

FEEDLINE

DECEMBER 2010



CLEAN SWEEP!!

(left to right) Rod KE0A, Nancy K9DIG, Ryan N0OJ, Charles KI0LS
Details inside

The **FEEDLINE** is the official journal of the *Forx Amateur Radio Club, Inc.*, PO Box 14773, Grand Forks, ND 58208-4773. The Forx ARC is incorporated in the State of North Dakota and is a non-profit organization as defined in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

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Articles are solicited for publication. Content must be geared towards amateur radio or advancement of the communications art. Articles that will not be published are those of a personal nature or that constitute an attack against an individual. The editor reserves the right to revise all material for space consideration

MEETING MINUTES

November 29, 2010

The meeting was called to order by Jeff KD0BTT at 7:30 PM there were 14 members present

Secretary's Report - The minutes from September were distributed by John KA0SVY and were approved.

Treasurer's Report - From Truman KD0MTD was accepted. He passed around a letter of thanks from Barb K0BAH for the money received for the Boy Scout radio tower project.

ARES/EC - Gerry N0NGW passed around a paper to sign saying we would abide by the NWS policy for security when we are out there. Jeff KD0BTT said he has not heard anything about funding for his project in Minnesota.

Gerry N0NGW also said that on December 1, 2010 the Discovery Channel will have the season finale of Storm Chasers about the Wadena storm. It will be at 9:00 PM on channel 43.

Activity's Report - John KA0SVY reported for Donna KC0SKD that the Christmas party is on for December 28th at the Italian Moon at 6:00 PM.

VE Report - Rod KE0A said that there are a couple of people interested in testing and to let him know of any others. We will be



testing Saturday, January 29th after breakfast at the Northside Cafe.

Repeaters - Paul KA0CAF said there is nothing new to report.

Old Business

A. Hamfest review - the Church is reserved for October 1, 2011 for our Hamfest.

B. November Sweepstakes - Nancy K9DIG said that she Rod KE0A, Ryan N0OJ and Charlie KI0LS had lots of fun. The made about 1534 qso's, had a sweep and possibly took the Section.

C. Skywarn Recognition Day December 3rd and 4th - Jeff KD0BTT said SRD will run from 6:00 PM Friday Dec.3rd to 6:00 PM Saturday December 4 local time.

D. Dog Sled Race - Nancy K9DIG said that they have a couple of teams signed up already. A decision to run will be made in January.

E. Website - Jeff asked if anyone had heard from John WA0LPV about the website. Nothing had been heard. The club then discussed some problems we are having with access for the site to change things like the time of Saturday morning coffee etc.

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DATES OF INTEREST

December 2010

- 19 ARRL Rookie Roundup – CW
- 28 Club Christmas Party

January 2011

- 1 ARRL Straight Key Night
- 2 Kids Day
- 8 ARRL RTTY Roundup
- 8 NA QSO Party – CW
- 22 ARRL VHF Sweepstakes
- 25 Club Meeting

February 2011

- 19 ARRL DX Contest – CW
- 19-20 Sled Dog Derby
- 22 Club Meeting

March 2011

- 5 ARRL DX Contest – Phone
- 29 Club Meeting

April 2011

- 26 Club Meeting

May 2011

- 31 Club Meeting

June 2011

- 25 Field Day
- 28 Club Meeting

July 2011

- 8-10 Peace Garden Hamfest
- 26 Club Meeting

FORX Amateur Radio Club

Christmas Party

**Italian Moon
Back Room
Tuesday
December 28, 2010
6:00 pm**

Buffet or Order from Menu

**Come one and all,
families welcome!!!**

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New Business

A. Letter from IRS - Truman KDOMTD said that the question from the IRS about our non-profit status has been taken care of.

The next club meeting will be January 25, 2011 at 7:30 PM

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 PM

2010 ARRL November Phone Sweepstakes by Rod Klug, KE0A

The annual Sweepstakes contest was held on the weekend of November 20 and 21. This year, as last, we operated from Nancy Yoshida K9DIG's shack. Ryan Dahlberg, N00J, former UND student from Colorado flew in to operate. The three of us took shifts, usually two hours in length, to keep our ears from ringing and our voices from going hoarse. We used Nancy's FT1000MP Mark V transceiver, with assistance of 1,200 watts from my Ameritron AL-82 amplifier. Four bands worked well, 15 and 20 meters on a tribander, and 40 and 80 meters using a G5RV dipole.

Most of the equipment ran smoothly, though we did need the services of Charlie KI0LS, our resident engineer. He fixed a T/R relay in the amp that was acting up, and also a connection problem with the Heathkit voice keyer. Nancy's chilli also kept us going from the start of the contest at 3:00 PM on Saturday, to when we quit at 8:00 PM on Sunday. With only a few hours break during the night, we operated the allotted 24 hours during the 36 hour contest.

We made a 'sweep' this year, meaning we worked all 80 ARRL sections. Our score was based on taking the two points for each contact, then multiplying by the number of sections worked. We estimated a final score of about

245,000 this year, working over 1,500 stations. The usual tough sections were Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta, and the last section we worked for the sweep, Puerto Rico. As ND doesn't have many operators, we were also in demand. We worked W1AW, the ARRL station, and gave them their sweep! Other stations from the area we worked were KC0EWX, the Sioux Club, Ray N0UY from Thief River Falls, N0UD in Dickinson, and Alan A10Q in MN. KC0EWX gave us our ND section and 49th multiplier.

This year's Sweep's was a great success. We topped our previous high score as N0GF by over 500 contacts, and should place high in the Dakota Division. It was a lot of work, but a lot of fun, and can't wait till next year to do it again!

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**DUES FORM
INCLUDED
IN THIS ISSUE
FOR THOSE
WHO HAVE
YET TO RENEW
THEIR
MEMBERSHIP
FOR 2011**

Ten Signs of Winter at the Ham Shack

- 1) Skywarn gear (binoculars, cameras, maps, anemometers) are removed from the car and a shovel put in.
- 2) Extra beams, verticals, and rope are picked up off the garage floor and stored in the rafters to make room for the car so the mag mount won't get iced over.
- 3) Tower maintenance is done to make sure it won't blow over in a blizzard.
- 4) Low band antennas and listening loops are put up to provide nighttime listening.
- 5) Radials are strung across the lawn and covered in leaves so the neighbors won't see them.
- 6) Antennas are tested and tuned to avoid any day-of-the-contest surprises.
- 7) The amp is cranked up to full power to make sure nothing is arcing and I'm not getting into the neighbor's phone.
- 8) Contest software is loaded and connections with the radio are tested; those connections NEVER work right away . . .
- 9) The spare bedroom is made ready for guest operators to sleep in during the day as they will be on the air all night.
And . . .
- 10) Check with the XYL to see how many hours you can operate for each contest, then double the hours!

- Anonymous

How to Have A Happy Ham Holiday

Does your XYL say you are too much into your radios to get into the holiday spirit? Here's some ways to bring ham into the holidays.

- 1) Wrap presents in electrical tape. You can even buy the colored kind to make them brighter.
- 2) Use your XYL's fudge for solder. It will cool down as hard a metal.
- 3) String popcorn on some coax. You'll have to use the biggest kernels.
- 4) Hang lights on the side of the house that spell out Merry Christmas in Morse code.
- 5) Put Christmas cookies on the dials of all your equipment. You'll have a handy snack during the winter contests.
- 6) Use the turkey as a dummy load and cook it with radio waves.
- 7) Hang keys, mikes, or tubes on the Christmas tree as ornaments.
- 8) Sing carols using Q codes: 'QRZ Child is This', 'CQ All Ye Faithful' . . .
- 9) Put resistors and capacitors in the XYL's fruit cake. No one will know.
- 10) Hook up your legal limit amp to the Christmas tree lights. Your whole house will glow with Ham Holiday Cheer!

- Anonymous

North Dakota ARRL Section News for November 2010.

Looks like the weather is changing and the temperature is starting to fade into our typical North Dakota winter season. The fall has been very nice and typically above normal temperatures. The December issue of QST indicated we have a new "TOP GUN" for 2010. Congratulations to the N0GF, the Greater Grand Forks ARES Group! Entries per the ARRL were: Theodore Roosevelt ARC, K0ND, 1,762 points; Souris Valley ARC, K0AJW, 4,030 points; Three Rivers ARC, W0END, 1,132 points; Red River Radio Amateurs, W0ILO, 602 points; Greater Grand Forks ARES, N0GF, 5,674 points; & Northern Lakes ARC, K0GPZ, 996 points.

**** ND NEWS **** Help! We are need of Net Controls for the ND Nets. If you can help us out please let Dave, N0CW or myself know. We will do everything we can to make it easy to become a Net Control, even if you can pick it up part time that would help. If this sounds like a plea... It still is!

**** Upcoming Events ****
No Hamfests have been scheduled from now to the end 2010. The next scheduled Hamfest will be in Bismarck in the spring of 2011.

**** October Net Report **** The ND WX Road Net on 75 Meters- 3.935 MHz, 8:30 AM CST, Monday thru Saturday reported 29

Sessions, 643 Check-ins & 9 Messages passed, and the DataNet on 75 Meters- 3.395 MHz, 5:00 PM CST, daily reported 29 Sessions, 627 Check-ins & 15 Messages passed. The Goose River Sunday Morning Net on 160 Meters reported 5 Sessions, 60 Check-ins & 1 message passed. Thanks to KA0ETO, W0FC, KD0YX, W0TF, K0TLW, KE0VF, KF0HR, W0VHW, K0HDA, K0UJ, K0MAD, N0CW, W0OSP, and AI0Q for acting as Net Controls in October.

Due to the deteriorating local band conditions on the 80 meter band, the 5:00 PM (DataNet) Dakota Amateur Traffic Net on the normal frequency of 3937 may be up or down the band depending on QRM. The net control has the option of moving the net to whatever frequency works. I know I have mentioned this before but the net control MUST ask if the frequency is in use and if he gets a response be prepared to ask if he can get the frequency clear for the net. If the answer is no, then move. If the net control deems that the net is impossible to conduct because of band conditions, close the net and forget about it until the next day. It's better to be a responsible ham than it is to be the bad guy and call over someone else that says they are using the frequency and would NOT be clearing it by 5:00 PM.

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MAKE SURE YOU CHECK THE NORTH DAKOTA SECTION NEWS FOR THE LATEST NORTH DAKOTA ACTIVITES AT www.arrl.org. If you have any special announcements, feel free to email me w0nd@arrl.org. Check www.w0nd.com for the latest list of ND stations and activities.

Until next month... 73's Lynn - W0ND

ARRL North Dakota Section
Section Manager: Mr. Lynn A
Nelson, W0ND
w0nd@arrl.org

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FOR SALE

**Cushcraft A3S –
TriBand Beam.**

3-element for 20, 15 & 10 meters
8 dB gain - 2000 watt capacity
Tuned to SSB band ranges
New: 2005.
Current New Price: \$ 599.
Selling Price: \$325. or offer

Contact: K0VDP John Jarman
701-746-9781 or 218-779-4520

John T. Jarman, LPCC
1015 Reeves Drive
Grand Forks, ND 58201

FOR SALE

Yeasu VX-170
2-meter Handheld
\$75

Astron Model S-3L
Power Supply
\$20

Mirage B-34
2-meter Amplifier
\$40

MFJ 1728B
Magnetic Mount Antenna
\$15

Merle Mathison K0JMM
2650 26th Ave S Apt 305
Grand Forks, ND
58201-6426

701-746-6558

Is Ham Radio Dying? **By Dan Romanchik,** **KB6NU**

If you've been around ham radio for even a year or two, you've no doubt heard or participated in the debate as to whether or not ham radio is dying. The question is as perennial as the grass.

Recently, this was a topic of discussion on the ARRL PR mailing list. Allen, W1AGP, the ARRL's Media & PR Manager, generated a chart to show that ham radio is NOT dying. It showed the number of licensees in the U.S. every year from 2005 to 2009:

2005: 661,000
2006: 655,000
2007: 655,000
2008: 662,000
2009: 681,000
2010: 694,000!

This chart as drawn is a good example of how you can lie with statistics. The y-axis started at 640,000, so the rate of increase in the number of licensees looked quite dramatic. Even so, the good news is that the number of licensees is quickly approaching 700,000, and should surpass that number shortly.

Upon seeing this chart, Jerry, N9TU, did a little statistical analysis of his own. Of the 83 licensees in his zip code, nine are deceased and one has expired. There are four Novices, 36 Techs,

18 Generals, 5 Advanced and ten Extras.

From this data, he deduces, "If this is an average sampling of deceased members, expired members and club licenses, there are roughly 90,000 fewer licensees than shown in the data nationwide. I have no clue of the error rate involved with my data. Your results may vary." My guess is that his zip code is probably pretty typical, and that his analysis is essentially correct.

There's also the question of activity. It's my guess that nearly half of all licensees are inactive, and that if we could figure out a way to activate those hams, then we'd really be able to say that our hobby is not dying. It's something worth thinking about, but there's certainly no easy answer to this problem. As Yogi Berra is purported to have said, "If people don't want to come out to the ball park, there's nothing you can do to stop them."

Overall, though, I think the numbers are headed in the right direction. Ham radio is NOT dying. Let's all keep up the good work.

When not pondering whether the reports of ham radio's death have been greatly exaggerated or not, Dan operates CW on the HF bands, teaches ham radio classes, and blogs about ham radio at www.kb6nu.com. All comments welcome and appreciated. E-mail them to cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

Zen and the Art of Radiotelegraphy By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

One thing that I find amusing about Morse Code is that the more people claim that it's dead, the more people there are that rise up to defend and promote it. Note that I said "defend and promote it," not actually use it, but that topic is for another column.

Having said that, let me direct you to a new tome on our ancient art, *Zen and the Art of Radiotelegraphy* by Carlo Consoli, IK0YGJ. This book is available as a free download in the original Italian (http://www.qsl.net/ik0ygj/enu/ZA_RT_ita_v20100826.pdf) and in an English translation (http://www.qsl.net/ik0ygj/enu/ZA_RT_r20101008m.pdf).

What makes this book different from others is that instead of concentrating on the mechanics of learning and using Morse Code, the author spends a good deal of time talking about the psychology of learning this skill. To succeed in learning Morse Code, Consoli advises that we need to change our approach to learning:

<<THE NEXT TWO
PARAGRAPHS ARE A
QUOTE FROM THE
BOOK.....Dan>>

"When learning CW, therefore, we must establish a new component in our self-

image and, when doing so, we need to be relaxed. Always practice during the same time of day and in a place where you can experience positive feelings of comfort and pleasure. When we make a mistake we are always ready to blame ourselves. This is the way we learnt from our environment during childhood, often accepting any fault as our own error or weakness.

This potentially destructive mechanism can be used to build a positive self-image, rather than demolish it. A mistake must be considered a signal, pointing us in the right direction. If you fail, let your mistake pass away, with no blame or irritation. Learn CW in a relaxed mood, enjoy the pleasure of learning something new, repeat your exercises every day and be confident in the self-programming abilities of your self-image. Just a few minutes a day: you can take care of your 'more serious' stuff later on."

Consoli also has some interesting things to say about getting faster. He agrees with me that it's essential to abandon pencil and paper and start copying in one's head. We also agree that at this point, you need to start using a paddle instead of a straight key.

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He has analyzed the situation a lot more than I have, though. When hams ask me how I learned to copy in my head, all I can do is to relate my own experience, which is that one day, I just went cold turkey. I put down the pencil and paper and never copied letter-by-letter ever again.

Unfortunately, that doesn't seem to work for a lot of operators. If that doesn't work for you, Consoli says that what you need to do is to program yourself to copy in your head. You do this, he says, by relaxing and visualizing. Visualize yourself as a high-speed operator, and one day, you will be one.

That seems to have worked for him. He is a member of the Very High Speed Club (VHSC), First Class Operator's Club (FOC), and has been clocked at copying over 70 wpm.

Will it work for you? I'm not sure, but if you haven't been successful with other methods to improve your code speed, then Consoli's methods are certainly worth a try.

When not pondering the psychology of operating CW, Dan actually operates CW. You'll find him almost every day on either 40m, 30m, and as we transition to winter here in North America, 80m.

You can e-mail him with comments or questions at cwgeek@kb6nu.com.



TRIVIA

The following trivia question is taken from *THE ARRL HANDBOOK 2006*. The answer will be published in the next issue of the *FEEDLINE*.

WHAT IS PSK?

October's trivia question was:

WHAT IS QAM?

And the answer is:

Quadrature Amplitude Modulation

This may be found on page 9.4 of *THE ARRL HANDBOOK 2006*

ANNUAL DUES FORM

January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
CHK# _____
DATE _____

As stated in the bylaws of the Forx Amateur Radio Club dues expire on the last day of December (December 31, 2010 in this case). Dues are payable as follows:

Regular Membership	\$20.00
Family Membership	\$27.00
Student/Youth Membership	\$10.00
Senior Membership (62+)	\$10.00

If you have paid your dues for the year 2011, thank you. You will continue to receive the *FEEDLINE* published monthly. If you have not yet paid your dues for 2011, please use the form below.

Please make your check payable to: FORX AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
P.O. BOX 14773
GRAND FORKS, ND 58208-4773

Please do not mail cash. Cash is acceptable if your dues are paid to the Treasurer directly.

Please complete the following form to be included with your dues payment:

Call Sign: _____

License Class: _____

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip+4: _____

Membership Type (circle one): Regular / Family / Student / Senior

To receive the club newsletter *FEEDLINE* via E-mail, please provide your address below:

E-mail Address: _____

Are you an ARRL Member? Yes / No ARES Member? Yes / No