



Arc Over

Fox River Radio
League
PO Box 673
Batavia, IL
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November, 2011

Editor's Note: Although this is the November issue, it will be released before Halloween, and I have chosen to include a timely story for a change of pace. The story was written for the kids in the Next Gen Hams, but was never published. Enjoy, but don't get too scared when you next go into your shack!

The Haunted Microphone

By Tom Davis WB9CHY

Jim was a ham operator who liked to collect old equipment. One day, while he was at a hamfest peering over tables of used radios, he spotted an odd-looking microphone with no price on it. "How much for that mic?" he asked the seller. "I'll give it to you for \$5," said the seller. "I have no idea where I got it from or whether it even works."

Jim studied the mic closely. It appeared to be a dusty brass microphone from the early 1930's, perhaps from a commercial radio station. There were no markings on the mic to tell who had made it and the plug didn't look like anything Jim had ever seen before. What had caught Jim's attention, though, were two lights on the top of the mic, shaped like a pair of eyes. "Don't often see lights on a microphone," he said to the seller, who only nodded. "OK, I'll take it," Jim said and reached for his wallet.

When he got home, Jim took his new microphone downstairs to his ham shack and thought about what it would take to connect it to his transmitter. Jim took another look at the plug, peering at it from all sides. "That's odd," he thought, "that's EXACTLY the kind of plug I need to connect to my transmitter." Had he just imagined it was a different plug?

Jim reached behind his transmitter and hooked it up—a perfect fit! "Well, I might as well see if it works..."

Jim turned on his equipment and soon the ham shack had the familiar sounds of a crowded band, with many operators all trying to talk to some distant station on an island near the South Pole. Jim pressed the button at the base of the microphone and began to call the station...and then stopped in surprise. One of the lights on the top of the mic had lit up, a deep glowing red like a hot coal in a grill! Jim let go of the mic and the light slowly faded out. "Well, that's handy," thought Jim. "Someone has put an 'On the Air' light on this microphone. It sure is unusual, though!"

Jim spun the dial and tuned down to a frequency where he knew some of his friends would be talking. He pressed the button to transmit and light began to glow again. "Wow, you've got a strong signal tonight," said his friend Dave, who lived clear across on the other side of town. "You must have gotten something nice at that hamfest, huh?" Jim grinned and pressed the button. "No, but I'm happy you can hear me on this dusty old mic I bought." Jim continued to talk to Dave and told him about the strange lights on the microphone. Was that light glowing a little brighter than before? "Yeah, one comes on when I key it, but I don't know what the other one does." "Probably a spare," replied Dave, laughing.

After their conversation, Jim turned off the station and headed upstairs to bed. The radio shack was dark and utterly quiet.

Suddenly...the *OTHER* light on the microphone began to glow. Not red like its partner, but a pale blue, like

(Continued on page 5)

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

Meeting Minutes October 11, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM by John Spasojevich AG9D– President.

- **Secretary's Report** - John AG9D announced that copies of the meeting minutes for the September 13, 2011 Regular Meeting are available from FRRL Secretary, Ron KC9SNI. Ken K9WCX motioned to accept the minutes, which was seconded by Denny W9HI. The motion carried.

Unfinished (Old) Business - There was no unfinished business from the September 13 General Membership Meeting.

New Business – Randolph W9HE motioned to increase member dues by \$15 in lieu of the Hamfest. The motion was seconded, and discussion of the motion proceeded.

Many points of view regarding the Hamfest including its benefits, drawbacks, and revenue were expressed by the members present. While it was noted that attendance at almost all hamfests has been declining, it was also observed that hamfests provide important social benefits to attendees plus a venue for the exchange of equipment and technological information.

Regarding revenue it was noted that, in addition to gate ticket and vendor table sales, Hamfest revenue has included advance ticket sales to club members. Traditionally, members have been expected to purchase six tickets at \$5 each for their own use or resale. Since the apportioned fixed costs of Hamfest operations amount to approximately \$15 for the \$30 garnered from advance ticket purchases by members, the net revenue to the club is about \$15.

Randolph W9HE clarified it was his intent that the proposed \$15 hamfest replacement fee be handled in a manner similar to the Repeater Fund and thus be separate from member dues.

Due to the complexity of the issues, the possible ramifications ensuing from this motion, and thus the need for continued discussion, Dick W9GIG motioned that this be tabled until the next month's General Membership Meeting. Kermit W9XA seconded the motion. John AG9D called for a vote from the attending members, and the motion to table carried.

- **Committee Reports:**

Banquet – Mike K9FE reported that a location for the annual banquet has not yet been booked, although last year's location is still under consideration. Mike conducted an informal poll of attendees asking "How many would like to continue with door prizes at the banquet?" A minority indicated support. He further asked "How many want to go to the same place?" Again, few indicated support. He also stated that the banquet would be held on the same Saturday in January as last year.

Education – Eric AB9OS reported that the next Technician license class will commence on October 15. A General license class is planned for the first quarter of next year. Dick W9GIG presented three ARRL course manuals to Eric for use in these classes.

Newsletter – John AG9D reminded that any material intended for ArcOver be submitted to the Editor, Tobi K9TCD, by the 20th of each month.

Nominating Committee – Kermit W9XA, Chair, reported that the committee, which includes Vicki KC9PWM and Bill WB9LPW, is in the process of identifying nominees to fill upcoming vacancies for club officers and directors. He asked that members interested in running for any of these club leadership positions to contact him.

Program – Kermit W9XA, in his capacity as Vice-Director of the ARRL Central Division, reported that he would at this meeting provide a briefing on current ARRL matters and present a quick tour of ARRL headquarters.

VE Session – John AG9D stated that the next Volunteer Examination session is scheduled for Tuesday, November 15. Doug W9RD is the VE Team Leader.

- **Announcements**

Food Pantry Donations – John AG9D reminded that food donations will be accepted at the December General Member

(Continued on page 3)

ship Meeting. These donations will be given to Hesed House or a local food pantry. Canned goods and non-perishable items are acceptable.

Ham of the Year – John AG9D announced that secret ballot voting for “Ham of the Year” will be conducted at the December General Membership Meeting.

Illinois QSO Party – John AG9D reminded that the annual Illinois QSO Party is scheduled to commence at noon Sunday, October 16, 2011 and end at 8 PM. This event includes phone and CW/digital contacts on 160m through 2m excluding 60, 30, 17, and 12 meters. Visit the website at: <http://www.w9awe.org/ILQP2011.htm>

QST Article – John AG9D noted that the upcoming November issue of QST includes an article by FRRL member Dave N9XU entitled “A 160 or 80 Meter Downspout Vertical.”

Raffle Program – Chris KC9IEQ reminded the group that an Astron 30-amp power supply will be included in next month’s raffle.

SDR SIG – Harry K9DXA announced that the Software-Defined Radio (SDR) SIG will recommence at Rasmussen College on Saturday, October 22 at 9 AM and continue on November 12th and December 10th.

Adjournment

With no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Ken N9WCX and seconded by Randolph W9HE. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 8:36 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:
Ron Jahr KC9SNI
FRRL Secretary

New Members

Welcome to the following new members:

CALL	NAME
KC9UTT	William Zinn

November Program Notes

The November program will be either information on how to get on the air for newer hams who do not have an antenna, or a session on internet communication modes relating to ham radio.

Bill Erickson HF Challenge Update – Mid-October 2011

By Eric Needles AB9OS

The fall contest season is here and HF Challenge participants are making good use of the contest contacts and great band conditions. As Larry K9ARZ says "conditions are sure getting better. I am having a ball."

10 meters has had great openings into Europe, South America, New Zealand and many more. The Illinois QSO party was hopping too. There were so many people from outside Illinois trying to get into the contest...what a great time!

In fact, Joe NA9A reports that "all new ones are on 12 meters." Way to go Joe! He also reported receiving his QSL card from contacts with ST0R. What fun! Remember, especially now, it's never too late to get into the HF Challenge. Just pick a category and e-mail your contacts to challenge "at" frri.org and you are in! Now for the numbers...

Limited Class	States	Provinces	DX Countries	Total
K9MMS-CW	50	10	177	237
K9BQL-CW	36	8	159	203
N5EP-CW	46	9	91	146
NF9D-QRP	39	4	46	89
W9IV-QRP	28	5	54	87
KC9SNI-10m	6		16	22
K9WDB-10m	14	1	4	19
K9LGE-Digital	9		2	11
AB9OS-CW	2			2

QRO Class	States	Provinces	DX Countries	Total
K9ARZ	50	12	247	309
AH6EZ	50	11	231	292
KC9DAO	47	7	91	145
N4LZ	30	1	101	132
N9JZN	26	5	76	107
NA9A	25	0	78	103
KC9EOQ	29	4	47	80

Operator Class	States	Provinces	DX Countries	Total
W9DTR	50	11	140	201
K9JE	39	9	143	191
K9TCD	42	5	68	115
KC9LQS	30	8	76	114
K9FBI	35	6	54	95
K9IH	27	3	40	70
WB9CHY	32	3	4	39

Ragchewer Class	States/Prov.	DX Countries	Total
N5EP	36/2	5	43
W9DTR	23/5	6	34
AH6EZ	23/2	9	32
K9IH	20	7	27
K9LGE			9
NA9A	7	1	8
AB9OS	2		2

The Haunted Mic (Continued from page 1)

moonlight at midnight reflecting off the fog on a freezing lake. Was that a shadow moving around the room? A frosty glow lit the radio shack briefly and then winked off. Darkness returned.

The next day, Jim returned to the radio shack, but looked in surprise at his station. "Seems like a raccoon or something got in here last night," he thought, staring at some paw prints that traveled across his desk. He poked around the room with a broom but didn't see any more signs of a visitor.

Jim went on the air and received compliments from several hams who wondered about his loud signal. A new antenna perhaps, or a high-powered amplifier? "No," Jim would explain, "just this dusty old mic." Almost as if it was listening, the red light on the microphone began to glow a little brighter, a little deeper in color. "Maybe the mic doesn't like me calling it 'dusty' and 'old'," thought Jim, chuckling to himself as he reached to turn the power off. "I wonder what it would look like if I polished it up a bit?" Jim left for bed.

That night, the *OTHER* light glowed a *LOT* brighter. Upstairs, Jim dreamt he heard things moving around in the basement and nearly woke up. But when the noise stopped, he fell back asleep.

The next morning, Jim was even more surprised when he returned to the radio shack. His chair had been knocked over and several of his books had gotten thrown from the bookshelves across the room. "Something was busy in here," he thought. "Maybe I shouldn't go on the air tonight, since it's Halloween." He laughed, but it was a nervous laugh. "After all, it's probably just the wind," he said later, talking to Dave on the radio. "Yeah, but I don't remember there being any windows in your basement," said Dave. "Have you cleaned up the microphone of yours yet?"

Jim looked at the mic. "No, but I'm not sure it's worth cleaning. Sometimes I think those little lights are

looking at me,” he said. “I may just toss it in a box—it’s starting to give me the creeps...”

With those words, the *OTHER LIGHT SUDDENLY CAME ON!!!*

Jim nearly knocked the mic over, he was so shocked. “Dave, you’re not going to believe this!!! The other light...”

Jim’s signal disappeared. Dave tuned around the band but heard only the hiss of static.

It took Dave 20 minutes to drive over to Jim’s house, but when he got there, there were no signs of Jim. In fact, Jim was never seen again. Dave looked for the microphone with the two lights, but now there was only an ordinary mic hooked up to Jim’s station.

Folks figured Jim just decided to leave town—quickly. But Dave was never sure. Jim would never have left without taking his station.

And at the next year’s hamfest, one of the vendors was selling a curious microphone with two lights, shaped like eyes....

THE END

FRRL and St. Rita Church Move Forward With Campus Plans

By Harry Jones, K9DXA

On October 22, 2011, FRRL members spent several hours at the St. Rita Church campus to work on two projects discussed with Fr. Cesar, during a meeting on October 19 with several Board of Director members. These projects involve FRRL bringing Wi-Fi internet to the Church basement, and helping Fr. Cesar set up a 2M base station in his office.

Dick AH6EZ located resources to tie in to an existing high speed internet connection point in the Parish Center, route the wire signal cable to a “Canopy” transceiver beamed to another across the lawn, located near the entrance to the Church. The second “Canopy” was then connected to an indoor mounted Wi-Fi AP via wire signal cable. Dick located all necessary parts and took charge of the installation. He had help from Jeff N9JZN, Larry K9ARZ, Dawn KC9LQS, Dean KC9EOQ, and Harry K9DXA. Dean used a laptop to test the system and lock down the Wi-Fi AP. Dick is now working on ideas to use this new found resource to enhance his meeting programs.

Larry strapped on his trusty climbing belt and took off for the top of the existing tower behind the Parish Center building. He removed a rotator and TV antenna, and mounted a Ringo 2M vertical, complete with RG213 coax. We’ll talk with Fr. Cesar again to determine the coax routing between the tower and his office. Then he will locate his ICOM base rig and check in on the W9CEQ repeater. So please expect him to be checking in shortly.

Further plans are underway to provide additional enhancements for Parish members as well as for FRRL members visiting St. Rita campus for meetings.

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 St. Rita of Cascia Church in Aurora. The meeting begins at 7:30 PM and includes social time,

a business portion and a program of interest.

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 St. Rita of Cascia Church in Aurora 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 November 15 at St. Rita of Cascia church. Please see the frrl.org website for details.

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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Email:

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Web Site:

<http://www.frrl.org>

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Vice President

Harry Jones, K9DXA

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FRRL CLUB MEETINGS ARE HELD AT ST. RITA OF CASCIA IN AURORA, IL, BUT LOCATION IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. PLEASE CHECK THE FRRL WEB SITE FOR THE ADDRESS AND 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

November, 2011

FRRL Board Meeting 1
FRRL Meeting 8
SDR SIG 12
VE Session 15

December, 2011

FRRL Board Meeting 6
SDR SIG 10
FRRL Meeting 13

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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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—147.225 Mhz (-6.0 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.
- Monthly Simplex Net—4th Tues following weekly FRRL Net on the FRRL 2 Meter repeater.
- Illinois DStar Net - Wed. Eve. at 8:00 pm local time on the DStar 440 repeater.