



Arc Over

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

March, 2009

President's Traffic

By Mike Urso, K9FE

Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their radio club! I slightly changed the wording but the meaning is still there. The FRRL has quite a number of service events coming up this year and we need each member to consider helping out. The load is light when we share it. So this year be a part of the solution, volunteer to assist. No, I am not asking for you to be a part of every event, but make a commitment to at least one. If you have never been involved in one of the events or special events, ask around and find someone who has. Our members will be more than happy to tell you all about them.

February's general meeting was just fantastic! First the attendance for the February meeting was 68 or 69. WOW! I was able to meet several non-members and a couple became new members. Were you there? Then, after a pretty exciting business meeting, we had a totally tubular (I just dated myself!) program by Dick AH6EZ on software defined radio or SDR to those who like acronyms. Just think, someday you will be able to own a radio that doesn't go out of date in its capabilities. This can be the Holy Grail to those who like to tweak and play. The flexibility of such a radio can be amazing. After the program the idea of another SIG (Special Interest Group) centered around SDR was talked about. To those interested, talk to Harry K9DXA at the next meeting, or e-mail him at VP "AT" FRRL.ORG. The first meeting will actually occur at Rasmussen College before you read this. Check out the new YAHOO group FRRL-SDR and request to join. SIGs are not exclusive groups or cliques, they are just groups that want to expand their knowledge in a particular area, sometimes for an extended period and doing it at a general meeting doesn't give them the time required.

What gives your day an exciting start or boost? I find it extremely exciting to get on the air and

make European contacts before I leave for work every morning on 20 meters PSK31. Very rarely do I get "SKUNKED", oh it does happen, but even in the pits of the sunspot cycle you can make quality contacts on 20 meter PSK31 running between 20 and 40 watts. You can do the same in CW, the ultimate NOISEBUSTER. CW and digital get through at times when the band is dead on phone. In PSK31 you can copy a signal that you really can't even hear in the noise. That is the wonder of DSP, Digital Signal Processing, done in your computer and sound card. If you haven't tried it ask around. There is quite a good-sized group that runs PSK31. Ask to sit in and learn. Don't have your General Class license yet? Pay attention to the future classes held by Eric KB9IDT for licensing and upgrades. It is really worth the time it takes to study for the test and then be able to join the world wide HF operators.

Speaking of upgrading, this month is a FRRL VE testing month. Upgrading could not be simpler. Just think, only 35 questions and the \$15 test fee and you could upgrade from Technician to General. Doug W9RD has a very active VE crew that is just waiting to assist you with your upgrade process. VE testing is on the 3rd Tuesday of odd months at Rasmussen College, 7:30 PM. Be sure to have your license test fee, your original license AND a photocopy.

Right now the 2m repeater is down due to an antenna move. The move will raise the antenna quite a bit. Access by those now in the fringe will be much improved when this task is completed. The weather is not being very cooperative, however, with frigid temps and now snow coming the weekend of the 21st. Kermit W9XA is on top of the process so be assured it will be completed and completed correctly. By the time you read this all should be finished.

See you at the March General meeting, de K9FE
Mike.

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 February 10, 2009.

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM by Mike Urso K9FE – President with 65 members and 3 visitors present.

Question: Do you stay on 1 mode exclusively or do you move around on multiple modes?

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

Treasurers Report: Dean KC9EOQ - Total Assets: \$22999 (Cash/Savings = \$6225 Certificates of Deposit = \$16,774)

Committee Reports

Hamfest: Dean KC9EOQ – July 12, 2009. Celebrating 80 years! 1929 – 2009.

Membership: Justin KC9NYY – Justin is the Membership Chairman for 2009. Thanks to Kermit for serving in 2008.

Newsletter: Tobi K9TCD – The deadline for submissions for the Arc Over is the 20th of each month.

Field Day: Eric AB9OS – Field Day is June 27-28, 2009. To be held at Johnson's Mound.

Eric AB9OS – Chairman

Dick AH6EZ – Technical Committee

Greg N9CHA – Public Relations

Public Relations: Greg N9CHA is the PR person for 2009.

Special Events: Bart KC9FQA – The Mid America Canoe Race in June is in the preliminary planning stage. There will possibly be 2 races this year, 1 long and 1 short.

Database: Chris KC9BKS – 100 + members have renewed at this point. Renewals for 2009 will be accepted tonight.

Education: Eric KB9IDT – No report.

Nets : Adam KC9ITG – need more net controls. Will have a signup sheet for net controls and backup net controls.

Emergency Coordinator: Bart KC9FQA – No new activity.

FRRL January Banquet: Dick AH6EZ – Jan. 24th at Walter Payton's Roundhouse. A fine time was had by all who attended. Paul W9DWP won the MFJ antenna analyzer. Greg N9CHA will be the chairman

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

April 25, 2009 Oswego Adventure Race

May 2-3, 2009 MS Walk – Chair KC9HDB

June 7, 2009 Canoe Race – Chair Tobi K9TCD

June 7, 2009 American Diabetes Bike Race – Kane county Ares

July 12, 2009 Hamfest - Chair Dean KC9EOQ

June 28, 2009 Tour De Cure

July 24, 2009 Cougars Night – Chair Ken N9WCX

Cougars Night: Ken N9WCX – July 24, 2009. Will purchase 40 tickets this year.

Technical Committee: Denny W9HI – Denny is the Technical Committee Chair for 2009.

Repeater Committee: Dick AH6EZ – The 2 meter and 440 repeaters are both functioning but better locations for them are being investigated.

Current Business.

Announcements:

Bart KC9FQA - Club logo items have not arrived yet. He and Catherine will contact people as soon as it arrives.

Bill NF9D – New members should sign up for the FRRL Yahoo group.

Program: Dick AH6EZ – Software Defined Radio.

Raffle: Jack K9JE

The March 3, 2009 Board meeting will be at Rasmussen College in Aurora, IL.

The April 7, 2009 Board meeting will be at Rasmussen College in Aurora, IL.

The March 10, 2009 General meeting will be at Rasmussen College in Aurora, IL.

The April 14, 2009 General meeting will be at Rasmussen College in Aurora, IL.

The March 17, 2009, VE Session will be at Rasmussen College in Aurora.

Motion to adjourn by Kermit W9XA, 2nd by Bart KC9FQA

General meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

Bill Stamps, W9WRS – FRRL Secretary

March Program Notes

By Dick Illman, AH6EZ and Tobi Davis, K9TCD

Dick is traveling and Mike K9FE, is putting together a program for us. He tells me that we will have a few choices of stations to visit, like we have done at some of our past meetings. He plans a QRP station, a demonstration table to show simple uses of a multi-meter, VOM and DMM and possibly an area showing a DVD (topic TBD). Members will have a chance to visit each area and/or visit among themselves.

New Members

Welcome to the Following New Members:

CALL	NAME
N9GTM	James Morrison
No Call	Robert Boehmer
W9MMS	Milverton Swire
AB9SW	Walter Jaskierny

Glow in the Dark Radio

by Mike Urso K9FE

There are several members in the club that like the “hollow state” radios. I did not count myself as one of them until just recently. In 1970 I built a Heathkit HW-101. “Hot Water 101” was its familiar name. It was for my club station in High School. There were 3 of us involved in the construction. We each had a few circuit boards, and worked together on the mechanical assembly. That was the high point of the radio club. The HW-101 was used for a short time until someone donated a Drake to the club. The HW-101 was put aside.

Fast forward 35 years. It is now 2005 and I am looking at some Heathkit equipment at the Dayton Hamvention. Lots of stories were told, lots of memories. Some were real and I bet some were just imagined. They all told of the feeling you get when operating classic gear. In my mind I remembered constantly retuning every time I moved 30 KC up or down. My memories were more of the hassles and less of the magic.

This Christmas I received a gift at work. I came in to find a museum quality HW-101 on my desk. An envelope was with it and inside was a note asking me to give it a good home. Along with it were the HP-23b power supply, a home-brewed dummy load, and two BNC to PL-259 UHF connectors. The HW-101 has a BNC connector for output and not the SO-239 we are used to now.

After I got the radio home, I brought it up slowly on a Variac to reform the capacitors in the radio and power supply. Five hours later, I was up to operating voltage and all looked good. I turned the radio off for the night and started to “get that feeling”. The next day I was excited to try it out. I did not have the correct microphone (the HW-101 used an Electro Voice 638) so I hooked up my old J38 morse key instead. I didn't think the RF output looked too far off so I called CQ on 40cw. I heard a return almost instantly and then lost the signal and then it returned then lost it again. I forgot about the startup drift on this radio for the first 30-45 minutes. A thrill went through me as we had a 20 minute CW QSO. It was fun, though the operator on the other end had to chase me around as I drifted.

The next Monday morning I walked into my office to find the Electro Voice 638 microphone and the “choke-to-talk” stand for the HW-101 on my desk! That night I used the HW-101 to check-in on the 10 meter SSB City of Lights net. Since then I have made a dozens of contacts and had a fantastic time. It is so rewarding to have

Bill Erickson HF Challenge Update – January 2009

By Cyd Runde, N9CV

Well, we are off and running with the HF Challenge of 2009. Gary (K9MMS) and Dick (AH6EZ) already have the 50 state challenge conquered, with Larry (K9ARZ) is right behind them with 49 states. Great start guys!

Joe (NA9A) and Jeff (K9BQL) both report working Desecheo Island, a small island off the shores of Puerto Rico. It is usually closed to the public, due to unexploded military ordinance, but some dxpeditions secured special permission, and have been operating from there (being careful where they walk!) Jeff also reports that it is great being an Extra, and has checked off Ascension Island, Falkland Islands and Wallis/Futuna Island/New Caldonia- France. Those are some great catches, especially at 100 watts with a vertical!

Limited Class	States	Provinces	DX Countries	Total
K9MMS-CW	50	10	72	132
K9ARZ-PSK31	49	8	91	148

Operator Class	States	Provinces	DX Countries	Total
K9BQL	8	0	44	52
K9TCD	33	5	4	42
WB9CHY	23	2	5	30
K9IH	12	2	17	31

QRO Class	States	Provinces	DX Countries	Total
AH6EZ	50	9	86	145
NA9A	7	0	12	19

Ragchewer Class	States/Prov.	DX Countries	Total
NA9A	4	1	5
K9IH	4	0	4
WB9CHY	1	0	1

New To Ham Radio? Just Do It!

By Dawn Williams, KC9LQS

Those of us who have immersed ourselves in amateur radio know how rewarding – and challenging – life on the air can be. The hobby is both science and art, and to those just introduced to our world, it is pure magic, too. Radio can open doors to new ways of thinking, new knowledge, and a whole community of new friends. Fortunately for “newbies”, most hams are willing and eager to share this world and help launch newcomers onto the airwaves.

Educating and mentoring future hams and helping newly licensed operators is part of the mission of the FRRL, after all, and part of the unspoken ethic of the radio community. The welcome and encouragement I received when I joined FRRL two years ago made a difference. A newly licensed tech and a woman to boot, I was pleasantly surprised to be accepted by this group of highly accomplished operators with years of experience and expertise in concepts I was just beginning to understand.

In spite of this awesome encouragement and the support of a great Elmer (Jeff N9JZN), it took a very long time before I had the confidence to jump in and, as Nike says, just do it. Like other new hams, I longed to just flip a switch and talk to the world! I envied the ease with which others casually chatted with their buddies on the HT or mobile rigs. I worked alongside Jeff every time he spontaneously started building a new antenna or modifying his gear, wondering how long it would be before my own ideas weren't hampered by fear of making a mistake. Overcoming “Newbie Syndrome”, as I came to think of it, is as critical to launching the new ham as passing the licensing exams.

All that has changed for me, and there are some simple but hard-learned truths that helped me conquer Newbie Syndrome. If you're hesitant to exercise your radio privileges, or if you're Elmering a new licensee, perhaps these tips will help.

Accept this fact: You're going to make mistakes!

Everyone goes through a learning curve, and our failures often teach us more than our successes. Put safety first, of course, but don't be afraid of mistakes! They mean that you're getting down and dirty, really using the privileges you worked so hard to earn. Again, remember the Nike slogan: Just do it! The more you do, the easier it gets.

Ask for help!

I can't stress this enough! Not everyone has an Elmer on the premises 24/7 like I do, but there are many people in our club and in the ham community in general who are willing to answer questions when you're stuck. And remember, even Einstein once said a sign of intelligence is knowing where to find the answers.

Remember: Anything can be fixed!

Is there a ham anywhere out there who hasn't fried a circuit, blown a tube, or spent an entire day hanging wire only to find his calculations were off and the antenna wouldn't load? Frustrating? You bet. Don't let this stop you from trying, though. Components can be replaced, mistakes corrected, and better still, there's just as much chance that you'll get it right. The satisfaction is priceless.

Education is a life-long process!

Learning doesn't stop once you've passed the FCC exam – in fact, that's only the beginning. Amateur radio is an ever-changing field, so make it a priority to expose yourself to new information regularly. Read QST and keep back issues for reference. Read posts at eHam and join an email group like Ham Radio Help Group. Attend FRRL meetings and training sessions on new topics. Get involved in club activities, because hands-on learning is both intensive and enduring.

Get on the air!

New hams are often hesitant to key the mike. They worry about getting the lingo right, or not being able to

(Continued on page 6)

(Glow in the Dark Radio Continued from page 3)

an answer to a CQ on a radio that I used as a teenager. The warm glow of a radio that literally glows in the dark can put a glow in your heart. I guess the glow is part of what makes this hobby special to me.

(New to Ham Radio? Just Do It! Continued from page 5)

pull a signal out of the mud, or sounding generally inexperienced. In fact, no one cares if you know the Q-signals or if you ask them to repeat their report or call sign. Just start logging those QSOs. You'll be confident soon enough and will make new friends along the way. Start by checking into the FRRL net on Tuesday nights. It's a structured, low-pressure way to get some on-air experience – and get to know your fellow club members at the same time.

To the new operator, earning that first ticket opens the door to a whole new world – one that can be thrilling as well as highly intimidating. Remember that help is just a conversation or a mouse click away, and no mistake is unfixable. With enough desire, access to information, and hard work, the door to the world is wide open.

So roll up your sleeves and “just do it”!

Read more from Dawn on her blog: <http://YLontheAir.blogspot.com>

Special Interest Group Meets February 28, 2009

By Harry Jones K9DXA

A new FRRL Software Defined Radio SIG was established during last month's club meeting. The new SIG got off to a blazing start on the last day of February. Eleven members in a festive mood met at Rasmussen College to set the scope for the group, and operate a software defined radio provided by Greg, N9CHA with help from Dick, AH6EZ. The SIG decided each member will order the new multiband HF receiver, a SoftRock, Lite+USB Xtall v9.0 with electronically switched bandpass filter. Members will assemble their own kit with group assistance during meetings. No kit will be left behind! The next meeting is Saturday, March 28, 2009 at 9:30AM at Rasmussen College where the agenda will be kit building and demonstrating other previously built SoftRock SDR receivers. There is still plenty of time to join in the fun, or simply stop by and see what it's all about. There might even be an opportunity to check out some SDR learning tools. Sign up for the new Yahoo Groups site for the SIG. Questions? Contact me for more information.

Jabra A210 Bluetooth adapter

By Ken K9KCK (as told to Greg Braun N9CHA)

I tried using one of these Bluetooth adapters and got good reports. They are simple to wire (1. Headphone Out, 2. Mic IN, 3. Mic GND) and can be seen on YouTube by searching K7AGE. He has numerous training videos and I came across this and was intrigued.

The Jabra A-210 can be purchased through cellphone dealers but they are expensive. I got mine off eBay for \$19.00 shipped to the door. Watch K7AGE videos and maybe you too will get the wandering bug so you can move about while chatting on the radio. My notes about the Jabra A-210 bluetooth adapter are posted in the files section of the FRRL Yahoo users group. The wire colors are the colors I used from a chunk of Heil mic cable. Also I was connecting this to a Kenwood TS 2000 so I needed the 1/4 phono plug for the audio out.

I am not using the VXI headset, I received a different one for Christmas. I also tried a small Jawbone type of bluetooth headset but having a beard caused my audio to sound like I was underwater with interference with the beard hair. My headset has a boom. I am using VOX and when Greg N9CHA and I talked I was adjusting VOX settings to keep from activating with background noise.

Thanks Greg for the feedback on my test.

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 March 17, 2009 at 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

Mailing Address:

Box 673
Batavia, Illinois
60510-0673

Email:

info@frrl.org

Web Site:

<http://www.frrl.org>

President

Mike Urso, K9FE

Vice President

Harry Jones, K9DXA

Secretary

Bill Stamps, W9WRS

Treasurer

Dean Holste, KC9EOQ

Directors:

Bart Bartkowiak, KC9FQA

Chris Farley, KC9IEQ

Dick Illman, AH6EZ

Larry Shaw, W9OKI

Past President

Greg Braun, N9CHA

License Trustees:

Kermit Carlson, W9XA
Bob Dillon, WB9LTN

Newsletter Editor

Tobi Davis, K9TCD
newsletter@frrl.org

Webmaster

Tom Davis, WB9CHY
webmaster@frrl.org



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 Ln.
Woodridge, IL 60517

FRRL Event Calendar

March, 2009

FRRL Board Meeting 3
FRRL Meeting 10
Linux SIG..... 14
VE Session 17

April, 2009

FRRL Board Meeting 7
FRRL Meeting 14

ArcOver FRRL Newsletter

Copyright 2009, FRRL

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.

Prior permission is required to republish original ArcOver material.

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 7:00 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.