

# FEEDLINE

DECEMBER 2011



(left to right) Nancy K9DIG, Charles KI0LS, Evan K0LWT  
working the ARRL November Phone Sweepstakes  
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 Articles that will not be published are those of a personal nature or that constitute an attack against an individual.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, 2011

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

Secretary's Report - The minutes from October 2011 were distributed by John KA0SVY and were approved.

Treasurer's Report - By Truman KD0MTD was approved.

ARES/EC - Jeff KD0BTT had nothing to report.

Activities Report - Donna KC0SKD explained reserving the Bronze Boot for the Club Christmas party. It will be on December 27th at 6:00 PM.

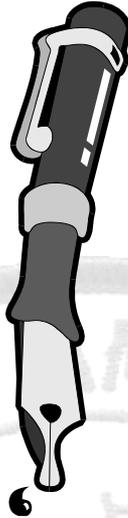
VE Report -Rod KE0A said we will try to set a date in January for testing as there has been some interest.

Repeaters - Paul KA0CAF had nothing to report

N0GFK school Club Report - Evan K0LWT said they are still meeting and will be building a crystal radio.

### Old Business

A. Thief River Falls Hamfest - John KA0SVY said he attended the Hamfest. It has about the usual number of people. A drawing was



held for a \$60.00 Chinese HT. Wally W0PHD won it and said he would give it to the youngest Ham there. John KD0FJT was the youngest one there. A good time was had by all.

B. Christmas Party - Covered in activities report.

C. November Sweeps - CW Nov. 5th, Phone Nov. 19th - Rod KE0A said he worked a part of the 24 hrs for the CW part and made a bunch of QSO's. For the phone part Rod KE0A, Nancy K9DIG, Charlie KI0LS and Evan K0LWT participated and came up with 1600 QSO's. The made a clean sweep and all had t good time.

### New Business

A. Skywarn Recognition Day - Jeff KD0BTT reported that SRD will be from December 3rd to 4th, 2011 from 0000Z to 2400Z

B. Jerry KC0GWK asked about communications from the JC's for Potato Bowl Parade. Paul KA0CAF explained that one person from the JC's does all the set up and that there were a few helping at the parade.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM

No meeting in December. Christmas Party December 27th 6:00 PM at the Bronze Boot.

The next club meeting will be January 31, 1012 at 7:30 PM

## DATES OF INTEREST

FORX Amateur Radio Club

December 2011

- 18 Rookie Roundup  
– CW
- 27 Christmas Party

## Christmas Party

**Bronze Boot  
Tuesday**

**December 27, 2011  
6:00 PM**

January 2012

- 1 ARRL Straight  
Key Night
- 7 ARRL RTTY  
Roundup
- 7 ARRL Kids Day
- 21 ARRL January  
VHF Contest
- 31 Club Meeting

**Order your meal off the  
menu – there will be a few  
restrictions in choices.**

February 2012

- 18 ARRL DX  
Contest – CW
- 28 Club Meeting

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

March 2012

- 3 ARRL DX  
Contest – Phone
- 27 Club Meeting

**GRAND FORKS  
HF  
NET**

April 2012

- 24 Club Meeting

**3.937 MHZ (±QRM)**

May 2012

- 29 Club Meeting

**7:00 PM  
Monday**

June 2012

- 23-24 Field Day
- 26 Club Meeting

This net will be an informal net to give new and old Hams HF experience. Nancy K9DIG will be net control.

# 2011 ARRL November Phone Sweepstakes

Sweeps was again held at the station of K9DIG's or Nancy's house. We had some new members on the team this year. The team consisted of Evan K0LWT, Rod KE0A Nancy K9DIG, Cameron KD0OSK and Charlie KI0LS. We missed our team member Ryan, N0OJ from Colorado who was busy with a work obligation but assures us he will join us again next year. Cameron helped us keep all the call signs logged correctly as well as put out a few calls. Charlie kept all the equipment in perfect condition with no major slow down due to equipment issues. Rod, Evan and Nancy did the majority of the operating logging 1600 contacts and breaking out record from last year. Glen, Nancy's OM was the perfect host keeping us all very well fed the entire weekend. As you can see it was a group effort and we are pleased with the results. We are again hoping to take the Division. Plans are under way for next year to improve our operating efficiency so we lose no time to words not needed for the exchange.

The QSO's were checked and compiled by Marilyn, Rod's XYL before they were sent to ARRL.

## THANK YOU

The following is an excerpt from the October 2011 meeting minutes:

Jerry KC0GWK recognized Jim KC0XW for his many years of doing the Feedline. Motion made by Jerry KC0GWK 2nd by Nancy K9DIG to give Jim KC0XW free dues for the 2011 year. The motion passed

A little history...

I took the reigns as Editor of the *FEEDLINE* in January 1998 from Gerry NONGW who had been doing it for a number of years prior to that. For the first couple of years the newsletter was published using an old dot matrix printer for the master, copying that master, folding and stapling up to 60 snail mail issues every month. Over a period of years the newsletter developed into both email and snail mail; today, two thirds of the issues are sent email while the remainder are snail mail. Up until relatively recently only the email version was produced in color. Now both the email and the snail mail issues are in color.

Thank you Jerry KC0GWK for the motion and the club for the award.

Jim KC0XW  
Editor



## **Rod KE0A working the 2011 ARRL November CW Sweepstakes**

I had a great time working the Sweepstakes CW contest the weekend of November 5th. I used an Elecraft K3 because I like its variable bandwidth adjustment when the band gets crowded. With it I used the ALS 600 solid state amplifier. Later I switched to a Yeasu FT 1000MP-MKV with an Alpha 8410 amplifier and a Begali key. I totaled 809 QSOs in 78 of the 80 ARRL sections. I couldn't find Northwest Territories or North Dakota this year. There was a lot of activity on the bands from 10 to 80 meters. Over half of my contacts were on 10 and 15 meters. The sunspots are finally kicking in!

## **You Can Enjoy Contests Even If You're Not a Contester**

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

I often talk to guys who say that they're not testers. Some even go so far as to say that they hate contests. I'm really not a tester, either, but I do enjoy operating them from time to time. There are several ways to enjoy amateur radio contests even if you're not a "tester."

This weekend, for example, the CQ World-Wide (CQWW) SSB DX contest was being held. As usual for a Saturday morning, I was down at WA2HOM ([www.wa2hom.org](http://www.wa2hom.org)), our club station at the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum ([www.aahom.org](http://www.aahom.org)). Now, the museum is only open from 10am - 5pm on Saturdays, so there's no way I'm going to score very highly in the contest, but I still decided to participate.

What I did was take advantage of the contest activity to add countries to our DXCC list. Over two hours of operation, I managed to make 63 contacts, including at least five new countries. The new countries that I added to our log included Iceland, Northern Ireland, Scotland, the Cayman Islands, and Madeira Island.

None of these is rare DX, but for whatever reason, we hadn't worked them before. Now, we have. In addition, some of the big testers

will travel to exotic locales and operate from places that normally have no or few ham radio operators. Contests are good opportunities to get those countries in your log.

Operating in a contest is also a good test of your radio and antennas. It's true that contest signal reports are basically meaningless, but if DX stations regularly hear you on your first or second call, then chances are your antennas are working well. If they're continually asking for repeats or never hear you at all, it's a good bet that you need to do some antenna work.

Working a contest can also improve your operating skills. In a CW contest, for example, the good ops are generally operating at 25+ words per minute. That's OK, though, because it forces you to copy that fast, and because you know what the exchange format is, you pretty much know what characters to expect. Try it sometime. You'll be surprised at how fast you can copy during a contest and how much your CW speed improves.

If none of the above reasons convince you, and you're still a bit apprehensive about jumping into one of the bigger contests, let me suggest that you try one of the smaller contests. State QSO parties, for example, are a lot more laid

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back than say the ARRL Sweepstakes. The CW speeds are a lot lower and the phone contacts are a lot less intense. You may even learn something about a particular state's geography. You will for sure learn a lot of county names.

It's all about having fun. And you can have fun in a contest, even if you don't have the time or the equipment to be competitive.

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When not worrying about the proper county code for Goochland County, Virginia, Dan blogs about ham radio at [www.kb6nu.com](http://www.kb6nu.com), teaches ham classes, and ragchews on 30m and 40m CW. You can e-mail him with comments or questions at [cwgeek@kb6nu.com](mailto:cwgeek@kb6nu.com).

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**DUES FORM  
INCLUDED  
IN THIS ISSUE  
FOR THOSE WHO  
HAVE YET TO  
RENEW THEIR  
MEMBERSHIP  
FOR 2012**

**If you have already paid your dues, thank you and you can ignore the form.**

## **Carving Out Time for Ham Radio**

BY Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

On a recent episode of This Week in Tech ([www.twit.tv](http://www.twit.tv)), Leo Laporte, W6TWT, mentions ham radio, and a guest asks him how much time he is spending on the air. Leo, who just recently got his Tech license says “Zero!” and laughs.

This is not uncommon. Lots of people seem to get a ham radio license and then do very little with it. I think one reason for this is that they don't take into account how much time the hobby really can eat up.

They get their ticket because it seems like a cool thing to do, but then they have to carve out some time to actually be a ham radio operator. Even if you don't make any of your own gear, setting up a station takes time, and then there is the operating time, of course. Carving time out of busy schedules—and I would guess that Laporte has a pretty busy schedule being the owner of TWiT—is a challenge.

I see things like this all the time. At one ham radio club meeting that I attended, the club vice president asked, “OK, here's the question of the month. How many of you actually got on the air in the past month.” Less than half of those in

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attendance raised their hands. Geez, I thought to myself, why do they even bother to come to meetings if they don't get on the air?

**Making time for ham radio**

So, if you're a busy person, how do you make time for ham radio? Well, being the Internet geek that I am, I Googled, "making time for things you love." I got a lot of links to sites that talked about work-life balance and some new-age blogs, but none of them offered much in the way of concrete advice.

Then, I Googled "make time for hobbies" and right off the bat, I found two good articles—7 Creative Ways to Make Time For Your Creative Hobby! (<http://www.exploringwomanhood.com/homelife/hobbies/maketime.html>) and 5 Ways to Make Time for Your Hobby (<http://o5.com/5-ways-to-make-time-for-your-hobby/>). Both articles offered very similar advice. Here are four points that both made:

1. Schedule it. Set aside a specific time during which you're going to do ham radio. Don't let that time get pre-empted.
2. Designate a place in your home for ham radio. Having to set up your radios or dig out your tools every time you want to operate or build something is not much fun and wastes a lot of time. Having a "shack" and a workspace

designated for your projects will let you spend more time on the fun stuff.

3. Partner up. Arranging to work with another ham will make it harder to blow off ham radio for some other activity. Besides, it's a lot of fun to do things with other hams. If you're a newly licensed ham, find an Elmer. There really are plenty around who would be willing to help you.

4. Create a project plan. Setting up an amateur radio station is no small feat. Breaking it down into smaller chunks will make it seem more doable, and you'll get a feeling of accomplishment when you meet your in-between goals.

There's so much to learn and do in amateur radio that it can seem quite overwhelming. I think that's one reason why so many Techs never really get into the hobby and why some experienced hams drift away. I think if you follow the advice above, though, you'll not only find the time to pursue amateur radio, but get a lot more out of it.

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When he's not down in his shack, working with a friend on yet another amateur radio project, Dan writes amateur radio study guides. You can find them on his website at [www.kb6nu.com/tech-manual](http://www.kb6nu.com/tech-manual). Make some time to e-mail him at [cwgeek@kb6nu.com](mailto:cwgeek@kb6nu.com).

**FCC NEWS: NEW RULES  
GOVERNING VANITY,  
CLUB STATION CALL  
SIGNS TO  
TAKE EFFECT  
FEBRUARY 14, 2011**

On Wednesday, December 15, new rules affecting vanity and club station call signs within the Amateur Radio Service were published in the Federal Register <<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-31349.pdf>>. These new rules will go into effect on February 14, 2011. Thirteen months ago, the FCC announced its intention to modify Part 97 <<http://www.arrl.org/news/fcc-looks-to-revise-clarify-vanity-call-sign-rules>> as it applies to the vanity call sign system and club station call signs, aligning the rules to prior Commission decisions. Last month, the Commission released a Report and Order <<http://www.arrl.org/news/fcc-issues-em-report-and-order-em-on-vanity-and-club-station-call-signs>> (R&O), outlining its decision. Along with the changes to the call sign rules, the FCC made "certain minor, non-substantive amendments" to portions of Part 97.

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The ARRL Letter  
Published by the American Radio  
Relay League  
December 16, 2010

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**ON THE AIR: ROUND UP  
THOSE CW QSOS IN  
THE ARRL CW ROOKIE  
ROUNDUP**

The ARRL's Rookie Roundup comes around again on Sunday, December 18. This time, the focus is on CW operation. The Rookie Roundup is an on-the air event is designed to help newly licensed amateurs build their HF and 6 meter operating skills. Similar to the ARRL Novice Roundup that ran from 1952 until 1995, the Rookie Roundup combines a competitive event with some on-the-air training, bringing fun and Elmering into the 21st century. Three Rookie Roundups -- SSB, RTTY and CW -- are held each calendar year: The CW running of the Rookie Roundup will take place Sunday, December 18 from 1800-2359 UTC. Read more here <<http://www.arrl.org/news/round-up-those-cw-qsos-in-the-arrl-cw-rookie-roundup>>.

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The ARRL Letter  
Published by the American Radio  
Relay League  
December 8, 2011

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**Editor Note:** There was no November issue of the *FEEDLINE*.

# <http://wa0jxt.org>

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## TRIVIA

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

ALMOST ALL OSCILLATORS CONSIST OF WHAT TWO PARTS?

October's trivia question was:

A "YIG SPHERE" IS AN AMPLIFIER. (TRUE OR FALSE)

And the answer is:

False, it is a filter

This may be found on page 10.1 of *THE ARRL HANDBOOK 2006*

# ANNUAL DUES FORM

January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2012

|   |
|---|
| FOR OFFICE USE ONLY<br>CHK# _____<br>DATE _____ |
|---|

As stated in the bylaws of the Forx Amateur Radio Club dues expire on the last day of December (December 31, 2011 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 2012, thank you. You will continue to receive the *FEEDLINE* published monthly. If you have not yet paid your dues for 2012, 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