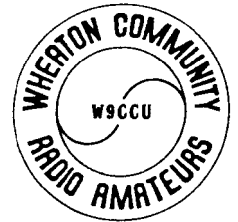




HAMLETTER



Published Monthly

Wheaton Community Radio Amateurs

Issue 451

Founded 1948

Dec/Jan 2000/1

WCRA WISHES ALL OF YOU AND YOUR FAMILY



A JOYFUL

Merry Christmas

AND A PROSPEROUS

HAPPY NEW YEAR

From the President's Gavel

by Joe n9wro WCRA President



It's the Holiday season once again. A lot has happened in the last year. On a personal note, we moved to St Charles and I finally have the land to put up the towers I have always wanted for contesting. Besides all the hassles associated with moving we had major redecorating to be done before the holidays. We made it, just barely. I was still installing new vanities in two bathrooms at 10:00 p.m. the night before our family Christmas Party. But it was worth it. At work things were as busy as ever. I did succeed in using up my vacation time from last year for the move, but I never found the time to use much of this year's vacation. On the club side it was a good year. Our Club Van is once again up and running and available for public service events and for emergency thanks to the truck committee and a few dedicated members who gave up a lot of time to work on the van. Our field day committee once again put together a great event. We placed first in 10A and I believe 11th overall nationally; a tremendous effort by a lot of our members. Great fellowship was had by all in our last Christmas Party of the old millennium. About 40 members came out on a "beautiful sunny day" to share a little holiday cheer with each other. Thanks Ruth for your time spent in making it memorable. My wife and I had a great time. She only gets to meet the membership once or twice a year; of course that could change if she gets her license (hint, hint). We worked a number of public service events again this year. Wearing my other hat, I want to thank the dedicated members who once again came out to help. It would be really nice next year to see some new faces, public service can be fun and it is very rewarding experience.

I want to thank everyone for his or her support during the first 8 months of my term in office. I am pleased to report that by hard work and sacrifice WCRA appears to be back on track fiscally ensuring many more years of club activity.

It is cold and icy and there is a lot of snow on the ground, must be HamFest time. It's almost here and we need everyone's participation. If you have never worked for the HamFest before, please consider working with us this year. If you have worked with us (con't on Page 3)

WCRA Staff

Elected Officers

President	Joe ,	N9WRO
Vice President	Janie ,	AE9JG
Secretary	Robert ,	N2EFT
Treasurer	John ,	W9LQL
Custodian	Kurt ,	KB9RTO

Volunteer Committee Chairs

Club Call Trustee	Tom ,	N9CBA
Christmas Party	Dale ,	NJ9E
Club Awards	John ,	N9MWF
Club Truck	Steve ,	N9OA
Elmer/Know-Code	Vince ,	K9VG
Elmer/Know-Code	George ,	KG9CG
Field Day	Frank ,	KG9H
Field Day	Dale ,	NJ9E
Hamfest	John ,	N9MWF
Health & Welfare	Harry ,	W9AXI
Historian	John ,	N9LIN
Interference	Greg ,	N9SA
Refreshments	Janie ,	AE9JG
Membership	Carol ,	KB9FYL
Membership Retention	Robert ,	N9XS
Public Relations	Eileen ,	N9TWS
Public Service	Joe ,	N9WRO
VHF/HF Awards	Peter ,	W9UF

Amateur License Staff

Training Classes	Jack ,	KA9HEL
Novice Instructor	Rich ,	AA9KZ
Nov/Tech Instructor	Robert ,	N2EFT
General Instructor	John ,	WB9VGJ
General Instructor	Pat ,	K9JAU
Extra Instructor	Sang ,	N9ZGS
Volunteer Exam.	Harry ,	K9HK

WCRA Repeater Administrative Board (RAB)

Trustee/Tech Adv	Tom ,	N9CBA
Chairman	Don ,	N9NYX
Secretary	Marty ,	KA9RCC
Member	Gary ,	N9VLL
Member	George ,	KA3HSW
Tech Advisor	Larry ,	KA9KDC

WCRA Radio Nets

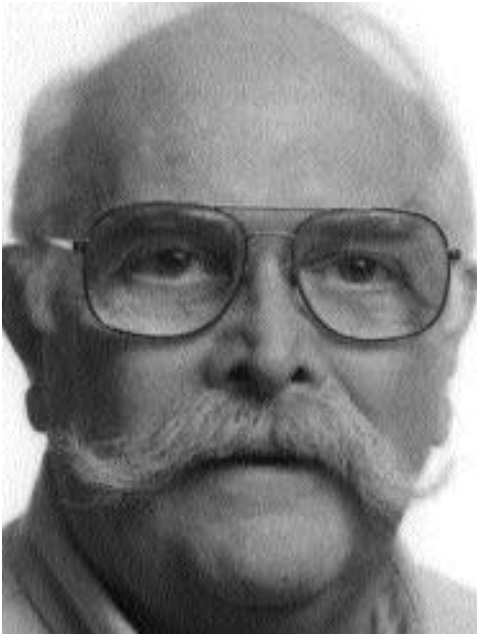
Sunday 8:00 pm	145.390/(-600)	Net Control: Rotates
Sunday 8:30 pm	224.140/(-1.600)	Net Control: Marty KA9RCC
Sunday 9:30 pm	145.390/(-600)	WCRA RTTYNet
Tuesday 8:00 pm	145.390(-600)	ARES Net
Tuesday 8:30 pm	444.475/(5.0)	UHF Net

WCRA Repeaters

145.390/ 144.790	103.5(1A) or 107.2(1B) PL Encode/Decode
224.140/222.540	Carries Access - SKYWARN Service Liaison
444.475/449.475	114.8 Hz(2A) PL Encode/ Decode
145.310/144.710	WCRA, W9CCU-1 Full Duplex Packet Repr

HAMLETTER

Editor	Don ,	N9NYX
Photos	Ron ,	K9ZE
Features	John ,	N9LIN
Features	Peter ,	W9UF
Features	Frank ,	KG9H
Distribution	John ,	N9PPO
HAMLETTER	eMail hamletter@w9ccu.org	
Printing plate prep.	Jon ,	KA9EPK
Printing	Wayne ,	KF9JC



From the WCRA History Files

by: John Lauder,
N9LIN
WCRA
Historian

Remembering the Bicentennial—

Twentyfive years ago, the United States was preparing to celebrate the 200th anniversary of our nation's independence during 1976. Most of planning took place in 1975. Just about everyone and every organization wanted to be involved some way. In response to many requests, the FCC authorized the voluntary use of special call signs by amateur radio operators during the 1976 bicentennial year. Prior approval was not required from the commission. The call sign plan was completely voluntary and required only the temporary exchange of existing prefixes by amateur stations within the contiguous United States with specific prefixes, in accordance with the following chart. Stations located outside the contiguous United States also could change but added a change in digit too, as shown on the following chart. All suffixes remained unchanged. Amateurs could interchange their calls with their own during 1976. Remember these special prefixes were valid only during 1976. Existing call-sign prefixes and equivalent bicentennial call-sign prefixes are shown below:

- | | | |
|---------|----------------|-----------|
| WA = AA | KB6 = AG2 | WB6 = AG3 |
| WB = AB | KC4AA-ZZ = AL4 | WG6 = AG5 |
| W = AC | KG6A-H = AG6 | WH6 = AH1 |
| K = AD | KH6 = AH6 | WJ6 = AJ1 |
| WD = AE | KJ6 = AJ7 | WL7 = AL1 |
| WR = AF | KL7 = AL7 | WM6 = AH2 |
| WN = AK | KM6 = AH7 | WP4 = AJ8 |
| | KP4 = AJ4 | WS6 = AH5 |
| | KP6 = AI0 | WV4 = AJ2 |
| | KS4 = AH4 | WW6 = AG1 |
| | KS6 = AH3 | |
| | KV4 = AJ3 | |
| | KW6 = AG7 | |

For example, WA9USA would become AA9USA and W9CCU would become AC9CCU (although W9CCU could still be used). So if you see some of these prefixes from the past that seem to be strange, this is how they came to be used. Amateur call signs were assigned in such a way that certain characters (1-0) indicated the geographical area that the station was operating in. For the FCC to maintain some flexibility in assignment of call signs, additional prefix blocks needed to be assigned. Call signs with prefixes N and AA through AL were introduced late in 1975. These new prefix call signs were not included in the bicentennial program. Also prior to mid 1976 only the U.S. Navy used the N prefix.

Of course there were contests and awards that were special to the 1976 Bicentennial time period.

Awards—CQ magazine had an USA-NPX-76 award for working 200 US stations using the bicentennial Prefixes.

- The ARRL had a special bicentennial WAS award.
- The WCRA had an award for contacts during 1976 with at least 25 WCRA members. Barry Nelson, K9YVT, was the first amateur to win this award.
- Terry Batt, WB9GLO, offered three bicentennial awards; (1) a bicentennial WAS award; (2) a Prefix award for forty different prefix contacts; (3) a district award for working all ten districts.
- There were many many more, this is but a sample. The 1976 Bicentennial was a big event. How many of our club members were successful in winning any of these awards?

This was a unique time in our country's history as well as our club and amateur radio in general. The past twentyfive years have brought many changes to our country and the hobby of amateur radio. Many of our members remember the interesting Field Day in 1976 with these temporary prefixes. The WCRA Field Day results show the club came in 75th out of 176 clubs.

Source: WCRA Hamletter, April, 1975

73, John, N9LIN

before, please do so again this year. The HamFest is our only money making activity and the club needs your help. Our January meeting is our traditional time to have the HamFest as the program. Come and be a part of final preparations for the HamFest. By meeting time it will be only 23 days away. If you cannot attend the meeting and you would like to participate, please contact John Cheney, N9MWF. I cannot over emphasize how important the HamFest is to the long-term viability of our club. Finally Nancy and I would like to extend our best wishes to you and your families for the approaching holidays. Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year

WCRA Meeting Minutes

by: Robert Mitlieri
N2EFT
WCRA
Secretary



WCRA Minutes from the November 9, 2000 Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by the President, **Joe, N9WRO**, and introductions were made by the board and all attendees. A motion was made and accepted to approve the minutes of the October meeting. Vice-President, **Janie, AE9JG**, mentioned that the room at Wheaton College will not be available for the first Friday in May. Kim (our treasurer in training?) stood in for Treasurer, **John W9LQL**, and gave a report of the club's financial condition. Custodian, **Kurt, KB9RTO**, reported that the club truck was at JOTA and hosted 61 visitors. Membership, **Carol, KB9FYL**, one new member was voted in at this meeting, **Philip, W9TUD**. Hamfest, **John, N9MWF**, reported that much has transpired since the last meeting. The Chicago Motor Speedway is having mandated construction, and will be unable to host the Hamfest. Thanks to a lot of hard work by the Hamfest committee and cooperation of the Chicago Motor Speedway, arrangements are being made with the Hawthorne Racetrack. The Racetrack is just two miles south of the Speedway. Stickers with the new location were printed and are being affixed to all advance-sales hamfest tickets. Volunteers are still needed. The hamfest website is www.wheatonhamfest.org. Public Relations, **Eileen, N9TWS**, brought in copies of an article printed in the Elmhurst Press as well as 11 other suburban Press Publication newspapers. The article which spanned three pages, was written by Marie Lazzara, and featured photos and quotes from several WCRA members. **Dale, NJ9E**, showed the Alinco dual band HT that the club received from the ARRL. This was the prize for coming in fourth (out of 25) for the presentation on Amateur Radio during the showing of the movie, Frequency. RAB, **Don, N9NYX**, reminded the members that we must make a decision regarding the 220 repeater. It will need some expenditures for

repairs. Don also reported that the 220 machine sees regular usage. Training, **Rich, AA9KZ**, reported that the Tech class has 12 enrollees (update: one of the students has already passed the test!). Field Day, **Dale NJ9E**, reported that WCRA came in first in the 10A category. Christmas Party, **Ruth, KA9RZG**, said that arrangements could be made at the Arrowhead Country Club as long as at least 25 people could attend. Ruth took a quick count and had the necessary number. The cost will be \$25/adult and \$14 for children (2-12 incl.). Checks should be made payable to WCRA. The party will take place on Sunday, December 3 at 4PM. Interested members should contact Ruth. Hamletter, Don, N9NYX, reported that, due to some changes, a few members may not have received the Hamletter. A motion was made and seconded to accept the committee reports. The meeting was adjourned at 20:30, and refreshments were served.

Activities on the HF Bands (continued from page 6)

1/1/2001

OSCAR Straight Key Night – No rules, points or logs. Just the pleasure of running CW with a straight key through any amateur radio satellite (moon bounce ok). Call or answer 'CQSKN'.

Well, that about wraps it up for me. Thanks to OPDX, The Daily DX, 425 DX Newsletter, ARRL, & W9XF for information used. I wish you all good DX, and the happiness that the Holidays bring.

THE BIRTHDAY MEMBERS OF DEC/JAN

WJ9N	12-06	W3MDM	12-09
KA9ALO	12-11	K9MUF	12-13
KA9RCC	12-15	W9NJM	12-15
N9GLZ	12-19	WA9RTE	12-21
WB9TEB	12-23	N9YLG	12-25
KA3HSW	12-27	W9GWR	01-03
KB9IYY	01-05	WA9ACO	01-10
W9LQL	01-11	W9PYG	01-12
WB9SFG	01-15	KB9FYL	01-16
N9VLL	01-18	W9XF	01-23
		W9JB	01-25

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Activities on the HF Bands

by:
Peter Barr
W9UF

Rumors were flying in October about a possible P5 operation from North Korea. According to "The Daily DX" a multi-national team of operators met in Seoul, South Korea "in preparation for the trip. However, only hours before they were to board the bus that would take them into North Korea for the operation, authorities informed them that permission to operate Amateur Radio would not be granted. The group was, however, given a new date of January 7, 2001, for a possible operation. Only a few details are available because of the sensitive nature of this venture. More details are to follow, and I will hopefully be able to include them in my January column. Let's hope that this operation can take place. In the mean time, KYFC and stay tuned.

Conway Reef should be a very busy DX location in the coming months, with two separate DXpeditions planned from there. Hrane, Y1AD, reports that he has organized an operation to Conway from February 5-15th, 2001. They will have three stations active at the same time, each with a 1KW amp. Additionally, each station will have two 3-element multi-band beam antennas, one vertical and wires for Top Band. The license was issued on October 5th, 2000, but the call sign has not been released, to prevent pirate operation. The call will be publicized in the beginning of February.

Furthermore, a group of European operators headed by Mats, 5X1Z/SM7PKK and Nils, SM6CAS have also announced a major DXpedition to Conway Reef two months later in April. Operators will also include: Janne, SMØDJZ, Pekka, OH1RY, Saggi, TF3CW and Steve, G4EDG will be active between April 5th through the 24th. Three of these operators have already been on Conway Reef once or twice, and the majority of team are well seasoned DXpeditioners. This undertaking will feature 4 complete stations running 24 hours a day as follows: The first position will run SSB on 20, 15, 10, the second on CW for the same bands. The third station will work 40, 80, 160, SSB/CW/RTTY and 6-meters, while the remaining operating position will work SSB/CW on the WARC bands (30, 17 & 12 meters). All stations will have their own generators, amplifiers and Force 12 antennas.

Since Conway is higher on the Most Wanted list in Europe, that will be the main target area. However the team promises ample opportunity to the rest of the world who may need this as a new one, or those who are chasing band/mode countries. They plan a much longer stay than any previous operation, covering 3 full weekends and a total of 19 days on the Reef (this will include the whole Easter week). No call sign for the operation was mentioned in the press release. The estimated cost of the DXpedition is approximately \$45,000.

On December 9-10, the Radio Agency of the Netherlands will celebrate the 50th anniversary of former intercontinental radio reception station "NERA" with a special event station operated by employees of the Radio Agency. The call sign PC-50-N has been applied for. The call block 'PC' has not been issued to radio amateurs before. "NERA" was converted to a professional monitoring station for longwave through UHF for the Dutch Radio Agency. The name stands for "NEderhorst-den-Berg Radio". Nederhorst-den-Berg is a village near Hilversum in the center of Holland. The reception site, which lays in the Horstermeer nature reserve, was chosen for it's quiet RF environment and excellent ground characteristics with it's natural salt water sources.

Activity will be around the clock, propagation permitting, in CW, SSB or PSK31 on 70cm, 2, 10, 15, 20, 40, 80 and 160 meters. On 160 meters a full-size inverted Eve dipole at 65 meters above very good ground will be used, on 10-20 meters a two-element Yagi 30 meters above the same ground will do the job. Dipoles will be used on 80 and 40 meters. A special QSLcard will be awarded to all contacting stations and will be sent by the bureau automatically.

Once again Doctor Rick, NE8Z, will be operating as HC1MD in Ecuador through December 11th. Activity will be on 40-10 meters CW/SSB (500 watts) and 6 meters (10 watts). He will travel to different areas in Ecuador and will sign HC1MD, HC1MD/HC2, HC3, HC6 and HC7. QSL via K8LJG: John Kroll, 3528 Craig Drive, Flint, MI 48506 USA. Also, please view the HC-DX AWARDS at: <http://www.octavia.com/qs/awards.htm>

The #CQDX chat channel is being moved to the WorldIRC network at irc.worldirc.org. Everything is exactly the same; you will just have to reconfigure the address you connect to in your DX-Telnet, mIRC, or other IRC software. Please visit <http://dx.qsl.net/cqdx> for information and instructions on how to plug the new address into your software. You may email Doug, N6RT at n6rt@qsl.net if you have any questions or problems.

If you are not familiar with #CQDX, it is a popular IRC "chat room" which has been running for over two years. Many DXers, contesters, and everyday hams from all over the world visit this site. Over 5000 different hams from over 170 different countries have visited #CQDX. The channel is also connected directly to DX Summit and broadcasts DX spots, WWVinfo, and announcements. You can find out about #CQDX at <http://dx.qsl.net/cqdx>.

A DXpedition (of sorts) has been announced to take place December 9-12, signing 1SL1A from Sealand, which is about 7 miles off the coast of England and resembles an off-shore oil rig. Activity will be on 80-10 meters - the WARC bands and 160 meters are being considered. They will be active during the 10 meter DX Contest as well.

It was originally built by the British during WW II to monitor the coast for a possible German invasion. It was later sold to a wealthy British ex-military officer, who has attempted to establish it as sovereignty.

Jon "JT" Utley, K7CO (1SL1J), who will be among the operators states that the license from 'the government' has been issued. He also provided the following: "For those that are wondering about using the prefix 1SL. As some of you know in the past 1S has been used for Spratly. This prefix bloc is not reserved for Spratly, but was used because the area is in dispute over who owns the area. Sealand is also in dispute. We have created the Radio Amateur Association of the Principality of Sealand and our goals are to become a member of the IARU and eventually the ITU."

Don't look for this to gain DXCC recognition, but then you never know. As always, a WFWL approach should be taken. If nothing else, it should be a good one to grab if you're a prefix collector. For more information and details, see the following Web sites:

<http://www.sealandgov.com/>

<http://www.fruitsofthesea.demon.co.uk/sealand/index.html>

<http://www.nielsen.net/1sl>

There is an ABC News article on Sealand as well. Click on the picture for a video news story using realplayer video.

<http://more.abcnews.go.com/sections/tech/dailynews/sealand000606.html>

DX POTPOURRI

A new station came on the air from Iran recently. On October 10th, Hamid, EP3HR and his friend Yar, EP3SP opened their club station EP4PTT. The club will only be active on 14 MHz with homebrew equipment and a dipole, with output power limited to 20 watts. QSL via the Iranian Bureau.

And speaking of Iran, Mac, W3HC, reports that for those who are interested, he has a Web page for Iran up and running. Any news he receives from Iran will be posted on: <http://www.ep3sp.hometstead.com/index.html>.

Patrick, W3PO (ex F6DWY), is now active as VQ9PO from Chagos primarily on CW on all bands until March 2001. QSL via W3PO.

Special event stations SP2ØØØS and SN2ØØØC will be active on all bands and modes from Poland until the end of the month December to celebrate the new millennium. QSL SP2ØØØS via SP5ZCC, QSL SN2ØØØC via SP9PKZ.

Gerard, FM/F2JD, now started his six months duty in French Martinique. He also intends to activate neighboring islands on both CW and SSB. QSL via bureau to F6AJA.

Masa, JA6GXX, will be active from Danjo Archipelago (Meshima Island AS-056) several times during the next few months: December 15-25th, January 5-16th, February 6-16th and March 20-30th. However, this is not a DXpedition and Masa will only be active during his spare time. Suggested frequencies are 14260 (+/- 10 kHz) or 21260 (+/- 10 kHz). QSL only via the Bureau.

John, G3IZM, will depart the UK for Manila on December 17th, and will be operational as DU7/G3IZM from Guimeras Island (OC-129) in the Visayan Group between December 19th and January 5th (as swimming and other vacation pursuits permit). His will using be an IC706 MK2G with dipoles over the sea on 20/15 meters CW/SSB. QSL to home callsign.

Takeshi, JI3DST, will be active as JI3DST/6 from Daitou Island (IOTA AS-047) December 30th through January 7th. Activity will be on 40 through 6 meters SSB (including the WARC bands). QSL via the JARL (Bureau is Best) or direct to JI3DST: Takeshi "TAKE" Funaki, 2-18-26 Hannan-cho Abeno-ku saka-city, OSAKA 545-0021 JAPAN

A web page has been created for a list (by date) of present, and upcoming, Island (IOTA & non-IOTA), Lighthouse, Castle, and other portable operations. This list is updated daily. You can find this site at www.qsl.net/va3rj/icpo.html.

Do you want to know if your DXCC cards have been safely received at ARRL HQ? A list of applications received is now available on the league website at <http://www.arrl.org/awards/dxcc/appstatus.html>.

Here is the contest line-up for December, with corresponding websites for additional information. Remember all dates are UTC.

12/1-3

ARRL 160Meter Contest www.arrl.org/contests

QRPARCI Holiday Sprints www.qrparci.org/

TARA RTTY Sprint www.n2ty.org/

12/9-10

ARRL 10 Meter Contest www.arrl.org/contests

12/16-17

Croatian CW Contest See December QST

OK DX RTTY Contest crk.mlp.cz/eng/dxconte.htm

12/30-31

RAC Winter Contest www.rac.ca/CANWIN.htm

Stew Perry Topband Distance Challenge (160M, CW only)

Jzap.com/k7rat/stew.html

12/31

ARRL Straight Key Night www.arrl.org/contests

(continued on page 4)

DEC/JAN CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

- 5th of Dec: Club breakfast **every** Tuesday morning 7-9 AM, Glen Oaks Restaurant, Glen Ellyn
- 7th of Dec: Club Brunch **every** Thursday at 10:30 AM Carol's Garden, Carol Stream
- 14th of Dec: Club dinner held at the Glen Oaks Restaurant, Glen Ellyn 6:30 PM
- 15th of Dec: DEADLINE FOR HAMLETTER SUBMISSIONS FOR JANUARY
- 2nd of Jan: Club breakfast **every** Tuesday morning 7-9 AM, Glen Oaks Restaurant, Glen Ellyn
- 5th of Jan: Monthly membership meeting at Wheaton College 7:30pm in classroom #8 in Breyer Hall. Breyer Hall is located on the Southeast corner of Irving and Kenilworth. The program will be the January 28th Hamfest at Hawthorn Racecourse.
- 6th of Jan: 29th Annual Midwinter SWAPFEST, Waukesha County Expo Center Forum, Waukesha, Wis. Sponsored by the West Allis Radio Amateur Club.
- 14th of Jan: South Bend Hamfest & Computer Expo, 8:00 am to 3:00 pm. Elkhart Co Fairgrounds, Goshen, Ind. Talkin: 145.290 -
- 15th of Jan: DEADLINE FOR HAMLETTER SUBMISSIONS FOR FEBRUARY
- 18th of Jan: Club dinner held at the Glen Oaks Restaurant, Glen Ellyn 6:30 PM
- 28th of Jan: WCRA Mid-Winter Hamfest at Hawthorne Racecourse, 3501 S. Laramie, Cicero, Ill. 8 am to 1 pm

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Wheaton Community Radio Amateurs Year in Review:

- * Hamfest is successfully moved from the Odeum in Villa Park to the Chicago Motor Speedway in Cicero, Illinois.
- * WCRA placed First in the 10A category in Field Day 2000 at Pan Fish Park, Glen Ellyn.
- * ARRL awarded club 4th place out of about 25 clubs participating in the competition to publicize to show the link between the movie *Frequency* and Amateur Radio. A new handi talkie was given as our prize.
- * Club moved its meeting location from the College of DuPage to Wheaton College this fall after over a decade at COD.

WCRA General Membership Meeting - January 5th - Wheaton College - 7:30 PM

WCRA was founded in 1948 and continues to be involved in all facets of Amateur Radio supporting the healthy growth of the hobby through diversification and participation. Our members have always been our most important asset and we would like to see you join us for our next meeting. Our business meetings are followed by a break for conversation, coffee, soda pop, and fat pills. This is followed by an amateur radio related program. We would like to see you there to share the enthusiasm.

HAMLETTER

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eMail: donlin@xnet.com

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First Class Mail

