



W1AW Announces New Schedule for Digital Bulletin Transmissions

by ARRL

Beginning Monday, March 15, W1AW, the Hiram Percy Maxim Memorial Station, will alternate the digital modes used for its digital bulletin transmissions. While Baudot, PSK31 and MFSK16 still make up the digital mode complement, W1AW Station Manager Joe Carcia, NJ1Q, says that the schedule will be altered to give more exposure to PSK31 and MFSK16. "Because of time constraints and the varying lengths of digital bulletins, there were many instances where only Baudot was used," he said. "With the new schedule, amateurs preferring either PSK31 or MFSK16 will find these modes no longer secondary."

The regular callup will be made using the mode that is transmitted first. The digital bulletin times remain at 6 PM and 9 PM (Eastern Time) daily. The Tuesday and Friday Keplerian data bulletins will continue to be sent using just Baudot and PSK31.

The new digital schedule is as follows:

- * Monday: Baudot, PSK31, MFSK16
- * Tuesday: PSK31, MFSK16, Baudot
- * Wednesday: MFSK16, Baudot, PSK31
- * Thursday: Baudot, PSK31, MFSK16
- * Friday: PSK31, Baudot, MFSK16

The complete W1AW schedule can be found on the ARRL Web site.

For details on joining the Ten-Ten Club
go to
www.ten-ten.org/

ARRL Continuing Education Course Registration

by ARRL

Registration remains open through Sunday, March 21, 2010, for these online course sessions beginning on Friday, April 2, 2010: Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Level 1; Antenna Modeling; Radio Frequency Interference; Antenna Design and Construction; Ham Radio (Technician) License Course; Propagation; Analog Electronics, and Digital Electronics. To learn more, visit the CEP Course Listing page, www.arrl.org/cep/student, or contact the Continuing Education Program Coordinator, cce@arrl.org.

DX Notes & News...

by n29q

DX News for March: Cycle 24 may have been frustratingly slow to start but the last 30 days have seen solar flux levels and sunspot numbers not recorded in several years. In 2009, over 70% of the days were void of visible spots on the solar disk. Over the last 30 days there has been no day without at least one spot visible from Earth. Propagation on the HF bands has responded accordingly. The 20M band has been a buzz of activity most days, continuing into the evening hours. I have heard 4S7, VU, E5, ZL, and HS stations. It has been common to hear both European signals and South Pacific signals at the same time in the late afternoon on twenty. Activity on 15M 17M, 12M, and even 10M has also been on the upswing although they are still mainly daylight

Cuba – Look for special call **T46A** in the ARRL Phone Test. QSL to **CO6LC**.

Sable Island - The previously announced and postponed operation is now on for October. Murray/**WA4DAN**, Ron/**AA4VK**, Randy/**N0TG** and Rick/**AI5P** will operate home calls /**CY0**. QSL to their home call.

Bulgaria – Special event station **LZ132GO** will commemorate the 132nd anniversary of the countries' freedom from the Ottoman Empire during March. QSL to **LZ1ZF**.

Marion Island – DX Magazine's number 3 most wanted will be activated by Pierre, **ZF1HF** as **ZS8M** beginning the end of April. He will be on the island for the next year and will use wire antennas and possibly an amplifier depending on his weight limitations. This is a working assignment and so operating time will thus be limited. However he plans to move Marion well down the list by his departure in 2011.

Aves Island – Watch for a team from Venezuela to active **YV0** in April dependent upon military transport. Look for **YW0A**.

Iraq – A multinational team of ops has a ten day permit to operate from Kurdistan beginning Aril 3rd. This will be a contest style operation to maximize results. Callsign **YI9PSE**, details at **www.yi9pse.com**. Donations are sought as well.

Notes for March – This month I want to address using Log Book of The World. ARRL opened LoTW several years ago and if you are not using it, I would sure ask yourself why not? It can save you lots of time and expense when chasing confirmations (QSL's) for DXCC and WAS. The use of the service is free to ARRL members and you only pay when you claim a credit for a QSO. And that cost is only about 25 cents or less each. When you consider the cost of a printed card, the postage to mail it overseas (98 cents) and the one or two IRC's you need to send to get a return (at \$2.10 each), LoTW is a real bargain. In fact for many the cost savings might well pay for your yearly ARRL membership. Also it provides a convenient way to view your total DXCC or WAS record. You can also file paperless applications on line for both awards, and in the future, look for other ARRL awards to be brought into LoTW.

LoTW can be a bit daunting to set up and requires a bit of patience in doing so but is easy to use once you get past the initial setup. Your files and records can be accessed using any of the common browsers (Internet Explorer, Firefox, etc.). The only necessary item that you must provide is an electronic log in ADIF format. Many of the free or for fee electronic logbooks can export the log in that format.



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If you don't already keep an electronic log, maybe now is the time to start. Many other benefits come with an electronic log. Fast printing of QSL labels, searching the log for a long ago contact or searching for old 75M band countries when 5BDXCC beckons. If you need help getting started, the ARRL has a fine tutorial on line and there are several in the club already using LoTW. I would be glad to help as I am sure the other users would be as well. Logs can be uploaded directly to LoTW and within a few seconds you will know if you have a match from any of your QSO's. And therein lies a major issue. Both parties to the QSO must be LoTW users for the system to work. So the more users, the better the return on your efforts. Granted we will never see 100% participation but everyone should consider joining the program and encourage others to do the same, especially DX stations. Just think, complete a contact with some distant DX station, upload the log to LoTW and within minutes you have your QSL. That isn't a daydream, it can and does happen now.

Good hunting on the bands... and remember the first rule of DX; always listen, listen, listen before calling.

Thanks to the ARRL DX Bulletins, the OPDX Bulletin and the 425DXN Bulletin for some of the information above.

73, and good DX, Mike, **NA9Q**

Poser

short answer

- What is a skimmer?
- What is a beacon?
- What is a reverse beacon?

Answer to the poser appears on "Poser Answer" on page 5.

BARC Member Doings

If you participated in a ham-radio-related activity during the past month, drop a line to W0KT. This is your monthly opportunity to promote your favored activities or for a moment of fame.

SACMARC - K0AIR

As trustee of the SACMARC call K0AIR, I have, in the last 3 months, started to work as many DX stations as possible. If I hear a station, I check to see if I have worked it with my call. If I have, then I see if I have worked that country with the club call. If not I attempt to do so. In the past three months I have brought the total of countries worked for the SACMARC club up to 78 from a previous count of only 12 countries. It's not hard to do. Just have the radio on while you are on the computer or while watching the Olympics and tune across the bands listening for the pileups. Sure glad propagation is improving a bit.

Frank - AA0ZP

CQ WW RTTY WPX

My WinWarbler digital mode program claims to work with RTTY, so I tried it. Unfortunately the program just works for a little while on my vintage laptop, then either locks up or fails to switch from transmit back to receive. I managed to work just three stations on RTTY, but one of them was in AR, and he confirmed the contact via LoTW. AR was my fiftieth state on 40 meters to be confirmed via LotW, so I now have WAS LoTW on one more band. With the sunspots becoming more frequent I hope to get WAS LoTW on some of the higher bands soon.

--W0KT

ARRL DX Contest CW

I put several hours into this contest, making over 100 QSOs, including several on 10 meters. Hello, sunspots! If you want to work some DX, be sure to try the ARRL DX Contest Phone on the weekend of March 6 (begins 6:00 p.m. on Friday).

--W0KT

CQ 160 Meter SSB

My 160 antenna is my 80 meter dipole with the shield and center conductor shorted, to become a vertical, starting at the output of the tuner. I had to turn the power down to 50 watts because of RF getting into the microphone. Most of the time, when I would call a station, I heard another CQ, indicating that I wasn't heard at all, even with no competition. I managed 23 QSOs in about two hours of operation. In a 160 meter CW contest I manage to work almost every station I hear, even though they may need repeats. An operator with a modest phone station has to be very determined and undaunted by being ignored in order to work a contest. CW contests are way more fun.

--W0KT

Field Day 2010 Planning

by Rick, W0KT

Field Day this year begins on Saturday, June 26. This installment discusses computer logging.

The club has chosen the N3FJP FD program for logging, as it is easy to combine the outputs of several computers together in order to submit a contest entry.

The screenshot shows a logging software interface with two main panels. The top panel, titled 'Recent Contacts', displays a table of contact logs. The bottom panel, titled 'Score Statistics', shows various performance metrics.

Rec#	Call	Class	Sec	Date	Time	Bnd	Mode	Opr
956	VE3YAA	2D	ON	6/28	17:55	40	CW	FT
955	VE3ZI	2A	ON	6/28	17:50	40	CW	FT
954	K4NVA	3A	VA	6/28	17:42	40	CW	FT
953	KASZZN	1B	OK	6/28	17:40	40	CW	FT
952	W8CDZ	2A	MI	6/28	17:37	40	CW	FT
951	W3SK	4A	EPA	6/28	17:35	40	CW	FT

Score Statistics	
Total CW Contacts.....	674
Total Digital Contacts...	0
Total Phone Contacts...	282
Total QSO Points.....	1630
QSOs / Hr (last 20 min)	0
QSOs / Hr (last 60 min)	0

Call	Class	Section
1	3	AB MTX
2	4	LA OK
3	5	DE MDC
4	6	EPA WPA
5	7	NH MTX
6	8	WMA
7	9	WVA
8	10	WY
9	11	WY
10	12	WY

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Beacon

You probably learned the definition of a beacon when you studied for your license. Most HF and VHF bands have space set aside for automated stations which listeners can attempt to tune in to determine whether there is propagation to a particular location.

Reverse beacon

Instead of beacons actively transmitting signals, a reverse beacon consists of a receiver/computer listening to the bands and reporting on the Internet what stations it hears, when, and how loud. Typically, skimming technology is used to extract the call signs. While CW is an obvious application, any other digital mode can be skimmed. Also, if voice-recognition technology were used, voice signals could be skimmed also (probably not very well). Check out

www.reversebeacon.net

Ham Events

If you have an event that you want to have listed, be sure to send an e-mail to the *Spark Gap*. Editor-recommended events are **highlighted**.

Ham-Related Events

event type	start date	event description
contest	Mar 6	ARRL DX contest phone - www.arrl.org
hamfest	Mar 6	McClelland, IA - www.swiarc.org
BARC Board mtg	Mar 11	7:30 PM, - www.bellevuearc.org
contest	Mar 13	Feld Hell Sprint
contest	Mar 14	North American Sprint, RTTY - www.ncjweb.com/sprinrules.php
contest	Mar 14	Wisconsin QSO Party - www.warac.org
BARC club mtg	Mar 18	7:30 PM club meeting - www.bellevuearc.org

Ham-Related Events

event type	start date	event description
hamfest	Mar 20	ARRL Nebraska State Convention - lincolnhamfest.org
contest	Mar 20	Virginia QSO Party
special event	Mar 21	Mesilla Valley Radio Club, K5B. Bataan Memorial Death March Marathon - www.n5bl.org/bataan
contest	Mar 21	10-10 Mobile QSO Party - www.ten-ten.org
contest	Mar 21	Oklahoma QSO Party - www.okdxa.org
contest	Mar 21	North Dakota QSO Party - k0ln.com
education	Mar 22	Storm spotter training - www.crh.noaa.gov/oax/skywarn/outreach.php
education	Mar 25	FCC license examinations - Lincoln, NE - K0IH@ARRL.NET
education	Mar 27	FCC license examinations, Midlands Hospital - www.bellevuearc.org
education	Mar 27	Central Plains Severe Wx Symposium. - www.lincolnweather.org/cpsws2010.html .
contest	Mar 27	CQ WW WPX Contest, SSB - www.cqwp.com
education	Apr 1	Storm spotter training - http://www.crh.noaa.gov/oax/skywarn/outreach.php
BARC Board mtg	Apr 8	7:30 PM, - www.bellevuearc.org
special event	Apr 9	Titanic Historical Society, W1MGY. 98th anniversary of the Titanic voyage - www.hcra.org/titanic.htm
BARC club mtg	Apr 15	7:30 PM club meeting - www.bellevuearc.org
special event	Apr 17	Great South Bay Amateur Radio Club, W2GSB. Boy Scout Camporee- Info@gsbarc.org or www.gsbarc.org
public service	Apr 24	MS Walk, Omaha - www.aksarbenarc.org/

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Ham-Related Events

event type	start date	event description
contest	Apr 24	Nebraska QSO party - www.hdxa.net/neqso/index.htm
special event	Apr 30	Annual DX-Pedition to Gay Head Lighthouse, Martha's Vineyard - hamcow.net
public service	May 8	MS 1-Day Bike Ride, Iowa Western Community College - kb0zzt@usa.net
public service	Jul 10	MS 2-Day Bike Ride, Omaha to Lincoln - kb0zzt@usa.net
public service	Aug 21	Arrows to Aerospace Parade - kb0zzt@usa.net
public service	Aug 28	Offutt AFB Air Show - www.bellevuearc.org
public service	Sep 26	Make-A-Wish Bike Ride, South-West Iowa - kb0zzt@usa.net
public service	Oct 9	Market-to-Market Relay Race - www.bellevuearc.org
public service	Nov 6	Veterans Day Parade - kb0zzt@usa.net

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February Program

Due to the absence of an after-meeting presentation, members just scurried off for home to see *The Mentalist* or scantily clad olympic ice skaters on the tube.

BARC March Meeting Program

The business meeting will be followed by a technical presentation.

ARRL

Nebraska State Convention

End of Winter Hamfest

Hosted by the Lincoln Amateur Radio Club

Saturday, March 20, 2010

Flea Market - Forums - VE Testing
CW Certification

Lancaster Event Center
84th and Havelock, Lincoln

Please ask for the NEBRASKA STATE ARRL CONVENTION DISCOUNT RATES at STAYBRIDGE SUITES HOTEL

Hours

8:00 AM to 4:00 PM

We'll have TWO VE Exam sessions. Stop in anytime between 8 and 10 AM OR 1 to 3 PM

EXHIBITORS

D&L Antenna Supply; WBØW; Creative Edge Monograms
NØTT-QSL Cards, WØTOK Books, other

Forums & Fun

Art Zygielbaum- KØAIZ Nebraska Section Manager

Jon Morris, KAØJGG (Nebraska SEC), Emergency Communications

Bob Allison, WB1GCM (ARRL HQ) A look inside the ARRL Lab

Cathy Zapotocny, WBØZAP National Weather Service – Valley, NE, Storm season predictions from the National Weather Service

Lonnie Rech, WDØAOP, Logbook of the World

Joe Dawson, KBØLQR (Assistant Chief Engineer, KLKN-TV), Tower construction and safety demonstration

Admission and Table Prices

Admission for everyone 18 and over \$5.00 each until March 1, 2010 After March 1 goes up to \$8.00 for Non-LARC Members. No Charge for anyone under 18.

Early registrations are encouraged; Tickets will be available for purchase to increase chances for winning any door prize drawings.

8-ft Flea Market tables before March 1, 2010--\$10.00 each. After March 1-19, 2010 --\$15.00 AT the Door \$20.00.

Send payment to LARC: PO Box 5006; Lincoln, NE 68505

Prizes

Great Hourly Prizes!
Grand Prize Drawing at 4:00 PM

For additional information see

www.lincolnhamfest.org

Chairman – Joe Eisenberg, [KØNEB](http://www.koneb.com)

General Manager – Reynolds Davis, [KØGND](http://www.kognd.com)

Treasurer - Carla Dawson, [KØDFR](http://www.kcodfr.com)

TALK-IN on KØKKV 146.76(-)

D-Star 145.25(-)

APRS beacon on 144.39

FREE
PARKING

[Google Map](#)
[Lancaster Event Center](#)
[Lincoln NE](#)

Bring the Family! The Event Center also hosts the [Husker Lawn and Leisure Show](#) on March 20-22, 2009