



# Hamtrix

Volume 54, Issue 11 November, 2009

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## Meetings & Events



**November 10**  
Club Meeting  
Program:

### **Robotics Demo**

by More Robotics Club  
7:00 PM Church Basement

**November 24**

### **Board Meeting**

7:00 PM Church Office

**November 29**

Material Due for Next  
**Hamtrix**

**December 6**

### **Annual Awards Dinner**

**December 8**

Next Club Meeting



## The President's Shack

by Howard Smith,  
WA9AXQ

First, I want to give a Big Thank You to Gary Sutcliffe, W9XT, for his excellent presentation on Contesting at the October meeting. I had never given much thought about how the antenna could affect the contest results. And, having a footrest with the foot switch attached is a great idea. I have often struggled to keep the foot switch in one location. I hope each of you learned of some new idea that will make your next contest more enjoy-

able, and bring a higher score.

The results of the Annual Elections were the following:

President	Howard, WA9AXQ
Vice President	Tom, K9BTQ
Secretary	Lynn, K9KR
Treasurer	Chuck, WB9PUB
Board mbr (2yr)	Frank, KA9FZR
Board mbr (1yr)	George, AA9SR
	<i>remainder of Chuck's term</i>
Board mbr (1yr)	Chuck, W9WLX
	<i>past president position</i>

I would like to thank Dick, W9JBE, who as served as the club treasurer since 2000, for a job well done. I would also like to thank George, AA9SR, for his two years as a board member. I was very pleased that he agreed to pick up the remaining one-year board position. It is en-

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## Annual Awards Dinner

**5:00 PM - Sunday, December 6**

**See Page 5 to sign up**

## 10 METER CONTEST

DECEMBER 12-13, 2009

In addition to the ARRL 10-Meter contest, WARAC members have the opportunity to join an additional contest just for our club members.

To participate in the Club contest, enter the ARRL contest as you would otherwise but keep an ear open for club members. For every club member worked you get bonus points in the WARAC contest. Rules for the ARRL contest may be found at: <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2009/10-meters.html>.

The ARRL Ten Meter Contest begins at 6:00 PM local time on Friday, December 12, and runs for 48 hours. Your Club score is calculated on the summary sheet below. It is recommended that you submit an entry in the ARRL contest, but it is not required for the WARAC contest.

To submit your entry for the Club contest, send a copy of your ARRL log and a filled-out Club Summary Sheet (below) before January 14, 2010 to Chuck Craven at the address listed at the bottom. Certificates for winners will be given out at the 2010 Club Awards Dinner.

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**From the Minutes...**

By Lynn Tamblyn, K9KR  
Secretary

**Minutes of the General Meeting  
October 13, 2009**

The meeting was called to order at 7:12 PM by President Howard Smith.

*Visitors* – Gary Sutcliffe, W9XT, Richard Regent, K9GDF, and Timothy McAdams, KC9QMK, introduced themselves. WARAC members introduced themselves to the three gentlemen.

*Minutes* – the membership approved the minutes as printed in Hamtrix.

*Club Dinner* – Howard mentioned the upcoming annual Club Awards Dinner, scheduled for December 6 at the Machine Shed Restaurant. The program is to be presented by Jim Maletta of North Star Energy Consulting, who will speak on Home Performance with the Energy Star Program. There is a flyer in the current issue of Hamtrix for those interested to fill out and submit to the Treasurer to confirm their attendance.

*Ten Meter Contest* – Chuck Craven spoke to the upcoming 10 Meter contest, that will happen on the second weekend of December, i.e. the 12th and 13th. Chuck will be doing an article on the event, which is also a WARAC activity, wherein club members compete against other club members, as a competition that parallels this ARRL sponsored event.

*Election* – at this time our annual election of officers was held. Howard Smith, WA9AXQ, was nominated for President and elected by motion; Tom Macon, K9BTQ, was nominated for Vice-President and elected by motion; Lynn Tamblyn, K9KR, was nominated for Secretary and elected by motion; Chuck Craven, WB9PUB, was nominated for Treasurer and elected by motion; George Dunco, AA9SR, was nominated for a one year at-large Board position to cover the remainder of Chuck Craven’s previous position. George was elected by motion. Frank Humpal, KA9FZR, was nominated for a two-year at-large Board position and elected by motion. Lastly, Chuck Dellis,

W9WLX, was nominated for the position of “Past President,” a one-year term. Chuck was also elected by motion.

*Program* – Tips for New and Experienced Contesters. Gary Sutcliffe, W9XT, presented a very fine program on the world of contesting. Gary’s program was to help contesters move up to the next level by presenting ideas for improving your score.

Gary writes a column in the National Contest Journal. He also is the staff and management of Unified Microsystems, who make various contesting accessories. Gary began by defining a contest. Next he moved to some hints to do better in the various types of contests, such as domestic, DX, phone, CW, and RTTY, some short term, some medium and some long, such as 48 hour DX contests. He talked of the best bands that depend on your antenna and/or terrain, gain versus take off angle, for dipoles, verticals, and beams. He suggested you optimize your antennas for specific contests, or have multiple antennas. Gary believes in having a lot of antennas. He told us about his antenna farm. He then spoke to also optimizing your shack for efficiency – such as equipment within easy reach, wear a headset (mike and headphones), use a foot switch, be able to view your SWR at all times, have some sort of automatic antenna selection, good lighting, ventilation, a decent chair, as well as a foot rest for the foot switch to save your feet. Lastly Gary spoke to his suggested “tips” for operating during various contests, such as making sure you call CQ a lot, watch your rate meter, and watch your multipliers. A Q & A session followed. Gary mentioned he would have this program on his website shortly – see W9XT.com .

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 PM, followed by refreshments and eyeball QSO’s.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
Lynn Tamblyn, K9KR, Secretary

**Minutes of the Board Meeting  
October 27, 2009**

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 PM. by Chairman Howard Smith.

Board members present were: Howard Smith, Charles Craven, Tom Macon, George Dunco. Newly elected

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WARAC Officers and Board			<b>Hamtrix</b> – Editor & Publisher
President	J. Howard Smith, WA9AXQ	414.425-5626	Submit newsletter material to: Tom Macon, K9BTQ 3547 S. 95 St Milwaukee, WI 53228 414 543-3878 tmacon@wi.rr.com
Vice President	Thomas W. Macon, K9BTQ	414.543-3878	
Secretary	Lynn C. Tamblyn, K9KR	262.534-9655	
Treasurer	Chuck Craven, WB9PUB	262.642-7628	
Director (2011)	Frank Humpal, KA9FZR	414.425-0794	
Director (2010)	George Dunco, AA9SR	262.782-6325	
Director (1 year)	Chuck Dellis, W9WLX	414.543-1134	
Board Chairperson	J. Howard Smith, WA9AXQ	414.425-5626	

# FIRST ROBOTICS COMPETITION

by Brian Cieslak, K9WIS

As ham radio aficionados, we often look with dismay at today's kids who take for granted the technology they use today. Cell phones that can take pictures and send them wirelessly across the world or that can access a worldwide computer network fill student knapsacks. While kids play video games that rival real life in look and feel draw kids into a near zombie like state, they give little thought about the technology that entertains them. The foundation of today's communication's boom was set years ago by kids of similar age who were exploring the new radio and electricity technologies of the early 20th century. What amazing and wonderful things came from the amateur of those days.

Today the same spirit of exploration is still alive if you know where to look. Some kids can see beyond text messaging or killing some gory monster in an underground research facility. I met a group of these kids a few years ago when I was asked to teach some high school kids how to program in the 'C' programming language after school. When I arrived, I was barraged with questions about programming and electronics. I asked what they were up to and that when they showed me 'The Robot'. This was not going to be your typical high school science project.

These kids were a team taking part in the internationally acclaimed FIRST robotics program. FIRST stands for FOR INSPIRATION and RECOGNITION of SCIENCE and TECHNOLOGY. It is a program that teams engineering professionals and high school students together for a robots competition. You may be familiar with competitive robotics from programs on TV called BattlesBots or RoboWars. Rather than being machines of destruction, FIRST robots are task oriented and generally have to play some sort of game. There are over 2000 teams in the FIRST program and over 50,000 students from around the world participate.



Let me tell you a little bit about the robot and the game. A robot typically weighs about 125 pounds, that's the maximum weight. They can be no larger than 5 x 5 x 5 feet. They are remote controlled except for the first 15 seconds of the two-minute match, then they have to play the game autonomously. Autonomously means no human interaction. The game that year was called AIM HIGH, a version of 3-on-3 basketball, where the robot had to shoot balls through a goal 10 feet in the air on a court about the size of a basketball court.

The game is announced in January at an event called the kickoff, which happens to be held the same day as the WARAC swapfest. Students from all over SE Wisconsin meet at WCTC to view a satellite broadcast just as other students meet all over the world at the same time. It's at the kickoff the teams pick up their boxes of robot parts. They now have six weeks to design, build, program and test their robot before the offi-

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## Ham Happenings

### Around the area

#### Ozaukee Radio Club

Wed, November 11  
7:30PM  
Grafton Senior Center  
1665 7th. Ave.  
Grafton

#### CQ3TUE Lunch

Tues. November 17  
11:15AM  
Old Country Buffet  
16750 W Bluemound Rd

#### Wisconsin Amateur Radio Club

Wed. November 25  
7:30PM  
Germantown Police Dept  
Germantown

#### Milwaukee Radio Amateur Club (MRAC)

Thurs, November 19  
7:00PM  
Redemption Lutheran Church  
4057 N. Mayfair Rd

#### South Milwaukee Amateur Radio Club

Wed. December 2  
7:00PM  
Legion Post 434  
9327 S Shepard Ave  
Oak Creek

#### Amateur Radio Testing

Saturday, November 28  
9:30AM  
Amateur Electronic Supply  
5720 W Good Hope Rd

### NOTE

Please do not contact meeting places for information.

**Don't forget — 2010**

**Dues are Due**

**See our new Treasurer**

Chuck Craven, WB9PUB  
W2292 Beulah Hgts Rd  
East Troy, WI 53120

**WARAC David Knaus Memorial Scholarship**

Available to licensed Amateurs who are Wisconsin residents pursuing an Associate, Bachelor's or Graduate degree in any course of study. The application deadline is May 1, 2010.

Visit the [FAR website](#) for additional information and application forms.

**Swapfest Tickets**

Phil will have tickets for advance sale at the Nov. 10 meeting. Help promote our 'fest by selling advance tickets!

**WARAC 2-Meter Net**

Since we no longer have a repeater, our off-meeting night net has moved to 147.42 simplex. Please make a note of it!

- **7:00 PM**
- **1st, 3rd and 5th Tuesdays**
- **147.42 simplex**

**Thanks!**

Thanks and a tip of the editor's hat to the following contributors to this month's issue of **Hamtrix**



**Brian Cieslak, K9WIS**



**Write an Article**  
**This means**  
**You!**  
**Please??**

**Scuttlebutt...**

- Slides from the excellent Contesting program presented by Gary Sutcliffe, W9XT, at our October meeting are available on his website: [http://www.w9xt.com/attachments/Radio\\_Contesting\\_2.ppt](http://www.w9xt.com/attachments/Radio_Contesting_2.ppt)
- John, K9IAC/4, is on the air from the Daytona, FL area during the first two weeks of November.
- The tower belonging to Don Rohleder, WA9YDU, SK, has been taken down in exchange for a donation to our Scholarship Fund.

**Do you have news that isn't listed here? It won't be here if ye editor doesn't know about it - call or email Tom, K9BTQ! .....**

**Upcoming Meeting Programs**

**November 10**

**FIRST Robotics Presentation**  
by MORE Community Robotics Team

The *Thomas More Community Robotics* is a group of young people who engage in robotics competition. More info next month.

**December 8**

**Video: Getting Started in Contesting**  
CQ Magazine

**Program suggestions?**

**Let us know - Contact a Board member! .....**

**FIRST Robotics**

*(Continued from page 3)*

cial end of the build season. These kids will stay after school from 3:30 to 8:00 each night and come in Saturdays from 8:00AM to 4:00PM. If the robot is not picked up by FedEx by the last day of the build season and shipped to the first competition site, your season is over.

The kids aren't alone in their quest to build the robot. Mentors from industry and universities work with the kids to help them achieve their goals, the work (fabricating, building, programming) is all done by the kids. The mentor's motto is "we don't build good robots we build good robot builders".

Competitions called regionals are where 50 to 60 teams come together to play the game. The Wisconsin regional is held in March at the Cellular Arena in downtown Milwaukee. The robots must pass inspections for safety and rule violations. The first day of the regional, teams are usually found in the pit area making last minute adjustments or out on the practice field. This is graduation day for the teams, the mentors step back (not too far) and let the students run their team. The first day is a seeding round where robots will play eight games. Each game is played with two other alliance partners against another three-robot team. On this day you will play with different partners in each game. The next day are the elimination rounds. The top eight robots get to pick their alliance partners for the elimination tournament. The alliance that survives the elimination round wins the regional competition.

Despite the intense competition, the kids display 'gracious professionalism'

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# WARAC ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2009

5:00PM QSO TIME — 6:00PM DINNER



*THE MACHINE SHED RESTAURANT*  
N14 W24145 TOWER PL  
(I-94 & HWY J, EXIT 294)



<p><b>WARAC Activities</b> <i>the year in review</i></p> <p>Swapfest    WIQP</p> <p>Field Day    <i>more</i></p>	<p><b>Presentation of:</b></p> <p>2009 Scholarship Certificate</p> <p>Years of Membership Awards</p> <p>Contest Awards</p> <p>2009 Member of the Year Award</p>
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### Program

**Home Performance**  
with the  
**Energy Star Program**

*Jim Maletta of North Star Energy Consulting*

Contact Phil Gural or Tom Macon if you need transportation

**Sign-Up sheet below— Fill out and bring to the Club meeting!**



## AWARDS DINNER

### RESERVATION FORM

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2009

5:00PM QSO TIME — 6:00PM DINNER

Name _____	Call _____
Number of people attending _____	Amount (\$16 each) _____

Sign-Up Deadline: December 1

Bring form and money to club meeting or mail to:

Make checks payable to:  
W.A.R.A.C, Inc.

**Chuck Craven**  
**W2292 Beulah Hgts Rd**  
**East Troy, WI 53120**

**FIRST Robotics**

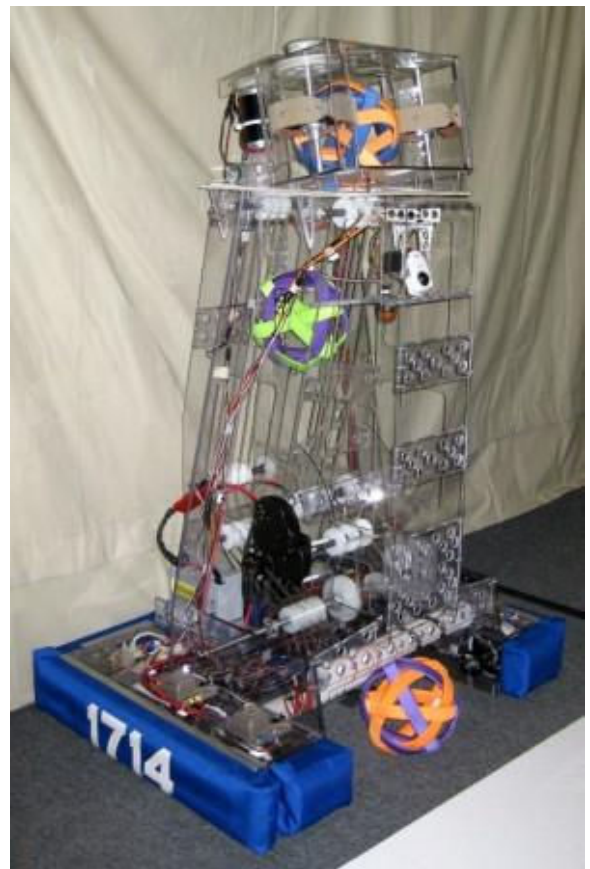
*(Continued from page 4)*

at all times. They help each be the best. Seeing rivals help each other during the regional is a common site. One team once helped an opponent in the championship match fix their damaged robot before going on. "We want to beat them when they are at their best" one team member was heard to say. Well their opponent went on to win. That's gracious professionalism.

Regional winners and Rookie all-star winners get an invitation to the International Championship competition held in Atlanta's Georgia dome in April. If you ever get a chance to go, go! There are 300 robots from around the world competing to be on the Champion Alliance. It's crazy to see 20,000 kids working feverishly to give their robot an advantage to win. Programmers adding special features or tricks to the autonomous operation, new sensors being added to find the target or a ball laying on the field, and more often than not, fixing battle damage before the next match starts.

All this hard work doesn't go unrewarded. There are millions of dollars in scholarships available to students who take part in FIRST robotics. There are many colleges offering full rides to FIRST kids that qualify.

Look at what communications technology has become today thanks to the efforts radio amateurs so many years ago. Imagine what this very special breed of amateur will do with robotics in the future.



Make sure you come to the WARAC meeting on November 10 and meet some of the best in FIRST.

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**2009 West Allis Radio Amateur Club 10 Meter Contest**

*Summary Sheet for WARAC-sponsored portion of contest*

December 12 Saturday 0000Z to December 13 Sunday 2400Z

Rules: See the ARRL General Rules and Rules for HF contests.

Operator's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Call Used \_\_\_\_\_

Entry Category: CW only:\_\_\_ Phone only:\_\_\_ CW and Phone:\_\_\_ *(Check one category)*

Power level: QRP (5w or less) \_\_\_ Low power (5w to 150w) \_\_\_ High power (150w and up) \_\_\_

**Scoring**

CW QSO's \_\_\_\_\_ x 2 = \_\_\_\_\_ **CW Points**

Phone QSO's \_\_\_\_\_ x 1 = \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone Points**

**CW Points + Phone Points = \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Points**

**Contact Points \_\_\_\_\_ x Power Multiplier \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ Total QSO points**

Bonus: No. of Club Members worked \_\_\_\_\_ x 5 = \_\_\_\_\_ **Club Member points**

**Total QSO points + Club Member points = Final Score: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Send this summary sheet plus a copy of your log and dupesheet before Jan-14-10 to:**

Chuck Craven, WB9PUB  
W2292 Beulah Heights Road  
East Troy, WI 53120



December 4 - Annette Hooker, KB9CPZ  
December 7 - Lynn Tamblyn, K9KR  
December 7 - Chuck Craven, WB9PUB



[www.warac.org](http://www.warac.org)

*Wedding  
Anniversaries*

[None to report this month]

**Minutes**

*(Continued from page 2)*

Board member Chuck Dellis was also present.

Awards Dinner - Howard announced that the dinner committee is trying to get together this week to determine the award recipients and get the plaques ordered. The program and restaurant have been arranged and the sign-up sheet will be published again in Hamtrix.

Audit Of Club Books – Howard stated that the 2007 audit is essentially complete except that no report has been prepared. Tom, K9BTQ, said he will summarize the receipt book audit and forward it to Howard. The 2008 audit must be done as soon as possible, then the 2009 audit. Howard expressed a desire to have this all done by February.

New Treasurer Chuck, WB9PUB, said he will get with former Treasurer Dick, W9JBE, to visit the bank to take care of signature cards. He also said he will start a new receipt book

Programs - A Robotics demonstration by the More Robotics Club is scheduled for the November meeting and the December program will be video from the CQ Getting Started in Contesting DVD. Tentative future programs include Airport Electronics by Frank Humpal, KA9FZR, Packet/RTTY by John Welty, W9ISC, Antenna Analyzer demo by Chuck, WB9PUB, Anatomy of our Club Web-

site by Tom, K9BTQ, CW-Get demo by Chuck, W9WLX, and Tom, K9BTQ and a Software Keyer by Howard, WA9AXQ. None of these programs were scheduled.

Scholarship – There was discussion of the fact that we have not been able to contact our new scholarship winner. Tom said he contacted the school and verified that our winner is enrolled in the program indicated in his application. Howard said he will contact FAR to see if they do any verification of applicants. It was also suggested that we review our scholarship requirements to see if any changes might be appropriate.

Club Jackets – The lack of progress in getting a sample jacket was noted and Chuck, WB9PUB said he would investigate another source of embroidered jackets that he knows.

Repeater – Tom, K9BTQ, announced that he recently received a third unsolicited inquiry, this one for the duplexers. Howard said he will take pictures of the equipment and Tom said he will ask John, N9LGD to take a picture of the Sinclair antenna. The possibility of listing the equipment for sale on eBay, Craig’s List or other online auction was discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.

*For the Secretary,  
Tom Macon, K9BTQ*

.....

**President’s Shack**

*(Continued from page 1)*

couraging to see new persons in the management of the club. Finally, I want to thank the Nominating Committee, Bob, KC9AGX, and Chuck, W9WLX, who called club members and discussed their interest in holding an elected position.

The Awards Dinner committee is taking care of the final details for the Awards Dinner on Dec. 6th. There is a sign up sheet in this month’s Hamtrix. Please fill this out and bring it with your check. Chuck, WB9PUB, will be collecting these at the meeting. This is the last meeting before the Awards Dinner, so it is the best time to sign up. See the sheet for additional information.

The ARRL 10 Meter contest is on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 12th and 13th. We will be having our friendly

club competition based on this contest. Chuck, WB9PUB, has the details in this Hamtrix. I would like to see a few more participants this year. It’s a fun contest, and while the 10 Meter band can be an unknown, it always seems to be active that weekend.

November starts a new fiscal year for the club, and that means that membership dues are now due. They are to be paid to the treasurer, Chuck, WB9PUB.

The program for the meeting is a Robotics Demo being presented by the More Community Robotics Club, a high-school student group. The robot will be the main feature, and they will put it through it’s paces. Sounds pretty interesting.

See you at the meeting.

*Howard Smith, WA9AXQ*

.....

West Allis Radio Amateur Club, Inc.  
Tom Macon, K9BTQ  
3547 S. 95 St  
Milwaukee, WI 53228



## WEST ALLIS RADIO AMATEUR CLUB, INC.

PO Box 1072  
Milwaukee, WI 53201  
W9FK  
<http://www.warac.org>

***See our Web Page or contact us  
for more information on***

- WARAC Memorial Scholarships
- Wisconsin QSO Party
- Midwinter Swapfest
- Worked all Wisconsin Counties Award
- Amateur Radio Classes

WARAC holds meetings on the second Tuesday of each month and board meetings on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Meetings are held at 7:00 PM at:

**St Peter's Episcopal Church  
7929 W. Lincoln Avenue  
West Allis, WI**

Entry is off the alley at the rear of the church.  
A wheel chair ramp and chair-lift are available.