

# The *Microvolt*

March, 2009



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UARC  
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Prologue

The Utah Amateur Radio Club was organized under its present name in 1927, although its beginnings may date back as early as 1909. In 1928, it became affiliated with the American Radio Relay League (club #1602) and is a non-profit organization under the laws of Utah. It holds a club station license with the call W7SP, a memorial call for Leonard (Zim) Zimmerman, an amateur radio pioneer in the Salt Lake City area.

Meetings: The club meets each month except July and August. The meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month at 7:30 PM in the University of Utah's Warnock Engineering Building in room 101.

Membership: Club membership is open to anyone interested in amateur radio; a current license is not required. Dues are \$17 per year, including a Microvolt subscription. The Microvolt and membership cannot be separated. Those living at the same address as a member who has paid \$17 may obtain a membership without a Microvolt subscription for \$9. Send dues to the Club Secretary: Dick Keddington, KD7TDZ, 1933 Woodside Drive, Holladay, UT 84124-1632.

Contributions: Monetary contributions are gladly accepted. Send directly to the Club Treasurer: Chuck Johnson, 1612 W. 4915 S. Taylorsville, UT 84123-4244. For in kind contributions, please contact any board member to make appropriate arrangements.

Repeaters: UARC maintains the 146.62- and 146.76- repeaters. The repeaters are administered by the UARC Repeater Committee. Comments and questions may be directed to any Committee member. The Lake Mountain repeater (146.76-) is IRLP node 3352. Instructions for IRLP use are on the club website.

Ham Hot-Line: The Utah Amateur Radio Club (UARC) has a Ham Hotline, 583-3002. Information regarding Amateur Radio can be obtained, including club, testing, meeting, and membership information. If no one answers leave your name, telephone number and a short message on the answering machine, and your call will be returned.

Publication: The Microvolt is the official publication of the club. Deadline for submissions to The Microvolt is the 17th of each month prior to publication. Submissions by email are preferred (uarc@xmission.com), but other means including diskettes and typewritten submissions can be mailed directly to: Gordon Smith, 632 University St., Salt Lake City, UT 84102-3213. All submissions are welcome but what is printed and how it is edited are the responsibility of the Editor and the UARC board. Reprints are allowed with proper credits to The Microvolt, UARC, and authors. Changes in mailing address should be communicated to the Club Secretary: Dick Keddington, 1933 Woodside Drive, Holladay, UT, 84124-1632.

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IRLP Information

For information on using the club's IRLP node on the 146.76 repeater, check http://www.utaharc.org/irlp.

For late breaking news listen to the UARC Information Net Sundays at 21:00 on 146.62 or set your browser to: www.xmission.com/~uarc/announce.html

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# The Microvolt

The Official Publication of the Utah Amateur Radio Club, Salt Lake City, Utah  
Volume 52, Issue 3, March 2009

## March Meeting: DX QSLing and Logging

You put up a great antenna. You hear a country you need. You pounce, and, low and behold, he comes back to you! Success! You're one country closer to DXCC, right? Well, maybe not. Some operators will tell you that working them is the easy part; the real challenge is getting them to send you a QSL card. There are operators who can tell you that their efforts to get a QSL have sometimes extended over years including sending multiple QSLs as well as International Reply Coupons, cash, and considerable pleading. So what's the answer?

For our March UARC meeting, to be held Thursday, March 5, we have been able to arrange for Mark Richardson, W7HPW, to tell us about the art and methodology of getting your contacts confirmed. Mark, a former UARC President, is a seasoned DXer with a great station and an enviable number of countries worked on a variety of bands and modes. He will be telling us some of the secrets and the options for QSLing and logging.

Why is it so difficult to get DX stations to QSL? Shouldn't they want a card for the exchange as much as we do? Is it better to QSL direct, use the bureau, use a QSL manager, or use electronic QSLing? Do you need to use a computer logging program? What are the relative advantages and disadvantages of the various electronic QSL services? These are some of the questions that Mark will be answering along with any questions you may want to ask.

The March meeting will also feature a chance to take a survey telling the officers what you would like in the way of topics for coming programs. There is a list of possibilities along with plenty of room to write in things that the Board may not have thought of. Let us know what you'd like to see.

Our meetings this winter and spring are being held in the Warnock Engineering Building, room 101. This portion of the building was previously known as the Engineering and Mines Classroom Building. For maps and instructions for reaching it, see <http://www.xmission.com/~uarc/meetmap.html>.

Of course, the meeting will include the "standard" meeting features:

- Availability of ARRL books from Fred, the "book lady"
- An opportunity to join UARC or renew your membership
- An opportunity to join ARRL or renew your membership
- The chance to meet face-to-face the people you talk to on the air
- The "Meeting after the meeting": A chance to enjoy pizza or other gastronomic delights with other hams. It happens at Litza's Pizza, 716 E. 400 South.
- The "Meeting *before* the meeting": A similar get-together for those who can leave work early enough to get there by 5:15 P.M. The March event will be at Crown Burger, 377 E. 200 South, in Salt Lake City.

## Latest News

### Our Cover

Our cover this month is from the February UARC meeting. John Long, KW7A, is showing off some of the software-defined radio hardware — an inexpensive way to try out the SDR concept using the power of a PC that you may already have.

Thanks to Ron Speirs, K7RLS, for the photo.

### Meeting Night Change Passes

UARC has been meeting on the first Thursday of the month since sometime back in the 1970's, but at the last two meetings a proposition was put to the membership to change to the *second* Thursday of each month. There was only one dissenting vote at each of the two meetings, so it appears the proposal has wide support and is considered to have passed the vote. The change will take place beginning with the September meeting of 2009.

The primary reason for changing the meeting night was to avoid the parking problems at the October meeting, which invariably conflicts with a University of Utah football game. The change should also solve the problem of needing to move the May meeting to the second Thursday to avoid finals week at the University, and to eliminate the occasional need to hold a meeting on the New Years Day holiday.

### Field Day Chairman Found

Andy Johnson, KE7UQQ, has agreed to be the Field Day Chairman for UARC's 2009 entry in the annual Field Day contest. Andy is a relatively new member of UARC and is featured as "Member of the Month" elsewhere in this issue.

Andy's job is a big one and he will need a lot of

help. It is hoped to put together a Field Day Committee of people who can help out with various aspects of the event including rigs, antennas, tents, power, operators, bonus points, computers, tables and chairs, and the Saturday night dinner. Anyone who would like to help on the committee should get in touch with Andy at (801) 706-8369.

Field Day is an annual nationwide contest sponsored by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) and held each year on the fourth full weekend in June. (This year's dates are June 27 and 28.) The contest objective is for portable and mobile stations to work as many stations as possible during a 24-hour period. The purpose of such a contest is to provide experience setting up and operating a station in a location where no utilities are available, such as might be necessary in an emergency. It also gives operators experience in passing information rapidly and accurately in what may be less than ideal conditions — another valuable skill during times of emergency.

UARC traditionally enters as a club station with several simultaneous transmitters from a site near Payson Lakes on the Mt. Nebo Scenic Loop. Many enjoy it as a family campout combined with a chance to operate on the HF bands.

We typically make close to 2000 contacts during the 24-hour period and contact every state in the union, or come very close to it. With more operators we could do even better.

The Field Day rules can be found online at: <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2009/fd.html> . In 2008 we entered in the 2A category (Club or group portable with two simultaneous transmitters.)

## UARC Joins Swapmeet Sponsorship

UARC has agreed to join with the Davis County Amateur Radio Club (DCARC) and the Ogden Amateur Radio Club (OARC) to sponsor an annual Davis County swapmeet held outdoors on the third Saturday in September. The event is normally held at a public park. It has grown in recent years and a larger venue would be helpful. We will provide more details as we get closer to the time of the event.

## Take A Survey

What meeting programs would you like to see in the future? Are you more interested in antennas?

VHF operating? HF operating? Homebrew techniques? Moonbounce? There's now an easy way you can tell us what you'd like to see. We have a survey (created by Jed Petrovich, AD7KG, one of our Program Chairpersons) that can be taken on-line. Just go to: <http://utaharc.org/Survey> and check your preferences. (Be sure to observe the indicated capitalization of "Survey.") This will help us choose some of the more popular topics for coming meetings.

If you're computer-challenged (or not an Internet subscriber) you are still invited to take the survey. We will have the survey available on paper at the coming meeting and possible a meeting or two after that. Just fill it out and return it with your ideas. (The officers would appreciate it, though, if you submitted only *once!*)

## Member of the Month: Andy Johnson, KE7UQO

By Linda Reeder, N7HVF



This month we are featuring Andy Johnson, KE7UQO. It was Bruce Clark, KJ7BC, Andy's scoutmaster, who got him interested in amateur radio many years ago. Andy said he just didn't know anyone who was in the hobby. It wasn't until years later when the Taylorsville stake of the LDS church was teaching a class in amateur radio when Andy finally got into the hobby. When Andy took his Technician test in June of 2008 he didn't miss a single question. Andy decided to take the General test, but didn't quite make it. Andy said the General is a little bit harder and would require some more studying.

One of the things that really impressed Andy about amateur radio is that an individual can go as far as he or she so desires. One can be a Technician forever if that is what one desires and still have plenty to do in the hobby, such as two meters, 70 centimeters, and six meters. Now with

the linking of repeaters and IRLP one can talk all around the world with just a Technician license. But, if one would like to advance and obtain a General or Extra Class license and experience the low bands, one can do that as well.

One of the experiences Andy had in amateur radio was at the steak-fry last year. John Hardy, K7ALA, let Andy talk to Rock Springs, Wyoming, on his handheld radio. They were talking on the 147.12 repeater. Andy thought that was very neat to be able to talk to Rock Springs, Wyoming, on a handheld radio.

When Andy first got into amateur radio he didn't have a radio. Andy decided to put a message on the club reflector. The message said that he would be glad to exchange a PacificCrest 12-foot antenna mast: "Tripod12: a fully portable mast, SUR-Loc quick release Clips, Heavy duty wood Tripod, 5/8 x 11 standard thread, fully collapsible and fits in trunk, for a handheld radio." Owen Michaelis, KC7ITA, answered the ad and exchanged his HTX-202 two-meter-only handheld

radio for Andy's antenna mast. This exchange took place on Saturday, February 7. Andy was very excited about his first handheld radio. He was having a blast making all kinds of contacts while traveling around in his vehicle. Andy said that now he has a radio, he wants to get involved with ARES.

Andy is a member of UARC. He works for Monsen Engineering in technical support for surveys and map GPS. He also works with UHF and VHF radios. Andy and his wife Melissa have a one-year old son, Dylan.

Andy loves taking things apart and modifying audio circuits. Andy really likes homebrew night. He is thinking of starting a homebrew corner in *The Microvolt*. Andy also wants to build a ham radio bike with all of the ham gear on it. Other hobbies that Andy enjoys are fly tying and fishing.

Andy we wish you all of the best in your endeavors.

## **Update on State Legislation**

Utah hams have been keeping track of several bills in the Utah Legislature in the hope of averting a possible negative impact on amateur radio. The bills were intended to reduce the incidence of traffic accidents caused by people trying to drive while talking or texting on cell phones. However, the language of some could easily be interpreted to ban mobile amateur radio transmissions.

The bills in question are as follows:

**HB95:** House Bill 95, introduced by Representative Phil Reisen of Salt Lake County, would prohibit use of a wireless communication device while operating a motor vehicle. This bill is the most dangerous as it is the only bill which specifically includes "two-way radio" in the definition of a wireless communication device, and the only one that outright bans voice use while

driving. The bill was referred to the Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Committee (HSTLAW) on February 10 and has not been reported out as of this writing (February 21).

**HB148:** House Bill 148, sponsored by Carol Moss of Salt Lake County, would require wireless communications devices to be hands-free if used while operating a motor vehicle. This bill was sent to HSTLAW on February 10 and has been sent to agencies for fiscal input.

**HB281:** House Bill 281, sponsored by Paul Ray of Clearfield, bans text messaging while driving and also requires voice communication to be hands-free if done while driving in a school zone or public parking lot. The bill was referred to HSTLAW which on February 13 recommended an amendment and put the bill on "hold" status.

**HB290:** House Bill 290, sponsored by Stephen Clark of Provo, amends an existing statute to include in the definition of “careless driving” “using a wireless telephone or other electronic device” unless used in a hands-free mode. It would be an offense only if a moving violation were committed while using the device. The current form of the bill was substituted for the original by HSTLAW on February 20. It has not yet been reported out of committee.

**SB149:** Senate Bill 149, sponsored by Lyle Hilyard representing Cache and Rich Counties, prohibits text messaging while driving. The offense becomes a felony if serious bodily injury is inflicted and there are two previous text messaging convictions. The bill was referred to the Senate Transportation and Public Utilities and Technology Committee where it was amended to its current form. On February 10 it was placed on the calendar for a second reading in the Senate.

All the bills include exclusions for:

- Use during an emergency (a *medical* emergency in some bills)
- Reporting a safety hazard
- Reporting criminal activity, and
- Use by law enforcement personnel.

None contain an exclusion for amateur radio.

On Friday, February 13, our ARRL Section Manager, Mel Parkes, NM7P, issued the following statement:

*Greetings Radio Amateurs:*

*This afternoon, Mel Parkes, NM7P, Bob Craven, N7GTE, and Jed Petrovich, AD7KG, attended the meeting of the House Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Committee. Two bills, House 281 and 290 were on the agenda and discussed. Both of these bills dealt mostly with text messaging.*

*However, since these bills contained language regarding “wireless communication devices,” we deemed it appropriate to attend the meeting and prepare to testify.*

*Before going any further, we wish to thank all radio amateurs for contacting legislators regarding these bills. It was evident that our voices had been heard*

*These bills were discussed in the meeting. However, neither bill moved out of committee. The official status is that they are being “held.” From speaking with one of the bill sponsors after the meeting, it seems these bills will go no further. Also, from what we gleaned from our other post-meeting conversations, the other two House bills will also go nowhere.*

*We were able to speak with two attorneys after the meeting. According to them, Utah law specifies that unless these bills specifically included “two-way radios” or something similar in their definitions, use of amateur radios would not have been included. HB95 did include two-way radios, but it likely will never make it past the committee.*

*Senate bill 149, which has made it out of the Senate committee, also does not contain any language about two-way radios. It may still be worth watching it's progress.*

*Again, we thank you for your participation in the legislative process.*

73,

*Mel Parkes, NM7P  
Utah Section Manager*

You can check the status of any of these bills at:  
<http://le.utah.gov>

# Hams Can Still Help with DTV Conversion

From *The ARRL Letter*, February 20 edition

Even though the mandatory conversion date for television stations to switch from analog signals to digital has been delayed by four months, hams are still assisting the FCC and their communities by providing technical support to those who need assistance. Although many TV stations won't turn off their analog signals until the new deadline, the law allows stations to apply to switch on the original date – February 17 – or any time before June 12. [Salt Lake City area full-power stations, with the possible exception of channel 30, now plan to wait until June 12 to shut down their analog transmitters. -Ed]

ARRL Media and Public Relations Manager Allen Pitts, W1AGP, said “People are asking what's happening with the DTV conversion — especially now that it's been delayed — and wondering what we as hams can do to help,” he said. “There has been considerable confusion concerning the extension of the date, but the role of Amateur

Radio is simply to be helpful to the people in our communities.”

Pitts advises those hams that are helping to provide technical educational assistance keep in mind the following troubleshooting pointers, provided by the FCC:

- \* **Check Your Connections**
- \* **Perform a Channel Scan**
- \* **Adjust Your Antenna**

Late last year, the FCC requested assistance from the ARRL in providing educational support to local communities regarding the digital TV conversion.

For more information on the conversion to digital television, please see the DTV Conversion Web site <<http://www.dtv.gov/>>.

## License Examination Schedule

Date	Location	Contact Person	Phone
03/04/09 (Wed.)	Clearfield	Mike Youngs, KK7VZ	(801) 573-3922
03/18/09 (Wed.)	Provo	Steve Whitehead, NV7V	(801) 465-3983
03/18/09 (Wed.)	St. George	Gary O. Zabriskie, N7ARE	(435) 674-2678
03/31/09 (Tue.)	Salt Lake C.	Eugene McWherter, N7OVT	(801) 541-1871 <sup>1</sup>
04/04/09 (Sat.)	Salt Lake C.	Gordon Smith, K7HFV	(801) 582-2438 <sup>1</sup>
04/15/09 (Wed.)	Provo	Steve Whitehead, NV7V	(801) 465-3983
04/15/09 (Wed.)	St. George	Gary O. Zabriskie, N7ARE	(435) 674-2678
04/25/09 (Sat.)	South Ogden	Mary Hazard, W7UE	(801) 430-0306 <sup>1,2</sup>
04/28/09 (Tue.)	Salt Lake C.	Eugene McWherter, N7OVT	(801) 541-1871 <sup>1</sup>

Footnote 1: Preregistration is required. Check with the contact person prior to the exam.

Footnote 2: Part of Weber County Hamfest, Browning Armory, 615 E. 5300 So., South Ogden