

K5THS News Release 12-05
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ARRISS
Amateur Radio on the International Space Station

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tecumseh, OK Students Contact Astronaut Shannon Walker on the ISS

December 5, 2020—Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARRISS) arranged a direct amateur radio (ham) contact with astronaut Shannon Walker. ARISS works with NASA and others to connect students worldwide and ISS crew members with amateur radio licenses.

Students from Tecumseh, OK, used their club call sign K5THS to talk with astronaut Shannon Walker, amateur radio call sign KD5DXB. The December 4, 2020 contact started at 12:33 pm and lasted about 9 minutes as Walker, and the ISS, orbited 254 miles above the earth.

Tecumseh has had a long relationship with the US space program. Gordon Cooper, one of the original Mercury 7 astronauts is from the area. In 1963, Cooper piloted the last and longest Mercury spaceflight for 21 orbits of the earth, totaling over 34 hours. The high school used for this contact is about 1 mile west of Gordon Cooper Drive. Assistant Superintendent Robert Kinsey celebrated Gordon's flight during the hour long ceremony.

More information, including pictures, and video is available on the website at <https://w5nor.org/k5ths/>.

Each student was able to ask astronaut Walker a pair of questions. The following is a list of the questions asked:

1. If you could go back to high school, what is one thing you would make sure you paid more attention to?
2. What was the scariest part when traveling through the atmosphere?
3. Are you longing for the day you'll return to earth or already putting on your brakes so that you can stay on the ISS longer?
4. What is one skill that every astronaut should have before entering the astronaut program?
5. Have you seen any changes in your circadian rhythms, or those of any plants or animals on board the ISS?
6. How does NASA train you to deal with zero gravity?
7. How do you get dressed without your clothes floating away?
8. How does NASA prepare you for walking on earth after months of being in space?
9. Is there a sight in space that was breathtaking the first time you saw it, and what was it?

10. If there is a small space particle that penetrates the ISS, how is that handled?
11. What are some of your favorite experiments in which you are involved?
12. How much training do you need before going into space?
13. What happens if you become sick on an EVA or inside the ISS?
14. What is the most challenging plant to try to grow in space?
15. Does time change in space?
16. How do you sleep in space?
17. How do you maintain body heat in and out of the ISS?
18. If someone is injured on the ISS, how do you respond?
19. If a free-floating one-ounce drop of water were to freeze in the ISS, would it be rough or smooth in shape?
20. What are some of the personal items you brought with you to the ISS?

With about 2,000 students in Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grades, Tecumseh Public Schools District is a rural school district. Nearly 275 teachers and support staff support the five grade-level sites and College, Career Readiness, and STEAM Center. The students and staff in the STEAM Center's Electronics and Amateur Radio Class hosted this ARISS contact. Students and staff from across the district worked to prepare for the astronaut contact. Instructor Billy Crow K5LUO and the Amateur Radio Class worked with the Pottawatomie County Amateur Radio Club and the South Canadian Amateur Radio Society. Member of these groups assisted with the equipment, installation, and operation during the ARISS contact.

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