
W₂K G Y Happenings

The West Point Cadet Amateur Radio Seminar

27 January 2006

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Special points of interest:

Cadets made contact with the International Space Station!

USMA Hams support the Boy Scout Jamboree

VE testing session planned for February 2006

Cadet Ham club submits needs statement and request for endowment

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West Point Radio Club talks to NASA Astronaut!

Written by Major Todd Brick.

The West Point Amateur Radio Club successfully made contact with the International Space Station (ISS) on 26 January 2006. Seven cadets spoke with COL(Ret) William McArthur (USMA '73), commander of the ISS Expedition 12, and asked him questions about the ISS and living in space.

The ISS mission began in August with COL McArthur contacting the Directorate of Cadet Activities and requesting a contact with the USMA Amateur Radio Club. Between August and December, the club continued with the application process and narrowing down dates for the contact.

A volunteer of the Amateur Radio on the ISS, Mr. Steve McFarlane from Ottawa, Ontario assisted the club with the application and technical details for the contact. Mr. McFarlane also graciously sent us some critical equipment that the club did not have or was not in working condition.

Mr. McFarlane sent the club a Yaesu G-5500 azimuth and elevation rotator assembly with controller, an M2 2MCP14, 14-element 2M circularly polarized yagi antenna, the computer-to-controller interface, and a Kenwood TM-D700 dual-band mobile radio.

The equipment arrived on 17 January and MAJ Todd Brick and LTC Tim Schmoyer (club OIC from 1998-2000) built the system the following weekend. We used the demo version of Nova tracking software to control the antenna.

We tested the system by listening on an ISS



contact with the Aquebogue, NY Elementary School on 24 January. We could clearly hear the astronaut's responses to the question, although we could not hear the actual questions themselves.

We also hooked the Kenwood radio's packet interface up to a computer and saw some packet messages that were relayed from the ISS.



For the actual event, we recorded the contact on two camcorders, and streamed the event live over a web camera to the Dept of EE&CS conference room. We will shortly have a video and sound clip of the contact for download.

The West Point Cadet Amateur Radio Seminar

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Let's keep in touch!
73's

We're on the Web!
<http://www.eecs.usma.edu/clubs/hams>



Above Left: MAJ Todd Brick, KC2NPA, attaches the first antenna

Above Right: LTC Tim Schmoyer, KC2FQS, finishes the cabling of the array

Below Left: Mr. Roy Spells, KC2NDQ, initiates contact with the ISS and sends greetings from West Point

Below Right: Cadet Alex McKenney asks COL McArthur why we haven't been back to the moon.

Cadets and Faculty support the Boys Scout Jamboree

Cadet Matt Sherburne (KF4WZB), took the lead on supporting the 2005 Boy Scout Jamboree at Camp Natural Bridge and Lake Frederick in May 2005. He organized the club to provide a solid communications link between Camp Natural Bridge and Lake Frederick.

With the help of Cadet Shawn Mosley (KC2NPB), MAJ Todd Brick (KC2NPA), and Mr. Kevin King (N1JUX) from the Tobyhanna Army Depot, the club set up a Kenwood TM-D700 radio with a portable dual-band antenna and tripod, recently purchased by the club with a grant from the USMA Women's Club. At Lake Frederick, we set up our Yaesu FT-736 and an experimental all-band antenna borrowed from the USMA Directorate of Information Management (DOIM).

The systems worked flawlessly and the Boy Scout were very thankful. In fact, the Scoutmaster purchased an identical set to the one that we purchased from the West Point

Women's Club. With these two systems, we now have portable systems to better support the Scouts without taking equipment from the club room or borrowing from the DOIM.



Above: Cadet Shawn Mosley operates the FT-736 at Lake Frederick.

Upper Right: Cadet Matt Sherburne mans the Camp Natural Bridge station

Lower Right: Cadet Sherburne and Mr. King unload equipment at CNB