



# The KLARION

Newsletter of the Keuka Lake Amateur Radio Association  
Winter 2017

## From Our Friends at ARRL

Beginning with the 9 AM EST fast code practice on Tuesday, January 2, 2018, W1AW will add 6 meters - specifically 50350 kHz - to its regular CW code practice, and CW, digital and phone bulletin transmission schedule.

Prior to late 1989, W1AW had a presence on 6 meters for all its CW practice, and regular bulletins. Since that time however, the station was absent on 6 meters, with the exception of regular visitor operations and contests.

In addition to providing regularly scheduled transmissions on 6 meters, another goal is to act as a beacon on 6 meters, especially from the Northeast US.

Signal reports will be welcome. A web page that will allow listeners to provide signal reports will be made available after the start date. Reports may also be emailed to W1AW at, [w1aw@arrl.org](mailto:w1aw@arrl.org).

Help  
NASA



### Celebrate Its Big Anniversaries!

The agency was founded in 1958 (60 years old). 1968 was Apollo 8, the first manned mission to the moon (50 years ago). The first elements of the International Space Station were launched in 1998 (20 years ago ... really?)

Many, if not all, of the NASA facilities have an amateur radio club. In the spirit of fun, NASA radio amateurs have decided to sponsor a number of special events. Events currently planned are as follows:

- Apollo 17 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary – 11-14 December 2017, beginning of event
- NASA founded 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary (act signed by President Eisenhower) – 29 July 1958
- ISS First Element Launch 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary – 20 November 1998
- ISS Node 1 Launch 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary – 4 December 1998
- 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Apollo 8 – launch 21 December 1968, splashdown 27 December, end of event

Note that there are also further events in the planning stages, but that the above events will feature participation by all of the NASA amateur radio clubs listed below:

### NASA Centers Participating:

- Ames Research Center (ARC) NA6MF — California
- Armstrong Flight Research Center (AFRC) NA6SA — California
- Glenn Research Center (GRC) NA8SA — Ohio
- Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC) WA3NAN — Maryland
- Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) W6VIO — California
- Kennedy Space Center (KSC) N1KSC — Florida
- Langley Research Center (LARC) KG4NJA — Virginia
- Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC) NN4SA — Alabama
- Stennis Space Center (SSC) TBD — Mississippi
- Wallops Flight Facility (WFF) W4WFF — Virginia
- White Sands Complex (WSC) N5BL — New Mexico

Modes of operation are phone, CW, and digital. Phone includes SSB, FM, and Digital Voice. Digital includes FT8, PSK31, JT65, RTTY, MSK144, SSTV, JT9. CW is, of course, it's own animal!

No log submittal is needed; logging will be handled by the NASA stations. There will be a scoreboard feature on the event website, found at:

<https://nasaontheair.wordpress.com/>

Sounds like a great deal of fun to me!

**Gary (KC2YTD) and Joel (KC2VAW)**

## I'd like to Work the New Modes, But ...

Looking for a way to add some ATNO (all time new ones) to your log, but feeling limited due to no Internet connection in your shack?

No fear, this is amateur radio, and there is always a work around!

Most of the new(ish) digital modes, such as JT9, JT65, and FT8, use very accurate time signatures to assist your transceiver in completing a QSO. The primary method of working these modes is through computer software, and the accurate time stamp necessary is almost always taken from the time kept by the computer system clock. The problem is that computer clocks are notorious for “sloppy” time keeping.

The original solution was to synchronize the system clock with a standard time source, through an Internet connection. Standard time sources can be found at NIST (<https://time.gov/HTML5/>) or the US Naval Observatory Master Clock (<http://www.usno.navy.mil/USNO/time/display-clocks/simpletime>). Incidentally, NIST also gives you a very nice graphic displaying the “gray line”, or the geographic line between daylight and dark (which has a large impact on HF propagation).

There are numerous sets of instructions on how to synchronize your computer system clock with other “network” time sources. Here is one for Windows users:  
<https://blogs.msdn.microsoft.com/astebner/2006/04/07/how-to-synchronize-your-system-clock-to-attempt-to-resolve-media-center-guide-download-errors/>.

However, if you have no Internet connection, you are out of luck, correct? Not so fast! There are other ways to sync your computer clock.

One of the best methods I can think of is using your GPS. Hunh?

Your GPS unit is capable of downloading information from the satellite constellation in small discrete “pieces”, called “sentences” or “slices”. They are usually described by their format name NMEA sentences. NMEA stands for **N**ational **M**arine **E**lectronics **A**ssociation.

No GPS? No problem ... they are readily available as USB “hockey pucks” or USB “sticks”.

The “hockey pucks” look just like a ... hockey puck with the antenna and electronics inside the “puck”. They usually have a 6 foot cord which plugs into a USB port on your computer. Cost? Around \$25 - \$30.

The USB “sticks” look just like the ubiquitous USB jump or thumb drives. Rather than having electronics for computer storage, they have a GPS receiver, antenna, etc. built into the stick. Cost? You can spend whatever you want, but I have seen these for as little as \$10. Only problem I can see with this approach is that you may have to park your computer outside, to allow your GPS a clear view of the sky.

O.K. you have your GPS receiver and antenna; it's attached to your computer; how do you get the time out of the data you are downloading?

There are a number of software packages you can use for this, but I like the software from Visual GPS. You can see what this is all about here: <http://www.visualgps.net/#visualgpsview-content>

You are now ready to load WSJT, JT 65-HF, or what ever your favorite digital mode software is, and go to work.

I can see a number of applications for this approach, beyond an unconnected shack. Care to activate a summit for Summits on the Air, using JT-65 or FT-8? The “time slice” technology will let you do it, probably with QRP power levels!

Have a special place on an island, which you would like to activate for Islands on the Air using the newer digital modes? Time slice to the rescue!

Finally, how about field day?

**Joel (KC2VAW)**



Hockey Puck GPS receiver, antenna, etc.  
Cord is about 6 feet in length.



USB stick style GPS receiver,  
antenna, etc. No cord, just plug into  
USB port.

## 2017 Christmas Party

We gathered in the afternoon on December 9<sup>th</sup> for our annual Christmas party. This year's celebration was held at Stephanie's Restaurant in Bath. They were willing to host us after the normal closing hours of the restaurant, so we were able to have the place to ourselves.

We had a very nice afternoon. The food was good and the company was better.

If you were not able to join us this year, hope to see you next December!



# A Different Kind of Mobile!

Pacificon is a very large hamfest and the Pacific Division convention rolled into one, rather like the Pacific coast version of the Dayton Hamfest. One of the most unique special events presented at Pacificon is a Parachute Mobile mission.

Parachute Mobile is a combination of two great hobbies, skydiving and amateur radio! The idea is to make as many simplex contacts as possible in the 10 – 15 minute window of a parachute jump.

The schedule for this year's Pacificon was as follows:

1. Jump 1 – 2 meter simplex on 146.430 – Jumper was AF6IM, Mark Meltzer
2. Jump 2 – 2 meter simplex on 146.430 – Jumper was KF6WRW, Michael Gregg
3. Jump 3 – 20 meter simplex on 14.250 – Jumper was AF6IM, Mark Meltzer
4. Jump 4 – 2 meter simplex on 146.430 – Jumper was W7BIG, Troy Bigelow

I know, you have a lot of questions! So did I ...

- **What gear do you use?**

1. 2 meter FM – Kenwood TH-F6
2. HF – Yaesu FT-817
3. APRS – Argent Data T2-301, which is a combination of the Friendcom FC-301/D VHF data radio and a Tracker2 daughter board modified to report blood oxygen saturation (SpO2) and heart rate.

- **How do you handle logging?**

1. Simplicity itself ... a digital voice recorder attached to the rig.

- **Big pile ups?**

1. No ... contacts are scheduled and listed in advance. There is a GOTA (Get on the Air) station at Pacificon which is available to use if you have left your gear at home.

Here are a few pictures of gear, etc.



2 meter Kenwood, hooked to a digital voice recorder



Yaesu FT-817

Argent Data Tracker



Battery clamshell used to power all the gear



Chest pack for carrying the HF rig

The antenna! An Ed Fong roll up J-Pole is deployed for 2 meter FM from an ankle pouch.



Last jump!

**KC2VAW (Joel) and K2RTH (Ruth)**

## **For Next Time**

**Who knows?**

**Got something to contribute?**

**Send it in. I'll print it!**