one you should miss. It is one of those once in a life-time opportunities. Steve Ford, WB8IMY, the Editor of QST Magazine will be talking with us on the current condition of the solar cycle. If you have any interest in high frequency radio wave propagation, and even 6M VHF propagation, you should be at this meeting. Also, we are not restricted to questions about HF band conditions only. You are welcome to ask Steve about any topic you have read about in QST and he will be happy to answer you. So here is your chance to fire away. Want to see more on a particular topic written about in QST? Here is your perfect opportunity to let that be known.

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.

Upcoming Events and Public Service Ops

15-16 November ARRL International EME Competition: The object of this event is two-way communications via the earth-moon-earth path on 50 MHz through 1296 MHz. **Date and Contest Period:** full weekend 48-hour period (0000 UTC on Saturday through 2359 UTC Sunday). More info at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2008/eme.html>.

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W5ROK

461-290

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

IF YOU ALWAYS DO
WHAT YOU ALWAYS DID
YOU'LL ALWAYS GET
WHAT YOU ALWAYS GOT

As RCARC starts FY 2009 please give some serious thought to how YOU will help make positive changes to your Rockwell Collins company sponsored radio club. Detailed ideas, along with the proposed implementation plan are always welcome. These can be sent to any of our officers or presented at our monthly meetings.

Often, when operating the club's W5ROK station folks will ask about Rockwell Collins with a question of "Do they still make radios?" It is appropriate to explain that Rockwell Collins is involved in both commercial and government communications. Our business is aligned into Government Systems, Commercial Systems and Services.

Government Systems includes both Airborne and Surface solutions. Commercial Systems includes Air Transport Aviation Electronics along with Business and Regional Aviation Electronics. Service and Support includes Customer Support, Maintenance Services, Material Management, Performance Solutions, Simulation & Training, Technical Publications, and Training Services. Our company website is: <http://www.rockwellcollins.com/>

If there is RCARC member interest in learning more about a particular area of Rockwell Collins, just let an officer know. With enough interest, we will have a few short presentations at our monthly meetings.

Our FY2008 annual report and FY2009 request has been turned into company management and was well received. We successfully demonstrated our involvement of radio education to company employees, support of the plants emergency facilities, support of company activities and working arrangement with the other Rockwell Collins Company radio clubs. We have an offer for help spreading the word when our activities would be of interest or provide education to Rockwell Collins employees. You can help by working with our activities chairman, John Champa, K8OCL, composing interesting and enticing announcements. Lets not let this opportunity pass us by.

Our activity chairman also needs your input on FY09 plans for RCARC 2009 Field Day, FCC Radio License test preparation classes, Fun Days, EFTRT, station maintenance and improvements, special events operation, monthly programs, etc. Please support John so that he can effectively plan beneficial RCARC club activities.

If you work with technical folks that you believe would enjoy or benefit from a RCARC presentation, tell them about your club. Invite them to a monthly meeting and give them a tour of our station and website <http://www.w5rok.us/>

Have you completed and sent in your FY2009 RCARC membership renewal form to Joe Wolf, N5UIC? A reminder to return your completed membership form with any changes, such as a new mailing or e-mail address, along with your dues payable to RCARC.

October RCARC Activities:

- Collins 75th Collins Radio Special Event followup.
- Meeting Refreshments Setup Volunteer – Jim Skinner, WB0UNI (**more helpers please**)
- RCARC Marketing – Joe Wolf, N5UIC; Mike Hollingsworth, W5QH
- Station Tour - Dennis Cobb, WA8ZBT; 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
- October Program - John Champa, K8OCL, Jorge de la Torre, KI4SGU
- RCARC Membership Applications & Database - Joe Wolf, N5UIC
- Secretary Report –Dwight Ramsey, KE5SAS
- Station Trustee – Steve Phillips, K6JT
- Vice President Report – Sidney Ross Terry, K5SRT
- CRARC (W0CXX) - Club News

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

Secretary's Report

Ross Terry opened the meeting at 1730 (Oct. 23 2008), in the Dallas Conference Room. Present at the meeting were:

James Gaston	KD5GYD	Bob Kirby	K3NT
Kerac Moore	AE5IH	Steve Phillips	K6JT
Dwight Ramsey	KE5SAS	James Skinner	WB0UNI
Ross Terry	K5SRT	Joseph Wolf	N5UIC

Via Teleconference:

Ken Piletic, W9ZMR Club members in Cedar, UID
 Jorge Luis "JL" de La Torre, KI4SGU (Presenter)

1. Officer Reports

- a. *President's Report:* Bob Kirby, K3NT, stated that there is a rack available that will be used for the repeater in the Penthouse. He noted that Steve Phillips had submitted the certification for the 440 Repeater. The Club's annual report is due to the company. The plan is to include as many of the employee and community beneficial aspects of our club to encourage additional club funding. The new Elecraft K3 transceiver should be arriving in the club shack in 3 months.
- b. *Vice-President's Report:* Ross Terry, K5SRT, indicated that the 75th Anniversary event went well with approximately 500 contacts (290 electronic and 198 handwritten logs). He indicated that the QSL cards were still in work.
- c. *Secretary's Report:* The Secretary's report was not available.
- d. *Treasurers Report:* Jim Skinner WB0UNI, and Jim Gaston KD5GYD, reviewed the club's financial balance sheet.
- e. *Station Trustee's Report:* There was no Station Trustee's report.

- f. *Activities Chairman Report:* There was no Activities Chairman report.
2. Old Business
 - a. There was no old business.
3. New Business
 - a. *50 / 50 Drawing:* The 50/50 drawing was won by Steve Phillips K6JT. These funds support refreshments at RCARC meetings and other club activities.

Ross Terry introduced Jorge Luis "JL" de La Torre, KI4SGU, who delivered an "Introduction to PropNet". The presentation covered PSK31 History & Basics, PropNet History & Basics, Propagation Prognostications, The Sack-Donnelly Effect, and The Sack-Donnelly in GA.

Activities Corner *By John Champa, K8OCL, RCARC Activities Chairman*

Half-Baked Hams? Every month the club arranges for a wonderful meeting with free refreshments in a comfortable room (Dallas Conference Room), with great companionship, a fun 50/50 drawing, and usually an interesting / informative program or speaker. Nonetheless, the usual 20% shows up for the meeting, and a goodly portion of them are retired employees. Membership is not even required. All employees are invited to attend.

What are we to conclude from that? Second shift guys are excluded, but what about the rest? Do we need to do a better job of marketing and getting the word out? Is it time for our club to consider going to quarterly or even semi-annual meetings? To those members that are not attending, please let me know what would be required for you to attend the RCARC meetings. We are always happy to get some feedback, off the record of course, if you wish. (k8occl@arrl.net).

Steve Ford, WB8IMY, the Editor of QST Magazine will be talking with us on the current condition of the solar cycle. If you have any interest in high frequency radio wave propagation, and even 6M VHF propagation, you should be at this meeting. Also, we are not restricted to questions about HF band conditions only. You are welcome to ask Steve about any topic you have read about in QST and he will be happy to answer you. So here is your chance to fire away. Want to see more on a particular topic written about in QST? Here is your perfect opportunity to let that be known.

What about next month, the December meeting? Unlike some clubs who cash in their chips for the holidays, we have some great fun activities planned. One of these is the speaker for the December meeting. This December meeting will also be exactly one week earlier than normal because of the holiday. Otherwise, same time (1700 hours) and the same place (Dallas Conference Room).

Buddipole (<http://www.buddipole.com/>) is considered by many to be the highest quality and most advanced portable antenna system available to Hams at a reasonable price. The owners of the firm will be talking with us about their full antenna line, including some very unique new products they have just recently introduced. If you enjoy Field Day, mountain-topping, camping, or just need an effective but compact antenna for your small city lot or apartment balcony, then you will not want to miss our December meeting!

Hope to see you there! Until next time, 73 and stay well!
 Vy 73, John K8OCL

RCARC 50/50 Drawing (Important Announcement!) *By John Champa, K8OCL and Jim Skinner, WB0UNI*

Our club's monthly 50/50 drawing has become an integral part of every meeting.

The purpose of the drawing is to make available at every meeting fresh coffee (both regular and decaffeinated), water, and some snacks for those who come directly from their work area to the Dallas Conference Room.

Here is how it works: Raffle tickets are given for a club donation of \$2 per ticket, or 3 tickets for a \$5 donation. These denotations are accounted for separately from other club funds and are used primarily for refreshment supplies, at the meetings and in the RC Emergency Communications Center (our club radio station).

So where does the 50/50 come in? The donations collected are divided between our club's refreshment fund, and the winner of that meeting's drawing. By donating to the 50/50 drawing you pay for the refreshments you have enjoyed at the meeting!

But that is not the end of it. We have additional donation ticket drawings for pretty nice consolation prizes for those who did not win the cash drawing. For example, new radio books, etc.

This quarter we have a **SPECIAL DRAWING** to encourage regular meeting attendance. Instead of throwing the tickets away after each meeting, they are kept for a final drawing to be held in December. So the more meetings you attend between now and December, the better your chance of winning in this drawing. What are the prizes in this special drawing? We are still working on that, but so far they include a modern crystal radio receiver kit (donated to our club by Tony Spiegel KC8UR), a battery charger / rejuvenator kit (donated to our club by John Champa, K8OCL), and there is more to come, so try not to miss any of our club meetings and SAVE THOSE DRAWING TICKETS!

Thanks for all your loyal and dedicated support to the club and to the club's role in the company's emergency response planning.

ARRL Membership Benefits

There are "fringe" benefits for RCARC when our members join or renew through the following process.

Renewing By Check—After filling out the form, return it to RCARC with your check. Note the definition of New or Renewing Member at the top of the form. If you have previously been a member of ARRL but have let that membership lapse for 2 or more years then you are considered a new member and the club would get a \$15 commission. If you are renewing a current membership or one lapsed for less than 2 years, you are considered a renewing membership and would get a \$2 commission. Do not deduct the \$15 or \$2 commission—make the check out to RCARC for the full renewal amount.

Renewing By Credit Card—If you wish to CHARGE the renewal to a credit card note the special instructions (Box on right side of form) which indicate that you would then pay the \$15 or \$2 directly to RCARC. Your credit card would be charged for the full amount minus the appropriate commission. In this instance the check should be made out to the RCARC for the appropriate commission amount.

In both cases, return the application to RCARC regardless of payment method in order for RCARC to get credit. **The application is now available on the RCARC website!** Mail to the following address:

RC Amateur Radio Club
Attn: Treasurer
MS 461-290
PO Box 833807
Richardson TX 75083-3807

RCARC Membership Renewal

It's that time of year again. Your continued membership in RCARC is greatly appreciated. If you haven't re-upped yet, please bring your renewal form to the meeting on Thursday 25 September. If you haven't received your form, please contact Joe Wolf, N5UIC, @ X1388

My Dog Thinks He is a Cat, But He Can Copy Code *By Fred Hambrecht, W4JLE*

First let me explain why my dog, Rocko- a small Chihuahua, thinks he is a cat. I will get to the code part in just a minute. He was raised with a cat that slipped this mortal coil a few years ago. If you have ever been around a Chihuahua, they have two major rules they live by. First they own their human and second no one other than them is to receive any attention. Prior to our cat assuming room temperature a call of "kitty kitty" created a furor as Rocko, feeling he was missing out on attention, would bound into the room as the cat feigned indifference. I take you through all this because we have just moved to a new home here in South Carolina. Picture if you will the neighbors as we pulled into our new home, my Subaru wagon replete with a screwdriver antenna and an Arrow 2/440 J-pole mounted on the roof led the procession.

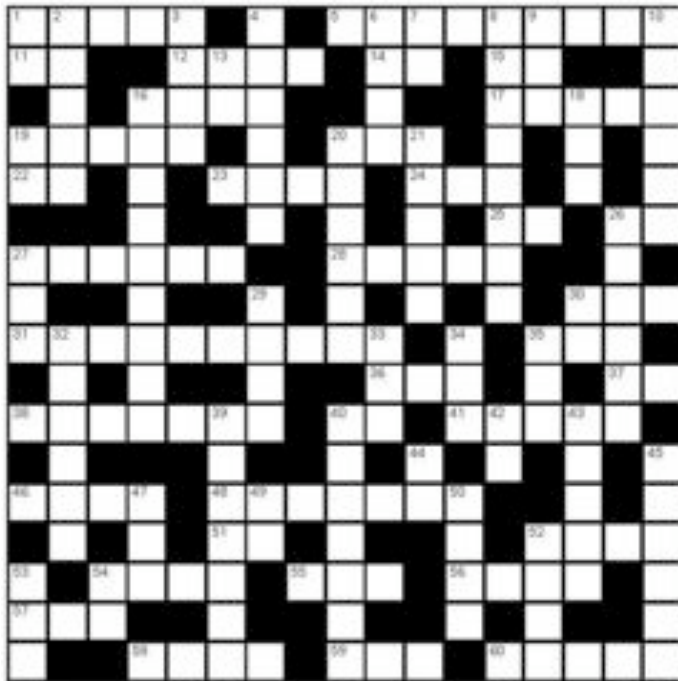
Several days later they observed me calling "kitty kitty" to entice my dog back into the house. Their suspicions were confirmed, a total nut ball had moved into the neighborhood!

That all changed after Rocko's appearance on the Letterman show! But, I am getting ahead of myself. For the past 70 dog years he has laid on my lap as I was teaching code to prospective amateurs. My XYL had even absorbed enough that sending "food" or "coffee" on the practice oscillator would bring a sandwich or the requested coffee. Little did I suspect that Rocko had noted the connection. I was setting on the couch watching the ole modulated milk bottle when he began barking "DiDiDaDit DaDaDa DadiDit" (he, like me, is not a very good speller). I got up and filled his food bowl and assumed he had just learned a sound and hoped to get results.

I was not prepared for the consequences of the simple act of filling his bowl, for the next few hours he was like Patty Duke in the miracle worker! He would go to an object in the room and act all excited. I would send the name of the object on the oscillator and if he understood would bark "DiDiDaDit". He gained a bit of fame in the neighborhood as a dog that understood code. Several professors from the local university came by and stated emphatically he did not understand code, he just associated sound with objects and it was a conditioned response. Needless to say I was really disappointed. This all changed one day, as I removed him from my lap and set him on the desk, so I could retrieve a chew of Redman. His wagging tail hit the paddle and emitted a sound! Like any novice it took a while to develop a readable "tail". At first after a few words his tail would cramp up and he had to quit. Within weeks he was able to send at about 15 WPM and copy 10. It was shortly after that we were invited to the Letterman show to be on "stupid pet tricks"

Those of you watching that night may have noticed that Dave ticked Rocko off by making fun of him. When he asked Rocko to send something, I translated it as "He is glad (*Cont. on page 5*)

The Amateur Radio Crossword Puzzler



Across

- 1. Predecessor to Windows
- 5. Packet relay
- 11. Weight (abbr.)
- 12. Branching network
- 14. Morning (abbr.)
- 15. Long-time ham (CW abbr.)
- 16. Attempt to contact
- 17. A video camera does this to the image
- 19. Mistake
- 20. Young reporter
- 22. From (CW abbr.)
- 23. Frequency determining element (abbr.)
- 24. Control - ... - Delete
- 25. Department in charge of computing services
- 26. Afternoon (abbr.)
- 27. Board in a computer
- 28. Signal containing a picture
- 30. Acknowledge (abbr.)
- 31. These make up text
- 35. Modulation for teletype
- 36. Automatic Link Enable (abbr.)
- 37. No longer (prefix)
- 38. Access port between networks
- 40. Not yours
- 41. Discrete change in frequency
- 46. Assist
- 48. Opposite of analog
- 51. Radio Frequency (abbr.)
- 52. Unit of current
- 54. A raster is made of these

this data

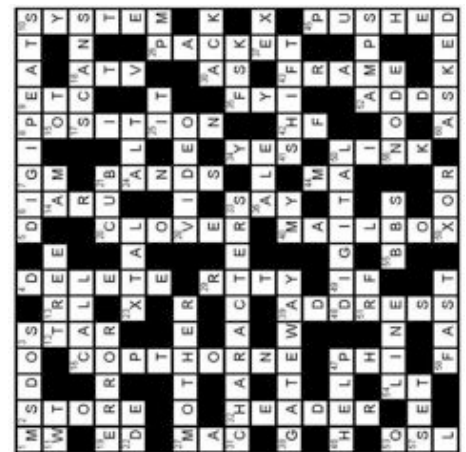
- 9. And so forth (abbr.)
- 10. Collection of connected parts
- 13. Resistor-Inductor circuit (abbr.)
- 16. First name of the inventor of SSTV
- 18. Ham Television (abbr.)
- 19. Editor (abbr.)
- 20. HF digital modulation using four sub-bands
- 21. Amateur allocations
- 26. Digital mode using AX.25 protocol
- 27. Slang for Apple computers
- 29. Oldest digital mode (abbr.)
- 30. Stand by (CW abbr.)
- 32. Beginning of a data packet
- 33. Speak
- 34. Not no
- 35. For you to know (abbr.)
- 39. Network location
- 40. Storage place for incoming messages
- 42. Frequencies between 3 and 30 MHz (abbr.)
- 43. Data set on a link
- 44. One-thousand of an ampere (abbr.)
- 45. Shoved
- 47. Greek letter
- 49. Intermediate frequency (abbr.)
- 50. Network connection
- 52. Sums
- 53. Received and understood (abbr.)
- 54. Light (abbr.)

- 55. Dial-up information server
- 56. Packet host
- 57. Select or change
- 58. Not slow
- 59. Type of digital gate used for randomizing
- 60. Inquired of

Down

- 1. Medium Wave (abbr.)
- 2. Save
- 3. Network connected to a central point
- 4. Erase
- 6. International Amateur Radio organization
- 7. Good Morning (CW abbr.)
- 8. APRS reports

This month's Puzzler Solution



My Dog Thinks He is a Cat

(Cont. from page 4) to be on the show", only me and some of the hams watching knows he really sent "Dave you are one supercilious SOB"

He really got the big head after being on the show and got a lot more obnoxious. During the last election, he being a "yellow dog democrat" would sneak in and send "bushs are to pee on" and then run around the house barking "Hi Hi" while I fumed!

My only reason for subjugating my fellow hams to this tale of woe is to apologize to all of you in the pile up on the lower end of 80 meters last night, who thought you were working R Zero CKO, It was just my dog screwing around! I am truly sorry.

I have to run, he is at the rig again. His speed is now up to 35 WPM and as I don't copy that fast I have to write down the dits and dahs and read it later...

DiDa DiDaDaDit DiDaDit DiDit DiDaDiDit DiDiDaDit DaDaDa DaDaDA DiDaDiDit

If any of you doubt this story I can send you a picture of my car with the dog in it!

Rockwell-Collins

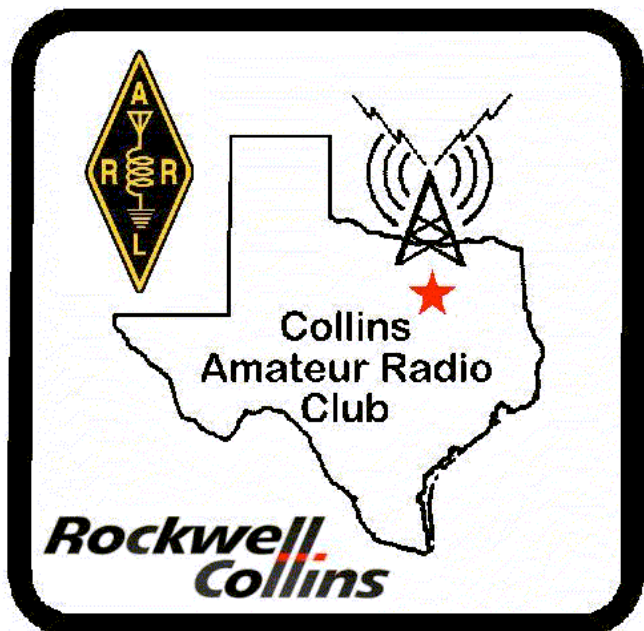
Amateur Radio Club

Mail Station 461-290

P.O. Box 833807

Richardson, TX 75083-3807

TO:



CLUB STATIONS

(972) 705-1349

W5ROR REPEATER

441.875 MHz +5 MHz Input

131.8 Hz PL - RX and TX

W5ROR-1 PACKET BBS ROR Node

145.01 MHz

MEETING

Thursday 20 November 2008

1700 Fellowship

1730 Meeting

Rockwell Collins Building 462

Dallas Conference Room

NEXT SIGNALS DEADLINE:

8 December 2008