

JCRAC Christmas Party – December 10

The JCRAC will hold its first indoor in-person event of the COVID era at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, December 10 at the Overland Park Christian Church. The Church has asked attendees to wear a mask as they enter the building and move about the building, to and from—but not in—the Fellowship Hall (our normal meeting room). The Church has asked, too, that we collect the names and phone numbers of participants so that, in the event of a meeting related COVID event, it can contact people who may have been exposed.

As always, the December meeting will be one of food and fun. As a nod to COVID, the Club asks people to bring food and drinks for themselves, rather than something for the buffet.

Insofar as the meeting itself is concerned, some of the usual suspects may have something up their collective sleeves.

(Below: Spirits of JCRAC Christmas Parties Past)



MEETINGS

Dec 10 - Holiday Party

Dec 24 – No meeting – Merry Christmas!

The Johnson County Radio Amateurs Club normally meets on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month at 7:00 PM at the Overland Park Christian Church (north entrance), 7600 West 75th Street (75th and Conser), west of the Fire Station.

Most months (not December) much of the membership travels to the Pizza Shoppe at 8915 Santa Fe Drive for pizza buffet and an informal continuation/criticism/clarification of the topics raised at the meeting ... or anything else.

LEAVE THE CHURCH, TURN RIGHT (WEST) ON 75TH. TURN LEFT (SOUTH) ON ANTIOCH. TURN RIGHT (WEST) ON SANTA FE. PIZZA SHOPPE IS JUST PAST THE SONIC ON YOUR LEFT.

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-> FEEDBACK <-

*A publication of the
Johnson County Radio Amateur Club, Inc.*

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Thank you, FEEDBACK contributors

A year ago, in this space, your editor suggested that 2020 had, in many respects, been a very unusual year. Some things, however, do not change.

Once again, in 2021, Tom Wheeler, NØGSG, take a technical topics and breaks them down in such a way that your editor think s that just maybe, if he applied himself, that he could have figured it out.



John Raydo, KØIZ shared news, tech tips and resources on a broad range of topics.

President Bill Gery, KA2FNK and Secretary Ted Knapp, NØTEK made their contributions, both to the JCRAC and to the Feedback, each month.

And then there's Jaimie Charlton, ADØAB, who, each month, found a memorable way to explain how Hambone tripped over an engineering problem or a law of physics.

Thanks, guys.

Chip Buckner, ACØYF

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Here we are, December, the last month of another very unusual year. We are fortunate to be able to do Field Day and the Ensor auction in person. It was good—after all this time—to have some face-to-face meetings. This



year the Christmas party will be in person as well. The Church asks us to enter and leave the building with masks. We can remove them when we are in the meeting room. To help keep everyone safe will not be having a pitch in for the food. So please bring your own food and drinks items. The tables will be also spread out.

The first meeting in January will be a Zoom meeting. At that point, we will reevaluate how to hold the rest of the meetings during 2022.

The club lost an active member in November. Allen Rawitch (KØIMP) became a Silent Key. Thank you to everyone who was able to take part in the special net we had with him. Services for Al will be after the holidays, so please watch for more information which we will send along.

I want to extend everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

– Bill Gery – KA2FNK

Johnson County Radio Amateurs Club - November 12, 2021

Meeting Date: Friday November 12, 2021. The meeting Started at 7:00 PM.

Attendance: Due to COVID-19 restrictions, this Meeting took place online using Zoom Video Conferencing. 34 were present.

There were No Minutes from the last meeting as it was Ensor Auction weekend.

The Treasurer's report was not available.

Old Business:

- We welcomed all 1st time visitors to the meeting.
- Repeater Update – Bill Brinker, WA0CBW reported All Repeaters are working well.
- Ensor Volunteer \$50 Associated Radio Gift Certificate Drawing – winner was Gary Benefield, KF0EKS. Thank you to All Volunteers that help staff the Ensor Museum in October.
- Cal Lewandowski, KC0CL reported the Ensor Auction netted \$3,826.

New Business:

- This year's In-Person Christmas Party will be on December 10th at 7:00pm at the Overland Park Christian Church.

Reports:

- 6 m – NR.
- 10 m SSB Roundtable – 4 participated on November 11 and 3 participated on November 4.
- 40m SSB Roundtable – 2 participated on November 10 and 1 participated on November 3.
- Fusion Digital 440 net – 9 Check-ins on November 10 and 9 Check-ins on November 3.
- 2m Wheat Shocker net – 12 Check-ins on November 11 and 10 Check-ins on November 4.
- HF Activity – São Paulo 17m. Galápagos Islands. Svalbard Island 20m.

Announcements:

- Skywarn Recognition Day first weekend in December.
- See Larry's List for upcoming Events.

Business meeting adjourned at 7:47 PM.

Program:

The Program was a presentation on Ward Silver's, N0AX Grounding and Bonding for Contest Stations. By Bill Brinker, WA0CBW.

Submitted by Ted Knapp, N0TEK Secretary.

Hambone Meets a Watt He Doesn't Like

*The day before the big fraternity
Christmas Eve Party*

"Everything is all set," said Hambone looking over the mini-FM broadcast station that he and Dill built from parts found in Dill's basement. "I hope one-

hundred watts is enough. Those portable radios we've hidden around the yard aren't very sensitive."

"You're nuts," said Dill, taking the direct approach that always seemed to work best when dealing with Hambone. "That's way too much power. We should only run maybe one watt."

"I just want to be sure all the portable radios get a good signal. You know, I've never met a watt I didn't like," replied Hambone with a smile.

"Hambone, the farthest radio is only about 200 feet away. You know, good radio practice says use only enough power to get a good signal. You don't want to interfere with others. A watt or two would be way more than enough."

"That's ham radio good practice. This is broadcast where they run megawatts. Besides, the frequency is near the low end of the band. The only things down there are those dull PBS stations.

It will be glorious! We'll fill the air with music and nobody will know where it's coming from."

"Hammy, over here!" Hambone turned to see his younger brother, Dude, standing by a thirty-foot trailer filled with logs and branches.



"Wow! You really got some wood!"

"Yeah, you were right. I took your advice and called Dom, he knew just where we could find a lot of firewood."

"Dom is the best woodsman I know. Take the wood over to that big clearing and stack it up ready to burn. We'll kick off the party tomorrow night by lighting the fire."

"The drones are ready to go," announced Tim, the tall skinny guy who likes to tell math jokes that nobody gets. "I've programmed the computer for five drones. One to carry Rudolph and make his nose blink, three for the rest of the reindeer and the one big one the TV station loaned us to lift Santa in his sleigh and drop party favors."

"Aren't those big deer and sleigh figures heavy?" asked Hambone.

"No. They are only cutouts less than an inch thick. The plastic foam material is so light that Rudolph weighs less than two ounces. The sleigh with Santa and the favors is the heavyweight. The favors are just little plastic balls with tiny toy figures inside them. They are really miniature ornaments. Altogether, it weighs less than four pounds which is easily carried by the TV drone. The TV engineer said it can lift up to forty pounds."

Tim continued, "The computer controls everything, of course. On my signal, the drones will lift off

from that field behind the frat house. Carrying the reindeer and sleigh figures, they'll make their grand appearance by flying over the house and then around the entire party area. I've got LED spotlights on top of the house and some colored lasers on the ground. The lasers automatically track the deer and sleigh. The figures are covered with glitter which really pops in the laser light."

"You said something about party favors?" asked Dill, more than a little skeptical about this airshow.

"Yes. The Santa and sleigh, which is carried by the big, TV station drone, will drop the plastic ornaments as it flies over the parties. Don't worry, they're very light so they won't hurt anybody."

"Oh, and what about the...?" asked Dom interrupting.

"I've fixed that, too!" blurted Tim. "I've gotta go now."

"Fixed what?" asked Hambone.

"I was watching when Tim tested his system last night. He had the ornaments coming off the front of the sleigh behind the deer. But in the dim light, it looked a lot like it was reindeer poop that was falling, not ornaments," laughed Dom.

Red-faced, Tim explained that the ornaments now left the back of the sleigh and with the very bright lighting there was no mistaking them for, well, you know what.

"It's tested and ready to go!" announced a breathless and unfamiliar face.

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from HAMBONE on page 4

“Who are you and what’s ready?” asked Hambone.

“I’m Lyle. I’m from the mechanical engineering frat house down the street.”

“Oh, okay. You guys are building the snow-making machine, right? How’s it goin’?”

“It’s all finished,” said Lyle as he waved a big wave at the house. “Look!”

A plume of white flakes shot up from behind the frat house, passed over the roof and fell gently to earth. It looked for all the world like real snow.

“How are you doin’ that?”

“It’s simple,” continued Lyle. “I wave and another guy starts the machine.”

“No, Lyle, I meant how does the machine work?”

“Oh, sorry mister Hambone. We made a rack that holds four battery powered leaf blowers and a garden hose lawn sprayer. The hose nozzle sprays water into a strong turbulent air stream created by the blowers. The cold air freezes this mixture and it falls just like snow.”

“Lyle, that’s amazing!” exclaimed Tim.

“Thank you. I’ve gotta run but remember one thing, always turn on the blowers before turning on the water. Otherwise, you’ll get a flood of freezing water.”

“Well guys,” announced Hambone, “It looks like we’re going to have an awesome party! We’ve got drinks, food, Santa and flying reindeer, big bonfire, music and snow.

Two days after the big party

Editor’s note:

Well, dear reader, I’m sure you’d like to know how the party went. So would I.

I’ve only been able to gather bits and pieces. Most of what I could discover came from Hambone’s parents and his uncle Elmer who rushed back from their vacation in Cancun. They posted bail and now Hambone, Tim and Dill are all wearing ankle bracelets and locked up in the frat house. Dude, Dom and the new kid, Lyle, escaped the long arm of the law and are hiding in undisclosed locations. I could only contact them via email.

The DA and police are still trying to figure out what happened.

Here’s what I know.

The party started off great. The sun had set and the gibbous moon in the clear night sky was still bright enough to add a sparkle to the gently falling snow-machine snow. About a hundred guys and girls were drawn to the free drinks, food and the heat of the roaring bonfire.

Hambone gave the cue and the tune, “Here Comes Santa Claus”, pealed forth from the dozen or so hidden portable radios. Hambone was right, the sound was perfect.

Tim hit the “Go” button on his tablet and the drone-powered sleigh with eight reindeer led by Rudolph and his flashing red nose rose over the roof of the frat house. The lasers and spotlights flashed on and the glittering Styrofoam figures almost seemed alive.

The partygoers cheered and started singing along with the music as Santa drove his sleigh above their heads. The drones followed their remote-control commands and stayed well away from the fire, but swooped down when “Santa” started dropping the party favors. And yes, the favors came out of the rear of the sleigh and not out of the of the deer.

This was certainly the most spectacularly beautiful and successful party the fraternity had ever put on.

Well, almost.

The first sign of a problem occurred when the drones completed circling the fire and passing over the crowd and headed back to their “home base”, the parking lot behind the frat house. This route took them over the far end of the frat house that contained the ham shack and more specifically, Hambone’s FM transmitter and antenna.

As they neared the house, the drones began to sway and drift off what should have been their course. Tim attributed the action to a slight evening breeze that had come up and attempted to correct the course manually. But the manual control was not very effective. The situation worsened when the sleigh began to randomly discharge more ornaments.

Although the marginally controlled fleet of drones was still well away from the fire, the ornaments weren’t. The breeze was enough to blow some of them into the fire where they popped and spit out

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from HAMBONE on page 5

small streaks of flame. The partygoers thought it was some sort of nerdy fireworks and loved it. Until some of the spitting flames spat at them.

The less-brave tried to run but found themselves slipping and sliding and falling down. In the excitement, no one noticed that the leaf blowers in the snowmaking machine had run down leaving the garden hose to flood the area with water that was now frozen.

ASIDE: During the postmortem of the fiasco, Lyle, the mechanical engineer wannabe, reminded everyone that he told Hambone not to run the hose without the blowers. In reply, Hambone advised Lyle that the batteries in the leaf blowers were too small and mechanicals should not be allowed to mess with “complex electrical stuff like batteries”.

Meanwhile, Tim was still fighting a losing battle steering the drones away from the fire and back to the parking lot. Unfortunately, one of the spitting ornaments struck Rudolph and caught him on fire. It is said that that really lit up his nose.

In reviewing the situation, Hambone’s uncle Elmer suspects that the root cause of the problem was Hambone’s excessive FM power. Dill was right, a watt or two would have been enough.

Elmer said that the radio-control receivers in the drones were overloaded when they got near the FM transmitter’s antenna. That’s why they stopped obeying the control signals. There was nothing Tim could have done to recover.

Elmer thinks that maybe this time Hambone had found a watt, or a hundred watts, that he didn’t like.

But I digress.

Tim, in full panic mode, sent a “home” signal to all the drones to get them and their flaming reindeer away from everyone.

For those unfamiliar with drone technology, some drones can be programmed to automatically return to a previously programmed home location. This function allows the return of the drone to its owner even if remote control is lost.

It’s not clear whether or not the small drones carrying Rudolph and the other reindeer received the home signal, but the large TV drone definitely did.

Home for the small drones was the frat house parking lot, but nobody thought to re-home the TV drone. So, it took off for its TV station home dragging the small drones and the flaming deer and sleigh behind it.

From the ground, it is said that the police received numerous phone calls reporting an apocalyptic crescent of fire flying from the frat house up into the sky. Various late-night church congregations ran outside to see the spectacle.

Depending on the denomination, it is said they either burst into song, prayer or raided their church’s supply of altar wine. Thousands of people ran into the streets to see the spectacle and the UFO Club called an emergency gathering to invite the “alien ship” to land in Loose Park.

Finally, with the remains of their burning cargo in tow, the drones landed out of sight behind the fence

at the TV station. Miraculously, they were undamaged.

Minutes after the first reports, a police cruiser with lights and siren barreled down the street towards the frat house.

Clearly, the officer was unaware of the ice because when he hit his brakes, the car kept right on going. It would have smashed into the frat house except for a large yellow post planted on the curb in front of the house. The purpose of the post was to prevent late-night frat boy arrivals from smashing into the house. It seemed to work on cop cars, too. Uninjured, the officer got out of his wrecked car and executed a perfect pratfall on the ice - well captured on various cellphones.

More cruisers arrived and they began rounding up whoever was still at the party site. That’s how they caught the boys.

The Kansas City airport control tower manager called the FBI to report that several pilots had reported flashes of red and green laser beams being directed at them. Shortly thereafter, a couple of black SUVs were seen driving around in the frat house neighborhood. Lucky for the boys, the lasers and spotlights were turned off.

At this writing, the police and the DA are having a hard time coming up with charges against the boys. Their first thought was a drunken brawl. But no evidence of alcohol was found. It is even said that the cops drank up the last of the eggnog and ate the cookies. The cops say Santa drank and ate the goodies.

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from HAMBONE on page 6

Then the DA thought he could nail the boys for illegal operation of a drone. But further research revealed that the boys had the proper permits and operated the drones within the requirements.

Finally, still wanting to appear the hero on the evening news, the DA thought it must be against the law to scare old ladies. But it isn't. There is no law in Kansas City that prohibits dragging flaming plastic reindeer through the night sky on Christmas Eve.

The one thing that was illegal, but missed by the cops, was the 100-watt FM transmitter. A local PBS station manager reported interference with their signal and wanted it stopped immediately. But then upon reconsideration, he decided it provided a good reason to have a fund raiser to buy a bigger transmitter and withdrew his complaint.

As an aside, someone apparently returned to the frat house and disassembled the transmitter.

So, it appears that, other than the smashed police car, no harm was done. The boys should be released soon.

Merry Christmas to all and to all a good night.

>> JCRAC FEEDBACK <<



Raydo Remarks – John Raydo, KØIZ

L.B. Cebik, W4RNL, became a silent key back in 2008. He was considered probably the most widely published and often read author of Amateur Radio antenna articles ever to write on the subject. A compendium of his articles has been assembled at http://www.on5au.be/Cebik_Collection.html.

It's a fantastic resource about everything relating to antennas, transmission lines, baluns, tuners, and modeling.

Jim Morgan, KØYLY, of Bradenton, FL, passed away on October 31. He served as club treasurer during part of his forty-year tenure with the club. He was a mainstay at Field Days (as shown, above, in this 1967 photograph) and always wore a big smile at club events.

