



Arc Over

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

May, 2004

President's Traffic *by Bill Schaben, W9AX*

The weather around here has been very quiet this year. However, we don't have to go far to see what it can do and what service the hams can provide. Utica is still reeling from the tornado that hit it. From the very beginning, hams were already getting communications up. They knew that they would be called upon to help immediately after the hit and for some time after. To see what they did, I direct you to the ARRL weekly bulletins and letter regarding the disaster there.

This should show us that we need to be prepared and be ready to go into action even before something strikes. Hams as weather spotters, observed the storm and were able to give warning before it hit. There is no way of knowing how many lives that saved. Immediately afterward, they helped the rescue efforts by backing up the

fire and police. Then as other services like the American Red Cross and Salvation Army came in, the hams assisted them.

I see that the county ARES groups were a major organized factor in several of the counties. Through ARES hams can get the training to be able to fit in and work efficiently with almost every agency in time of emergency. When the stuff has hit the fan, it's not time to begin OJT. Being properly trained means that you can keep a cool head when necessary.

I would encourage everyone to push for an active ARES group here in Kane County. Talk with Dick, W9GIG and send a note to Pat Ryan, KC9VVT, the Illinois Emergency Coordinator, at kc9vvt@arrl.net. Remember, this will happen here. And will we be ready?

Canoe Race, 2004 *by Bill Schaben, W9AX*

It's time again to get out the HT's, pack a snack and clean off the binoculars. Yes, June 6 is our public service event for the Mid America Canoe Race. As most of you know, the race is a canoe and kayak race from St. Charles to Aurora. At the portages around dams, we'll have communicators stationed to provide safety and event communications. Historically, we'll be using the NIARC repeater with the FOX as secondary.

At each of the four portages, start and finish lines (six locations), I would like to have at least two operators. Equipment is as simple as an HT with extra batteries or external power to last the duration. From there you can add any creature comforts you want. It's suggested to bring some sort of sun protection.

The race will start at 8:00 AM and run until the last canoe is over the finish line, usually about 2:00. The up-stream portages can clear as soon as the last canoe is past their location. Meaning, the up stream workers get out early. So, it is desirous to sign up early to get those spots.

As of right now, I have openings at all portages. There is a sign up sheet at the meeting. Or you can call or email me. I'll get more info out to everyone as soon as I am sure of the details.

This is an enjoyable event and a good opportunity to work with your fellow FRRL members. Not to mention that it also prepares us for emergency communications.

See you at the meeting.

The last month has been a great month on HF. Contrary to popular belief the HF bands are not dead. They are quite active, just not all the time. Weekends have been really good for 40. Someone named Joe worked quite a few of the "desired countries" list. TJ3G Cameroon, AP2NK Pakistan, A52PRO Bhutan, 5TOEU Mauritania, YA8G Afghanistan, T33C Banaba Island, TT8PK Chad, C21DL Nauru, 3D2MM Conway Reef, and 5A/G4VFU Libya. WOW! All in a one month's time!

Now it is true that NA9A is not running a novice station, but with the conditions being less than great, it takes some perseverance to get those rare ones. I can't even hear most of those contacts. That said it is still fun to be able to work 5 submarines in a 2 hour period on 40 meters on a Saturday morning. Turning on a radio to play a bit takes time. That's something a lot of us have trouble finding, but we do somehow. Are you in the Challenge? Just e-mail or call me with your entry. Have you a schedule once a week with an old friend? That contact is your first entry. Tell us about it.

AH6EZ is having a great year so far. 3B9, R1FJ, HL5, HK0 (Mapelo), KH8 just to name a few. Dick is running moderate power, (NO ALPHA), and an antenna that radiates poorly in all directions (a vertical). I believe he is also running a wire for the Lower Bands. We all know wires are just for beginners...yeah right!

K9COE has been busy also with the following DX... ZP, ZL, YS, RA9, S5, PA, OK, OE, LZ, FY, FM, FG, EA8, CQ, A3, and 7X. Keep up the good work.

Right now the QRO class is getting to be a 3 horse race. AH6EZ in the lead by a neck with NA9A coming upon the outside and driving hard to pass. WB9O in the slot and waiting for a mistake to punch ahead with the top two. K9JE has pulled a quick count to take over the Operator class with K9COE and AB9CC in 2nd and 3rd. His is still within reach however and looking over his shoulder.

We even have DX in the race with J68AR Jack using his alternate DX call. I guess those numbers won't go up unless he takes another vacation. Then we have a new SOUTHERN GENTLEMAN by the call of W4CEO. Say "HOWDY" to him when you see him.

This is an outstanding year for the challenge. I count 19 different operators that have entered. But wait...aren't there more that have HF privileges? Where are they? If you know of a ham that should be in the challenge, but just hasn't sent in his or her score...get on their case. It is so simple and it can get addicting.

Remember, just because you started in one class doesn't mean you are tied to that class all year. You can go from **Limited** to **Operator** to **QRO** easily. Going backwards poses a problem since you cannot use your **QRO** contacts for **Operator** **IF** they were gotten with higher power than the class you want to be eligible to be in. Remember the 250-watt output power limit on the **Operator** category.

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. 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

This month's standings are listed on Page 5.

Share the Excitement!

by Dick Illman, AH6EZ

Here is what I have heard of recently. If you had fun with ham radio, share it. If you have not been having fun with ham radio, why not?

I have not heard much locally because I was overseas in England and Scotland. I did hear W9CZA while he was working a G3 station. Benny was 339 to me and I am sure my 2 watts would have been 009 to him. I did manage to make 76 QSOs in 35 countries. All of those EU stations have it easy to work DXCC, but maybe a hard time working WAS.

I did manage to work two Boston stations and one in New Jersey. Thanks to those guys who listened for me or tried to call me. The solar and QRP gods were not on our side.

I was able to get into a simplex IRLP node in Edinburgh near the Edinburgh Castle. Edinburgh was where I felt like a spy when I dropped my wire antenna out the second story window and tied it to a light pole in front of the hotel on a busy street.

I went to a Hamfest (they call them rallies) west of London. They really put Maurice to shame with a 25 piece orchestra playing Big Band tunes. The old timers were really tapping their toes. We drove up to Sheffield, the QTH of M1ERS who helped with our first IRLP demo and enjoyed their Ham Club meeting. I connected my Elecraft rig to their antenna and worked Italy.

Let me know of fun you are having with ham radio by email (AH6EZ@aol.com), on the Fox Repeaters, or telephone 630-584-4388. I will share it in the next ArcOver. If I do not receive any input for this column, I may discontinue it.

May Program Notes

by Dick Illman, AH6EZ

I hope you got energized for Field Day by Mike and Denny's program last month. Kurt, KC9CBY, came up with a 30 minute World War II video made by Hallicrafters showing how they adapted their equipment to HF mobile use.

Fox Repeater and IRLP Update

by Dick Illman, AH6EZ

Please remember that our repeaters are shared facilities and keep your transmissions short, especially during commute times. We have set the time out timer to 60 seconds to encourage this new behavior. We hope to have automatic timers to lengthen the time out timer during the Tuesday net. We have changed the courtesy tone to remind users of the changed operation. Try to create large enough round table conversations so that everyone can participate and have courteous conversations that are beneficial to the cause and traditions of amateur radio. This means avoiding the historically controversial topics of religion, sex, and politics. Let's all try to learn more about amateur radio and expand our horizons and not just have a wireless chat room.

Solar Flux

by Bill Muhr, KB9YSI

This month's ArcOver features the first in an ongoing series of interviews with our club members. As I note in the article, it is getting harder and harder to get to know your fellow hams, thanks to busy schedules and crowded calendars. I hope this feature helps us to become familiar with each other.

If you'd like to volunteer to be grilled ... uh ... interviewed, drop me a line or a call. It's a simple process, and you don't need to have a photo published unless you want to.

This past weekend the club participated in its first public service event of the year, the MS Walk. Speaking as someone with a family member who suffers from MS, this is a special event. It is also a lot of fun. All the volunteers are wonderful and the walkers are dedicated and inspiring.

Public service is a great way to put your amateur radio skills to work and have lots of fun at the same time. The next few months are full of opportunities to volunteer, with the Canoe Race, Peyton Run, Field Day and a Hamfest. Do your best to get out and participate—I guarantee you will enjoy yourself, and you will also feel like you are making a difference.

Oh—one more thing — 6 Meters was open yesterday. It looks like Spring has arrived!

73 — Bill

The Arc-Over Interview: Club President Bill Schaben, W9AX

By Bill Muhr, KB9YSI

As our club grows it becomes harder to get to get to know individual members. It seems there is never enough time at meetings or events to sit down and figure out exactly what makes our fellow hams tick. In order to try and make things easier, we put together a series of "interviews" with members of our club. Our President, Bill Schaben, W9AX, volunteered to be the first interviewee.



This photo of Bill was taken at the recent "Antenna Party" at the old meeting site. Photo by Greg Braun, N9CHA.

Q. When were you first licensed?

A. I was first licensed in 1962 as WN9AUW as a novice and later moved up to WA9AUW as a Tech.

Q. When did you get interested in ham radio and what interested you about it?

A. As a kid, I was fortunate to live down the street in Elburn from Clayton Hines (W9IJY), who was home during the day. Clayton had a very nice workshop and started me off on electronics as well as wood and metal working.

Q. What class of license do you hold now and what classes have you held?

A. After a short hiatus, I came back to ham radio, studied the code and moved to General, then to Advanced and then Extra.

Q. Have you held any other call signs and what were/are they?

A. For a while I was in California and held the call KB6KWQ. I wasn't on the air much as I returned to Illinois and got WA9AUW back.

Q. What are your favorite bands and modes?

A. When coming back to ham radio, I was determined to get my code speed up. In doing so, I feel in love with CW. I've tried other modes, but nothing turns me on like CW. I only wish I were better at it. Favorite bands would be any HF that's open.

Q. What equipment are you using in your station?

A. Currently my station consists of a Kenwood TS-850 running into either a 5 element Yagi or an 80 meter horizontal loop. There is a G5RV on the ground that should be put back up. Someone once said you never have enough rigs. I also have a Drake TR7 (my favorite, but it needs work), a Kenwood TS-820, a Ten-tech QRP rig, a Heath DX-40 plus a couple of others.

Q. What do you do for a living or if retired what did you do?

A. After selling my business of 20 years, I've taken a position as an executive at Radio Shack. Actually, I retired but need something to do and am a part-time sales associate at RS. I do get to meet interesting people and some of them are hams.

Q. What do you enjoy most about ham radio, what do you like to do (DX, rag chew, contest, etc.)?

A. Going back to my early days, I like to build, get things on the air. I've put together a number of Heath Kits and scratch some items. I feel a ham should know how to handle a soldering iron. As for operating, I like to contest, but don't consider myself anything other than a small gun. Lately, I've seem to have trouble in sitting down long enough. I generally don't like to talk too long or about myself so don't get into too many rag-chews. Also it's a little more difficult to rag-chew on CW.

(Continued on page 6)

Erickson HF Challenge Standings as of 3/15/04

Ragchew	States/Provinces	DX Countries	Total
AH6EZ	50	6	56
K9COE	29	18	47
K9FE	23		23
K9IH	12		12
W8DTR	6		6
NA9A	1		4

Operator	States/ Provinces	DX Countries	Total
K9JE	48/10	109	167
K9COE	46/8	64	118
AB9CC	38/9	69	116
NT3J	40/6	65	111
KB9YSI	38/8	63	109
J68AR	33/8	62	103
W4CEO	37/4	47	88
W9XA	38/4	37	79
W9DTR	40/8	28	76
K9IH	33/3	15	51
KA9OBH	0/1	36	37
W9DNJ	11/1	3	15

Limited Class	States/ Provinces	DX Countries	Total
K9MMS	49/7	93	149
KB9YYX	7/0	0	7

QRO Class	States/Provinces	DX Countries	Total
AH6EZ	50/11	170	231
NA9A	6/1	190	197
WB90	38/4	101	143
K9FE	20/4	22	46
WOHED	36/2	2	40

W9AX Interview

(Continued from page 4)

Q. What was your most memorable experience as a ham?

A. I have two. The first was in Elburn. Clayton and I had just finished building a 40 meter phone transmitter and got it on the air. I can remember the time when he let me call CQ. I don't think anyone came back, but it still was a thrill. The other was when I had just got out of the Army where I got my license. I had the DX-40 and a Knight R-100 receiver. A wire in the back yard about 6 or 8 foot above the ground served as the antenna. With dry mouth, I called CQ and someone from St. Charles called me back. I was so nervous, I don't think that QSO was ever completed.

Q. What direction would you like ham radio go or do?

A. I feel that ham radio continues to exist because of the service that it can provide in an emergency. I would like to see more involvement of the ham population in Kane County in that area.

Q. How long have you been a member of the FRRL?

A. I joined the club in 1983. I've served in various offices and chaired some events. As you know, now serving as President for the second year.

Q. Any thoughts about the club?

A. I think the club is a great place to keep the interest of amateur radio and to mix with others. I really enjoy the public service events. I am sorry to see the horse trials fade away. There the hams definitely performed a service in that event.. I don't feel these types of events can be handled as well without ham radio.

I also feel that to truly enjoy the club and hobby, one needs to get involved, either as an officer or as a communicator for an event (or both). There is something working shoulder to shoulder that is different than just sitting next to each other at a meeting.

Letters to the Editor

by Bill Muhr, KB9YSI

Bill,

At the last FRRL meeting you mentioned that we could request ideas for possible future newsletter articles. I would be interested in reading about somebody's experiences with running their transmission lines into their house (i.e., what design did they use to run in multiple coax lines, did they use a remote antenna switcher or duplexer, how did they construct a common ground point--hung on the house or away from house, did they really bore a 2 inch hole through the side of their house and how did they weather-proof it?).

This is probably pretty mundane and specific stuff, but I've NEVER seen practical information on this in the ARRL Antenna book, Handbook, or even QST (other than general guidelines and the "wood block in the window" diagram).

Thanks & 73,
Tom, WB9CHY

Tom,

Thanks for your question. Now that you mention it, this is one of the "big questions" I had when setting up my station, and there wasn't a lot of information available. I think the ARRL's "Now You're Talking" book had a diagram showing a PVC pipe stuffed with fiberglass insulation going through a wall, and I've seen a few pictures in QST and CQ Magazine of banana plugs used in aluminum window frames and coax pass-through plugs in molded frames, but that's about it.

I'm lucky to have a sliding window in the basement, so the "wood block with holes" works fine for me. How about the rest of you? What are your secrets for getting your signals out of the house and into the ether? Let me know and I'll publish your ideas here.

Dear Editor,

I'd like to submit an article to the Arc-Over, but I have no idea how to do it. Will email work? If so, what format should I use and where should I mail it? And what should it be about? Do you want photos? Help!

Hamnonamous

(Continued on page 7)

Letters to the Editor

(Continued from page 6)

Dear Hamnonamous,

Arc-Over submissions are always welcome. Email works fine, but try to make sure it is formatted as text (not HTML). You can also attach a word processor document to your email. I prefer Microsoft Word (.doc) files, but I do have the ability to convert from most of the standard word processing formats.

You can also mail a disk, or just give it to me at one of the club meetings. I use a PC so I can read 3.5" floppies, Zip Disks, or burned CD-ROM disks. I can also handle Mac disks and file formats, but those take longer and require a trip to the secret Mac processing site.

Your article can be about anything related to amateur radio that you think might be of interest to your fellow hams. I do, however, reserve the right to decide if and when your work will get published in the Arc-Over.

I don't need photos, but they can add a lot to certain types of articles. If you do send photos, please use the JPEG format and keep the fairly small. I don't have the bandwidth to handle huge 10 meg. files. If you have any problems with the size of photos please give me a call or an email and we can discuss the situation.

Thanks for your interest! I hope to see an article or two in my mailbox soon.

Club Antenna Removal Completed

by Greg Braun, N9CHA

April 16, 2004 was the end of an era for both club meetings and amateur communications at the former bank building in the Northgate Shopping Center. Since March of this year, the FRRL has moved its club meetings to the Prisco Center, leaving behind the basement meeting room of the former bank building.

As a last farewell, two club antennas and associated feed lines were removed from their mounting positions on Friday morning, April 16th.

W9AX, Bill, FRRL President, led a three man team to the roof top of the former bank building. N9CHA, Greg, and W9OKI, Larry assisted by cutting the two RG8 feed lines and removing the an-

tennas from their mounts. An HF vertical and a VHF vertical, both badly weathered were removed and dismantled. The two 100' sections of RG8 feed line were also pulled back and coiled for future use.



Larry, W9OKI , hard at work on the roof.

Club Events for May, June & July:

FRRL Board Meeting5/4
FRRL Meeting 5/11
FRRL VE Testing..... 5/18

FRRL Board Meeting6/11
Canoe Race.....6/6
FRRL Meeting6/8
Peyton Run.....6/13
FRRL Field Day 6/25, 26, 27

FRRL Board Meeting7/6
FRRL Hamfest..... 7/11
FRRL Meeting 7/13

Special Event Functions are in **RED**

FRRL Hams Volunteer for MS

by Mike Urso, K9FE, MS-Walk Communication Coordinator - Fox Valley

This year's MS-Walk in the Fox Valley Region took place on May 2nd, a 2 week move to try for better weather than in year's past. The response from the hams asked to help was great.

This is one event that you may be able to take personally if you have a family member or friend that has MS. Since the date change now conflicts with the hamfest in Sandwich, it took a choice, hamfest or charitable service work. Thanks to the hams that made the choice to come out and help!



The 2004 MS Walk Communications Team. L to R, N9CHA - Greg, KA9VMD - Jerry, KB9YSI - Bill, N9TO - Tim, MS Walk Coordinator Abbey, K9FE - Mike, KC9DMS - Lloyd, N9YBP - Tom, AB9CC - Keith. Not Pictured: KC9DLL - Chris



Part of the crowd at the Turn-Around during the 2004 MS Walk. This spot is at the Batavia Windmill on Rt. 25, just across the River from the Fabyan Lighthouse.

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, Marcy, 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 \$12.00. (The FRRL receives no portion of this fee.)

The next exam is scheduled for Tuesday, May 18, 2004, at the Prisco Community Center in Aurora.

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 .

Send Address Corrections to:
 Fox River Radio League, Inc.
 29-W-458 Candlewood Lane
 Warrenville, Illinois
 60555-2639

FRRL Event Calendar

May, 2004

FRRL Board Meeting 4
FRRL Meeting 11
 FRRL VE Testing.....18

June, 2004

FRRL Board Meeting 1
 Canoe Race 6
FRRL Meeting 8
 Peyton Run.....13
FRRL Field Day26/27

July, 2004

FRRL HamFest11

Handy Web Links

FRRL Web Site	http://www.frri.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.orgcontests/
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

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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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.

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**We will be attending the
Fox River Radio Leagues 2004 Hamfest Sunday, July 11th!
(See the "Scheduled Shows and Events" page on our website)**

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