

The Oscillator

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NOVEMBER MEETING

**Friday, November 19, 2010, 8 PM at the Bunker
White Elephant and W9VT Equipment Sale**

This will be our annual White Elephant sale, which is open to everyone. Also, extra equipment from the Club Station will be offered for sale to Club Members. As usual, there will be a business meeting, refreshments and raffle.

DECEMBER MEETING

**Friday, December 17, 2010, 8 PM at the Bunker
Election of Officers and Christmas Party**

The Club will wrap up 2010 with a business meeting, Election of Officers for 2011 and our Christmas Party. Hope all members will be able to attend this important meeting.

From the Board Room

Todd Schumann, KA9IUC, Chairman

A very important event will take place at the December meeting. It is the elections of Club Officers for 2011. Every December we elect a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and one Board member. This year's elected Board member would have to be a past officer in keeping with the Club's Constitution. As of this writing, no one has come forward to serve on the election committee. The Club needs help from its membership to run and act as a Club. Please give deep thought as to how you can help the Club.

With regards to helping the Club, the Board wants to thank Mike Kiley, WA9PMZ and Doug Heath, WB9YSW for their efforts to diagnose and repair the Ten-Tec HF transceiver to full working condition. The Board also thanks Mark Thompson, KA9MDJ for donating a Solarcon A-99 10M vertical antenna to the Club.

Thanks also goes out to Greg Rosenberg, AB9MZ for hosting our web site on his server and Tom Gunderson, W9SRV for being our Web Master and getting the new web site up and running.

Hamfests

11/13/2010 | [Indiana State Convention \(Fort Wayne Hamfest & Computer Expo\)](#)

Location: Fort Wayne, IN, **Sponsor:** Allen County Amateur Radio Technical Society

Website: <http://www.fortwaynehamfest.com>

11/27/2010 | [Evansville Hamfest](#)

Location: Evansville, IN, **Sponsor:** Electronic Applications Radio Service (EARS) & The Ham Station

Website: <http://w9ear.org/hamfest.htm>

Check out the Club Website: WWW.W9VT.ORG

Officers, Board Members, & Committee Heads for 2010:

Tom Niemeyer AB9LA	President	708.672-5844	tom1485@sbcglobal.net
Matt Schumann N9OTL	Vice President	708.423.7066	mattschuman@yahoo.com
Jim Everand WD9GXU	Secretary	708.748.6798	None @ No I' dont have one
Trish Jaggard N9WDG	Treasurer	708.957.1973	the_jaggards@sbcglobal.net
Todd Schumann KA9IUC	Chairman of Board	708.423.7066	tschum3063@aol.com
Tom Gunderson W9SRV	Webmaster, W9VT	815.466-0245	webmaster@w9vt.org
Matt Schumann N9OTL	Raffle Chairman	708.423.7066	mattschuman@yahoo.com
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Members of the Tri-Town Radio Club Inc. publish the Oscillator 6 times a year. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Officers or members of the Tri-Town RAC, but of the contributors. All articles may be reprinted as long as full credit is given. Other publications are asked to reciprocate their newsletter. Some Articles printed here are from AMSAT, ARRL Letter, TAPR, World Radio, and Other Amateur Radio Publications.

Club Meetings & Nets

Club meetings are the **3rd Friday** of each month at the **Village of Hazel Crest Village Hall**, 170th and Holmes. All are welcome and refreshments will serve. Don't forget to bring a Friend.

Official Club 2 Mtr hangouts:

146.49 Simplex, & The Club's Repeater 146.805 WD9HSY/R

Unofficial Club Hang Outs:

442.375 Homewood, 441.300 Grant Park WA9WLN/R, "Waldofar"
443.325 Frankfort WD9HSY/R & 147.165 Kankakee Co. WD9HSY/R
All UHF's use a 114.8 PL All VHF's use a 107.2 PL

Club Nets

2 Mtr FM 49'ers Net - Wed, 8:00 PM Local, 146.490.

10 Mtr SSB Net - Thursdays, 8:00 PM Local, 28.490.

2 Mtr FM Weather Net - Sundays, 8:00 PM local, on **The Club's Repeater** 146.805 -600kc 107.2 PL

Trading Post

Items for sale from N8EAT (Jim) 708-361-2657 All antennas in excellent condition:
Cushcraft 3 element 10 meter beam\$50.00

Check out the Club Website: WWW.W9VT.ORG

The Spratlys Islands DXpedition

Jim Linton VK3PC, Public Affairs DX0DX <http://www.dx0dx.net>

DX0DX will be on air from the 6th of January and now through to the 1st of February, 2011. Thitu Island (Pagasa in Filipino) is the second largest island in the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea. The island has a landing strip (Rancudo Airfield) and a small harbour. There are 100 inhabitants, mostly military, fishermen and a weatherman.

With only 60 days to go until DX0DX hits the amateur bands, the DXpedition Team Leader, Chris Dimitrijevic VK3FY & DU8/VK3FY has announced it will be extended to allow participation in the CQ World Wide 160m CW Contest.

He says while DX0DX was to go QRT on the 24th January, a couple of individual and keen members have asked if they could stay on air for that contest when ends at 2200 UTC Sunday the 30th of January. This will now extend DX0DX activation to 1st of February, 2011.

This limited extension was agreed in light of strong interest from Top Band contesters and the 160m band being the highest sought after in the DX0DX website online survey.

In another development, the pre-assembly, erection and tuning of eight HF yagi antennas in Fontana California went extremely well with the eight antennas tuned as per instructions to their allotted bands. Each was then partly disassembled breaking down into four parts for allow for quick installation once they reach the island. Masts, rotators, masts and cabling have all been finalised.

ARRL Field Day: 2010 Results Are Now Online

If you can't wait to get your December issue of QST in the mail to see how you did in the 2010 ARRL Field Day, don't worry! The results -- including a copy of the QST article (with line scores) and a results database -- are now available on the ARRL Web site. Be sure to also check out the 193 comments in the Field Day Soapbox. It's not too soon to start making plans for next year -- the 2011 ARRL Field Day is scheduled for June 25-26, 2011.

4F	CALL	QSO'S	Score Section
Bergen ARA	K2BAR (+KC2VRY)	2128 2 56	6,226 NNJ
Thomasville ARC	W4UCJ (+K14RGD)	1735 2 89	6,084 GA
Denton Cty ARA	W5NGU (+KD5EOC)	1333 2 62	6,038 NTX
Van Wert OH RaRC	W8FY	1878 2 20	5,486 OH
Maxim Mem. Station	W1AW (+KA1UFZ)	2979 1 11	4,778 CT (Who? HI HI!!)
Tri Town RAC	W9VT (+N9WDG)	1477 2 16	4,168 IL
ARA Tonawands	W2SEX	515 2 26	2,542 WNY
Kokomo ARC	W9GO	508 2 34	1,916 IN
National Trail ARC	K9UXZ	674 2 10	1,868 IL
Baytown ARC	K5BAY (+K5MRM)	445 2 26	1,580 STX
CQ RC	K1BCI	215 2 21	1,470 CT
TX Emerg ARC	W5SI	241 2 33	1,090 STX
Laguna Woods ARC	W6LY	199 2 10	1,074 ORG
Citrus Cty ARES	KD4FG	121 2 5	1,040 NFL
Mercer Cty ARC	W3LIF	15 2 5	980 WPA
Osceola Cty ARES	KG4EOC	134 1 27	899 SFL
Valley Camp	K7S	296 1 7	772 WWA
Endless Mts ARC	N3EP	182 2 1 6	632 EPA

All results are in the Dec QST or at: http://www.arrl.org/files/file/ContestResults/2010/2010_Field_Day_QST.pdf

Check out the Club Website: WWW.W9VT.ORG

Live Ham Web Broadcast from MFJ, Tuesday Nov 16 8am CST

The URL for this broadcast is: <http://w5kub.com>

Live video broadcast of MFJ, Ameritron, Hygain, Cushcraft, Mirage, and Vecronics starting at 0800 central time or 1300 UTC on Tuesday November 16.

This live video will show the entire operations of these companies from design, to manufacturing, Hear and ask questions directly to the staff including Mr Martin F. Jue, the president and founder of MFJ.

Over a thousand dollars in prizes will be given to lucky viewers. Names will be selected at random from the list of those logged into the chat room. Join us with this broadcast and chat with hams in over 150 countries or directly to the W5KUB team.

MFJ - Keeping the torch lit

From N7UR, his post on QRZ 11.06.2010

"Mighty Fine Junk".....we've all heard that one. But, I don't believe any of us really mean it. When you have a good, close, friend sometimes its a lot of fun to goof on them. MFJ is certainly our friend.

If you have been around this hobby for any length of time then, like I have, you have seen hundreds of ham gear manufacturers fade away. Most of the remaining folks have trimmed their product lines down to a few items.

As a kid I couldn't wait for the latest Burnstein-Applebee, Allied Radio, Lafayette, Heathkit, Olson, World Radio Labs, Harrison, or Trigger Electronics catalog to land in our mailbox. Of course as the son of a handicapped widow anything that I earned went to help feed my two little sisters.

So even though they never received a single penny from me, those companies continued to bring me dreams of radio excitement each month with their latest "wish book".

MFJ catalog day still brings back that same old "wish book" feeling. I can tell you that if the Income Tax refund and the MFJ catalog hit the mailbox at the same time, the check is getting tossed un-opened on my desk and the MFJ catalog is coming with me to my "porcelain reading chair" where I can study all of the new offerings in great detail.

MFJ always seems to expand their product line. I'm also sure that many of the brands that MFJ has acquired in recent years would also have vanished from our midst had MFJ not acquired them.

So it appears to me that while most manufacturers have branded the ham radio market as being too small, or too cheap, and have abandoned us for greener pastures, MFJ continues to expand their lines. They make a little of just about everything. They offer it at a reasonable price.

Well times have changed. When the MFJ catalog arrives I no longer have to just wish and dream. I own a ton of their products and continue to buy those that catch my eye. Of course I like buying MFJ accessories....after all it really is some "Mighty Fine Junk"!

Solar Update

Tad "They watched the hazy Sun sinking in the sea" Cook, K7RA, reports: The average daily sunspot numbers declined again this week, this time by nearly 25 points to 25.7, about half what it was last week.

Look for good conditions this weekend in the ARRL CW Sweepstakes. The predicted planetary A index for 5 for the foreseeable future on November 8 and beyond. Predicted solar flux is 82 for each of the next 10 days. The latest three-month moving average of daily sunspot numbers shows a steady rise, with the trailing three-month average at the end of June through October at 16.2, 20.4, 23.2, 28.9 and 33.

The average daily sunspot number for the month of October was 35, slightly higher than the trailing three-month average, which is a good sign. Look for more information on the ARRL Web site on Friday, November 5. For more information concerning radio propagation, visit the ARRL Technical Information Service Propagation page. This week's "Tad Cookism" is brought to you by The Eagles' The Last Resort.

Government sues K1MAN for not paying \$21,000 fine

Courtesy of W5YI-News:

Glenn Baxter has 20 days to respond to lawsuit.

A lawsuit has been filed against Glenn A. Baxter, K1MAN, of Belgrade Lakes, Maine, on October 25, 2010. by the U.S. Department of Justice. (Case No: 1:10-cv-00435-JAW.) A U.S. District Court - District of Maine (Bangor) civil action summons was served on Baxter on October 27, 2010. He has 20 days to respond to it.

His response must go to Assistant U. S. Attorney Evan J. Roth in the Portland, Maine, U.S. Attorney's Office. If he fails to respond to the court, a \$21,000 judgement by default will be entered, the amount assessed by the Federal Communications Commission on March 29, 2006.

Five years ago, the FCC issued Baxter a Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture (NAL) in the amount of \$21,000 for "... willful and repeated violation of Sections §97.101(d) -- causing deliberate malicious interference to ongoing Amateur Radio radio communications; §97.113(a)(3) -- violating the pecuniary interest rules; §97.105(a) -- failure to exercise station control; §97.113(b) -- engaging in impermissible broadcasting; and "...failure to file requested information with the FCC.

The civil action was brought under Section 503(b) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, and Section 1.80 of the FCC Rules and Regulations. Section 503(b) covers FCC violations resulting in forfeitures (fines); persons subject to and amount of penalties and applicable procedures. The five page complaint in USA vs Glenn A. Baxter had three exhibits:

Exhibit A is a 6-page Apparent Notice of Liability (NAL) issued June 7, 2005. During late 2004 and early 2005, FCC agents observed "...K1MAN commence transmissions on top of existing communications on 3.890 MHz."

Baxter is Executive Director of the American Amateur Radio Association (AARA) which has a website at www.k1man.com. Baxter uses his station to promote his website which offers various products for sale including a monthly newsletter at a cost of \$45 per year.

A December 2004, pre-recorded (70 minute with no station identification) on air interview with a potential customer discussed Baxter Associates, an employment search firm owned by Baxter. "During the transmission, Baxter discussed fees for his franchises, investments and franchising opportunities."

Baxter failed to properly explain to the FCC how station K1MAN was controlled and the identity of the control operator. Baxter responded to the Warning Notices by stating "no corrective action or changes are needed with regard to station control" and that he "had provided all the information required by FCC rules and federal law." He encouraged the FCC to take "enforcement action" and "...look forward to seeing you in court." He was advised of his liability for a \$21,000 fine.

Exhibit B is the Affirmed FCC Forfeiture Order released March 27, 2006, ordering Baxter to pay the \$21,000 fine within 30 days. Baxter apparently can't argue that he doesn't owe the amount. He had his chance to do that during the NAL period. A June 20, 2006, FCC letter further advised Baxter that if the fine was not paid, the matter would be referred to the Dept. of Justice for enforcement.

Exhibit C is the Certificate of Forfeiture, dated: September 18, 2006, certified by the FCC, verified that Baxter was ordered to pay the United States the sum of \$21,000. Baxter did not pay the fine.

The FCC has no collection department, therefore the Department of Justice acts as the collector for all Civil Forfeiture debts payable to the U.S. government. The DoJ has 5 years to bring a civil suit for collection. The deadline for service of process is February 22, 2011. The DoJ beat the deadline by a little over 3 months.

The Complaint seeks to force payment of the \$21,000 fine along with a \$350 filing fee and "such other and further relief as the Court deems just and proper." If Baxter still doesn't pay the fine, the U.S. Attorney will proceed to establish a court date for trial.

This federal court case is a completely separate matter from any action the FCC might take regarding Baxter's Amateur Radio license. His ham ticket expired on October 17, 2005. And his July 22, 2005, renewal has been pending for more than five years. Payment (or non-payment) of the \$21,000 fine has no bearing on whether Baxter's license will be renewed. Best guess is that the FCC will eventually issue a "Show Cause Order" why his license should not be revoked.

Dust in the Ham Shack

How important is it to keep your ham shack dust free?

From Mark, W5TXR, posted on QRZ

Take the cover off that Astron power supply or open up your favorite HF rig. Integrated circuits can suffer from overheating due to the insulating effect of dust as well as suffer from electrical shorts caused by dust across their contacts. The most susceptible ICs are those having a metal lid acting as a heatsink cooling surface. To prevent overheating and failure, this metal surface and heatsink need to be essentially dust-free. Dust acts like an insulating blanket, preventing proper convection cooling. In PC's, Tests suggest that the temperature of some of the higher power PC components, such as the CPU, can go up nearly 30oF due to a build-up of dust. This is a significant increase in temperature and can lead to complete and abrupt part failure.

Another reliability problem is circuit shorting. Modern integrated circuits have hundreds exposed electrical contacts per inch. Designers rely on an airgap between these contacts (especially RF) to prevent electrical shorts or cross-coupling of signals. Dust containing conductive material such as water, oils, and metallic elements can cause signal errors and component failure. Some manufactures now seal the contacts with a plastic coating once the part is soldered onto the circuit board in order to avoid signal shorting due to dust.

In order to avoid these serious electrical problems, dust ingestion into the equipment case needs to be minimized.

Electronics attract dust! What is dust exactly? Dust is finely divided solids that become airborne through a fracture process from a larger solid object. Common household dust is mainly composed of decayed skin particles, while industrial dust is commonly generated by sawing, grinding, or polishing of wood, metal, plastic, or masonry type materials. Dust particles can be as small as a few microns (micrometers) or as large as hundreds of microns insize. The larger and denser particles tend to settle, while the smaller and lighter ones can remain airborne indefinitely.

Yes, dust has conductive properties! Dust particles can contain moisture (water or oils), organic material (carbon), various minerals, or various chemicals. All of these can affect the reliability and life span of ham radio equipment, PC's and consumer electronics if the device is overexposed.

W5TXR/K5TXR's solution: I purchased two Oreck air cleaners (One for the ham shack) and what a difference it makes! We shopped around and I could have purchased a Wal-Mart peice of junk for \$50 but I did some reasearch on air cleaners. The Oreck air cleaners are a little pricy but they always have specials (e.g. buy one get the 2nd half price) There are other good brands too.

Just remember the old adage "You get what you pay for"

Pacemakers and RF

Schley Cox, W4AMW, of Owensboro, Kentucky, told the Doctor that he's headed to see the cardiologist next week about a pacemaker. He's already started researching their use around RF and says he is happy to go all low power (QRP), if that's what's called for. Schley mentioned that he might also be able to operate his rig remotely -- perhaps 20 feet away, but he needs to know how to measure stray RF in the shack itself.

I haven't received actual reports of any pacemaker problems and that seems to go along with the [info on the ARRL Web site](#). Note that there are no power levels (or field strength) limits noted there, nor have I found any on manufacturers' Web sites. Thus knowing the actual field strength level in the station may not help. If it were me, I would start by talking to my physician. She won't be able to give you power limits, but perhaps could indicate symptoms to watch for while on the air so you could take appropriate action quickly if called for.

I would start with a careful RF safety evaluation, as required by the FCC anyway. While the FCC guidelines were not based on pacemaker interference, they should result in a reasonably safe environment. If your station is properly set up -- without common mode feed line current, for example -- most radiation should surround the antenna and there should not be much RF within the shack.

Calibrated RF field strength meters are available, but are quite expensive. Relative measurement is pretty easy -- look at any recent *ARRL Handbook*. If you had a simple field strength meter running at all times in the station (I'm thinking the diode and microampmeter type that doesn't require power), you could see if anything changed, and diagnose and repair as needed.

Understanding LF and HF Propagation - free ebook

(from QRZ.com)

Steve G0KYA and Alan G3NYK, of the Radio Society of Great Britain's (RSGB) Propagation Studies Committee, have released a free ebook called 'Understanding LF and HF Propagation'

In 2008/2009 Steve and Alan wrote a series of features on LF and HF propagation for the RSGB's "RadCom" magazine.

The features consisted of a month-by-month look at each HF band in turn, showing the reader the propagation modes behind each band and explaining some of the technicalities of ionospheric propagation.

"Alan then took over and wrote three detailed features on LF propagation. We are told that the features were well received and as a result I have managed to persuade the RSGB to allow me to put them together into a single document, which is now freely available for amateurs worldwide to download."

Please see: http://www.southgatearc.org/news/nov...tion_ebook.htm

Indonesian disasters, as of 11.07.2010

From QRZ.com

Jim Linton VK3PC, Chairman, IARU Region 3 Disaster Communications Committee

As the dual natural disasters of an erupting volcano and the aftermath of a Tsunami continue, ORARI (Organisasi Amatir Radio Indonesia) has advised how its members are providing emergency communications.

ORARI International Affairs Coordinator, Wisnu Widjaja YB0AZ said, 'Our members are still working in the field at Mount Merapi Eruption disaster and Mentawai Tsunami. We are working on the 2-metre band and HF is 7.065MHz.' He asks that the 40m frequency and the IARU Region 3 Emergency Centre of Activity Frequencies be kept clear from regular use.

'We are supporting communication for rescue, first aid, medic, food and logistics. We are embedded with the local government and Ministry of Communications and Information Technology Rescue Team,' said Wisnu YB0AZ.

Mount Merapi at Yogyakarta province has had a series of eruptions and claimed 138 lives. Volcanic ash air pollution is also disrupting international flights and hampering local aircraft movements delivering much needed medical and other supplies. Thousands have fled the immediate volcano area.

Meantime the tsunami triggered by a 7.2 magnitude quake that hit the Mentawai Islands washed away coastal villages claiming an estimated 400 lives. Aid is yet to reach all of the remote and sparsely populated areas.

Contests this Month

November 13-14	Kentucky QSO Party; WAE DX Contest (RTTY); OK/OM DX Contest (CW)
November 13-15	CQ-WE Contest
November 14 --	SKCC Weekend Sprint
November 17 --	QRP Fox Hunt
November 18 --	NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint
November 19 --	YO International PSK31 Contest; QRP Fox Hunt
November 20 --	Feld Hell Sprint
November 20-21	LZ DX Contest; All Austrian 160 Meter Contest; RSGB Second 1.8 MHz Contest (CW)
November 20-22	ARRL Sweepstakes Contest (SSB) ; North American Collegiate ARC Championship (SSB)
November 21 --	EU PSK63 QSO Party; Homebrew and Oldtime Equipment Party
November 22 --	Run for the Bacon QRP Contest
November 24 --	SKCC Sprint; QRP Fox Hunt

All dates, unless otherwise stated, are UTC. See the ARRL Contest Branch page, the ARRL Contest Update and the WA7BNM Contest Calendar for more info. Looking for a Special Event station? Be sure to check out the ARRL Special Events Station Web page.

Tri-Town Radio Amateur Club Inc.
PO Box 1296
Homewood, IL 60430-0296

November 2010

First Class Mail

Check out the Club Website: **WWW.W9VT.ORG**

Tri-Town Radio Amateur Club Membership Application

Name _____ Call _____

Address _____ License Class _____ ARRL Member Y / N

City, State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Email Address: _____

_____ Regular Membership	\$ 20.00
_____ SWL Membership	\$ 20.00
_____ Extra Family Membership	\$ 6.00
_____ Bunker Buddie	\$ 5.00
_____ Auto Patch w/1 Speed Slot	\$ 25.00
_____ Extra Speed Slots	\$ 5.00

\$ _____ Total Paid by Club Member

For Example: Regular Member, with A/P and Bunker Buddy (20+25+5) = \$ 50.00