

2022-12-13 Hamlet Net

Announcements:

- The LARC Christmas Party is this Thursday at the Niwot Grange. Doors open at 6 with food at 6:30. The cost per person is \$11 at the door. Members and spouses/family members are welcome! (Dick - KE0VT)
- Bob, N0ZFV, is helping Dick out with special events. They are planning to put together a LARC Winter Field Day site at noon, Sat Jan. 28th in the Clover Building. Come join the fun, and if you haven't made an HF contact yet, this would be a perfect opportunity, as there will be a lot of activity on the bands, as well as experienced hams to help you out. You don't even have to be licensed (or be a General or Extra Class licensee) to use the radio - we will have plenty of licensed control operators on site.
- RMHAM has published the recording of their recent "Test Equipment for Amateur Radio" presentation on their web site at rmham.org. The next presentation will be on 3D printing on January 14th.
- While LARC's Santa on the Air is over for 2022, you can still contact Santa on 80 meters nightly at 6pm. Information on the 3.916 Ham Radio Santa Net can be found at: cqsanta.com
- You're running out of time, but it's still possible to earn a free year of club membership by acting as NCS for at least 5 nets this year. You can run either this Tuesday night net or the Thursday night net (or both). We have scripts available for both, so all you need is a good connection into the repeater, and somewhere to keep track of names and call signs as people check in. If you're going to be on the net anyway, why not save some dough at the same time! The LARC Board also approved this program for next year, although the number of free memberships will be limited to just four memberships.
- Club dues are going up by \$5 per year starting January 1st. If you renew before then, you can pay the current price of \$20.
- All club activities are open to anyone - members and non-members. If you have questions, ask them on a net or send email to elmer@w0eno.org
- Club breakfast Saturday mornings at 8am at the Hidden Cafe in Longmont
 - Come meet other Club members and discuss amateur radio

Presenter: Bryan, AF0W

Topic: Special Event Stations

- I planned to give this presentation before last weekend, but as you are aware, we held the Santa on the Air event instead.
- Ed, WA7EM, ran a special event station in December to celebrate the anniversary of the transistor
- You may be wondering what this means - what is a special event station, and how is that any different than a regular station or a contest?
- Well if so, you've come to the right place!
- A special event station is one or more stations operated in observance or commemoration of a special or historical event, usually having some special significance to the amateur radio community
- These stations generally operate for a short time and may have special QSL cards for those who make contact with them
- The stations may also provide some background on or answer questions about the event being observed to those who contact them
 - a. If there is a pileup, QSOs are usually kept brief
 - b. During slow periods, the station may provide more info to try to generate additional activity

Call Signs

- One major advantage special events have is that they can apply to use a 1x1 call sign - such as LARC's W0T (whiskey-zero-tango) for the invention of the transistor or N0P (november-zero-papa) for Santa on the Air
- Due to their length, these call signs are more likely to stand out on the air, as well as being shorter to send
- The call signs themselves do not authorize any operating privileges - those are handled as they would for any amateur station
- The call signs consist of a prefix (K, N, or W), followed by a region number (0 to 9), and end with a single suffix letter (A through Z excluding X)
 - This results in a possible 750 special event call signs
 - Apparently, the X after the number was issued only for experimental stations until the late 1990's

- The FCC has approved five coordinators to handle these call sign requests, the largest of which is the ARRL
- You may reserve your call sign up to one year in advance. Short notice requests may also be granted, but of course there's no guarantee of availability or turnaround time, so you'll want to get your request in as soon as you have the date nailed down
 - One posting I saw mentioned a turnaround time of up to a week, so don't wait until the last minute!
 - If your event date changes, you will have to cancel your initial request and submit a new request for the new date - you can't just move your reservation
- They may be requested by any licensed amateur radio operator
- When you make a request, you can specify up to 10 candidate call signs - you will be assigned the first one available
- They are assigned for the duration of the special event, with a 15-day maximum duration - the assumption is that most events will last from 1-3 days
 - You cannot reserve multiple back-to-back events to circumvent this limitation
 - Reserving more than one 1x1 call sign per year is also discouraged - this is probably so that other stations can get in on the fun
- You must have an actual special event you are commemorating - you can't get a 1x1 call sign just so you can up your QSO rate in a contest, for example
 - If you do happen to have a legitimate special event, you can use the special event call sign for any contests or other amateur radio operating events during that time
 - If you do abuse the special event call sign system, you may be denied any future requests
- Your special event call sign assignment is complete when it appears in the 1x1 call sign database (note that it will not appear in the FCC call sign database)
- Note that while the operators of a special event station may use the special event call sign to identify transmissions (with the standard "every 10, and at the end" timing), they must still transmit their assigned call signs at least once per hour to provide identification for the transmissions

QRZ

- One other item you may want to look into is getting the QRZ page for your special event updated with your event information
 - I'm not familiar with this process, but hopefully Ed, WA7EM, can address it
 - If you don't have your station information on QRZ, be prepared for some confused operators, as many people use that site for looking up callsigns!

Finding Them

- So how do you find out about upcoming special event stations?
- Since there are 5 licensed coordinators, there had to be someplace where a list of all assignments was kept
- These coordinators maintain a consolidated list of assignments that is available on the web at: 1x1callsigns.org (one-xray-one-callsigns.org)
 - a. You can search for granted 1x1 call signs using the "Search 1x1 Calls" link on the left of that web page
- I ran a search for special event callsigns for the month of November - there were 37 call signs returned
 - a. The web page mentioned that there were 20,571 total entries - the database appears to go back to September of 2005, with the first call sign being kilo-9-papa which was granted for the Persimmon Festival - I guess this means the "significance to amateur radio" requirement is pretty loose!
 - b. I looked at the November-zero-papa call sign for LARC's Santa on the Air event
 - The detailed information included the coordinator and requisitioner, including name, call sign, address, email, and phone, so some individuals may have privacy concerns

Running a Special Event Station

- If you are running a special event station, there are a number of tasks you may need to complete in addition to obtaining the call sign, such as:
 - a. What hours you will be operating
 - b. What frequencies and modes you will be using, and whether they will change during different dates or times
 - c. Designing a QSL card or certificate for the event (if you are going to send them out)

- d. Putting together a web page to advertise your event
- e. Doing PR work, such as submitting your event to QRZ, posting it on social media, mentioning it during nets, submitting it to clubs for inclusion in their newsletters, etc.
- f. Getting equipment to use during the event
 - This may also include getting digital communication software, such as WSJT-X, and logging software set up for special-event operation
- g. Identifying volunteers to help with station setup, operation, and teardown, as well as handling QSL and certificate requests after the event
- Of course, the main concern here is to have fun commemorating the event!
 - a. I've included a number of web sites in the net notes if you'd like more information

Questions:

- **The question for the week is:** Have you ever contacted or worked at a Special Event station? Do you have any ideas for Special Event stations that LARC could run?
- **In my case,** I've worked the radios at one special event station, which was when LARC commemorated the Boulder County Fair. We operated from a park in Longmont, and the first year I worked the event, we had a special event call sign. Unfortunately, the QRZ entry for that call sign was a previous event, so we had some operators who were confused about what we were doing.

I've contacted a few special event stations over the years - the ones that stand out are the Museum Ships Weekend Event (held in June) where this year 89 ships participated over voice, CW, and various digital modes such as RTTY and FT8. If you contacted at least 15 different ships, you could request a certificate.

The other is the Indianapolis Motor Speedway special event stations, which are three stations commemorating the Grand Prix, Indianapolis 500, and NASCAR 200 races starting in May. They provide individual station QSL cards as well as a certificate for those who contact all three stations during the week.

More Info:

- ARRL's Special Event Call Sign page: <http://www.arrl.org/special-event-call-signs>
- Planning and Operating a Special Event Station: <https://forums.qrz.com/index.php?threads/planning-and-operating-a-special-events-station.249795/>

- How to Run a Special Event Station:
<https://w4amc.com/2022/02/19/how-to-run-a-special-event-station/>
- 2022 IMS Special Event Station:
<https://swling.com/blog/2022/05/2022-w9ims-special-event-station-details/>
- Museum Ships on the Air: <https://www.nj2bb.org/museum/>

Notes:

- If you have ideas for net topics or general meeting topics / presenters, please let us know! Tell us on a net, or send email to k0itp@w0eno.org

Email to elmer@w0eno.org

1. K0ITP - Chuck - Firestone - Had some newhams for W0T event. Had to contact owner of N0P page to get them to release it for him to use. 13 Colonies special event (July 1 - 8) and Indianapolis special event. Used GoBox and dipole on tower at 350 Terry Street on HF for W0T. Send email to elmer@w0eno.org if you have any suggestions or questions. Boulder County Fair and Boulder County Farmers Market (may be get-on-the-air instead of special event). 24-hour POTA. In addition to looking for ideas, need to get people who are interested in running it
2. KF0CFD - David - Longmont - Worked Field Day stations.
3. WA7EM - Ed - Erie - Is a tab on QRZ that contains a listing of special events (News -> Special Events Contests, etc.). Some events are silly - don't need to be high-tech, etc. Farmers Market is good as will have lots of walk-by traffic
4. NA0A - John - Boulder - Never worked at a Special Event station, but have contacted them.
5. KF0KFJ - Laura - Loveland - Colorado Day (Aug 1) - and possibly have other clubs participate as well. Is when Colorado became a state.
6. K0IPH - Al - Loveland - Haven't worked at one, but contacted someone doing a ¼ century special event, Boy Scout Jamboree, and Indianapolis Speedway
7. KM6SJA - Steve - Longmont - Have one unintentional contact.
8. AF0W - Bryan - Longmont -
9. KV0N - Raman - Lafayette - Have done 13 Colonies and some others, but have not run a station.
10. AE0DO - John - North of Longmont - Do not have any experience with Special Events. Looked at 1x1 call sign web page - was surprised to not find a lot of details about the events themselves.

Chuck announcements:

- 23 contracts on the Anniversary of the Transistor special event station
- SoTA - 2 weeks, 96 contacts / QSO cards, and had help from NCARC. Contact Chuck, k0itp@w0eno.org if you're interested in helping out next year

- Hybrid general meeting in January - 350 Terry Street and via Zoom

Special event call signs do get reused during the year

Chuck mentioned the 13 colonies special event - this has multiple stations with different call signs. Might be applicable to Colorado Day if we get other clubs involved.

Commemorate formation of LARC - not sure when that occurred

Colorado QSO Party - was Sept 3 this year

Chuck says K0C is available in August

KF0CFD - Extra - Artemis 1 returned to Earth after a successful mission. First orbital mission is scheduled for 2024 (or Artemis 3 mission)

WA7EM - Yesterday or today is the anniversary of first transatlantic radio communications - subject to debate among Marconi and (someone) as to who did it first. Bunch of British stations on for special events. Look for someone with a "G" call sign for special events.

K0ITP - Special events don't need to have a 1x1 call sign