

TORC newsletter First edition



Photo by Chris Seger

references

Click on titles to go there

A new club is born!

GROUPS.IO

Contest Calendar

NG7A Cedar Rapids After Action Report

SOLAR CYCLE 25 HAS BEGUN

Links

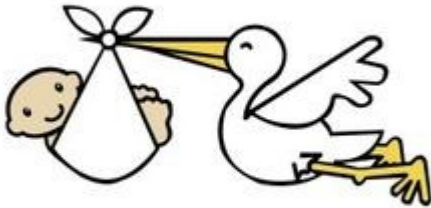
LINUX LINKS

PURPOSE

WELCOME

Welcome to the first edition of the Tortolita Radio Club newsletter. We sincerely hope you enjoy the new club and all that it will offer. For a quick overview of what we're all about, click on PURPOSE above.

Clicking on **references** at the bottom of any page returns you to this area of the newsletter.



A new club is born!

The Tortolita Radio Club is open to everyone for membership.

- No dues or assessments.
- No rules. If you belong to another club, you can join this one.
- No repeaters.
- No monthly meetings.
- No hamfest.
- Handyman Corner resumes via youtube.
- Monthly operating events resume as coronavirus allows.
- Emphasis is on HF (1.8-30 MHz) radio, all modes.
- Elmers (mentors) available.
- Website is in development
- Mail reflector on groups.io is active, see following page.

Not yet a member? Email tkravec@pobox.com and I will add you

GROUPS.IO

Scott K7ADX has set up a groups.io board for TORC.

Send members here: <https://groups.io/ToRC>

They click the address ToRC+subscribe@groups.io or copy and paste that address and send an email. They have to get an account – really simple. It only takes a minute.

Once they ask to join I will accept them and off we go.

Once folks get in we can start communicating that way along with email, set up some topics where folks can interact, etc.

Contest Calendar

Tortolita Radio Club, October 2020

By Tom Kravec W8TK

Arizona QSO Party: Saturday October 11, 0800 MST until 2200 MST

Demonstrate your pride in Arizona by joining this one. Sponsored by RST and run by W6WSC, it has become a really good party. It's not crazy-busy so it's ideal for the newbie contester. Don't know what to do? Here's what you will hear:

You: CQ AZQP CQ AZQP THIS IS KILO SEVEN ALPHA BRAVO CHARLIE CONTEST

Caller: K7ABC THIS IS WHISKEY ONE ALPHA WHISKEY

You: W1AW FIVE NINE PAPA MIKE ALPHA (Pima, your county)

Caller: THANKS. FIVE NINE CONNECTICUT

You: THANKS. QRZ AZQP THIS IS KILO SEVEN ALPHA BRAVO CHARLIE

That's it. Takes less than a minute. I have seen SSB operators make 400 contacts per hour! QSO Party quirk: you can work the same station multiple times if he moves from county to county. Mobile stations are plentiful. I use N1MM Logger and it will permit "dupes" if the county changes. Complete rules are at: <https://www.azqsoparty.org/>

Other QSO Parties this month:

California, October 3-4. Biggest QSO party in USA. www.cqp.org

Nevada, October 10. <http://nvqso.com/contest-rules/>

Pennsylvania October 10-11 <https://www.paqso.org/pa-qso-party-rules.html>

South Dakota October 10 <https://sdqsoparty.com/>

New York October 17-18 www.nyqp.org

Illinois October 18 <http://www.w9awe.org/ILQP%202019%20Rules.pdf>

Finally, BIGGEST contest of the year, CQWDXSSB. Not for the timid!

October 24-25 Rules: <https://www.cqww.com/rules.htm>

The following article is included from NG7A, George, an OVARC member and now TORC member.

NG7A Cedar Rapids After Action Report

Summary

On Monday August 10, 2020 at approximately 1:00 pm CDT (1800Z) a powerful Derecho windstorm came through Cedar Rapids causing widespread damage, power outages, internet outages, broadcast band outages and cell phone outages. The emergency broadcast system was not activated before or after the event. Local sirens went off approximately 10 minutes before and the NWS broadcast warnings of the approaching storm on 162.475 MHz foretold 100+ winds. Skywarn was activated on the 146.745 MHz repeater and reported events in real time; during the event N0GUD lost power and another station picked up Net Control duties. Afterwards a group of us organized an information gathering net on 146.745 MHz. Besides myself (NG7A), this included KA0IES, KE0SSM, N0XUT, K0PAS and many others. It continued for a week (through Sunday Aug 16,2020) after the event. Information was logged in a paper notebook. Approximately 316 QSOs were made with many new or previously in-active stations participating.

Damage Assessment

- Most houses to the NW of us (in the direction of the winds) had blown out windows.
- There were no injuries within several blocks of our house.
- Power was out
- Internet was out
- AM 600. AM 1450 and FM 88.5 were off the air as were several other stations.
- A short 6.5 mile drive to work confirmed downed trees over high tension lines, numerous snapped power poles, debris that blocked most roads and a widespread power outage.
- NWS 162.475 was off the air

Local Repeaters:

- ◦ 145.19 and 443.8 were down
- ◦ 146.745, 145.15, 147.09, 443.00 were operational

NG7A

- 1 of the 4 160M verticals from the four-square survived and resonated on 1860 MHz
- 80M and 40 M full wave loops down
- 20M vertical down
- 80M Magnetic loop destroyed (base of the support tree snapped)
- 20M beam damaged and 20M vertical destroyed (tree snapped in half).

W0CXX

- SteppIR beam down
- SteppIR operational and resonated 40 – 10M
- 80M dipole operational
- VHF radio operational

Response

- NG7A 20M beam repaired
- NG7A emergency 80M magnetic loop deployed on a tree stump
- 160M vertical disconnected from four square and routed through antenna tuner for multi-band use
- 100W solar panels with deep cycle lead acid batteries and 1500W inverter deployed
- Gasoline generators deployed with initial fuel siphoned from a vehicle
- Copper pipe J-pole and twin-lead dual band J-poles deployed.
- Handheld charging stations organized in one location for power management
- Informational net started with paper notebook log
- A combination of handheld, mobile and base radios were used to maintain watch on the 146.745 repeater. HF radios were used to obtain outside information and pass traffic.

Communication Details

- Listening watch was established on 146.745 MHz with regular requests for conditions in the surrounding areas as well as availability for gasoline and supplies. The goal was not to interfere with normal communications, but to record and disseminate information. New and inexperienced operators were encouraged to join in. Throughout the net, anyone breaking in to a conversation was immediately recognized. Whenever there was a double, I had a radio listening on the repeater input frequency to help discern both station's calls.
- Lelia Garner WA0UIG, our section manager, provided guidelines on how to run an informational net and offered support and information. She also arranged for much needed relief.

Tuesday Aug 11

- no weather or local news was available on broadcast band. Weather was obtained from the Eyebank net on 3970 KHz. On Wednesday W0RAS from Okoboji, IA was kind enough to look up the detailed weather forecast for Cedar Rapids and relay in on HF.
- Worked with KE0SSM, who I had regularly talked with on other repeaters, to gather and disseminate information. Dave, an electrician, was a radio broadcaster in Cedar Rapids at one time. We worked off each other to give advice and solicit reports from the surrounding area.
- KE0SSM provided advice on keeping generators running and offered a free generator repair service 75 generators were serviced that week.
- With broadcast stations down, news was also obtained on the 3970 Iowa SSB traffic net at 12:30 pm and 6:30 pm CDT, the Triple Nickel net on 3.9555 KHz in the evenings and the 3913 KHz net mornings at 9am. The Tall Corn CW Net (TLCN) on 3560 kHz was also monitored at 1830 and 2200 CDT.
- As power and internet started coming up in areas where the repeater had coverage stations were asked to look up information. Dwayne N0XUT provided regular updates of Cedar Rapids news stations then relieved me: KA0IES Tuesday afternoon 4pm to 7pm, K0PAS for a few hours on Friday, and KE0SSM as needed during the week.

NG7A Experience

- First Field Day: 1980
- Licensed since 1981
- Army MARS radio operator for Electronic Research and Development Command's Harry Diamond Laboratories. Supported emergency communications in the 1989 San Francisco Earthquake.
- Montgomery County MD RACES/ARES 1981 through 1990 – provided communications between 4-wheel drive vehicles during snow emergencies.
- Participated in numerous public service activities such as the Cherry Blossom and Fourth of July parades in Washington, DC.
- Participant in the Maryland Slow CW Net (MSN).
- Yavapai Amateur Radio Club, Prescott, Arizona 1990 – 1995 Founding member, newsletter editor and participant in numerous public service activities.
- Coconino Amateur Radio club – Flagstaff AZ 1996 – 1999.
- Salem Amateur Radio Club and Willamette Valley DX Association 1999 – 2010. Participated in numerous public service activities, Field Days, brushed up on CW and contesting.
- Obtained DXCC.
- Trained as Skywarn observer in OR.
- Flight test pilot for UPS coordinated all test communications between participating aircraft and Air Traffic Control.
- Yankee Clipper Contest Club, Contookook Valley Amateur Radio Club 2011 – 2014. Improved contesting skills by improving my station and working as a guest operator at K0TV.
- Operated PJ4A in the 2013 CQWW CW contest. Placed 1st the NH section in ARRL's 160M and 10M contests in 2013.
- Trained as Skywarn observer in NH. Worked emergency communications during hurricanes Irene and Sandy on both the HF and VHF as well as the October snowstorm. Took up Summits on the Air (SOTA).
- Instructor on the Maryland Slow CW Net (MSN) and net control station for the NH CW Net.
- Oro Valley Amateur Radio Club , Arizona Outlaws Contest Club 2014 – 2018. Continued contesting at my own station and as a guest op at W8TK. Continued activating SOTA peaks. Trained as an advanced WX spotter in Tucson AZ, backed-up NCS on many occasions.
- Participated in the statewide RACES/ARES net as well as the local Pima County OEM HF and VHF Nets, served as NCS for the latter on a rotating basis.
- Served on the Board of Directors for OVARC.
- Participated in OVARCs monthly HF outings.
- Served as NCS on OVARC's weekly FM net.
- Participated in the nightly AZ Traffic and Emergency net (ATEN), where handling a minimum amount of traffic was required to maintain membership; passed traffic from ATEN on CW when digital was not available.

- Collins Amateur Radio Club, Cedar Valley Amateur Radio Club and Eastern Iowa's DX Association 2018 until present. Trained as Skywarn spotter and registered spotter number in Iowa. Continued contesting.
- Served as CW Academy instructor. Obtained 5BDXCC and 160M DXCC. Held HF in the Park events for new hams.
- Continued activating SOTA peaks (first to activate a peak in Iowa).

What went Right

- Informational net was effective in locating operating gas stations, supplies and fixing emergency generators.
- Help in locating gas stations and supplies was provided to out-of-town repair crews HF nets were utilized as a resource to bring in outside information.
- Formal traffic nets were used to send information outside the affected area.
- Contesting skills were used to immediately recognize stations during conversations. Even though it is more difficult to discern station during a double on narrow band FM compared to SSB and CW, listening for bits of information on the tail end of the message as well as the input frequency were often effective.
- 145.15, 145.090 and 443.00 did not have much traffic and were used for side conversations away from the main 146.745 channel.
- WA0UIG's quick recognition of emergency power stations on the 3970 kHz SSB HF net and very efficient check-in process, where a roll call was not used but rather stations A through F and so on were asked to call. Her asking for relays was very effective.
- Local repeaters used UHF radio links that do not depend on the internet.

What made the net successful were the large number of new and relatively inexperienced operators joining in to give reports.

Another thing that was positive was how easy it was for the public to listen-in. Our first clue that many outsiders were listening was when Dave KE0SSM was overwhelmed with walk-ins for generator repairs after we'd mentioned it on the air.... the majority of the 75 fixes were for non-hams with scanners (all for free as a community service - in fact many of us hams donated materials carb cleaner, oil etc.).

Suggestions for Improvement

- Many HF phone net control stations are not used to listening up for weak stations and often did not ask for relays. In many cases the net control simply told me I was unreadable and continued with a long roll call list and casual conversation about participant's doctor's visits and medical procedures. Listening skills can be improved by chasing weak signals such as Summit on the Air Activators or participating in an upcoming HF contest.
- Instead of trying to check-into a 75M with 100 watts, use bigger generators and hit the net with a kilowatt from the beginning.
- When using a magnetic loop, provide a means of turning the loop to maximize radiation in the desired direction. The difference between the max radiation and null is several s-units.

- Build a controller to automatically adjust the magnetic loop's frequency by tracking the transceiver's frequency.
- Refrain from lecturing on nets about operating procedures during an emergency or weather event. This often takes up more valuable time than an offending station, and discourages useful participation.
- Do not discourage participation in nets by rigidity and lecturing. Meet each station on its level and work with it. Encouragement and flexibility are the keys to effective nets and information exchange.

Field Day 1980 the lessons taught by Bruce Green W3IR (SK) and Tom Calomiris K3TC that night were not forgotten 4 decades later. There have been many mentors since, including Marc K3NCO (SK). Most recently, Tom W8TK, Chief Elmer and Field Day chairman in Tucson, AZ had drilled a lot of good operating practices into us. Even though he is primarily a CW OP, Tom is an excellent phone operator, and one can learn a lot listening to him run weekly FM nets.

Concluding Remarks

I'd like to thank Lelia WA0UIG, Dave KE0SSM, Al KA0IES, Dwayne N0XUT, Phil K0PAS and every station, both on VHF and HF, that did their part to share information and help others in the aftermath of the storm.

Respectfully Submitted,
George Cooley NG7A

(Note: photos not included due to space limitations)

Space Weather News for Sept. 15, 2020

<https://spaceweather.com>

<https://www.spaceweatheralerts.com>

SOLAR CYCLE 25 HAS BEGUN: Solar Cycle 25 is officially underway. NASA and NOAA made the announcement during a media teleconference earlier today. According to an international panel of experts, sunspot counts hit rock bottom in Dec. 2019, and have been slowly increasing since. What can you expect in the months ahead? Visit [Spaceweather.com](https://spaceweather.com) for answers.

Links

[settings for the *NEW* ARISS cross band repeater on the I.S.S.](#)

<http://w1hkj.com/>

- All source, dmg, and Windows setup files are now available on this [site](#) and at [Source Forge](#)
- **fldigi / flarq - modem / arq - [Sights & Sounds of Digital Modes](#)**
- **flamp - Amateur Multicast Protocol - file transfer program**
- **flwrap - file encapsulation / compression**
- **flmsg - Forms manager**
- **flrig - rig control program, cooperates with fldigi**
- **flwkey - modem program for the K1EL Winkeyer series**
- **fllog - can use same data file as fldigi**
- **flnet - voice net controller database / check-in application**
- **flcluster - telnet client to remote DX cluster servers**
- **flaa - Rig Expert Antenna Analyzer control program**
- **kcat - Kachina 505DSP controller**
- **kcts - Kachina 505DSP test suite**
- **test suite - includes linsim, comtext and comptty**

LINUX LINKS

[How to Encrypt Files with gocryptfs on Linux](#)

- Do you want to encrypt important files, but not your Linux system's entire hard drive? If so, we recommend gocryptfs. You'll get a directory that, essentially, encrypts and decrypts everything you store.

[AppImages on Linux: Why developers should stop using them](#)

- Jack Wallen doesn't think AppImages are the application nirvana many developers believe them to be. Find out why and see if you agree.

[Happy 29th anniversary, Linux, and a heartfelt thank you to Linus Torvalds](#)

[How to flush the DNS cache on Linux](#)

- How you flush the DNS cache will depend on your operating system. I want to show you how easy it is to flush the DNS cache on the Linux operating system.

[How to Manage Startup Programs on Ubuntu Linux](#)

- Many applications automatically set themselves to start when you sign into your Linux desktop. You might want to add your own favorite programs to the startup process, too. Here's how to control what Ubuntu starts when you sign in.

PURPOSE

TORTOLITA RADIO CLUB TORC
A group of amateur radio operators aiming to just have fun located south of the Tortolita mountains near Marana
Serving the greater northwest Tucson area and beyond.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No formalities • No regular meetings - just occasional weekend outings • Occasional newsletters will cover items of interest to the group • NO DUES • No repeaters • Emphasis is on having fun



Newsletter editor: Ron Herring W7HD

Material in this newsletter is public domain and may be freely shared.
Credit may be given as follows: ***Courtesy of Tortolita Radio Club***

Of course, we are just starting out, so there is a lot yet to come. Your feedback and articles are very much wanted. Please feel free to email me with **suggestions and articles** at w7hd.torc@gmail.com ...

The word *tortolita* means little dove and is used here as a reference to the Tortolita Mountains north of Tucson, AZ USA.

The cactus field photo is courtesy of Chris Seger KI7DET.
The flag photo is courtesy of Ron Herring W7HD.