



ARES COMMUNICATOR

Information for Scott County Amateurs



December, 2011

Accurate, Reliable Emergency Communications

Volume 11, Number 12

Hot Props on 10M!

ARRL 10M Contest Dec 10-11

Ten meters — in case you haven't heard, it's alive in a big way! That means that the ARRL 10 Meter Contest — coming up the weekend of December 10-11 — is going to be the one of the best we've seen in years! During this event, many propagation modes will be available: Sporadic-E will help you work stateside stations, a touch of meteor scatter in the morning will give you split-second chances to work stations — you'd better be quick, though! — and DX stations will be plentiful, thanks to the return of F2 propagation.

Yes, 10 meters is back. During the CQ World Wide DX CW Contest this past Thanksgiving weekend, many stations worked more than 100 DXCC entities on 10 meters. ARRL Contest Branch Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X, said that he keeps hearing from numerous hams who have been licensed only three or four years, telling him that they've never experienced a 10 meter opening before because they weren't licensed during the last solar cycle peak: "A common phrase I'm hearing is, 'Now I understand what all the Old-Timers in my club were talking about — 10 meters is great!' With a concentration of activity for the contest, there will be an opportunity for the first time in several years to experience the beauty of a wide-open 10 meter band. With so much excitement worldwide over the great conditions, the 2011 ARRL 10 Meter Contest could see the highest level of participation in a very long time!"

Single Operator entrants can use CW only, SSB only — or a mixture of both. US Novice and Technician class operators can get in on the fun, too. Both classes are permitted SSB operation between 28.3-28.5 MHz with 150 W. You

10M Contest *cont'd on page 2*

The ARES COMMUNICATOR is published for the benefit of Amateur Radio Operators in Scott County and other interested individuals.
EDITOR: Bob Reid, Scott County Emergency Coordinator
Snail Mail: 13600 Princeton Circle
Savage, MN. 55378
E-Mail: N0BHC@aol.com
Phone: Home 952-894-5178 Portable 612-280-9328
Reader submissions encouraged!

60M Changes

New Channel, New Modes & Higher Power

The FCC adopted new rules for the 60-meter (5 MHz) band in mid-November, swapping one frequency for another and permitting greater flexibility in power and operating modes. Currently, hams in the U.S. have a secondary allocation on the band and are limited to upper sideband (USB) with a maximum of 50 watts PEP on five specific frequencies.

In the new rules, amateurs will also be able to use CW and the PSK-31 and Pactor-III digital modes; and the power limit has been doubled to 100 watts PEP. In addition, the current channel centered on 5368 kHz will be replaced by one centered on 5358.5 kHz. Voice and digital users should set their VFOs 1.5 kHz below the center frequency while CW ops should be right on the center frequency. The new rules take effect 30 days after publication in the *Federal Register*, which would most likely mean sometime in mid-January. The complete, 45-page, Report and Order is available online at <http://www.fcc.gov/document/amateur-radio-service-5-mhz>.

BREAK - OVER

ARES Activities

Weekly Net Monday 7 PM 146.535 mhz (s)
Breakfast Saturday, December 10th
Digital Monday, December 12 th

ARES Nets

MN ARES Phone Net
6:00PM Sunday Freq: 3.568 mhz
ARRL MN Phone Net
12:00p, 4:30p CST Daily Freq: 3.568 mhz
ARRL MN CW Net
6:30p, 9:50p CST Daily Freq: 3.568 mhz

NETS WITH OUR NEIGHBORS

North Dakota: Daily 3.937 mhz 6:30pm
South Dakota: Daily 3.870 mhz 6:00pm
Wisconsin: Daily 3.985 mhz 5:30pm
Iowa: Daily 3.970 mhz 12:30/5:30pm

10M Contest - cont'd from page 1

don't have an antenna for 10 meters? Why not build one yourself! A dipole for 28.4 MHz is about 16.5 feet long — build it and get it up in the air as high as you possibly can. According to Kutzko, it's an easy construction project and you will work stations, especially with band conditions like this! Quite simply, this is a weekend not to miss!

In 2010, the ARRL added the 32 Mexican states as multipliers to the 10 Meter Contest. "Activity from our friends in XE spiked in 2010 as a result of the inclusion of Mexican states, and there's every indication there will be even more activity from the XE's in 2011, providing even more stations to work and increase your score," Kutzko said. For a list of the Mexican states, download a free map, provided by Grupo DXXE.

The ARRL 10 Meter Contest runs from 0000 UTC Saturday, December 10 through 2359 UTC Sunday, December 11. Logs must be e-mailed or postmarked no later than 0000 UTC Wednesday, January 11, 2012. Paper logs should be sent to ARRL 10 Meter Contest, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111.

BREAK - OVER

Digital DX!

British Ham Plans PSK31 DXpedition to Myanmar

The Daily DX is reporting that Simon Luttrell, HS0ZIB/G6JFY, has been granted an "invitation" from senior officials within the Myanmar Ministry of Post and Telecommunications and the Ministry of Tourism to visit Bagan, Myanmar to operate a four-day PSK31 "micro DXpedition." Myanmar — formerly known as Burma — has not been on the Amateur Radio bands since 2004. Although Luttrell does not yet have a formal date for his first operation, his Myanmar contacts want him to "come soon for about five days." Luttrell told The Daily DX that he is hoping to go to Myanmar in early December, "but must wait for the 'final go-ahead' from Myanmar authorities."

Luttrell's initial activity will be on 20 meters only, running about 50 W into a wire antenna. "This operation is intended to be an initial demonstration station," he told The



Myanmar / Burma

Daily DX, "and my plans for regular 'low-profile' PSK DXpeditions from different tourist locations within Myanmar have been warmly received. Whilst some may scoff at such a micro station, others will be fully aware that a small station of this type can easily achieve global contacts." He said that he hopes that this will be the first of many operations from XZ, as he lives just three hours from the Thai/Myanmar border.

Visit the DailyDX at www.dailydx.com.

BREAK - OVER

Scott County ARES Contacts

Emergency Coordinator
Bob Reid NOBHC
13600 Princeton Circle
Savage, MN 55378
952-894-5178
NOBHC@arrl.net



Asst. Emergency Coordinator
Bob Minor WONFE
5210 West 141st Street
Savage, MN 55378
952-894-2657
WONFE@arrl.net

Asst Emergency Coordinator
Daniel Vande Vusse NOPI
5722 West 141st Street
Savage, MN 55378
952-440-1878
NOPI@arrl.net



Christmas Trivia



- The common abbreviation for Christmas to Xmas is derived from the Greek alphabet. X is letter Chi, which is the first letter of Christ's name in the Greek alphabet. X has been an acceptable representation of the word "Christ" for hundreds of years. This device is known as a Christogram.
- The first printed reference to Christmas trees appeared in Germany in 1531.
- The earliest reference to minced pies was 1557.
- In 1836, Alabama was the first state in the US to declare Christmas a legal holiday. Oklahoma was the last state to declare Christmas a legal holiday—17 years after it became a national holiday.
- In 1856, President Franklin Pierce decorated the first White House Christmas tree.
- In 1937, the first postage stamp to commemorate Christmas was issued in Austria.
- The story of Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer was written by Robert L. May, a copy-writer at the Montgomery Ward department store in 1939 as part of a store promotion.
- Every year since 1947 the people in Oslo have given a Christmas tree to the city of Westminster. The gift is an expression of goodwill and gratitude for Britain's help to Norway in the 1939-1945 war.
- Some priests in Australia advise you to say "Happy Christmas", not "Merry Christmas", because Merry has connotations of getting drunk—which brings its own problems. One should say "Happy" instead.
- The biggest selling Christmas single of all time is Bing Crosby's White Christmas.

Test Your NIMS Knowledge

This month we will review some of the points from the course ICS-200b: ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents. Check your recall of the course material with these questions.

- 1) Select the TRUE statement:
 - A. When a new Incident Commander assumes command, the outgoing Incident Commander should be demobilized to avoid confusion
 - B. Upon arriving at an incident the higher ranking person will either assume command, maintain command as is, or reassign command to a third party
 - C. A lower ranking but more qualified person may not be designated as the Incident Commander
 - D. Transfer of command procedures are implemented at the Emergency Operations Center before the Incident Commander arrives at the scene
- 2) Branches within the ICS organization can be established:
 - A. Along agency jurisdictional lines
 - B. Geographically or functionally
 - C. Within Groups to organize resources
 - D. Under the supervision of a Leader

Check next month's ARES Communicator for the solution



November NIMS Knowledge Solution

- 1) _____ means that each individual involved in incident operations will be assigned to only one supervisor.
 - B. Unity of Command
- 2) Which Section is responsible for handling claims related to property damage, injuries, or fatalities at the incident?
 - C. Finance/Administration Section

Ham Radio on the Tube

From: CQ Newsroom

Amateur radio will become an ongoing part of the ABC comedy, "Last Man Standing." Star Tim Allen will have various pieces of ham gear on his office desk, including rigs provided by ICOM, and an HF antenna from Comet. Scenes from CQ videos will be visible on his large-screen TV and some copies of CQ magazine may show up on his desk as well. His character will be identified as a licensed ham, although the callsign he will use is fictional.

Producer John Amodeo is a ham (NN6JA) and says he feels that ham radio fits right in with the persona of Allen's character, Mike Baxter, who is marketing director for an outdoor/sporting goods company. He also thinks that hams fit right in as part of the show's target audience. Amodeo warns that, at least at first, ham radio's presence will be only visual, and has not yet been worked into any scripts. (See John's article, "Producing Ham Radio," about how he got several of the show's staff members licensed as hams, on page 30 of the December 2011 issue of CQ.)



BREAK - OVER



Troops During the Holidays

Looking for ways to support and honor U.S. military servicemembers and veterans who protect our security and freedom? In years past, you could wrap up a care package, or address a card, and mail it to "Any Service Member" for the holidays, but with increased mail restrictions, the Pentagon is asking people to help through financial contributions, letter-writing and e-mail, purchasing authorized pre-made care packages, or volunteering time through non-profits.

The link below leads to a page of links to programs that offer aid to our military — everything from care packages to emergency services to military family support. Show your pride in our armed forces today, either by purchasing a gift or card for a servicemember, or donating to programs that support our military. <http://www.military.com/spouse/content/military-life/military-resources/how-to-support-our-troops.html>

BREAK - OVER

Take a Dip in the General Pool

Time to test your knowledge of the information covered by the General Class license exam. Each month we'll take a look at a selection from the question pool. Here is this month's sample:

1. What types of messages for a third party in another country may be transmitted by an amateur station?
A. Any message, as long as the amateur operator is not paid
B. Only messages for other licensed amateurs
C. Only messages relating to Amateur Radio or remarks of a personal character, or messages relating to emergencies or disaster relief
D. Any messages, as long as the text of the message is recorded in the station log
2. Which of the following applies in the event of interference between a coordinated repeater and an uncoordinated repeater?
A. The licensee of the non-coordinated repeater has primary responsibility to resolve the interference
B. The licensee of the coordinated repeater has primary responsibility to resolve the interference
C. Both repeater licensees share equal responsibility to resolve the interference
D. The frequency coordinator bears primary responsibility to resolve the interference

(Check next month's issue of the ARES Communicator for the answer.)



November General Pool Answer

- 1) Which of the following would disqualify a third party from participating in stating a message over an amateur station?
A. The third party's amateur license had ever been revoked
- 2) Which of the following conditions require an Amateur Radio station to take specific steps to avoid harmful interference to other users or facilities?
- When operating within one mile of an FCC Monitoring Station
- When using a band where the Amateur Service is secondary
- When a station is transmitting spread spectrum emissions
D. All of these choices are correct

BREAK - OVER

Radio Days Are Back

Ham Radio Licenses at an All-Time High

The newest trend in American communication isn't another smartphone from Apple or Google but one of the elder statesmen of communication: Ham radio licenses are at an all time high, with over 700,000 licenses in the United States, according to the Federal Communications Commission.

Ham radio first took the nation by storm nearly a hundred years ago. Last month the FCC logged 700,314 licenses, with nearly 40,000 new ones in the last five years. Compare that with 2005 when only 662,600 people hammed it up and you'll see why the American Radio Relay League — the authority on all things ham — is calling it a "golden age."

"Over the last five years we've had 20-25,000 new hams a year," Allen Pitts, a spokesman for the group, told FoxNews.com.

The unusual slang term — a "ham" is more properly known as an amateur radio operator — described a poor operator when the first wireless operators started out in the early 1900s. At that time, government and coastal ships would have to compete with amateurs for signal time, because stations all battled for the same radio wavelength. Frustrated commercial operators called the amateurs "hams" and complained that they jammed up the signal.

People like John Pritchett have used the slang term ever since. "It takes an inquisitive mind that wants the challenge to speak with the rest of the world," Pritchett told FoxNews.com. "I meet a lot of people as a result amateur radio. It's a fascinating experience to meet somebody who you've talked to for years — when you finally meet them and go, wow, that's you."

Pritchett has been a ham for over 35 years. He sits in his ham shack slowly turning the dial on his amateur radio and listening attentively for a voice through the high radio frequency. But he's not looking for aliens: Pritchett is dialing in to make contact with someone around the world.

"W6JWK, This is John in Fresno, California," he says. Pritchett can communicate with people around the globe or even astronauts in space by talking through his microphone or using Morse code.

With more people joining the hobby, local ham radio businesses are growing as well. Amateur Electronics Supply in Las Vegas sells everything to do with ham radios, from transceivers, amplifiers and antennas to handhelds.

"We have clientele from all walks of life," manager Luke Rohn told FoxNews.com. "We have church groups who are

interested in ham radio for a viable source of communication in times of natural disaster. We have young kids that find ham radio interesting. Maybe they've heard about it through their father and grandfather and it's a lot of fun for them."

According to the American Radio Relay League, retirees and emergency groups are among the main reasons for the nearly 30,000 new hams that pick up the hobby each year.

Ham is a boon for safety as well as a fun pastime: When normal communications methods fail and cellphone towers are jammed, ham radios will still work and can help out in disaster situations, because they don't require towers to relay the signal.

"Amateur radio came into play very much during the major earthquake in the Bay Area in 1989. The only thing I had was a little handheld radio. Nothing else worked, telephones didn't work, cellphones didn't work, amateur radio just kept right on working," Pritchett said.

Looking to ham it up a bit with some friends? Try a fox hunt — the radio equivalent of ham-to-ham combat. In a fox hunt, local amateur radio clubs search for a transmitter (called the fox) using their homemade antennas.

"The fox hunting is really fun — the thrill of the chase, the competition of being the first to find the transmitter," said Rob Mavis, president of the Clovis Amateur Radio Pioneers club in Clovis, Calif.

Ham radio is inexpensive fun, as well: All you need is a couple hundred bucks to get started and a FCC license — which is free, but requires a \$10 to \$12 fee to cover expenses.

So join the latest craze — no iPhone app required.

BREAK - OVER



The Geminids are Here!

Watch For Some Strange Propagation!

The Geminid meteor shower, which peaks this year on Dec. 13th and 14th, is the most intense meteor shower of the year. It lasts for days, is rich in fireballs, and can be seen from almost any point on Earth.

It's also NASA astronomer Bill Cooke's favorite meteor shower—but not for any of the reasons listed above. "The Geminids are my favorite," he explains, "because they defy explanation."

Most meteor showers come from comets, which spew ample meteoroids for a night of 'shooting stars.' The Geminids are different. The parent is not a comet but a weird rocky object named 3200 Phaethon that sheds very little dusty debris—not nearly enough to explain the Geminids.

"Of all the debris streams Earth passes through every year, the Geminids' is by far the most massive," says Cooke. "When we add up the amount of dust in the Geminid stream, it outweighs other streams by factors of 5 to 500." This makes the Geminids the 900-lb gorilla of meteor showers. Yet 3200 Phaethon is more of a 98-lb weakling.

3200 Phaethon was discovered in 1983 by NASA's IRAS satellite and promptly classified as an asteroid. What else could it be? It did not have a tail; its orbit intersected the main asteroid belt; and its colors strongly resembled that of other asteroids. Indeed, 3200 Phaethon resembles main belt asteroid Pallas so much, it might be a 5-kilometer chip off that 544 km block.

"If 3200 Phaethon broke apart from asteroid Pallas, as some researchers believe, then Geminid meteoroids might be debris from the breakup," speculates Cooke. "But that doesn't agree with other things we know."

Researchers have looked carefully at the orbits of Geminid meteoroids and concluded that they were ejected from 3200 Phaethon when Phaethon was close to the sun—not when it was out in the asteroid belt breaking up with Pallas. The eccentric orbit of 3200 Phaethon brings it well inside the orbit of Mercury every 1.4 years. The rocky body thus receives a regular blast of solar heating that might boil jets of dust into the Geminid stream. Could this be the answer?

To test the hypothesis, researchers turned to NASA's twin STEREO spacecraft, which are designed to study solar activity. Coronagraphs onboard STEREO can detect

sungrazing asteroids and comets, and in June 2009 they detected 3200 Phaethon only 15 solar diameters from the sun's surface.

What happened next surprised UCLA planetary scientists David Jewett and Jing Li, who analyzed the data. "3200 Phaethon unexpectedly brightened by a factor of two," they wrote. "The most likely explanation is that Phaethon ejected dust, perhaps in response to a break-down of surface rocks (through thermal fracture and decomposition cracking of hydrated minerals) in the intense heat of the Sun."

Jewett and Li's "rock comet" hypothesis is compelling, but they point out a problem: The amount of dust 3200

Phaethon ejected during its 2009 sun-encounter added a mere 0.01% to the mass of the Geminid debris stream—not nearly enough to keep the stream replenished over time. Perhaps the rock comet was more active in the past ...?

"We just don't know," says Cooke.

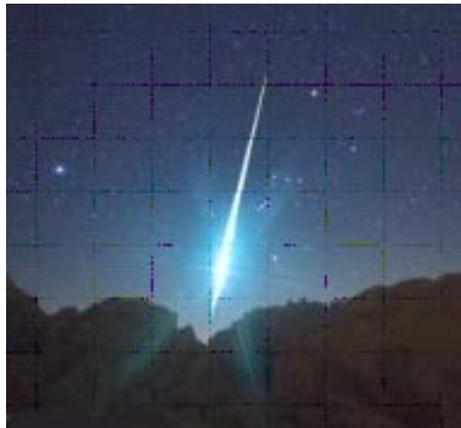
"Every new thing we learn about the Geminids seems to deepen the mystery."

This month Earth will pass through the Geminid debris stream, producing as many as 120 meteors per hour over dark-sky sites. The best time to look is probably between local midnight and sunrise on Tuesday, Dec. 14th, when the

Moon is low and the constellation Gemini is high overhead, spitting bright Geminids across a sparkling starry sky.

Bundle up, go outside, and savor the mystery.

BREAK - OVER



A Geminid fireball explodes over the Mojave Desert in 2009.

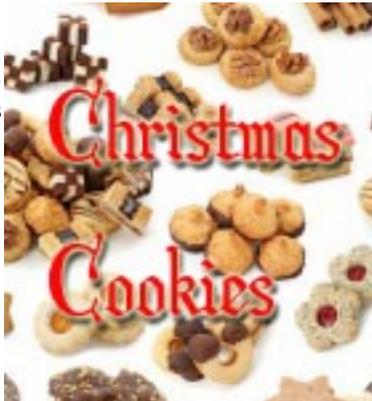
Q. Why didn't the Teddy bear finish dinner?



A. He was stuffed!

Across

1. With their bright red raspberry jam center, these festive cookies will liven up every Christmas cookie platter. Not just for Christmas cookie trays, these cookies also make a sweet addition to any Valentine's dessert tray!



5. Soft & buttery, melt-in-your-mouth cookie made with cream of tartar and rolled in red & green sprinkles.

8. Christmas baking wouldn't seem complete without a batch of these cute little men. They are fragrant with molasses and ground ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves; the amounts of which can be adjusted to suit your own individual taste.

9. Known as Swedish Butter Cookies or Pressed Butter Cookies, are a very popular Christmas cookie, not only in Scandinavia, but also here in North America. They have a lovely vanilla flavor and a rich buttery texture that is tender crisp. Their name implies a German word meaning "to squirt".

Down

2. Cinnamon, cloves and ginger, brown sugar and butter all rolled in sugar. Better than Grandma's cookies!

3. Old-fashioned, made-from-scratch cookies made with cream of tartar & rolled in cinnamon and sugar. So tender, they melt in your mouth! Share their name with a



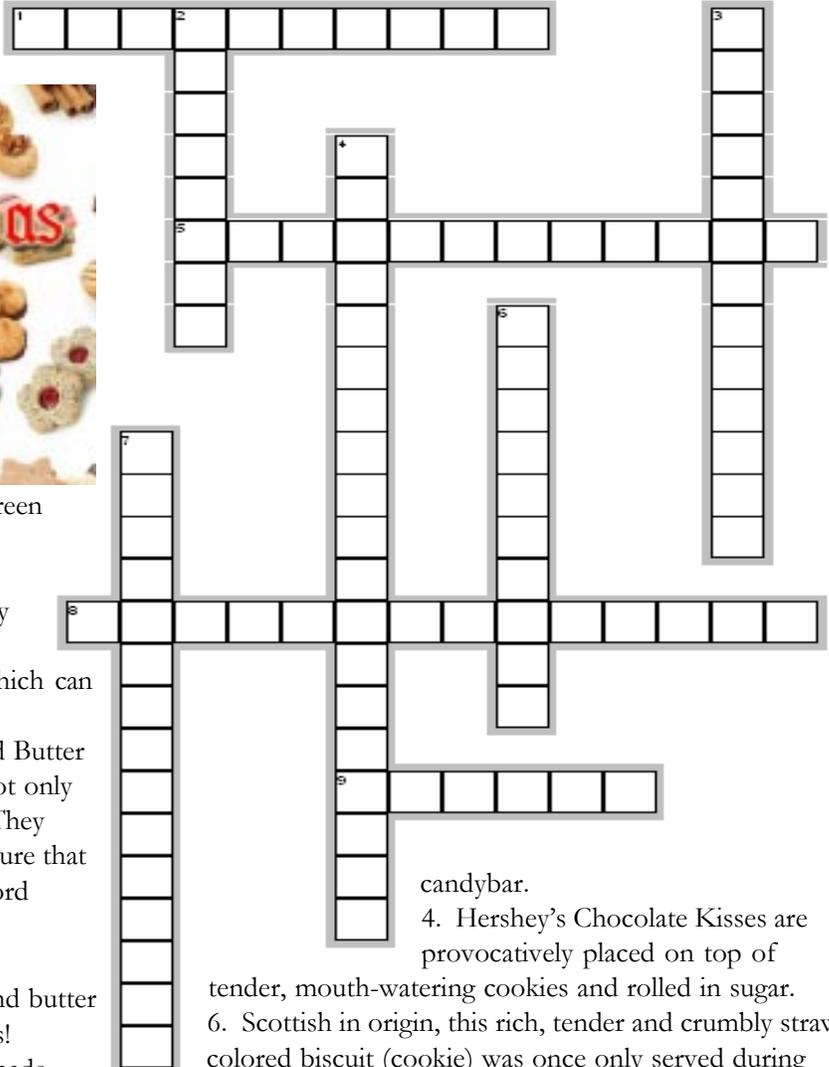
A Finger Diet?

An answer for fat-fingers

If you've got fat fingers, then you probably find it difficult to peck at the tiny keyboards - virtual or physical - on mobile phones. You could just use a traditional stylus, although doing so kind of takes away from the intuitive "hands-on" aspect of finger typing. Well, that's where the iDigiTip comes in. It's got the fine tip of a stylus, but because you wear it on the end of your finger or thumb, you can still type like the slimmer-fingered folk.

The iDigiTip is simply a one-size-fits-most coiled plastic ring with a foam button on the bottom, that aligns with the pad of the user's finger. Not only does it allow for more precise key- and icon-pecking, but it also reduces

cont'd col. 2



candybar.

4. Hershey's Chocolate Kisses are provocatively placed on top of tender, mouth-watering cookies and rolled in sugar.

6. Scottish in origin, this rich, tender and crumbly straw colored biscuit (cookie) was once only served during Christmas and New Year's Eve (Hogmanay).

7. A ball-shaped cookie with chopped walnuts, rolled in powdered sugar.



finger oil smears on touchscreen devices.

The designers of the product have also suggested that it could also be worn over top of latex gloves in sterile environments such as hospitals, or used by individuals who don't want to directly touch public keypads or touchscreens. People with limited manual dexterity, such as the elderly, might likewise find it useful.

Prospective buyers should be aware that there are already other finger styluses available, such as the STINGER and the TrueTip. The iDigiTip's foam button appears to make it unique, however, as its competitors utilize a hard plastic tip instead. A pack of two iDigiTips can be purchased via the product website (<http://www.idigitip.com>)

November Corssword Solution

Across

4. GIZZARD—A part of a bird's stomach that contains tiny stones. It helps them grind up food for digestion.
8. OSCEOLA—This subspecies is only found on the Florida peninsula.
9. WATTLE—The flap of skin under the turkey's chin. Turns bright red when the turkey is upset or during courtship.
10. SPURS—What do male turkeys have (on their legs) that females do not?
11. JENNY—A first year female is called a _____
12. BEARD—A cluster of long, hairlike feathers from the center of the adult male turkey's chest.
13. HENS—Female turkeys
16. GOULDS—This southwestern turkey ranges throughout the central portion of Mexico into the southernmost parts of New Mexico and Arizona.
17. JAKE—A first year male is called a _____
18. CARUNCLES—Both males and females have fleshy growths on their heads known as _____

Down

1. GANG—A grouping of turkeys in the late summer/early fall.
2. MERRIAMS—This subspecies ranges along the Rocky Mountains and the neighboring prairies of Wyoming, Montana and South Dakota.
3. RIOGRANDE—This is the cowboy of the turkeys ranging through Texas and up into Oklahoma, Kansas and Colorado. Also found in parts of the northwestern states.
5. BENFRANKLIN—This person tried to convince the Continental Congress that the wild turkey should be our national bird.
6. POULT—A baby turkey or a chick
7. GOBBLERS—Adult male turkeys
14. EASTERN—This subspecies of the turkey is the most common and ranges the entire eastern half of the United States.
15. SNOODS—Fleshy protrubances that hang over the bill and can be extended or contracted at will. Usually much larger in an adult male. Probably developed as ways to attract mates.



Pheasant Fights Back

Bird well done!

North Dakota's most popular game bird is to blame for an incident that left about 7,700 Dickinson Montana-Dakota Utilities customers without power. It also started a fire. "A pheasant tried to perch on the line and that caused a fault and that's what set off the breakers at the substation," MDU spokesman Mark Hanson said, adding it's similar to how breakers work in homes. When a surge is detected, the breaker shuts down as a safety precaution.

Three of the five substations that serve the Dickinson, North Dakota area went down.

When the pheasant fell from the line it caused a small grass fire, he said. A circle of grass under the power line was on fire when

Dickinson Rural Fire Department firefighters responded, Chief Curt Lefor said, adding there was a lot of smoke because it was in thick grass, but it only took a few minutes to put out. The fire was south of Dickinson and about a mile east of Highway 22 on a section line. No one was injured, "just the pheasant," Lefor quipped.

The power went out at 7:26 a.m. and at 7:55 a.m. MDU had it restored to western and southern Dickinson. During the outage, police officers directed traffic across Dickinson due to nonfunctioning stoplights. By 8:30 a.m., the remaining customers had power, Hanson said.

After the incident, MDU crews installed a retrofit to the line to decrease the likelihood of harming wildlife, he said. "It makes the area they land on safer for them." However, birds and power lines have never mixed. Last week a Canadian goose got tangled in a power line near Dickinson, which also started a small grass fire, Lefor said.



BREAK - OVER

"Whenever you are asked if you can do a job, tell 'em, certainly I can! and get busy and find out how to do it."

Theodore Roosevelt

Merry Christmas My Friend

by Marine Lance Corporal James M. Schmidt (1986)

*'Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone,
In a one bedroom house made of plaster and stone.
I had come down the chimney, with presents to give
and to see just who in this home did live.*

*As I looked all about, a strange sight I did see,
no tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.
No stocking by the fire, just boots filled with sand.
On the wall hung pictures of a far distant land.*

*With medals and badges, awards of all kind,
a sobering thought soon came to my mind.
For this house was different, unlike any I'd seen.
This was the home of a U.S. Marine.*

*I'd heard stories about them, I had to see more,
so I walked down the hall and pushed open the door.
And there he lay sleeping, silent, alone,
Curled up on the floor in his one-bedroom home.*

*He seemed so gentle, his face so serene,
Not how I pictured a U.S. Marine.
Was this the hero, of whom I'd just read?
Curled up in his poncho, a floor for his bed?*

*His head was clean-shaven, his weathered face tan.
I soon understood, this was more than a man.
For I realized the families that I saw that night,
owed their lives to these men, who were willing to fight.*

*Soon around the Nation, the children would play,
And grown-ups would celebrate on a bright Christmas day.
They all enjoyed freedom, each month and all year,
because of Marines like this one lying here.*

*I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone,
on a cold Christmas Eve, in a land far from home.
Just the very thought brought a tear to my eye.
I dropped to my knees and I started to cry.*

*He must have awoken, for I heard a rough voice,
"Santa, don't cry, this life is my choice
I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more.
My life is my God, my country, my Corps."*



*With that he rolled over, drifted off into sleep,
I couldn't control it, I continued to weep.
I watched him for hours, so silent and still.
I noticed he shivered from the cold night's chill.*

*So I took off my jacket, the one made of red,
and covered this Marine from his toes to his head.
Then I put on his T-shirt of scarlet and gold,
with an eagle, globe and anchor emblazoned so bold.*

*And although it barely fit me, I began to swell with pride,
and for one shining moment, I was Marine Corps deep inside.
I didn't want to leave him so quiet in the night,
this guardian of honor so willing to fight.*

*But half asleep he rolled over, and in a voice clean and pure,
said "Carry on, Santa, it's Christmas Day, all secure."
One look at my watch and I knew he was right,
Merry Christmas my friend, Semper Fi and goodnight.*

BREAK - OVER



ARABIAN GULF F/A-18C Hornet assigned to the Golden Dragons of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 192 launches from the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74).

Only the Operators Change

The names remain the same!

Our objective as ARES volunteers is to provide our served agency with accurate, rapid communications when our services are requested. In pursuit of this goal we have developed a number of operational tools. Tactical callsigns are one of these tools.

The dictionary defines tactical as: *of or relating to small-scale actions serving a larger purpose.* This precisely explains our use of tactical callsigns.

Tactical callsigns are basically a plain language identifier assigned to a specific activity or location. Tactical call signs remain the same no matter who is operating the radio. The FCC callsign provides identification of the individual operating the equipment. The individual may change however the location call sign remains the same.

Let's take a look at a scenario and see how tactical callsigns operate. Suppose a snow storm has brought travel within the county to a halt. Large areas are without power, possibly five days before the lights come on in many areas. The Red Cross has opened several shelters around the county to provide assistance for those having a difficult time coping with the cold and lack of power.

This is a good application for a communications network using tactical callsigns. The central command and control of the emergency, and location of the Incident Commander, might be the county emergency operations center. This location might be assigned a tactical call of EOC. The Incident Commander may be shadowed by an ARES member, maybe designated as Shadow One. Shelters might be designated as "Shelter One" or "Shakopee Shelter" or "Senior High". Additional communications points might include a Red Cross office and various City office locations.

It becomes obvious that the "place" names must remain the same during the course of the emergency while ARES volunteers would work a shift at a location. The name stays the same, only the operators change.

Let's take a look at how the net works with tactical calls. The manager at Shelter Three needs to place an order for material from the EOC. The operator at the shelter would list their traffic on the net by making the call, "Shelter Three with one routine for EOC". NECOS would respond with the direction, "Shelter Three, Call EOC and pass one routine, N0HIC, OUT".

The EOC would respond, "This is EOC, ready to copy,

OVER." When the traffic had been received and all fills requested, the EOC would end their part of the exchange by saying, "EOC, ROGER, WB0GDE, OUT". The sending station would respond by saying, "Shelter Three, KC0KIL, OUT".

After this exchange the NECOS knows the two stations have successfully exchanged their information and assumes control of the net.

There are a few important points to note in the station identification and prowords used. The ONLY FCC callsign a station sends is their own. The station sends their FCC callsign at the end of their participation in an exchange, just prior to the proword OUT. This satisfies the FCC identification regulations.

The dialogue between the three stations involved; NECOS, Shelter Three, and EOC, is minimized as much as possible. We want to avoid cooking up Call Soup during a busy directed net!

Another important point is that at no time do either Shelter Three or EOC give direction to the NECOS. The phrase, "Back to Net" is NEVER used on a directed net. NEVER! Needless 'cool' phrases and time wasters will be the topic for next month.

BREAK - OVER



ARES Breakfast

Saturday, December 10th
7:30AM
Perkins Restaurant
Savage, MN

NECOS Schedule November 2011

5 Dec KC0YHH Tony
12 Dec N0PI Dan
19 Dec W0NFE Bob
26 Dec KB0FH Bob
2 Jan KC0YHH Tony
9 Jan N0PI Dan