

Route 66 On the Air

Background: The purpose of this event is a way to offer amateur radio operators a fun way to "Relive the Ride" and their own memories of Route 66, and to celebrate the highway's 82nd anniversary. This is the Ninth Annual "Route 66 On The Air" Special Event.

Event: For more information about the event, the clean sweep certificate or QSL routes, visit the sponsors website at

http://www.w6jbt.org/Route_ota/General_Pages/Information.htm. This is a table of contents page, with links to many other pages. Operators should read this page so they know a little about the big picture of the event.

Local News: Route 66 goes right through Tulsa – the original route runs through downtown Claremore. Parts of old 66 coincide with Route 66 between there and Catoosa. At 193rd E. Ave, the route turns south to 11th street, then proceeds to downtown Tulsa, jogging onto 10th Street where it hits the angled part of downtown. At the west end of 10th Street (near Fire Station #4) it veers southwest, and becomes Southwest Boulevard enroute to Red Fork and then Sapulpa. Old 66 sometimes parallels and sometimes is New Sapulpa Road, then US 66 enroute to Bristow.

Some famous landmarks on the old route are the Blue Whale near Catoosa, several of the old "motor lodge" motels along 11th Street and SW Blvd., Tally's Café, the Corner Café and others. Some of the people you'll talk with on the air will have traveled the road and will know of these (and other) landmarks.

Special Events: In general, special events work much like contests, but are more "laid back". On one hand, there are a lot of people that want to work us, so at times we will encounter pileups and need to work quickly to keep the crowd happy. On the other, it IS NOT a contest, or a race, so if conditions permit, and someone wants to talk, go ahead and ragchew a bit. Don't be afraid of the pileup – remember, they want to work YOU, so YOU are in control.

Use of the W6L callsign: We (and the people working the special event) want the callsign on the air as much as possible, on all bands and modes if possible. But this callsign is registered to Gregg (W5GGW) and if anyone screws up, it's his license on the line. Because of this, we have a few guidelines for sharing the call. And since it is in Gregg's name, if any disputes or improprieties arise, his word is final.

1. We want the call sign on the air as much as possible - day and night, weekday and weekend.
2. We want to give as many club members as possible some time on HF with the 1x1.
3. We want to give as many area hams as possible some time on HF with the 1x1.
4. We want to maximize the number of contacts made - keeping the hams looking for our 1x1 happy.

In light of the above, preference is given to stations calling CQ Route 66.

To maximize contacts, more than one station can be on the air at a time. However, to minimize confusion, certain guidelines are necessary.

1. By preference, only 1 station per band and mode at a time.
 - a. If one station is on 20m phone, a second on CW or PSK is fine.
 - b. a second station on 40m phone is fine.
 - c. a second station also calling CQ on 20m phone is not!
2. Calling CQ will net many more contacts than checking in to a net and announcing you have a special event callsign.
 - a. If you're a regular on these nets, or are more comfortable working them, by all means, use the 1x1, but
 - b. If someone else wants the call to call CQ let them, to maximize the contacts with that call.
 - c. It IS allowable to have 1 station calling CQ, and a second on the same band/mode checked in to a directed net, but ONLY one of each.
 - d. ONLY 1 station on the band, plus 1 on ONE net at a time. The "net" station needs to stay on that net only, or announce when they move to a different net, but do not move off the net unless the station calling CQ has shut down.
 - e. If we get any complaints/confusion because of having the callsign in two spots on the band, we immediately go back to one station per band/mode with those calling CQ having priority.
3. SHARE - see points 2 and 3 above. By all means, if no one else is using it, get the 1x1 out there, but if there are "people waiting", don't hog it.

Coordination: All frequency coordination will be on 145.11. Before getting on the air, call, wait a few minutes (2 or 3) and then call again, asking each time if anyone is using W6L on your proposed band and mode. Call twice in case someone IS on that band, but is in a QSO and can't get back to you right away. Continue to monitor 145.11 while you are on the air, and be prepared to answer if someone asks about the band/mode you are on. Also announce when you are going off the air and every time you switch bands. It is important that we know who is using the call and when!

Logging: If you use electronic logging, whatever you use is fine, just export to ADIF and send it to me (ad5pe@sbcglobal.net) and I'll merge it in to one master log after the event ends. If you don't use a logger, Excel works just fine. And if you don't have a computer (or have one but don't have a spreadsheet program) use a paper log. I'd prefer not to have paper logs, but I know not everyone has a computer in the shack. In your log, clearly indicate your name and call, and for each contact, we need: Date, time (in UTC, please – we're -5, so noon our time is 1700 UTC), their call, signal reports both ways, and their name and city/state if you can get it. Names and cities are less important, but helpful in the cases where callsigns get garbled. Last year I had a lot of "not in log" contacts – that I think were people who worked us, but that we logged their call wrong. When they send us a card, the time/date on their card helps me find it in the log to match it up, even if OUR info is incorrect.

What to Say: Well, this is a special event, so it doesn't really matter – say whatever you want.... (within the rules and in good taste, of course). To get the ball rolling, try “CQ Route 66, CQ Route 66, this is Whiskey 6 Lima, W6L, Tulsa, Oklahoma” or something to that effect.

Where (on the bands): The guidelines say we'll be on frequencies ending in .66, so (for example) 14.066 for 20m CW, 14.166 for 20m phone (Extra class only) or 14.266 for 20m phone (General class). In reality, we'll run into scheds, regular nets, other QSOs, and (especially on the weekends) contests and other Route 66 OTA stations. If the preferred freq is in use, move up or down in 3kHz increments until you find a clear spot. For digital modes, just stay on or near the regular freq for that mode (14.070 for PSK31, for example). Watch the band-plan and stay within your privileges, though.

QSLs: Many of the stations we work will want a QSL card from us. To get one, they **MUST** send a self-addressed stamped envelope (SASE) to the club PO Box. (TARC, Box 4283, Tulsa, OK 74159).