



Reelfoot Amateur Radio Club

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501c4 Non-Profit Organization



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"Ides of March" Hamfest 2012

March 17, 2012

Location:

Tennessee National Guard Armory, Union City, TN

The 5th 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. Well, faith and begorrah !! It was also St. Patty's Day and there was lots of green to be seen !

The Event:

Setup for the event began the previous day and went very smoothly. As usual, the acoustics of the giant dining room at the armory was more than a bit challenging, but the PA system that was acquired the previous year performed very well. *Mid-South Amateur Radio Supply* with Steve KI4YOP, and Rosalinda KI4ZKW 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. This year, a projection system was used to project the winner's

ticket numbers on the wall as a database.

Given the poor acoustics, this was

particularly beneficial and much appreciated.

Harold KJ4FTM and Brandon KJ4FTN manned the gates as the event kicked off. Our Master Chef Chris KI4TRM was unable to attend this year, so Master Chef Second Class Noel KJ4UNX fired up the grill and the voice of Rhelda N5BSE, Ottis K5BSE, and Rose W9DHD filled the air over the PA system. Folks from near and far started driving in with their 'porcupine' vehicles. Brandon KJ4FTN handled the talk-in duties on the local repeater. Again this year, we had great contributions from vendors including Force 12 Antennas, Elecraft, and ARRL who all provided prizes for the raffle.



Marv KK4MAC & Noel KJ4UNX at the barbecue

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Dave WT8R selling boat anchors

away. A wide array of prizes from many other vendors were on hand such that a prize was given away nearly every 8 minutes. Because of these fine prizes, the "chicken coup" rolling bin was filling fast with purchased raffle tickets.

The food again was superb !! Hamburgers from Noel's grill and barbecue from the Smoke House in South Fulton filled many a plate. 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:



Pat Lane W4OQG new TN Section Emergency Coordinator

Charlotte, NC and he was able to combine several jobs and make it in for the hamfest. The talk was very well attended and nearly 'standing room only'. His slides included some of the several super multi-multi contest stations that he has had a hand in constructing. Everyone came away with lots of information and a favorable impression. *Thanks Don so much !*

VE Session & DX Card Checking:

This year's VE session was again manned by the Crockett County VE team headed by Randy KI4OAS. We

The new 3-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 West Mountain Radio's Rigblaster Pro. We also had a few of the new Wouxon 2M/440 MHz dual band HT's to give



Crockett County VE gang

We were honored to have newly elected Tennessee Section Manager Keith Miller N9DGK and ARRL Director of Delta Division David Norris K5UZ and Vice Director Glen Clayton W4BDB. New Tennessee Section Emergency Coordinator Pat Lane W4OQG also made the trip from Memphis and presented new District Emergency Coordinator and Emergency Coordinator certificates. 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 !*

Tower Guru Don Daso K4ZA:

This year at the Ides of March Hamfest, we were especially honored to have on hand Don Daso, K4ZA to give a forum on tower and antenna construction. Don is author of *Antenna Towers for Radio Amateurs* sold by ARRL. His home QTH is in

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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.



Don K4ZA talks towers

Raffle Prize Winners:

Grand Prize	Michael Taylor N4MHT	Icom IC-718 HF Transceiver
2nd Prize	Brandon Snow KJ4FTN	Force 12 LFA-306 6M yagi
3rd Prize	David Gilbert AJ4LV	Yaesu FT-2800M 2M Transceiver
4th Prize	Kathy Denton KJ4CLW	West Mountain Radio Rigblaster Pro
5th Prize	Marv Cummings KK4MAC	LDG Auto Antenna Tuner

Epilogue :



David AJ4LV wins 3rd Prize

Ed, AB4IQ, seemed to have several people bring cards for him to check. Always glad to see him at the hamfest, always smiling.

The refreshment workers did an excellent job of keeping people served with some really great food.

Having a projector to display the prize winners was a super idea. Thanks Bob. We still have room to improve on displaying the info but we'll get better at it. The second projector will become a standard

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 and women of the Tennessee National Guard, a donation will be made to the 913th FRG (Family Readiness Group). Plans are already being made for the Ides of March Hamfest 2013.

Don't miss it !

Soapbox:

Glenn N4MJ :

Best one we've had. Seems more people came. Saw lots of eye-balling and rag chewing going on during the quiet times (when no prizes being given away). The forums went very well and had good attendance. Maybe we should have more forums next year. ??? They do provide a good learning experience for particular interests.

accessory for forums. So good to have our own projectors and not have to worry with finding and borrowing or begging for one.

Even though we have a good audio system the acoustics of the building haven't changed so it is still difficult to understand the audio once there is the buzz of people under the roof. As I said before, the projector was a super improvement.

The atmosphere was more relaxed this year, at least from my perspective. Club workers all did their jobs in an outstanding fashion. Maybe that is why it seemed so relaxing !!!



Michael N4MHT wins Grand Prize

Many thanks to all who helped and attended the 2012 hamfest. May 2012 be a happy and prosperous year for everyone.

Art WA4EQO:

It was a fine Irish morning for the annual RARC Ides of March Hamfest and the Wearing o' the Green. It seemed quite fit and proper for it to fall on St. Patrick's Day since Guglielmo Marconi was a son of T' Old Sod. His mother was the granddaughter of himself, John Jameson of Jameson's Irish whisky fame. As always, it was good to meet up with old friends and wander the tables looking for bargains.

I was able to straighten out a major problem with the ARRL representatives regarding my membership status of which I was entirely unaware. I was fortunate enough to win a nice gift certificate from the ARRL during the drawing. It was enough to cover my Field Day stuff for this year, as well as a few other goodies.

Thanks and congratulations to the RARC for all the hard work in organizing and running the Hamfest. The addition of the projector to list the winners in the drawings was a fine idea and made it go much easier. I look



Steve and Rosalinda selling their wares

forward to a bigger and better event in 2013.