



Arc Over

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

April, 2005

President's Traffic *by Dick Illman, AH6EZ*

Spring is finally here. I hope that you are getting your antennas fixed up from any Winter mishaps. I know that I am looking forward to going to Dayton. It is a highlight of the ham year for me as it is good timing to spend all of the Tax Refunds (I hope).

This year, Dayton will be the National ARRL Convention. I am looking forward to meeting W1RFI, Ed Hare, who has been helping me with BPL. In case you did not know it, BPL has now been installed in Illinois. Speaking about BPL, I will likely miss the April meeting because I will be out of town testing some alternate technology that will not interfere with ham radio.

The April program will be a combination of W9AX speaking about Emergency Preparedness for the upcoming storm season and W9HI talking about plans for Field Day which will be upon us soon. Rumor has it that KB9UBU will not be dividing her time with the bicycle event this year so we might have her undivided support for food this year. I think that W9HI is considering using our alternate club call of W9NE for field Day this year. That should be more efficient for all of you CW enthusiasts this year.

Our Wednesday night CW practice has completed it's nine planned weeks. I know that this has given some of our members new confidence in going for their General class upgrade. Thanks to N9CHA and K9COE for having the idea and carrying through with it, along with AB9IN for helping out. I heard that K9FBI just passed his Extra class license.

By the time you read this, the First Annual International IRLP contest will be in full swing. Our UHF repeater may be busy at times with people from throughout the globe trying to contact some of us. This activity may be at strange hours of the day or night. Check out www.qsl.net/vk3irl for details. With low sun spot numbers, there is more than one way to enjoy ham radio. You might find that PSK31 is useful too, even under marginal band conditions or limited antennas.

The annual MS Walk event is on May 1. Contact K9FE to see how you can help out with this easy and beneficial communication support.

The May program will be a presentation by AJ9N and his International Space Station support crew talking about their school children contacts with the ISS using ham radio. We hope to have science school teachers attend and we have reserved the upstairs room where we had the Christmas Party. See you on the air, that's what ham radio is all about – communicating about the radio art.

73, Dick AH6EZ

Bill Erickson HF Challenge by Mike Urso, K9FE

HF challenge for April

I first want to congratulate Mike K9FBI who was able to upgrade his license to EXTRA at last months VE session. Mike studied hard, and took a good amount of time to do the best he could on the test, and passed. He can now explore those areas where the DX tend to hang out. This is very true in CW, so go get those rare ones Mike.

This month has been busy with QSO parties and some good contests. QSO Parties are great for the casual contester. Many treat it as an all out contest, but there are a lot of casual contesters. You not only get the contact, but also may even get a short chat. Virginia's QSO party was enjoyable. I was able to play in that party for a few hours, in a parking lot, while waiting for some parts to be delivered. So with 100 watts on 20 and 40 MOBILE I was able to work 60 contacts. It was definitely not a barn burning performance, but it was a lot of fun.

USE ALL THE BANDS!!! That is to say that the *CHALLENGE* is not a normal contest, so you can use 12/17 and 30 meters. In fact as Joe, NA9A, found out 17 can be really a good DX band, but as he said in his score report, "this morning it was super and the DX actually took the time to ask my name". Thanks for the observation Joe. Now it time for the rest to hit the WARC bands.

As is typical for contest season, there have been a good amount of scores turned in. I have to thank you for the input. What I want is a description of you shack for this article. Just a paragraph will do, but it might be interesting to find not everyone has a 120-foot tower and an ALPHA.

So I'll start, this years shack consists of a 1998 Plymouth Voyager with a Hustler mobile antenna, originally purchased in 1959 (I have the receipt!) by a ham at one of our fests. I was able to get the mast, springs, and 3 coils for \$25! The antenna is mounted on a custom built (by me) mount that goes into the trailer receiver, but still allows me to pull my trailer. Fed with RG-58 A/U coax with ferrite sleeves in 3 places for decoupling. All fed by an ICOM 706 Mk II G that I got at Dayton 2 years ago. It works!

A note from Gary, now AL9A:

Greetings from up north. The days are getting longer now, about evenly divided between day and night as we approach the equinox. The weather has been warming up and our snow at this latitude is almost gone. Locals are saying we're going to have an early breakup this spring. We'll see! The DX has improved a lot lately as the days have gotten longer and I've discovered I can get into Europe over the pole late at night on 20M if the propagation Gods cooperate. Also manage to dig out the occasional good one from Oceania.

Some of the DX heard this month were 3B9, 5H, UT, ES, EU, FG, FS, FM, GW, HR, IS0, J6, OH0, S9, TA, TF, RA, YL and a whole bunch more.

Remember to get your updated **totals** to me by the 15th of each month to have them included in the **Arc Over**. If you are a day late of so, don't worry, I'll still get them in. Send them to **challenge@frri.org** or **K9FE@arrl.net** as an alternate. I am not sure just when the FRRL.ORG addresses will be interrupted. Also include a list of rare and not so rare entities you have worked so we can all be a part of the HF hunting. The bands may seem dead, but make sure you try...you never know how the propagation can change.

Good Hunting!
73 de K9FE Mike Urso

Scores are on page 5.

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FRRL Morse Code Tutor Net Concludes

by Greg Braun, N9CHA

The last session of the FRRL Morse Code On-Air Tutor Project was concluded on Wednesday, March 9th. John, K9COE and Tom, AB9IN handled the net control duties for the 9 weekly sessions which began January 12th. Each week on Wednesday night at 7:30 the net would begin by asking for general check-ins. Two FRRL members, besides the net control operators, checked into all 9 of the weekly sessions. Kirt, KC9CBY and Mike, K9FBI held perfect attendance. Besides these two punctual students, we had 19 others who checked into the net week to week.

At the end of the sessions, John or Tom would open the net for general comments. Several evenings we had listeners check in who were studying their code along with the net, but did not actively participate.

Ken, N9QPE upgraded to General during the 9 week project. Congratulations to Ken! We hope to have others who will also upgrade in the near future.

Please check our web site (<http://www.frri.org/>) to download practice files, which are still available.

New Members

by Bill Muhr, KB9YSI

I messed up last month with some typos in the new members list. Al Maromaty, K9WK, lives in Naperville. I misspelled both his name and city. I also managed to miss KA9INV, Sal Rizzo, who lives in Sugar Grove.

The new members joining this month are John Fleming, AA5SU (Extra) from Plainfield, and Leo Doyle (no call yet) from Aurora.

Training Essential To Radio Operators

by REGINE LABOSSIÈRE, Hartford Courant Staff Writer

February 27, 2005 — NEWINGTON, CT -- Before ham radio operators can assist victims of bombs, plane crashes and smallpox outbreaks, they have to train. And so, about 60 hams, as they are called, gathered in the Newington Fire Department's headquarters on Main Street Saturday morning to review, discuss and prepare. The hams, also known as amateur radio operators, are members of Amateur Radio Emergency Services, a national program of the American Radio Relay League, whose national headquarters are in Newington. "Training, everything we do is about training. We have to be ready to serve," said Rod Lane, one of the speakers on Saturday and an assistant section manager for ARES. "In a post-9/11 world, it's even more important."

Amateur radio operators set up and operate organized communication networks locally for government officials and emergency services. They are usually most active when power outages and downed telephone lines render other communication ineffective. According to Allen Pitts, a spokesman for the league, amateur radio, unlike other forms of communication, can never be blocked or tied up. "Ninety-five percent of other emergency communication services go through some type of a choke point," Pitts said, naming emergency dispatch and cell phone towers as examples. "There's always something. If that something is overloaded or dysfunctional, the system's dead."

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Beyond BPL?

by A. P. Rill, AP1RIL

Special to the ArcOver:

Washington, DC — April 1, 2005 — The recent pressure from the ARRL on the FCC's position on the new Broadband over Power Lines (BPL) technology may be having a significant effect. According to rumors circulating around Washington, DC., the FCC has quietly shifted its enthusiasm and support from BPL to a new process called BPR.

BPR, or Broadband over Paved Roads, is the brainchild of Alex P. Geekdecker, a Rio Linda, California inventor. According to Geekdecker, the only things that connect to more individual homes and businesses than power lines are paved roads. Several years ago he began trying to transmit radio waves through concrete and asphalt in order to take advantage of this linked network of highways.

After several years of experimentation, Geekdecker says he has succeeded. Although he refuses to provide specific details, we noted during an interview that he has many large containers of both copper sulfate and Vernor's Ginger Ale stored on his property. It is possible that he is using a mixture of these chemicals to create RF conductivity through pavement.

According to unnamed sources in Washington, the FCC has become quite enthused about the possibilities of this process, and may have even authorized testing of the technology. A recent massive traffic jam in Southern California was rumored to have started when every vehicle in a large section of the Santa Anna Freeway simply stopped running when their engine computer chips shut down. State Police blamed the incident on a UFO, but Southern California ham radio operators immediately suspected something even more sinister—the FCC.

Rutger F. Meter, who claims to be an amateur radio operator, informed this reporter of several unusual incidents the morning of the traffic jam. According to Meter, who refused to disclose his callsign, there was a mysterious chemical spill on the freeway shortly before the traffic jam. He also claims to have seen at least ten FCC vehicles on that particular section of roadway prior to and after the slowdown.

The FCC denies any knowledge of or involvement in BPR technology. However, several informed sources state that the FCC is taking a serious look at BPR. One such source told me, " ... the Chairman's Office staff is really pushing this. There is talk of a 'lasting legacy', 'outdoing Al Gore', and other very enthusiastic statements."

Geekdecker also denies any involvement with the FCC. He claims that he is only interested in fulfilling President Bill Clinton's dream of an *information superhighway*. "What better way to have an info superhighway than to use the 405 freeway for broadband," he says. "Just imagine, 12 lanes of info-streaming concrete running twenty-four hours a day. We just need better shielding on those car computers and we'll be ready to go."

Amateur radio operators have a different vision—12 lanes of concrete radiating RF across a thirty mile corridor around the freeway and along every connecting roadway in the country. Mr. Meter believes that BPR will produce even more interference than BPL. "This could be the worst disaster for radio communications ever," he said, radiating concern.

Only time will tell which of these competing technologies will win out in the end. And, of course, it is possible that something newer and better will come along to challenge both. But very soon, amateur radio operators may have to mount another long and difficult campaign to protect their frequencies and prevent traffic jams.

A. P. Rill is a freelance reporter and author based in Washington, DC. He provides an annual report to the ArcOver during the month of April.

Erickson Challenge Standings
(Continued from page 2)

| Ragchew Class | States/Provinces | DX Countries | Total |
|---------------|------------------|--------------|-------|
| AL9A | - | - | 16 |
| AH6EZ | - | - | 12 |
| NA9A | - | - | 5 |
| K9FE | - | - | 1 |

| Operator Class | States/ Provinces | DX Countries | Total |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------|-------|
| W4CEO | 45/5 | 99 | 149 |
| K9MMS | 50/10 | 79 | 139 |
| K9FBI | 43/5 | 42 | 90 |
| K9JE | 43/6 | 26 | 75 |
| W9DNJ | 2/0 | 1 | 3 |

| Limited Class | States/ Provinces | DX Countries | Total |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------|-------|
| KB9YSI | 31/2 | 30 | 63 |

| QRO Class | States/ Provinces | DX Countries | Total |
|-----------|-------------------|--------------|-------|
| AH6EZ | 47/9 | 130 | 186 |
| WOHED | 50/6 | 86 | 142 |
| AL9A | 50/9 | 82 | 141 |
| NA9A | 7/1 | 70 | 78 |
| K9FE | 5/1 | 5 | 11 |

Solar Flux

by Bill Muhr, KB9YSI

Last month I mentioned that progress was being made on the club website. Progress, indeed! The new site should be live and available for your use in a few days, if it isn't already up and running. Please take some time to look it over and let Eric know what you think. Comments, suggestions and news are always welcome (for both the website and the ArcOver).

The weather is finally warming up, and it's time to start thinking about upcoming activities. As noted elsewhere, May 1 is the MS Walk. I'd like to ask everyone to consider participating in the event or making a contribution to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. Recently a second member of my family was diagnosed with MS. The impact of this disease is devastating to both individuals and families. Please help if you can.

Thanks & 73,

Bill, KB9YSI

FRRL Cougars Night Tickets Still Available

Don't miss out! There are still tickets available for the FRRL Kane County Cougars night outing for July 29th. For only \$8 per ticket you can enjoy an evening of baseball, fireworks and fun with your fellow club members. Family members and friends are encouraged to attend as well.

To purchase your tickets, please see N9CHA at the April club meeting. If you can't attend, you can email your ticket request to Cougars@frrl.org.

Training Essential To Radio Operators

(Continued from page 3)

However, Pitts said, every amateur radio is self-contained and fully functional on its own, so there's never any "choke point."

Pitts used the recent tsunami disaster in Southeast Asia to explain the effectiveness of amateur radio. "The first thing that happened in the tsunami, a lady was talking on the radio and she just said the word tremors and the hams heard her," he said. Hams alerted emergency and governmental services when the telephone wasn't working.

Dozens of radio operators came from all over the state to Newington Saturday to prepare for Top Off, an emergency disaster drill run by the federal Department of Homeland Security. The drill will take place in Connecticut, New Jersey and foreign countries. The radio operators will learn how to assist the Red Cross and the Office of Emergency Management during emergencies. Pitts said the drill is scheduled for April 4-8 in the New London and Groton areas and will be the biggest disaster drill ever in Connecticut. Anything can happen during those four days, he said. The Department of Homeland Security was planning on replicating anything that terrorists could cause.

Many members of the group who gathered in Newington have taken part in major disasters. Some were also radio beginners. All of them sat in a room in the fire station intently listening to the various speakers. The speakers talked about several important factors of being a radio operator. For instance, everyone should have a jump kit - a mini-radio station that operators have handy in an emergency. Several jump kits were on display in the back of the room. The speakers also discussed staying calm in emergencies and where to buy materials. During breaks, people traded barbs and experiences.

Michael Abramowitz, a 71-year-old Stratford resident, said he became a licensed operator 15 years ago because of all the opportunities it afforded him. "I wanted to give back something to the community, meet other people on the air, try other means of communication," he said. Rose-Anne Lawrence, a 51-year-old radio operator who lives in Newington, said she became licensed about five years ago. "I thought it was interesting and I found there were a lot of challenges in the hobby and you meet a lot of interesting people," Lawrence said. She and her husband went to Torrington in 2002 when a major ice storm destroyed power lines and amateur radio was the only means of communication. Tom Barnhart, 49, from Groton, helped in Torrington and also in the Sept. 11 disaster. He said he first heard the news on television and then went on the air where he heard hams were collecting resources and looking for people willing to go to New York. He was there for 10 days. "We were definitely helping," Barnhart said. "That's the big thing. The people that are here in this room are here because they want to help."

Pitts said that amateur radio operators are key in all disasters, but they are no amateurs: "It's called the amateur radio service but it's no more amateur than your amateur volunteer fire services."

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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©(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 the Prisco Community Center in Aurora, Illinois. 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 in the basement of the Prisco Community Center, 150 W. Illinois Street, (South East corner of Lake and Illinois) in 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, original CSCES and a photocopy (if needed), some form of photo identification, and the fee of \$14.00. (The FRRL receives no portion of this fee.)

The next exam session is scheduled for Tuesday, May 17, 2005, at 7:30 pm at the Prisco Center.

FRRL Dues

Annual dues are payable no later than the January Club Meeting each year. Persons 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. You can also help support the FRRL Repeaters by joining as a combined Club/ Repeater member for \$30.00. Repeater dues are \$20.00.

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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FRRL CLUB MEETINGS ARE HELD AT THE PRISCO COMMUNITY CENTER AT 150 WEST ILLINOIS STREET IN AURORA. PLEASE CHECK THE FRRL WEB SITE FOR A MAP TO THE MEETING LOCATION .

<http://www.frri.org>

Send Address Corrections to:
 Fox River Radio League, Inc.
 40W981 Bridle Creek Drive
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 60175

FRRL Event Calendar

April, 2005

FRRL Board Meeting 5
 FRRL Meeting 12
 NSRC Hamfest 16

May, 2005

MS Walk 1
 DeKalb Hamfest 1
 FRRL Board Meeting 3
 FRRL Meeting 10
 VE Testing 17
 Dayton Hamvention 20-22

Handy Web Links

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| FRRL Web Site | http://www.frrl.org/ |
| ARRL Main Site | http://www.arrl.org/ |
| ARRL Central Div. Site | http://www.central.arrl.org/ |
| ARRL IL Section Site | http://www.central.arrl.org/illinois.html |
| ARRL IL Section News | http://www.arrl.org/sections/?sect=IL |
| ARRL Contest Page | http://www.arrl.org/contests/ |
| Contest Calendar | http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/ |
| Callsign Lookup (QRZ) | http://www.qrz.com/ |
| Vanity Callsign Info | http://www.vanityhq.com/ |
| IRLP Main Page | http://www.irlp.net/ |
| AMSAT | http://www.amsat.org/ |
| FCC Services | http://wireless.fcc.gov/services/amateur |
| SMC Contest Club | http://www.w9smc.com/ |

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 six days prior to the end of the previous month. Articles can be sent by email to kb9ysi@arrl.net 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

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

W9ZGP—146.580 Mhz.
 +1.08 Mhz (147.660)
 Owned by NIARC

KC9OEM—145.470 Mhz.
 -600 KHz, 103.5 access tone
 Owned by Kane County OEM

W9XA — 224.40 Mhz, +5 Mhz, IRLP Node #4846
 — **443.65 Mhz, +5 Mhz**
 — **1292.00 Mhz, -20 Mhz (1272.00)**

* Weekly FRRL Net—Tues. Eve. at 7:30 pm local time.