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501c4 Non-Profit Organization



- [Home](#)
- [News](#)
- [Forums](#)
- [Meetings & Discussion](#)
- [Recent Events](#)
- [Photo Gallery](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Links](#)
- [Constitution & By-Laws](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

"Ides of March" Hamfest 2011

March 19, 2011

Location:

Tennessee National Guard Armory, Union City, TN

The 4rd Annual "Ides of March" Hamfest sponsored by the Reelfoot Amateur Radio Club in Union City, Tennessee was held once again at the Tennessee National Guard Armory. The weatherman was quite kind to us as we were blessed with wonderful Springtime temperatures and no rain.

The Event:

Setup for the event began the previous day and went very smoothly. A new PA system was setup and tested and proved to be much improved over previous years. The acoustics of the giant dining room at the armory is more than a bit challenging. Todd N4QWZ of *Hamfest Services - Gigaparts*, pulled in from Indiana and set up an impressive display spanning six tables. Also *Mid-South Amateur Radio Supply* with Steve KI4YOP, Rosalinda KI4ZKW, and Ham W4GMM from Memphis set up a large display on several tables. Many new and familiar faces filled the vendor tables with their wares. Once again Shane Barnes and his daughter Courtney from Jackson, Tennessee set up a fine display with items related to communications accessories. Also Gladys KJ4EKN was again present selling several items from Ron W9RVR(SK)'s station.



Rhelda N5BSE calling out the next raffle prize winner

Noel KJ4UNX and Brandon KJ4FTN manned the gates as the event kicked off. Our Master

Chef Chris KI4TRM fired up the grill and the voice of Rhelda N5BSE and later Larry KI4UNT filled the air over the PA system. Folks from near and far started driving in with their 'porcupine' vehicles. Harold KJ4FTM handled the talk-in duties on the local repeater. This year we had several new contributing vendors including Force 12 Antennas, Elecraft, and Don Dazo K4ZA who all provided prizes for the raffle. Don's new book *Antenna Towers for Radio Amateurs* was a big hit. One prize, the new 4-element 6 meter LFA yagi was generously provided by Force 12 and became our 2nd Prize. Our Grand Prize was again an Icom IC-718 HF transceiver. For 3rd prize, we had one of the new Wouxon 2M/440 MHz dual band HT's. We also had a wide array of prizes from many other vendors such that a prize was given away nearly every 10 minutes. Because of

[Christmas 2014](#)

[Field Day 2014](#)

[Hamfest 2014](#)

[Christmas 2013](#)

[Field Day 2013](#)

[Hamfest 2013](#)

[Christmas 2012](#)

[Field Day 2012](#)

[Hamfest 2012](#)



Harold KJ4FTM holding down the talk-in frequency

these fine prizes, the "chicken coup" rolling bin was filling fast with purchased raffle tickets.

The food again was superb !!

Hamburgers and hotdogs were handled by Chris KI4TRM and Jim KI4KHT brought in 15 pounds of barbecue. The ladies serving up the great chow included Glenn N4MJ's XYL Linda, and granddaughter Lexi, Jamie WB4YDL's XYL June, and Dolly KN4SLY. After all was said and done, there was very little food left. Lots of complements were heard about the food all throughout the event.

VIP's:



Jean KE4OEQ and TN Section Manager Glen W4BDB

We were again honored to have Tennessee Section Manager Glen Clayton W4BDB and ARRL Vice Director of Delta Division David Norris K5UZ. Tennessee Section

Emergency Coordinator Lowell Bennington WD4DJW also made the trip and presented an Emergency Coordinator certificate to the new Weakley County EC, Roger Elmore KJ4AJP. Together they gave a fine forum and updated a great crowd on happenings with the Delta Division and the Tennessee Section. *Thanks so much for attending !*

VE Session & DX Card Checking:

This year's VE session was again manned by the Crockett County VE team headed by Randy KI4OAS. We had many testers this year and several managed to pass for a new license or to upgrade to a higher class of

license. *Congratulations !*

Ed Pflueger AB4IQ again came down from Paducah, KY as an official ARRL QSL card field checker for DXCC. In addition to checking QSL cards for DXCC credit, Ed gave a great forum on DXing QSL technique. This was well attended and all took away nuggets of information important to their own QSL'ing efforts.

Raffle Prize Winners:

- **Grand Prize: Todd Phillips N4QWZ**
- **2nd Prize: Billy Simpson AD4PF**
- **3rd Prize: Art Anderson WA4EQO**

Epilogue :

The high value lineup of prizes and the great vendor offerings contributed to a highly successful Hamfest. Estimated crowd size was again on the order of 250 which is excellent. Again, in appreciation to the men



Gladys KJ4EKN attempting to sell to an astonished customer

[Christmas 2011](#)

[Field Day 2011](#)

[Hamfest 2011](#)

[Event Archive](#)

and women of the Tennessee National Guard, a donation of \$200 will be made to the 913th FRG (Family Readiness Group). Plans are already being made for the Ides of March Hamfest 2012.

Don't miss it !

Soapbox:

Ed AB4IQ :

I feel that [the hamfest] is growing and I know the guys I was with did too. They were amazed that GigaParts was there as well. I personally enjoyed the little seminar about 4 of us had, because every time I do something like that, I do learn something. I just wish there was a little more attendance and I'm surprised that you (Jamie WB4YDL) were the only one that had cards for me to check. The guys that were



Todd N4QWZ selling his wares for GigaParts - also the Grand Prize winner



Art WA4EQO shows off his 3rd prize

with me, two of them, were seasoned hams and do work for awards and the other guy was brand new and enjoyed learning a little more about the hobby and is working towards his General. The food, coffee etc. was taken care of as well and no one should have gone home hungry. At least this year it was half decent weather and we didn't freeze to death. I did by the way sell my Icom 746 Pro because of the Hamfest. Gary Wheatley from Paducah saw it there and called me Thursday morning and bought it.

I also enjoy just seeing folks that you haven't seen in a while and just setting around BS'ing.

Art WA4EQO:

I always look forward to the signs of Spring. The first robin, the dogwood blooms, and the RARC Ides of March Hamfest. I look forward to the hamfest each year because of the opportunity to see folks I have not seen in a while, as well as the chance to meet others who share the hobby. It is always nice to make a new connection. As usual, the ARES seminar provided some useful information. Needless to say, winning

one of the top 3 door prizes made the day that much better. To all the vendors who made the trip, and everyone else who worked so hard to make the event a success, Thank You!

Steve K4TAZ:

UC is a good hamfest. If it were me, I would put it one week before Tullahoma. Two or three weeks before the event, I would get your biggest gun station to promote it on the morning and evening TN Net and any other nets in SW KY and eastern AR. Have you built up a database from those that have attended in the past. If you can determine email addresses, send out emails. Be sure to have a page up and going a month or two in advance on your web site and keep it updated as to vendors and prizes. You might want to do a mailing to the clubs in the area. If I'm able, I'll sure be there next year.

Jerry KJ4NSG:

My hat goes off to all who put this year's hamfest together. It's nice to see people eye to eye that you talk to over the air all year long and you haven't even met them, to see what they look like. I'D also like to thank the kitchen help for what they do also, to take their time to feed and serve all of us and to put out a great meal. Thanks one and all.



Lowell WD4DJW congratulates new Weakley County EC Roger KJ4AJ

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Web design and concept by [James C. Hall, MD, WB4YDL](#). Please report any bugs