



Arc Over

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

February, 2010

President's Traffic

By John Spasojevich AG9D

2010 is the 86th year since the founding of the FRRL. I wonder if the charter members thought anyone would be writing a story for the club newsletter this many years down the road. I'm not sure how many Presidents came before me but I am sure each of them has taken the time to thank those who have served the club and I will not alter that tradition. Please join me in thanking our outgoing officers, directors and chairmen for their time and contributions to the club over the past year. Time is a precious commodity and volunteer time is even more precious because it comes from the true desire to help.

I suppose it is somewhat expected of me to mention something about the direction I would like to take us during my term and as I think about that I call to mind words from a former U.S. President. Taking a little poetic license I came up with the following:

"But this Club, this hobby of amateur radio was not built by those who waited and rested and wished to look behind them. This club and this hobby were built by those who moved forward."

It's all too easy to look behind us, it's comfortable, and it's what we are used to. We are lucky to have so many talented people in our club. Over the years we have done so many things well and some, to be honest, we've not done so well. As we grow in size, that's to be expected. With careful attention to detail we can improve our efforts. But to improve these efforts we need you. This brings to mind another message from a President. This time I got to meet him, the current President of AMSAT asked the membership this past October, "What are you going to do for AMSAT?" I would ask "What are you going to do for the FRRL?" We can only move forward, we can only achieve our goals as a club if we have your help. In terms of club operation, the sort of routine day to day things that keep us going, look to the committee chairmen, ask them if they need help. They always seem to be committees of one. We have too many members for that to be acceptable. At the same time committee chairmen, if someone wants to help, bring them aboard. Sometimes people will only offer once, so take advantage!

We plan to move forward through a new effort in outreach to schools. Not by trying to start ham clubs but by presenting information to our local science, technology and electronics teachers about the ARRL Teachers Institutes. I'm willing to bet not one teacher from St. Charles to Yorkville knows about these excellent opportunities. If we can get this information into their hands and then successfully follow up on a routine basis with them we will build relationships, become a "go to" source for information and probably generate a school club that starts with the school rather than the ham.

We plan to move forward in Education and Public Relations; promoting both the amateur radio service and the ability to become a ham to our surrounding communities. Our focus will not only be on youth licensing but also finding more people like me who had heard about the hobby as a kid but who didn't get into it until the age of 30. We're out there and we'll find them.

We have some upcoming efforts with the Boy Scouts of America and will be looking for a few good people to get involved with this short term effort. Often times these short term efforts reap the greatest rewards.

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**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 January 12, 2010.

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM by Mike Urso K9FE – President with 69 members present.

Question of the Month: Has low sunspot activity limited your radio activity this year?

Secretary Report: Bill W9WRS– meeting minutes available on web and Arc Over. Motion to accept Adam KC9ITG, 2nd by Bill K9WDB. Minutes accepted.

Treasurers Report: Dean KC9EOQ -

- o Checking: \$4,517.59
- o Savings: \$5,265.63
- o Petty cash: \$71.00
- o Total Investments \$16,773.55
- o Total Assets: \$26,627.77
- o Repeater fund: \$4442.20
- o Motion to accept Marty N9NTM, 2nd by W9PNZ.

Committee Reports

Hamfest: Dean KC9EOQ – Jere KA0KPO will assist Dean with this activity. Next Hamfest July 11, 2010.

Membership: Justin KC9NYY – No report. 120 members per Dean KC9IEQ.

Newsletter: Tobi K9TCD – On front table and on the web. 20th of the month is the deadline for submissions.

Repeater Committee: Paul W9DWP – UHF is back to normal.

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

Linux SIG: Mike K9FE. Next meeting is February 6, 2010, 9:00 – 12:00 – Rasmussen. Shackbox part 2 will be presented.

Software Defined Radio SIG: Harry K9DXA. Next meeting is February 13, 2010, 9:00 – 12:00 at Rasmussen College.

Net Control: Adam KC9ITG – Needs net ops for 2010.

Website: Greg N9CHA will be the new webmaster.

Field Day: Eric AB9OS – Will be on the 4th weekend in June, 2010 at the F. O. P. Lodge in Sugar Grove.

Raffle: Chris KC9IEQ – Buy tickets.

Education: Eric AB9OS – Tech and General classes are scheduled for 2010.

Program: Amateur Logic TV episodes.

Cougars Game: Ken N9WCX. It will be 3rd week in July.

New Business

K9FE – Rasmussen College has informed us that we should be looking for a new place to hold the general meeting, that the room we use will be turned into a nursing lab and there will be no chairs for us to use. A search has begun for a new place to meet.

The February 2, 2010 Board meeting will be at Rasmussen College in Aurora, IL.

The February 9, 2010 General meeting will be at Rasmussen College in Aurora, IL.

The March 2, 2010 Board meeting will be at Rasmussen College in Aurora, IL.

The March 9, 2010 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

February Program Notes

February's meeting program topic will be radio astronomy, focusing on a method and signals that anyone should be able to hear with equipment they already have.

New Members

Welcome to the Following New Members:

CALL	NAME
N9JZN	Jeffrey Bussie
K9UB	William Nolan
K9XK	David Burr
W9CSR	Ralph Sikich

President's Traffic (Continued from page 1)

Field Day, a triple edged sword. Contest? Emergency Preparedness? Social Event? We try to make it all things for all people. Some have come to me upset that the primary focus of the club seems to them to be Field Day. We're going to see what we can do about that. I will go on the record now; for me it is not a contest. (I'll be waiting for the tar and feathers!)

Before I close I want to share a story about one of the best times I ever had with this club. It was the June 2009 VHF Contest Weekend. Bill, NF9D planned to go out to Johnson's Mound to test his Field Day set up. I learned about it from Greg, N9CHA and I asked if I could come out, they said "sure". So when I got out there I also found Dean, KC9EOQ had come. About midway through the afternoon I was surprised by a visit from my son, Jack and his Mom. Jack begged Mom to bring him out and to bring this pedal car sort of things along with them. Now he didn't know I was going to be at Johnson's so this was a pure coincidence. If you have been there you know of the sledding hill. Jack got in the car and down the hill he went. A small group of maybe 6 of us stopped operating to go watch this. Not to be outdone, his old man, me, got into the car and down the hill I went. I think I went down a couple more times. It was a blast. I think I tried to coax Marty, N9NTM into making the trip but he wouldn't. Eventually my family went home and I returned to the pavilion. That day about 30 hams came out and only 8 or so actually operated, including Gregg, NW9G a new ham that heard us on the repeater and came out to see what was going on. He came to the next meeting and joined the club. The rest spent their time "chewing the rag" or watching us roll down the hill. I think Greg, N9CHA shot some video of the event so maybe there is some evidence. Sometimes the radio is just the catalyst not the main event. The important thing is that so many people came out and enjoyed the afternoon for the heck of it.

How successful will we be? I'm not sure. But one thing I am sure of is that without YOU our success will be limited. Whatever your talents are, I hope you will volunteer some of your time and join us in pushing the FRRL forward into the next decade of the 21st Century.

Bill Erickson HF Challenge Update – Mid-January 2010

By Eric Needles, AB9OS

It's a new year and a clean slate for the HF Challenge. Everyone should have received their PINK HF Challenge worksheet in the mail. On it you will find all of the rules for this fun on-air activity, plus a little of the history and "why" behind it. If you didn't get a sheet, please e-mail me (challenge "at" fril.org) and I'll get one to you. Basically, just get on the air and have fun! The HF challenge is a simple and fun contest to encourage FRRL members to get on the HF bands. Just keep track of your HF contacts and e-mail an update to me by the 15th of each month. The updated scores will show up in the next issue of the ArcOver. Everyone who participates (even 1 contact) will receive a handsome certificate.

A few club members have already gotten a good start on the 2010 HF Challenge. Dick, AH6EZ says "as you can see, I have been busy and the Spider beam has been doing an excellent job. There have been nice openings to Asia for JA, HL, BV, KH2, and UA0. As usual the RTTY Round Up is the best way to jump start the states. I made 49 states and 49 countries this year."

Tobi, K9TCD took advantage of the North American QSO Party on SSB and logged a bunch of states, provinces and countries.

There are plenty of HF contests in February to help boost your numbers. Look them up and get on the air. And for you Ragchewers, enter the HF Challenge in the Ragchew category and count your contacts that are 10 minutes or longer!

And now for the numbers....

Limited Class	States	Provinces	DX Countries	Total
K9ARZ-Digital	49	8	84	141
AB9OS-CW	37	3	1	41

Operator Class	States	Provinces	DX Countries	Total
K9TCD	33	3	2	38
WB9CHY	30	3	5	38
KC9DAO	12	0	5	17

QRO Class	States	Provinces	DX Countries	Total
AH6EZ	50	11	79	140

Ragchewer Class	States/Prov.	DX Countries	Total
W9DTR			112
AH6EZ	3		3

Learning the Code

By Dawn Williams, KC9LQS

One of my former neighbors holds a PhD in chemistry. Always in awe of people of science – especially in the days before I'd discovered my inner ham – I asked how holding an advanced degree had affected her as a young woman.

“It made me realize,” she said after some thought, “that if I could earn this degree, I could probably do anything.”

That's precisely how I feel since making my first CW contact last night.

All those dits and dahs beeping into one's headphones are music to some, and terrifying chaos to others. Since the FCC dropped its Morse code requirement in early 2007, there is little motivation for those in the chaos camp to learn CW.

I was among the first wave of “no code” hams licensed that year, and I can see both sides of the debate over the wisdom of the FCC's decision. On the one hand, the hobby became accessible to many people who would have shied away from radio altogether because of the challenge of learning Morse code. On the other, it seemed to me, an important tradition and useful emergency communication skill stands to be forgotten.

Learning code, in this new era, is a personal choice. Admittedly, it wasn't the easiest aspect of radio that I'd attempted to embrace. For almost a year after upgrading to Amateur Extra, I would jump in, learn a few characters, then jump back out in frustration. Finally, after making the commitment to stick with it, I started making progress.

Why learn code when you don't have to? There are many reasons from which to choose:

- **For the tradition.** Morse code was the only means of radio communication for hams until the end of the 19th century. Until the year 2000, proficiency at 20 wpm was a licensing requirement for Amateur Extras.
- **For the convenience.** CW can be used on all bands in the U.S. except 60 meters.
- **For the efficiency.** Code requires less equipment, less power and less bandwidth than other modes. It's easier to copy code compared to voice, even in high noise/low signal situations.
- **For the “brain aerobics”.** Joe NA9A pointed out that using Morse code exercises the brain as effectively as learning a foreign language or playing a musical instrument. Researchers have made a strong case for the “use it or lose it” approach to keeping our cognitive skills sharp as we age.
- **For emergencies.** When the chips are down, any device capable of simulating an on-off signal can get a message to the outside world. Sending a simple SOS with a flashlight could save your life.
- **For the community.** Hams are among the most generous group of mentors I've ever met. They encourage, teach, and share their knowledge and their passion freely and gladly. Part of this tradition of helping new operators stems, I think, from a sense of generativity. We seek to give of ourselves to the future. Taking the torch – learning the code – and passing it on to those who follow is a fitting way to honor what they've made possible for the current generation of hams.
- **For the accomplishment.** CW is a challenge! Copying is much more difficult than sending for most people. But, oh! The thrill of facing that mountain and proving that you can, indeed, reach the top is a thrill beyond measure.

- **For the fun of it.** My elmer, Jeff N9JZN, and my daughter Susie and I sometimes sit around the kitchen table sending CW messages to each other via a homemade oscillator. Jeff and I have used code to communicate in situations where privacy is both essential and unavailable. It's like passing messages as kids, which can only be read by those who possess the secret decoder ring.

Jeff called me "Code Girl" all evening as we rehashed my CW debut and basked in the glow of that shared accomplishment. The moniker may be a bit premature, as I have a lot of work to do in the weeks ahead. Difficult, frustrating, true. But the reward is very sweet indeed.

Kudos

By Tobi Davis, K9TCD

We have a new ham in our midst. Ordinarily we don't single out the new hams, other than welcoming them in the new member section. However, this is one of our special ones. Susie, KC9RGO is Dawn's (KC9LQS) daughter, and one of the few member kids to become licensed. When I first met Susie, along with Dawn, at one of our club's hamfests, I could tell she was interested in radio, even though she was a bit quiet about it. Some time later we had fun doing fox hunts and exploring various aspects of radio during the Radio Fair I held for the kids. Susie was still interested in becoming licensed, but as we know with kids, school and their activities take a lot of time. Just last weekend, after taking many practice tests on the QRZ website, Susie took her Technician test at the WCRA Winterfest, and passed. Congratulations, Susie, you rock! Now, let's hear you on the radio. Call us, we're listening!

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. A special session is held at the club's hamfest, usually in July each year. 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 March 16, 2010 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.

Check with the Treasurer for details and additional dues rates.

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

Fox River Radio League

Founded 1924

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Harry Jones, K9DXA

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Bill Stamps, W9WRS

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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:
Fox River Radio League, Inc.
3023 Scenicwood Lane.
Woodridge, IL 60517

FRRL Event Calendar

February, 2010

FRRL Board Meeting 2
SDR SIG 6
FRRL Meeting 9
Linux SIG 13

March, 2010

FRRL Board Meeting 2
FRRL Meeting 9

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.