



# TMRA Amateur Radio Beacon

January 2010



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## The Prez Sez

Best wishes to all for the Holiday Season: the annual TMRA Christmas party was held last month in place of our usual general meeting on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. Turnout seemed to be about 40 members and their guests - the only time that I could count was when everyone was seated eating, and by the time, so was I. Many thanks go to Sandra, KD8HYS, for organizing the party, and I assume that she was helped in this by her father, Bob, N8WBG. Thanks are also due to Brenda, KB8IUP; Pat, KC8WQU and Rita, WB8FBG, for their work with the arrangements too, and thanks to all for the great foods that were brought.

Another reminder, and yes, it won't be the last - that the Hamfest is less than 3 months away: please consider volunteering some time the afternoon and evening of the day before - that is Saturday March 20 - to help our vendors get their stuff into the buildings. There can be no driving of vehicles into the actual halls where the tables will be. On the reasonable assumption that they won't sell everything they bring - helping them getting their stuff out of the halls Sunday afternoon will also be important.



With the start of a new year, this seems to be the time for some people to look into the future and make predictions. It's also a time when some newspaper reporters won't let some predictors forget how wrong they were. A recent article in the Wall Street Journal listed a few that are close to our hearts: Bill Gates in 1981: "No-one will need more than 637 kb of memory for a personal computer - 640K ought to be enough for anybody." Ken Olsen, founder of Digital Equipment Technology (DEC) in 1977: "There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home." Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM in 1943: "I think there is a world market for maybe 5 computers." IBM in 1959 commented to the people who started Xerox "The world potential for copying machines is 5,000 at most." Not everyone gets it wrong; the WSJ article also pointed out that the science fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke wrote in 1977 that there would be: "Immediate access in the home via simple computer-type keyboards and TV displays to all the world's great libraries" "and items needed for permanent reference could be printed off as soon as located on a copying machine - or filed magnetically in the home storage system."

73, Brian WD8MXR

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## VE Session 12/12/09

Congrats to: Terry, KD8MRQ, Tech; Kent, KD8MRR, Tech; James, K8JDG, General; Harry, KC8ZVG, General; Mark, KC8CUN, General; Bryan, KD8KCF, General; Bob, AC8FE, Extra. (Ex KD8IMG)

Thanks to all VE's that helped in 2009

Steve, KC8TVW

## Bennett Venture Academy Talks with ISS Crew

On November 20, 2009 twenty students from Toledo's Bennett Venture Academy made contact via ham radio with Flight Engineer Robert Thirsk on board the International Space Station some 248 miles above the Earth as the station flew over Ohio early in the afternoon.

ARISS Mentor and control operator Steve, KB9UPS and members of TMRA set up ham equipment on Saturday at the school. The twin high gain antennas proved to be a challenge to set up on the school's hipped roof. Also set up were the back up antennas and a UHF link beam used to connect to Chris's IRLP node at his home and linked with the discovery reflector on the web via the IRLP 9010 node. Audio was sent into the AMSAT conference node "Echolink" via a Skype connection to Graham Layton G7EVY in the United Kingdom.

Attendance on Friday totaled nearly 800 students, staff, parents and media. Media on hand included Toledo's WTOL TV 11, and TV 24. Both stations aired very good spots showing how ham radio can influence students in science, math and technology on the 5 o'clock news Friday night.

Although the contact lasted only just under ten minutes everyone watch and listened for the first words to crack from the speakers as the call came in from Astronaut Robert Thirsk saying he was ready for questions from the students. As the ISS faded over the horizon and signal was lost everyone in the room exploded with applause and cheers. Smiles could be seen on the faces of everyone there.

ARISS (Amateur Radio on the International Space Station) is looking for more schools to participate in the program, if anyone knows or would like to bring the program to your school please contact me at [kb9ups@yahoo.com](mailto:kb9ups@yahoo.com) or check out the web at <http://www.rac.ca/ariss/oindex.htm> and I'll be happy to help organize the contact with your school.

*From: [www.nasa.gov/ISS](http://www.nasa.gov/ISS)*

Dr. Thirsk has been involved in various Canadian Space Agency projects including parabolic flight campaigns and mission planning. He served as crew commander for two space mission simulations: the seven-day CAPSULES mission in 1994, at Defence Research and Development Canada in Toronto, and the 11-day NEEMO 7 undersea mission in 2004 at the National Undersea Research Center in Key Largo, Florida. He led an international research team investigating the effect of weightlessness on the heart and blood vessels. He works with educational specialists in Canada to develop space-related curriculum for grade school students. Initiatives such as Canolab, Space for Species, and Tomatosphere have allowed thousands of young Canadians to experience the thrill of scientific discovery.

In June and July 1996, Dr. Thirsk flew as a payload specialist aboard space shuttle mission STS-78, the Life and Microgravity Spacelab (LMS) mission. During this 17-day flight aboard Columbia, he and his six crewmates performed 43 international experiments devoted to the study of life and materials sciences. The life science experiments investigated changes in plants, animals, and humans under space flight conditions. The materials science experiments examined protein crystallization, fluid physics and high-temperature solidification of multi-phase materials in a weightless environment.

In 1998, Dr. Thirsk was assigned by the Canadian Space Agency to NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston to pursue mission specialist training. This training program involved advanced instruction on both shuttle and space station systems, EVA (spacewalking), robotic operations, and Russian language. Within the NASA Astronaut Office, Dr. Thirsk serves as a Capcom (capsule communicator) for the International Space Station (ISS) program. Capcoms participate in actual and simulated space missions as a communication link between the ground team at Mission Control and the astronauts in orbit. Capcoms speak directly with the space station crew, and assist with technical planning for the mission and last-minute troubleshooting.

In 2004, Dr. Thirsk trained at the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Centre near Moscow and became certified as a Flight Engineer for the Soyuz spacecraft. He served as backup Flight Engineer to European Space Agency

(ESA) astronaut Roberto Vittori for the Soyuz 10S taxi mission to the ISS in April 2005. During the 10-day mission, Dr. Thirsk worked as Crew Interface Coordinator (i.e. European Capcom) at the Columbus Control Centre in Germany.

Dr. Thirsk has now returned to the Johnson Space Center in Houston and has begun ISS Expedition crew training. He is currently assigned to the Expedition-19 crew and scheduled to arrive at the International Space Station in May 2009 aboard a Soyuz spacecraft.

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## NCVEC Releases New Technician Class Question Pool

The Question Pool Committee (QPC) of the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators (NCVEC) released the new Technician class (Element 2) question pool on Monday, January 4. This new question pool will become effective for all examinations administered on or after July 1, 2010; it will remain valid until June 30, 2014.

The current Technician question pool that became effective July 1, 2006 will expire June 30, 2010.

The new Technician pool contains approximately 400 questions, from which 35 are selected for an Element 2 examination; it will contain graphics and diagrams, something new for this element.

The current General class question pool was effective July 1, 2007 and is valid through June 30, 2011.

The current Amateur Extra class pool was effective July 1, 2008 and is valid until June 30, 2012.

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## MARS Gets New Name As It Fine Tunes Mission

On Wednesday, December 23, the Department of Defense (DoD) issued an Instruction concerning MARS, effective immediately. This Instruction gives the three MARS services -- Army, Air Force and Navy/Marine Corps -- a new focus on homeland security and a new name: Military Auxiliary Radio System. The Instruction is the first major revision to MARS since January 26, 1988 -- as such, the first revision since the 9/11 attacks and Hurricane Katrina, two major events that changed the way Amateur Radio dealt with emergency communications.

The DoD defines a "military auxiliary" as "an organized body of volunteers prepared to supplement the uniformed services or any designated civilian authorities by provision of specialized autonomous services when called upon or when situations warrant," and gives the Civil Air Patrol and Coast Guard Auxiliary as examples of auxiliaries.

In the past, MARS had focused primarily on emergency communications and health and welfare support. The DoD's Instruction now directs the three MARS services to provide "contingency radio communications" to support US government operations, DoD components and "civil authorities at all levels," providing for national security and emergency preparedness events. MARS units will still continue to provide health and welfare communications support "to military members, civilian employees and contractors of DoD Components, and civil agency employees and contractors, when in remote or isolated areas, in contingencies or whenever appropriate." MARS must also be capable of operation in "radio only" modes -- without landlines or the Internet -- and sustainable on emergency power (when public utility power has failed); some MARS stations must be transportable for timely deployment.

The Instruction, however, does not mention which of the three MARS services will take the lead when responding to events. According to sources, this has been seen as a critical issue in conforming to the National Incident Management System (NIMS) that calls for "unity of command." As now constituted, the three separate MARS services are supposed to "interoperate," but command-wise, each operates independently. Some MARS members had urged clarification on this issue to avoid confusion during an emergency, sources said.

The Instruction also dictates that MARS leaders will now report to three DoD officials; before this revision, they only reported to one person. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Security and Americas Security Affairs (ASD [HD&ASA]) now has primary responsibility for the MARS Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) mission. In addition, MARS leaders will report to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Networks and Information Integration/DoD Chief Information Officer (ASD[NII]/DoD CIO) and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Logistics and Material Readiness (ASD[L&MR]). In the 1998 charter, oversight of MARS was assigned to a single top official, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence.

This revision -- which was years in the making -- keeps the Navy/Marine Corps MARS intact; until now, members of this MARS service were concerned that their part of MARS might be terminated by Navy commanders.

The Instruction also gives some new perks to MARS members. Active duty military personnel who are affiliated with MARS may be able to earn Reserve points based on service in MARS and, in cases of permanent change of station, qualify for weight exemption for transportation of MARS communications equipment. All members may be considered for benefits associated with DoD civilian service, such as access to DoD morale, welfare and recreation Category C recreational facilities and access to DoD credit unions.

Membership in any of the three MARS services is open to qualified active duty, Guard and Reserve personnel, as well as those in civilian agencies who report to civil authorities or their supporting organizations (including nongovernmental organizations) and private US citizens who meet age, education and other criteria -- such as an FCC-issued Amateur Radio license -- imposed by a DoD Component MARS office.

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***Next TMRA meeting will be on Wednesday, Jan. 13 at The Electrical Industry Building. Important information about the upcoming TMRA Hamfest will be presented.***

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THE TOLEDO MOBILE RADIO ASSOCIATION P.O. BOX 9673, TOLEDO, OH. 43697-9673

President, Brian, WD8MXR; Vice-President, Steve, W8TER; Secretary, Ron, N8RLH;

Treasurer, Brenda, KB8IUP; Public Information Officer, Steve, KC8TVW.

Board Members: Dave, KB8EH; Chris, KC8UFV; Steve, KC8TVW; Tom, KB8PAI; Rita, WB8FBG; Dan, KE8UE.

TMRA Home Page [www.tmrahamradio.org](http://www.tmrahamradio.org) Webmaster, Tom, KB8PAI.

TMRA W8HHF Repeaters; 147.270+, 224.140-, 442.850+ (TMRA 2 meter, 220, and 440 repeaters operate with a 103.5 "PL", or a touch-tone access code of 1-2-3) Please "ID" before using phone-patch.

(10 digit dialing, \*up and #down)

TMRA W8HHF Packet BBS Frequencies 51.780, 145.690, 223.480, 441.060

The TMRA meets at 7:30 PM every second Wednesday in

The Electrical Industry Building, Lime City Rd. Rossford, Ohio.

The TMRA Q & A net meets every Sunday night at 7:30 PM, followed by the TMRA "Information & Swap 'N-Shop" net at 8:30 on the 147.270+ repeater. All amateurs are invited to check-in.