

# St Clair Amateur Newsletter

December 2020

PO Box 94, Belleville, IL 62222

[www.scarc.net](http://www.scarc.net)

Club Repeaters: 147.120+ / 224.120- / 444.625+(pl 127.3) / 442.275+ (pl 127.3)

## Club Officers

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Activity Mgr- Jim Morgan  
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### VE Test Coordinator

Randy Bastian, KC9MZ

### Repeater Committee

Randy Bastian, KC9MZ  
Michael Petz, KA9HNT  
Gary Valentine, N8GIL - emeritus,  
John Sundstrom, WA0LIS - emeritus

### Emergency Comm Committee

Curtis Williams, W5DTR, SK

ARES/RACES Directed Net is normally conducted by  
Gene Kramer, WA9TZL  
(Tuesdays following the Club "on-the-air" meeting.)

## Curtis Williams, W5DTR, Silent Key

I am very sorry to advise all of you of the passing of Curtis Williams, ARO -W5DTR, who passed away on Saturday, December 12. I was informed by both our Club President and my partner with the ARRL ARES IL Section, N9LQF. The call to me was almost simultaneously concerning the passing of Curtis. I have delayed a bit in getting this information out to our SCARC members in hoping I would have more information as to funeral arrangements, especially during this COVID19 pandemic environment.

The announcement of Curtis as an SK was made on the ARES net last Tuesday evening and I know that our club president also announced it on the SCARC club net that follows the "early session" of the ARES net.

I have known W5DTR, since 1990 as he applied for his RACES/AUXCom membership with me back in Feb. 1990. When Curtis became the District Emergency Coordinator for the ARRL ARES®, he became my "supervisor" for the County ARRL ARES®. As only one of the several counties within Region VIII, he was responsible for the monthly reports of every county in the region and he would stay very active in the emergency amateur radio "Hospital Support Communications" system, now known as HARN (Hospital Amateur Radio Network). He also chaired the SCARC Communications Committee. He was a dedicated volunteer with the ITEC units prior to their relocation to Monroe County. Curtis was also a dedicated volunteer with the Fire Department communications.

To say Curtis will be missed is a huge understatement! His common sense operations to the ARRL ARES is unmatched, his personality top notch, his dedication as a volunteer-second to none. God's peace and grace upon the family and friends who had the honor to know Curtis Williams, W5DTR.

Gene WA9TZL

St. Clair County ARRL ARES EC

St. Clair County RACES/AuxCom KC9NPN

## Operating Events and HAMFESTS:

ARRL Straight Key Night 1800 CST December 31-1759 CST January 1 <http://www.arrl.org/straight-key-night>

ARRL RTTY Roundup January 2-3 <http://www.arrl.org/rtty-roundup>

ARRL RTTY January VHF Contest January 16 – 18 <http://www.arrl.org/january-vhf>

K1USN Radio Club Slow Speed CW contest (20 WPM max) Mondays 1800-1900 CST

<http://www.k1usn.com/sst.html>

CWops Test (CWT) Every Wednesday at 1300-1400Z, 1900-2000Z, and 0300-0400Z 28 to 45 kHz from the band edges [CWops Tests \(CWT\) – CWops](#)

RRI Training Broadcast Schedule Wednesday 2000 CDT (0200Z Thursday) 7060 kHz, and 2130 CDT (0330Z Thursday) 3563 KHz, Thursday 1900 CDT (0001Z Friday) 14060 KHz

**Meeting Date, Time and Location:** Next month's meeting will be on January 28<sup>th</sup> 2021 and it will be an "On the Air" meeting. Check-in starts at 8 pm CDT. Steve, W9ZA, will have the 224.12MHz Net at 7 pm.

**New Members:** New applications should be submitted to the Sgt. at Arms. Applications will be vetted by the Sgt. at Arms and will be brought forward for a vote at the next monthly meeting after being submitted. We look forward to meeting/greeting any new member because to grow our club, we must find people that love to talk (should not be too hard) and that would love to be on the radio. So putting the two together can make a dedicated enthusiast for HAM Radio. We welcome all new members and prospective members and thank them for their interest in Ham Radio.

### No SCARC License Testing in December

We will be offering a test session in January. If you or someone you know would like to test, please have them email me at [kc9mz@arrl.net](mailto:kc9mz@arrl.net).

### SCAN Needs Your Input, Articles

It would be great to hear from others amongst us about what operating activities you've involved with or what projects you've been working on. Thank you to Dave, WB1CDG, for the following:

# The Multi-Use Radio Service

WB1CDG

The Multi-Use Radio Service (MURS) is a little-known radio service that originated in the Fall of year 2000. It offers VHF frequencies for public use without a license, much like the old Citizen's Band. The five frequencies available in the MURS fall between 151.8-154.6 MHz. The FCC permits license-free operation in this band for low-power voice and data communications. The band acts much like 2 meters and is perfect for family use. Years ago, I invested in some heavy duty MURS handhelds for family use in areas where there were likely to be a lot of QRM from other license-free services like GMRS and FRS. Families with walkie-talkies in a concentrated area (like a cruise ship or campground) can make the GMRS/FRS walkies virtually unusable. But the MURS is pretty much a private band. It seems to be the best kept secret of the communications world.

This was, at one point, a business band. Businesses who were using the channels before MURS was created were permitted to continue using those channels after the advent of MURS. Those frequencies are called the "blue dot" and "green dot" channels in Part 90 of the FCC rules.

Frequency
151.82000 – Common Use
151.88000 – Common Use
151.94000 – Common Use
154.57000 – Common/Blue Dot "business" channel
154.60000 – Common/Blue Dot "business" channel

The FCC has put some limitations on MURS, of course. Antennas may not be more than 20 feet above a structure or 60 feet above the ground, whichever is greater. They require very narrow bandwidth channels (maximum 11.25 kHz bandwidth, with 2.5kHz deviation), however two of the channels are older and permit wider bandwidth (a 5 kHz deviation). PL codes are permitted on the band as well. Effective radiated power (ERP) was originally limited to 2 watts. But in late 2002, the FCC changed the power output limitation to 2 watts of transmitter power output (TPO), rather than ERP. Using TPO rather than ERP means that high-gain external antennas are permitted (Ya gis, quads, and beams of all varieties)! Telephone patches (connections to the public telephone network) are not permitted. Repeaters are not permitted, although it is possible that you might encounter an old, established business repeater on a Blue Dot or Green Dot channel; those are likely very old repeaters which have been "grandfathered" by the FCC and perfectly legal for the businesses to continue using.

Since the MURS channels are smack-dab in the middle of the VHF business band, virtually any commercial VHF business band radio can operate on those frequencies. Many of the current programmable VHF radios on the market can be tuned to operate on those channels as well (although not all of them are FCC Type-Accepted to operate in that slice of spectrum). Operators must only use legal, type-accepted MURS equipment, operated under the rules articulated in 47 CFR Part 95.

We purchased some dedicated MURS radios soon after the service was introduced, long before the flood of dirt-cheap programmable Chinese handie-talkies hit the US market. Our MURS-22 and MURS-25 handhelds were made by Topaz (supplier of Maxon, Legacy, and TruTalk communication products). We used them on cruises and when we went camping to ensure reliable communications among our family members. The radios themselves were commercial quality – better built than my amateur radio 2m handhelds. They were essentially kid-proof. We never had a problem competing with other families on the over-crowded GMRS and FRS radio services. Since the early 2000s, I've only heard a non-family transmission once... a delivery truck gave his location to his dispatcher. That's just once in over 20 years. Like I said in the beginning of this article, it's essentially a private band; it is perhaps the best-kept secret of the communications world. If you have a need for short-range, low-power communications with people who do not have ham radio licenses, then MURS might just be the answer!

73,

- Dave (WB1CDG)

I belong to an email reflector that recently had a "My first Station" thread. I enjoyed reading the many stories so much that I thought we could try that here at SCAN but with a column name of How I Got My Start in Radio. I'll start off and I welcome your story.

### How I Got My Start in Radio

Randy KC9MZ

I got my start in radio when I was in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

Someone my Mom worked with gave my parents a Telefunken Hi-Fi console phonograph/radio. The radio had the normal AM band, FM band, and 3 buttons that were marked "SW". Sometimes I wonder why they even brought it home because they seldom used it. But on cold winter mornings, my sister and I would hunker down in front of that big cabinet and listen to Belleville's very own 5,000-watt blaster, WIBV. We had some snow in the sixties, and surely the man on the radio (Norm Greenberg) would know that it was too cold and snowy to send kids to school!

Around the same time, my Dad took an assignment as a Navigator with the reserve group at Scott Field. It seemed like he was gone at least two or three weekends a month for a couple of years.

Each time he left the house, he'd turn on the Telefunken and press one of the SW buttons and set the time on his watch to WWV.

In those days, WWV would identify with both voice and code (A2) and my Dad told me what those dits and dahs meant.

After the time check, I'd crank the dial around to see what I could find. There were broadcasts from other countries with unique music, some lady who would only say "This is AT and T", some signals that sounded like Morse Code but without the musical tones, and all sorts of weird sounds!

That was the beginning. The next chapter started at Belleville Township High School West!

### FCC Proposes new fees for Amateur Radio!

The FCC is proposing a \$50 fee for new or modified Amateur Radio licenses, license renewals and vanity call signs.

This is all from the "Ray Baum's Act", part of Public Law 115-141.

Filing deadlines for comments have not yet been established.

This is condensed from <https://forums.grz.com/index.php?threads/fcc-proposes-new-filing-fee-structure-new-fees-for-ham-radio.722029/>

<http://www.arrl.org/news/fcc-proposes-to-reinstate-amateur-radio-service-fees>

According to the ARRL the FCC is already accepting comments.

<http://www.arrl.org/news/fcc-application-fee-proposal-proceeding-is-open-for-comments>

I suggest we take pen in hand and write our Congressman! (Or fingers on keyboard. For most of us it's Mike Bost <https://bost.house.gov/contact> )

Thanks to Tom W9KC, for tipping us off via the SCARC email reflector!

**So far, there have been 3,988 (117 in the last 90 days) comments on this proposal. Have you sent yours in? As of December 20<sup>th</sup> the FCC is still taking comments. You can view the comments here:**

[https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/search/filings?proceedings\\_name=20-270&sort=date\\_disseminated,DESC&submissiontype\\_description=COMMENT](https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/search/filings?proceedings_name=20-270&sort=date_disseminated,DESC&submissiontype_description=COMMENT)

## Here are some shorts:

We lost a good friend and 40 year member Curtis Williams, W5DTR, this month. Here is a little more information about his actives in Amateur Radio. I'll include his obituary at the back of SCAN.

Curtis earned his Amateur License when he was 13 while in high school in Arkansas. He eventually progressed to Extra class.

He has been a member of our club since the early 1980s. He was a past president (4 terms), and vice president. As a member of the repeater committee, he was very active in supporting and repairing our repeater. He led the club's emergency communications committee, and was a volunteer examiner.

Curtis had retired from Southwestern Bell and was a member of the Telephone Employees Amateur Radio Club since 1978.

He was a volunteer for the Signal Hill Fire Department.

He was a past ARRL Section Communications Manager of Arkansas, and an ARRL ARES District Emergency Coordinator for Southwestern Illinois. Curtis was active in the National Traffic System and past NNJ.

Thank you Curtis for your support of our club!

Everyone knows what a bad year 2020 has been. It's been especially bad for our Club. We have lost several current and past members this year: "Red" Becker WA9MGX, Lee Uhley WA9MMM, Bob Vago KC9ZHA, Bob Parrish W9BP, Thurman Carver WA9ZYE, John Sundstrom's WA0LIS wife, Andrea, Kevin's W9GK wife, Deborah, and Curtis Williams W5DTR. We offer our sympathy to their families and friends.

Don't forget the "Good Morning Net" M-F, 7-8am by Larry, K9LWW and the 224.12 MHz Net on Thursdays, 7 pm by Steve, W9ZS. Thank you guys for running these nets! (The Good Morning Net will not meet on Christmas morning.)

I've attached the SAVE Holiday Newsletter for your review. If you make a personal donation, let them know you belong to the radio club.

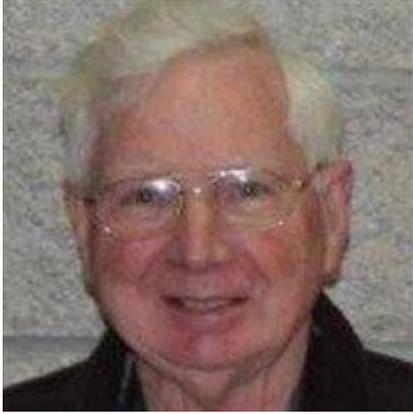
Please send anything you might have for SCAN to [kc9mz@arrl.net](mailto:kc9mz@arrl.net).

I hope you can check in to the meeting January 28<sup>th</sup> at 2000 CDT.

73 es gud dx,

Randy, KC9MZ





Curtis Williams W5DTR, SK

Curtis R. Williams, 78, of Belleville, died Saturday, December 12, 2020 at Missouri Baptist Hospital in St. Louis, MO. He was born December 5, 1942 in Paron, AR, the son of Harold and Lois, nee Curtis, Williams. He married Dolores High June 3, 1962 in Little Rock, AR and she survives in Belleville.

In addition to his wife he is survived by a daughter, Lyn (Rob) Morris of Belleville; a granddaughter, Danielle (Ryan) Wallace; a step-sister, Bonnie Clarke; a step-brother, Graham Clarke; a nephew, Josh Dutton; an aunt, Carolyn Hartsfield; and a cousin, Mike (Dee Dee) Curtis.

In addition to his parents he was preceded in death by his sister, Sandi Dutton.

Mr. Williams was an electrical engineer for over 30 years at Southwestern Bell/ATT. As a professional, he was meticulous in researching the subject matter with which he was tasked. At 13 he became an amateur radio operator with the call sign W5DTR, among others. He took pride and pleasure in helping the district maintain their radio equipment. He was a past trustee for Stookey Township; and was among the many people who believed in the Road District and rolled up his sleeves in service of its residents. He was an amateur meteorologist who stayed up during weather events to alert the road crews about the behavior of the storm and reported road hazards.

Curtis joined the Signal Hill Fire Protection Association on January 5, 2006 after visiting the fire house on the insistence of his granddaughter Dani. His desire to help was peaked and he saw he was able to help his community by joining the Fire Protection Association. Curtis became a member of the Board of Directors and his knowledge with communications systems quickly became a focus as he worked to understand and enhance a problematic paging system. Curtis also volunteered his time as a member of the Illinois Transportable Emergency Communications System. His knowledge again was valuable in not only keeping the equipment in a constant state of readiness, but he deployed as a communications specialist during a flooding event in Hardin Illinois. Another passion for Curtis was the weather. He made sure the Fire Department was kept aware of impending storms, tracked the amount of moisture that accumulated in the gauge at the firehouse and reported it to the National Weather Service, and helped to ensure that the Severe Storm Warning sirens in the district were ready and tested on a monthly basis. Somehow, Curtis found even more time and became the Treasurer for the Fire Protection Association. He spent hours signing checks and reviewing invoices, preparing financial documents and federal returns, researching where the Association could earn the most for its money, and ensuring for the financial stability of the Association. Curtis truly made an impact during his 15 years with the Signal Hill Fire Protection Association. Curtis was a true steward of the community in every aspect in which he found to serve and help. His dedication, knowledge, and most certainly his friendship will be missed by all who have ever met him.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date.

Memorials may be made to the Signal Hill Fire Department and will be received at Nordike Funeral Home, 15 E. Hanover St., New Baden, IL 62265 who is serving the family. From: Nordike Funeral Home

# Happy Holidays

As 2020 comes to a close for you and for SAVE, I think most of us will look back on this year as a strange and challenging one. As many of us make Holiday plans that aren't exactly what we'd prefer, likely one more detour we've made around the Covid 19 Pandemic, SAVE's mission hasn't changed. Even in these difficult times, or really especially now we need your help to accomplish that mission.

We're still busy providing homes and productive work opportunities for people with disabilities. Covid 19 has only added to their challenges and so to ours in supporting them. At a time when our state funding is down over 50% and will be down for another 6-12 months, we face additional costs keeping residents, our disabled workers, and those who supervise them safe. All while our regular costs are as high as ever.

We are managing despite these new challenges, and we have reason to be optimistic. As I write this just before Thanksgiving I'm grateful that the people who live at SAVE and those who assist them are all well. More broadly the news on treatments and a vaccine looks promising for all of us. All things to be thankful for.

Looking ahead our task is to get through this trial with everyone healthy and with our finances and programs ready to meet our mission moving forward. That's where a contribution from you can be particularly helpful this year.

Any contribution is welcome, but to give you an idea of what a contribution in \$ increments can mean to the people we serve, \$500 covers groceries for a month for 4 SAVE residents. If you're thinking of health, \$200 buys 100 N95 masks, the state of the art protective equipment we use if someone has symptoms that could be serious. \$100 nets a case of gloves at current inflated prices or a case of regular, every day masks. SAVE has a long history of "catching" people who fall through the social service system's cracks, and \$50 just about pays for one day of services in our Work Program for someone who needs the program but doesn't quite qualify for funding.

There are so many needs you can help meet so any contribution, however large or small brings our heartfelt appreciation. Many of you have supported SAVE in some fashion in the past, and we appreciate that help as together we've built a strong program. Together we can keep it strong until this current health crisis and funding challenge are behind us.

So if you're able, please donate to SAVE this Holiday Season. Thank you for your time and attention and we at SAVE all hope you have a joyful Holiday and a happy, safe New Year.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Wibbenmeyer".

Paul Wibbenmeyer

Please patronize our supporters!

