



Arc Over

Fox River Radio
League
PO Box 673
Batavia, IL
60150-0673

August, 2009

President's Traffic

By Mike Urso, K9FE

Can you believe that the year is more than half over? They say time flies when you are having fun. This year's hamfest deserves mention. First, the weather was absolutely fantastic. Remember those temps over 100F? This year we were closer to 80F and with the light breeze it was great. As usual we do a lot of setup the Saturday evening before the fest. This year we had a good crew of club members show up. A lot of credit must also go to the students of Aurora Central Catholic High School. They had already erected the tables and set the basic chairs out for us. That saves the setup crew a lot of work. The larger vendors arrived and their wares were moved into the "cafetorium" and setup on tables. The PA system was setup after some errant cables to connect to the outdoor speaker assembly were located and added to. You all probably have seen the outdoor speaker we use. It looks like it came from a military parade ground from the 1940's along with its equally antique tripod stand.

Sunday started out great and it just got better. One notable addition was the food this year was done by the school boosters group. They even had breakfast with sweet rolls and outstanding coffee. Their lunch offerings were also a treat, from reasonable priced hot dogs to brats and burgers and a nice selection of drinks. The fest chair was Dean KC9EQQ and he had every indoor table sold. It has been a long time since we were able to do that. We have several vendors that really like our local hamfest and promise to return next year.

Dean said he is looking for someone to train to take over the hamfest. If you are interested contact him and make your wishes known to him. It is good to get new blood involved. Remember that you will not be alone. The great support from this club will be glad to help, as well as the guidance from Dean himself.

By the time you read this the annual Cougar Night will have taken place. Did you go? Did you have a good time? Did the team put on a good show? Last of all, how were the fireworks? Ken N9WCX is also looking for some fellow ham to take over the Cougar's ballgame outing. Contact him if you are interested. This is fairly easy event but it still needs a leader. Are YOU that leader? I bet one of you would like to run this event. Contact Ken and he will fill you in on everything you need to know.

Recently I put my HF/VHF/UHF radio back in the car. I used some ingenuity to rebuild the antenna mounting system using a drill press, a kludged up mandrel, a machine tool vise, a metal working lathe cutter, some stainless steel hardware, and some left over nylon 3/4" x 1" spacers that came with the mounting kit from my LCD television. I never throw out items that I can possibly use...ask my wife! I originally assembled it using steel hardware as a proof of concept you would call it. After everything worked well, I went searching for stainless steel hardware. Most hardware stores do not carry much in the way of 3/8x24 nuts and bolts much less having them in stainless steel. I walked into DG Hardware at 1955 E. New York Street just east of Aurora proper and found a fantastic selection of SS nuts, bolts, washers. They have the 3/8x24 thread used in antenna installs on the shelf. Pricing is not low but is fair, but having the right materials is "priceless". The whole project took less than 2 hours. So now I am back on the air as HF mobile. Did not realize how much I missed checking into the South Cars (7.251) and Mid Cars (7.258) nets as well as the YL system (14.332).

(Continued on page 3)

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the General Membership of the
Fox River Radio League (FRRL) an Illinois not-for-profit Corporation
Held at Rasmussen College, Aurora, IL**

Meeting Minutes July 14, 2009.

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM by Mike Urso K9FE – President with 61 members present.

Question: Is it likely you will get involved in 6 meter this year?

Secretary Report: Bill W9WRS – meeting minutes available on Web and Arc Over.

Treasurers Report: Dean KC9EOQ - Total Assets: \$23,456.08 (Cash/Savings = \$6682.53 Certificates of Deposit = \$16,773.55)

Committee Reports

Hamfest: Dean KC9EOQ – Thanks to all that helped on Saturday and Sunday. Preliminary estimate is \$1300.00 in profit. Group thanks to Dean for running the event.

Membership: Justin KC9NYY – Currently 185 members.

Newsletter: Tobi K9TCD – No report.

Yahoo Group: Bill NF9D – Everything is going smoothly. All members are welcome to join if they have not done so already.

Software Defined Radio SIG: Harry K9DXA – 5 people attended the group on Tuesday, June 23. Next SIG will be on Tuesday evening, 7/21/2009, 7 PM, at Rasmussen College.

Repeater Committee: Kermit W9XA – 3 climbers worked on the tower all day to reduce interference. There is no news about the WBIG tower. IRLP is not running yet, there is no internet to the UHF repeater site.

Net Control: Adam KC9ITG – will be mobile net control next Tuesday.

Public Relations: Jere KAIKPO – announced the Event of the Month Promotion for the general meetings. Information will be presented on upcoming ham events.

Field Day: Eric AB9OS – Eric thanked the band captains, all of the people that helped in the setup and teardown, and all of the participants in Field Day 2009. Special thanks to Neil KB9RFX and Bill WB9LPW.

eQSL: Jack K9JE – I starting to work on the task of cleaning the eQSL logs up.

Cougars Night: Ken N9WCX – July 24, 2009. Has tickets left at \$11.00 each.

Special Events: Bart KC9FQA – This is the current list of upcoming events:

July 24, 2009 Cougars Night – Chair Ken N9WCX.

July 26, 2009 Radio in the Park – N9FD – 12 to 4 P.M. Elburn Forest Preserve in conjunction with the Flight of the Bumblebees Contest.

Raffle: Jack K9JE - Chris KC9IEQ will be doing the raffle going forward.

Program: Miniature Fuel Cells – K9DXA.

Member Announcements

Kermit W9XA – Central States VHF society gathering will be July 23-25, 2009.

New Business

The club needs a new education Chairperson.

Larry W9OKI – Made a motion to approve the expenditure of up to \$700.00 dollars for the purchase of up to 10 white fiberglass tables for club use. The old tables we have now are worn out. Kermit 1st, 2nd by KC9EOQ. Motion passed.

Greg N9CHA – gave a farewell speech to the club. He is moving back to Wisconsin.

Greg N9CHA – Read thank you letter from Walter and Connie Payton Foundation.

The August 4, 2009 Board meeting will be at Rasmussen College in Aurora, IL.

The August 11, 2009 General meeting will be at Rasmussen College in Aurora, IL.

The September 8, 2009 Board meeting will be at Rasmussen College in Aurora, IL.

The September 15, 2009 General meeting will be at Rasmussen College in Aurora, IL.

Motion to adjourn by Adam KC9ITG, 2nd by Ken N9WCX.

General meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

Bill Stamps, W9WRS, FRRL Secretary

August Program Notes

By Dick Illman, AH6EZ

The August program will probably be a showing of some AmateurLogic TV program highlights. There is a possibility of having a Collins Radio engineer present the two attempts made to find Amelia Earhart's airplane.

New Members

Welcome to the Following New Members:

CALL	NAME
N9CCP	(Rev) Cesar Pajarillo
KC9PWP	Michael Haase
KC9PWO	Gregory Voice
KC9LRZ	Wanda Nagel
WA9JON	Jon Sheley
N9IFG	Joseph Serocki

President's Traffic (Continued from page 1)

Have you attacked a project or problem lately that took some real off the wall thinking? Why not send in a paragraph or two to the newsletter editor.

See you at the next club meeting!

De K9FE (linux mobile?) ---get it...linux laptop!

Field Day 2009 in Review

by Eric Needles, AB9OS and Dick Illman AH6EZ

de Eric

Ham Radio and the great outdoors...what a blast! ARRL Field Day is always the largest on-air activity in ham radio and this year was no exception. With more than 60 volunteers and visitors, the Fox River Radio League Field Day event at Johnson's Mound was packed with fun. We operated as 8A, which means we had 8 stations on the air at the same time, plus 2 bonus stations...40 SSB, 40 CW, 40 PSK, 20 SSB, 20 CW, 20 PSK, 80/15 SSB, 80/15 CW, VHF, and GOTA (Get On The Air). Planning began in January, volunteers started signing up in March and by Friday at 1pm of Field Day weekend, we were ready to set up and go.

This year we had a giant collinear string of dipoles set up for the three CW stations to operate. This set of dipoles, strung end to end, measured a couple hundred feet long, and once strung up between 30' tippers was most impressive. 20 SSB featured a spider beam, 20 PSK had a MOXON beam, and the VHF station

Bill Erickson HF Challenge Update – Mid-May 2009

By Cyd Runde, N9CV

Dick, AH6EZ reports: “The SpiderBeam is making up for the lack of sunspots. Not bad considering I worked 164 countries ALL of last year. TU2, 3A2, JT1, 3D2, VQ9, 5J0, TL0, ZB2, EY7, ZK2, 7Z1, BA8, VU2, 4O3, RZ3, SV9, PJ7, A61, TF8, UT9, OK1, OZ2, OE3, FM5, JY4, UA2, H44, GD0, JW, 9M6, E51, ZL4, IS0, VY1, 4U1, FY5, WH2, 4Z4, TA3, A73, OH0 worked 2009 A.S. (after SpiderBeam)”

Jeff, K9BQL worked Australia and Tajikistan.

The best part, to me anyway, of working DX is getting the cards. Whether scenery from a foreign country, the antenna array atop a cabin in the mountains, or the operator proudly posed in front of his radio – they are all great. I have created albums to proudly display my cards. My favorite album contains all my light-house cards!

Limited Class	States	Provinces	DX Countries	Total
K9ARZ-PSK31	50	9	118	177
K9MMS-CW	50	10	110	170
KC9FQV-Digital	29	4	9	42

Operator Class	States	Provinces	DX Countries	Total
K9BQL	48	12	156	216
W9DTR	50	9	99	158
K9TCD	38	7	61	106
KC9DAO	43	6	53	102
K9IH	25	3	38	66
WB9CHY	30	3	33	66

QRO Class	States	Provinces	DX Countries	Total
AH6EZ	50	12	172	234
NA9A	27	5	160	192
N4LZ	47	9	100	156

Ragchewer Class	States/Prov.	DX Countries	Total
W9DTR			51
AH6EZ			21
KC9FQV			13
NA9A	7	5	12
K9IH			9
WB9CHY	1	0	1

was a combination of beams and a vertical for 6 meters, 2 meters and 440 MHz. The rest of the stations were a combination of dipoles and verticals.

We began setup on Friday at 1pm and had most tents, antennas and equipment set up around 8pm. We were back at it around 7am on Saturday and by 11am we were ready for an RFI check. At noon we stopped for lunch, and then the contest began at 1pm. The afternoon was hot, and so was the on-air activity, as we were on our way to surpassing last year's score by almost 30% and putting up our highest score in 8 years!

At 6pm we stopped for dinner. Becky KB9UBU and her crew did a fantastic job again with a delicious feast of hamburgers, hot dogs, chicken, turkey, sides and treats! Dinner at Field Day always doubles as a kind of club summer dinner and everyone had a great time. After dinner, we were treated to a fun show from Mother Nature as dark clouds rolled in and high winds picked up. We pulled down the giant collinear dipole arrangement to avoid the high winds and monitored weather updates from Cyd N9CV and the Kane County ARES crew. When the winds calmed down, we put back up the dipoles and the CW stations got back to pounding brass.

As the sun set, operators did their best to work Grayline propagation and the overnight crews went to work. By morning, many Band Captains knew they were on their way to beating last year's performance. With a break for a quick continental breakfast, operators worked right up until the 1pm cutoff on Sunday. Again, we had several willing volunteers who helped with tear down and by 3pm we were ready to pack the final truck load of equipment and move out.

Is Field Day a contest? Is Field Day a test emergency operation? The answer is easy...Field Day is what you make it. Some club members are operating remotely on their own throughout the year and enjoy setting up a station and operating under bare-bones conditions. Other club members love radio sport and crave the excitement of pilling on Q's. Either way, Field Day is fun for everyone with plenty to learn. We will review scores and more at the August club meeting so plan to attend. Remember, Field Day is always the fourth full weekend in June, so mark your calendars for June 25 & 26, 2010 and in the notes section, write in FUN!

de Dick

It seems to me that our Field Day was both very different and similar. The venue was challenging with the hill, the small building, and the power line noise. Although we used the full 1000 foot diameter circle, there were trees in all the wrong places that clustered the stations in only 2 areas. This made it difficult to eliminate all of the interference between stations. I think it also cut down on casual visits of neighboring stations. We had distributed generators. This did make the power wiring pretty simple. I would like to build a more powerful wire antenna launching tool next, maybe a compressed air launcher. The food was good but the food preparation and eating area was too small. The temperatures were more moderate this year that helped with setup and knockdown activities. It was fun to be within earshot of the 6m station as they rejoiced when they worked new territory while the band was open. I have not seen how we compared year to year for QSOs but I can say that the Spider Beam (even just 16' above the ground) made it easy to search and pounce. Perhaps a directional antenna would not be as good for trying to hold a frequency. It was very easy to make the solar powered QSOs with the Elecraft KX1. Maybe it was because W9CEQ on CW was fresh meat. As always, my shack and basement will take some time to recover from Field Day, but I am already looking forward to the new challenges of doing it all over again, with as many of the club members as possible.

de N9CHA QSY

by Greg Braun, N9CHA

To all my friends, thanks! Being a member of the FRRL has been rewarding, exciting, educational, and most of all, fun. Since first joining in 2004, I have had the wonderful opportunity to get to know many of my fellow club members on a personal level. Plus I've made some incredible friends that have made a big impact on my life.

I am moving to Osceola, Wisconsin to be near my family. Since graduating from college in 1980, I have always lived at least a 6 hour distance from my home town. Certainly not that far away, but far enough. It's now time to return and be a part of my parents' daily lives.

You have impacted my life in many ways. I found that I needed the club, probably more than it needed me. Being an entrepreneur, I have had to reinvent myself a few times to try and stay ahead of the curve, make myself valuable to my customers and to stay up to date in a very fast paced industry, video production. A creative person needs diversions, and the FRRL provided me with plenty of those!

Membership in the FRRL offers tremendous opportunities. If I had not been a member, I would have missed seeing Dick AH6EZ receive his Technical Excellence award at Dayton; I would not have seen Dean KC9EOQ's family become hams (Tamie KC9LWX and Brenden KC9KJW); I would have missed that boyish grin on Bill NF9D's face making CW QRP contacts; and I would not have seen John AG9D stand on a stage and orchestrate an ARISS contact for his son's elementary school.

Significant events like Field Day were just that much more fun for me because of you. Setting up antennas, generators, feed lines, electrical cables, tents, signs, and most of all, seeing the excitement in Tobi K9TCD's eyes as she made Q's on 40 SSB. Filling my plate with exceptionally prepared meals by Becky KB9UBU and Kim KC9EIF would not have been possible; or enjoying the sight of a new ham making long-distance Q's on 6 meters had I not been a member.

Technical challenges presented themselves as well. October 2008 comes quickly to mind. The unfortunate accident at our tower site resulted in having to put up a temporary repeater site. I witnessed the talent and creativeness of our repeater committee in action. Kermit W9XA and Paul W9DWP got a VHF system on the air within 24 hours. Soon after, Dick AH6EZ got our UHF system up and working. I am in awe of these guys! Unless you've been involved with repeater building yourself, you can't imagine all the logistics that must be overcome to get a system working on your behalf.

Had I not been a member of the FRRL, I would not have seen Charles KC9DAO start up a portable mast company based on his ham radio experiences. Or, I would not have gotten to know Cyd N9CV, Dave K9WDB, Chris KC9BKS, Adam KC9ITG, Earl N9FNX, Ken N9WCX and so many others who I have enjoyed having lunch with, conversing on the repeaters with, or just enjoying an eye-ball QSO with at meetings. And, had it not been for the FRRL, I would not have been introduced to Dick W9GIG, Benny W9CZA, Lou K9LU, Maurice N4LZ, Joe NA9A and Jack K9JE... all exceptional gentlemen, excellent hams, incredible spirits for the hobby and to whom I owe my personal regards for their leadership and encouragement.

I have been lucky to see many club members step up and take on leadership positions, my fellow board members for instance; Dick AH6EZ, Dean KC9EOQ, Mike K9FE, Bill W9WRS, Larry W9OKI, Bart KC9FQA, Chris KC9IEQ, and Harry K9DXA.

I am proud I got to know Michelle KC9HDB our MS-Walk chairperson, who shares a personal attachment to the event. And I've seen Eric KC9FQV take on a broad range of responsibilities and continue to ask for more.

During the past few years I've seen hams re-discover the hobby, join the club and support many of the activities such as Eric AB9OS taking on Field Day, Joe AB9OU organizing the Huntley Fall Fest special event station, and Craig AB9IV teaching CW to a class of Techs who needed it to pass their General tests. As you can see, I can go on and on, listing all of the many hams who have been a part of my life because I

joined the FRRL.

Besides, my father Chuck WD9GWG, my two brothers, Dale W9DKB and Glen KE7FZX also share in this wonderful hobby with me. Like many hams, I've put the microphone down for a few years, put the key back in the drawer, and turned the power supply off. But my family continued to encourage me to keep in contact using ham radio. I had excuses like "I'm too busy with work," or, "I don't have a good enough antenna" to get on the air. By becoming a member of the FRRL I enjoyed a renewed enthusiasm for the hobby. I got involved with digital modes, satellites, ATV, D-Star, and best of all, sharing my love of this hobby with kids and fellow members. It was also while a member that I achieved my Extra Class license, through the help and support of Dick AH6EZ and John AG9D.

It's easy for me to answer the question, "Why did you join the club?" I will stay connected to the club via email and the Arc Over, I will see you at the club Banquet in 2010, and let's set up a QSO on IRLP. I have already joined the local club in Polk County, so if you're interested, take a look at the www.N9XH.org web site from time to time to see what we're up to. For now, I say so long my friends. If you only knew how much you mean to me.

73, Greg Braun N9CHA
Greg@N9CHA.com

Replacing back lighting in the Kenwood TS-530S/830S

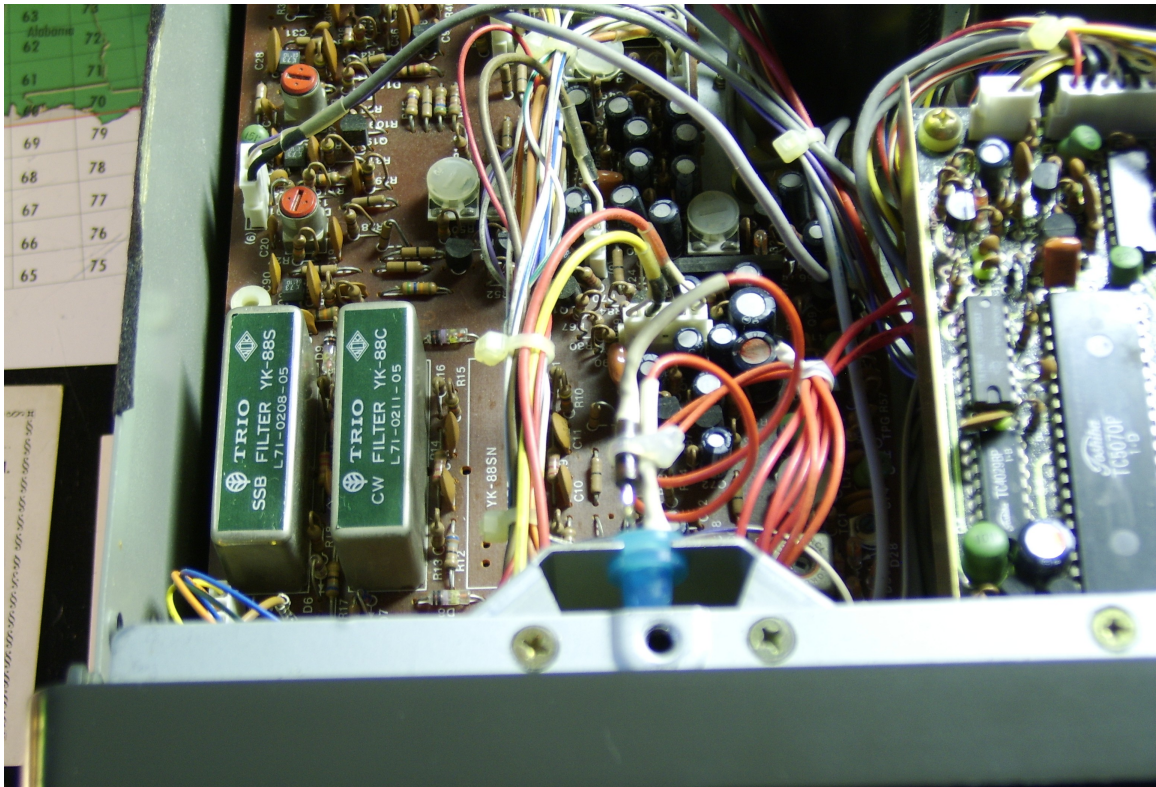
By Lawrence W. Stark, K9ARZ

At one time when you lost the filament in a pilot lamp or back light for a meter it was possible to order a direct replacement from the manufacturer. Now that the Kenwood TS-530S/830S transceivers are over 25 years old, it is not such a simple matter. Another earlier option was to head on down to the local radio store for a less than exact replacement. The last time I tried this I came home with a "grain-of-wheat" sized bulb that shown so bright when connected to the Kenwood S-meter's 12 volt back light supply line, its life span was severely cut short. The choice of "pilot lamps" is somewhat limited at the local electronics stores so I sought another solution. While attending a local hamfest, I picked up a few dozen **ultra-bright** LEDs (Light Emitting Diodes) which were blue in color. By replacing the burned-out Kenwood bulb with an ultra-bright LED and its associated dropping resistor (1K ohm), I now have a back-light that will last much longer than the incandescent bulb will, and also give my radio a new look. If you don't care for a "blue background" the ultra-bright LEDs are available in other colors such as green, yellow, red, and clear. A clear will not adversely change the appearance of the radio's back lighting, but should greatly outlast the normal pilot lamp.

When attaching the led in the Kenwood TS-530S/830S, the leads for the S-Meter lighting are both colored red so you do not have a clue about polarity unless you use a DVM or VOM to check for plus or minus leads. That really isn't necessary, you can connect the 1000 ohm (1 K ohm) resistor to either lead of the LED and then merely try connecting the red wires to one lead of the LED or the resistor that is in series with the other lead until the LED lights.

I covered the connections with small diameter heat-shrink tubing to give the connections extra strength and to protect them from a short circuit.

On the next page is a picture that illustrates how the LED fits inside the soft rubber bulb holder behind the S-meter. The second picture is the finished project, showing the new back light. This technique should apply to other radios using 12 volts to supply their back lighting.



About the FRRL

The Fox River Radio League, Inc., is a general interest amateur radio club serving the central Fox River Valley area. Records indicate the club has been in existence since at least 1924, and has functioned continuously ever since. We are an ARRL Special Service Club, an Illinois not-for-profit corporation, and a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization as specified in IRS Statutes.

We sponsor training classes

for new hams, license examination sessions, an annual hamfest, and participate in various public service events. If you have a specialized amateur radio interest, chances are you can share it with one or more of our club members.

The Fox River Radio League meets on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at Rasmussen College in Aurora, Illinois. Information tables are open at 7:00 PM, and the meeting begins at 7:30 PM. After conducting business, coffee and snacks are

served while we socialize. Following the break, a program of interest will be presented.

All persons interested in amateur radio are invited to attend. Families are welcome.

We hope to see you there!

License Exams

The Fox River Radio League, Inc., in conjunction with the ARRL VEC, conducts amateur examinations on the 3rd Tuesday of January, March, May, September and November at Rasmussen College, 2363 Sequoia Drive, Aurora, IL, at 7:30 PM. No advance registration is required, but please be sure to bring your license (if you have one) and a photocopy of

it, some form of photo identification and the fee of \$15.00. (The FRRL receives no portion of this fee.)

The next exam session is scheduled for September 15, 2009 Rasmussen College.

FRRL Dues

Annual dues are payable no later than the January Club Meeting each year. New members joining during the year will have their first year's dues prorated to the nearest yearly quarter.

Regular dues are \$20.00 a year, Senior Citizen dues are \$12.00. Family dues are \$30.00. Members can help support the FRRL Repeaters by making an annual \$10.00 donation.

Nets

Net Name	Freq.	Day	Time
FRRL	147.210	Tuesday	7:30 PM Local
10-10 CW	28.150	Monday	8:00 PM Local
10-10 SSB	28.720	Monday	8:30 PM Local

Check with the Treasurer for details and additional dues rates.

Fox River Radio League

Founded 1924

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FRRL CLUB MEETINGS ARE HELD AT RASMUSSEN COLLEGE, 2363 SEQUOIA DRIVE IN AURORA.
PLEASE CHECK THE FRRL WEB SITE FOR A MAP TO THE MEETING LOCATION.
<http://www.frrl.org>

Send Address Corrections to:
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3023 Scenicwood Lane.
Woodridge, IL 60517

FRRL Event Calendar

August, 2009

FRRL Board Meeting 3
FRRL Meeting 10

September, 2009

FRRL Board Meeting 1
FRRL Meeting 8
VE Session 15

ArcOver FRRL Newsletter

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The ArcOver is published monthly by the Fox River Radio League, Inc. Articles and letters are always welcome. The normal deadline for material is the 20th day of each month for the next month's newsletter. Articles can be sent by email to arc-over@frri.org or via U.S. Mail. Contact the Editor for details and submission guidelines.

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The opinions expressed in the ArcOver are strictly those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the FRRL, Inc. or its sponsors.

Local Area Repeaters/Nets

W9CEQ—147.210 Mhz.
+600 KHz, 103.5 access tone
Owned by FRRL

W9CEQ—444.300 Mhz. IRLP Node # 4850
+5 Mhz, 114.8 access tone
Owned by FRRL

W9CEQ__B D-Star—442.10625 Mhz (+ 5.0 Mhz offset)
W9CEQ__C D-Star—145.270 Mhz (-0.600 Mhz offset)
FRRL Digital Voice/Data Repeaters
Contact W9XA for information

KC9OEM—145.470 Mhz. -600 KHz, 103.5 access tone
KC9OEM—444.525 Mhz + 5 Mhz, 114.8 access tone
(2 meter is primary Kane Co. SKYWARN /ARES freq)
Owned by Kane County OEM

W9DWP—Kane Co. Amateur Public Svc. Rptrs.
145.270 -600 KHz, 107.2 access tone
443.025 +5 Mhz 114.8 access tone

W9ZGP—NIARC
147.060 +600 KHz, 103.5 access tone

- Weekly ARES/Skywarn Net—Wed. Eve. at 6:30 pm local time on the KC9OEM 2 meter repeater
- Weekly FRRL Net—Tues. Eve. at 7:30 pm local time on the FRRL 2 Meter repeater.
- Illinois DStar Net - Wed. Eve. at 8:00 pm local time on the DStar 440 repeater.