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# THE FEEDLINE

Volume 44, Issue 1 The Voice of the Western Illinois Amateur Radio Club January 2020

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## Presidential musings

Trusting everyone had or will have a wonderful Christmas with family and friends. If anyone was gifted a Ham Radio Christmas present don't be afraid to bring it to the Jan. 8<sup>th</sup> meeting for some show and tell; and if you can't bring it, you would be welcome to talk about it. Don't forget, there will be no meeting or net on January first 2020. Our January meeting will be on the 8<sup>th</sup> following the 6:45 pm net.

I want to thank our new/old officers for stepping up and doing the job. This club could not function without your efforts and I'm looking forward to working with you.

From Donald Wary KD0HHN, Field Day scores are out. Quincy/Hannibal scored 9<sup>th</sup> overall in 3F nationwide and 3<sup>rd</sup> in Illinois for 3F. Not bad. Congrats to all who helped. Let's see what we do next year. (I got this too late for the December feed line but still wanted to post this, I'm very impressed on what 2 clubs can do when they put their talents together, Dave.)

I'm very proud to say that our club made our annual contributions to the American Red Cross, Toys for Tots, Honor Flight, and Salvation Army; you hams are great!

Elections were held during our December meeting with the following results for 2020.

Treasurer –K9VXD returned, Secretary –W9EMR new, Vice President –NR9Q new, Trustee –NG9R returned, President-k9FHX returned. Thanks for stepping up and doing the job.

NR9Q and others have a great idea. Our club is pretty good at testing but not so well at mentoring and keeping hams. During discussion at the after meeting at the Tower it's been decided to make up a sheet to hand to new hams with names, calls, phone number, email etc. of hams who are willing to assist a new ham and mentor them if they need assistance in anything ham related and also to provide encouragement in their new adventure in Amateur Radio. At our January meeting we will ask for a few volunteers for this and upgrade our Elmer list.

Also...I think we should check out the possibility of teaching another Amateur Radio Class for our area. Winter would be a good time for this.

I want to welcome our newest member, Scott KD0DKE.

This article was sent to me by a member and I believe we all should pay attention to it. <https://www.naturalnews.com/2019-10-14-california-ban-ham-radios-unless-pay-fees.html>

Much DX in 2020, Happy New Year. De David, K9FHX 73

## Moved and Seconded: Minutes of the Dec 2019 WIARC meeting

The regular December 2019 meeting of the WIARC was called to order by President K9FHX at 7 pm with 23 members and guests (KB9FIN and Brad Florea) present. Minutes of the November meeting were read and approved motion NR9Q, second W9WE carried

Treasurer's report: K9VXD presented a report for the year's expenses and income, not including \$195 paid for extension on domain name nor the account changes.

Approved on motion by KB9YN, second NR9Q, carried

Trustee's report: Nothing new.

Station Committee Report: Windows 7 support is going away Jan 14, 2020. Do your updates!

Repeater Board report: No meeting; everything working including D-Star (6 month trial); no opposition to leaving it on the network; NR9Q is currently providing the radio that is linked.

Contest Committee Report: ILQP logs being processed. Upcoming contests: ARRL 160 and ARRL 10.

Hamfest Committee Report: Paloma Community Building is reserved for August. Price has gone up to \$300. Next year will be \$600.

### Old Business

Dinner meeting will be April 18, location to be determined. NG9R has been in contact with Bailey House in Camp Point.

### Election of officers:

President: K9FHX

Vice-President: NR9Q

Secretary: W9EMR

Treasurer: K9VXD

Trustee: NG9R

Nominations closed: Motion for election by acclamation by KB9YN, seconded by N9UPG, carried.

Applications for membership; KD0DKE from Canton MO (motion by NG9R, second by N9JF, carried.) Welcome, Scott!

New Business: Field Day will likely be Hannibal in 2020. HARC has a new tower, beam and dipole, partially due to WIARC member assistance.

N9DT offered a gift certificate from RF Adapters

NR9Q and N9JF offered used QST's.

Annual donations to Toys for Tots, Honor Flight, ARC, Salvation Army were made on a motion by N9DT, second by WA9GBC, carried

N9DT: Donut Dunker net on 147.030 each morning, Tater Tot net on 50.130 each evening

NCS Stations are already assigned through the February meeting:

Jan 8: NG9R Jan 15: NR9Q Jan 22: N9JF Jan 29: N9DT Feb 5: NG9R

Next meeting refreshments: KB9YN and W9WE/W9WEB (drinks)

Next meeting will be January EIGHT! (Note the change....)

Meeting adjourned on motion by NG9R and second by N9DT Approved

Program: harmonica music followed by a video on loop antennas

In attendance: K9FHX, WA9GBC, W9WE, W9WEB, NG9R, KC9FSQ, KD9NET, KD9KB, W9EMR, KB9FIN, N9DT, KB9YN, KD0DKE, KA0SNL, AB9QW, N9UPG, KB9UNQ, KB9WFC, WM4D, K9VXD, NR9Q, N9JF, Brad Florea

Respectfully submitted, N9JF Secretary

[If you didn't catch it in Dave's article, the January meeting is WEDNESDAY JANUARY 8!!

## **DX Doin's from Larry**

**Hello from Chicago (visiting family for the holidays). Here are some interesting finds for the DX hunter. Good luck.**

**Merry Christmas, Happy new year. See you all again in 2020. 73, Larry WB2UFO**

**ROTUMA ISLAND, 3D2. 3D2AG/p is QRV until January 5, 2020. Activity is on 160 to 2 meters using CW, SSB, RTTY, JT65 and FT8. QSL via 3D2AG.**

**EASTER ISLAND, CE0. Oleh, KD7WPJ will be QRV as CE0Y/UR5BCP from Hanga Roa, IOTA SA-001, from December 26 to 31. Activity will be on 60 to 6 meters using CW, SSB, FT8 and FT4. QSL to home call.**

**FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, DA. Volker, DL1WH will be QRV from Borkum, IOTA EU-047, from December 21 to 31. Activity will be holiday style on 80 to 10 meters using CW with some SSB. QSL to home call.**

**ECUADOR, HC. Antonio, EA5RM is QRV as HC3AGT from Loja. Activity is on 40 to 10 meters using SSB and various digital modes. QSL to home call.**

**OGASAWARA, JD1. Harry, JG7PSJ will be QRV as JD1BMH from December 22 to January 3, 2020. Activity will be in his spare time on 80 to 10 meters using CW, SSB and RTTY. QSL to home call.**

**AUSTRIA, OE. Members of the Amateur Radio Contest DX Club are QRV with special call sign 4U1XMAS until December 31 from the station at the United Nations Vienna International Center. Activity is on 80, 40, 20 and 15 meters using CW and SSB. QSL via UA3DX.**

**SURINAME, PZ. Arie, PA4ARI is QRV as PZ/PA4ARI from Paramaribo until January 7, 2020. Activity is on 80, 40 and 20 meters using SSB, FT8 and FT4. QSL to home call.**

**GABON, TR. Roland, TR8CR has been active on 30 meters using CW around 2000 and 2200z. QSL via F6AJA.**

**CHAD, TT. Nicolas, F8FQX is QRV as TT8SN from N'Djamena for the next three to four years. Activity is on the HF bands and 6 meters. QSL via DL9USA.**

**SOUTH SUDAN, Z8. Diya, Y11DZ is QRV as Z81D from Juba for at least six months. Activity is on 80 to 10 meters using SSB, FT8 and possibly FT4. This includes possibly being active on 60 meters as well. QSL via OM3JW.**

**The Canadian National Parks on the Air, CNPOTA, operating event runs for the entire year of 2019, with special stations active from Canada's parks and historic sites.**

## MASSACHUSETTS DISTRACTED DRIVING LAW (FROM THE EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS ARRL SECTION NEWS)

(Relevant if you're driving in MA or to compare to the law in Illinois... -ed)

The story of the month certainly is the sudden surprise appearance of the Massachusetts Distracted Driving Law after it had been held in committee for months

<https://ema.arrl.org/2019/11/16/ma-lawmakers-announce-surprise-agreement-on-distracted-driving-legislation/>.

With little time to react, amateurs across the state contacted their State House Representatives and Senators to get clarification on the impact the final text of the bill would have on continued use of amateur 2-way radio operation. This outpouring of concern from the ham radio community resulted in a statement sent on November 21 from the General Counsel's office in the Joint Committee on Transportation to Tom, K1TW, the ARRL Eastern Massachusetts section manager.

An excerpt from that communication seems particularly relevant to the discussion on the distracted driving legislation. "It is the Committee's view that the legislation does not alter, amend or limit existing language in section 13 of chapter 90 of the General Laws that expressly permits use of a 'federally licensed 2-way radio' provided that '1 hand remains on the steering wheel at all times.' I have reproduced GL 90:13 below and highlighted the relevant provision." The General Counsel of the Joint Transportation Committee requested we distribute their statement to the amateur radio community in Massachusetts to clarify the impact the bill has on amateur radio operations. The full statement has been posted on both the EMA and WMA ARRL websites:

<https://ema.arrl.org/2019/11/21/impact-on-amateur-radio-from-distracted-driving-bill/>

Finally, a word of thanks to Massachusetts amateur radio operators from Ray Lajoie KB1LRL, (WMA section manager), and Tom Walsh K1TW, (EMA section manager). Ray and Tom worked in unison to get the word out across the state. We are very appreciative of the excellent response from the amateur radio community statewide.

Also from the EMA Section News: (and also very relevant.. -ed.)

Jim Idelson, K1IR, has been traveling around the Section and Division delivering his very important talk on Tower Safety. He has spoken at the Northeast HamXposition (a.k.a. the New England Division Convention), NEAR-Fest, and local clubs. A video of his talk recorded at the November meeting of the Billerica ARS is found at

<https://blog.thedrivenelement.com/2019/11/amateur-radio-tower-safety-presentation-for-the-billerica-ars/>

Concerned with the number of tower tragedies Jim has started a blog called "The Driven Element" <https://blog.thedrivenelement.com/>. If your club would like to schedule the talk, please contact Jim directly at [jim@k1ir.com](mailto:jim@k1ir.com).

## Miscellaneous Gleanings

The [ARRL Contest Update](#) is always a good read and a source of information not easily found in other places. The December 11, 2019 issue is especially fruitful. If you are at all interested in such things, I'd encourage you to subscribe and get it in your e-mail on a regular basis. In the meantime, here are some snippets....

When you're reading this, you've already missed the ARRL 10 Meter Contest (if you missed it....). There are TWENTY entry categories for this contest, and some of them have no established records, including two categories in Illinois. At this point in the sunspot cycle, we might have been fortunate to make twenty contacts in this year's contest. At this writing, the event is still a few days in the future. We'll see what happens....

**Dayton Hamvention®** is increasing the cost of admission and its booth fees. Hamvention General Chair Jack Gerbs, WB8SCT, announced this week that general admission would rise by \$4 per ticket to \$26 in advance or \$31 at the gate for all 3 days. The cost of flea market spots will go up by \$5 per space, and inside exhibitors will pay \$30 more. It's still not a bad deal, and the cost of the ticket is insignificant compared to the cost of driving to Dayton and paying for a couple of nights of hotel stays. I often just scheduled some service calls in Ohio or that area and stopped in for a day.

Here's a good one:

The [Sun City Grand Hams](#) publish the *Grand Hams newsletter* each month. Here's "A unique Approach to Lightning Protection" by Gordon, NW7D, from [December 2019's SCG Hams Newsletter](#):

"Amateur Radio Operators in India have taken a proactive approach in helping reduce deaths by lightning to area farmers and shallow water fishermen. By providing a device that will attract lightning, it tends to reduce lightning hits to humans in open fields and shallow water. The low-cost device is strikingly simple: A bicycle wheel is attached to the top of bamboo pole that is installed in the open field or shallows. A wire cable attaches the bicycle wheel to an earth ground at the base of the bamboo pole which is inserted 3 feet into the ground. The soil surrounding the base of the pole is treated with salt and charcoal so as to help with conductivity. The "Earthing" process was promoted by the West Bengal Radio Club. The Ham Radio club also is very active in providing emergency communications in the area especially during monsoons."

This is a bit of a twist on the "pitchforks" some (myself included) mount on top of towers.

The Louisiana QSO Party took the bold step of soliciting "customer feedback" regarding improvements in their event. Should we do the same sort of thing for ILQP? We are already doing some of the things they propose adding.

Additionally, "With these greatly improved tools, the log submission deadline will now be 10 days after the end of the contest. Our goal is to be able to post the final results online about 30 days after the contest ends."

Well, the new log deadline is an idea worth considering. I "live and breathe ILQP" for a month after the event is over. I don't think we could finish the results in the following 20 days, but, wow...would that ever be nice!

Read about W2RE's remote station in Maine: <http://www.w2re.com/jonesport/>

Is this the future of serious contesting?

“If you’re not ‘running’, you’re losing!” This is conventional wisdom amongst serious contesters. In other words, the rate, usually when calling CQ, is going to exceed that if you are strictly “search and pounce”. There are a rather predictable number of targets who will be CQing frequently, and you will find them. However, there is a vast population who will tune the bands and *never call CQ*, and you will miss *ALL of them* if you don’t call CQ, either. Another consideration for me last weekend on 160 was to try to work stations, and counties, that I had not previously encountered on the band. It works; try it!

## Chasing Counties

Yes, I guess it’s an obsession.

It took me 41 years to work all 3077 USA counties and get cards from them the first time. After that, you only need the contacts...not the cards. <Whew!> The second time took about 13 ½ years. N4CD, on his way back from Maryland to Texas after Thanksgiving, went through the hills of eastern Kentucky and hit Morgan County on Sunday, December 1. Bob told me ahead of time he would be there, and what was originally going to be Sunday afternoon turned out to be Sunday morning. Oops. With church at 8 and 9:45, how was this going to work? Not only was he going to get Morgan, he was going to hit Elliot before Morgan and Breathitt after Morgan...and I needed both of those for two of my last four for all CW.

He landed in Elliot just as we were getting into the car to head to church. I dashed back into the house and worked him. One down.... Ten minutes into the church service, he texted me: “Two minutes to Morgan”. I confess. I snuck out. Five minutes later, I was back, with Morgan in the log. I think I missed the announcements and one hymn. On the way from church number 1 to church number 2, he ran Breathitt. I love my forty meter antenna on the van.... 😊

With 2nd time all done (and officially recognized by MARAC), it was time to start on 3<sup>rd</sup>. (Melba: “Really?”) I’m like a kid in a candy store. Two days of FT8 and a weekend of ARRL 160, and I’m at 565 counties for 3<sup>rd</sup> time. I’m guessing it won’t take 13 years for this. But, no, I’m not “obsessed”....am I?

## Trouble-shooting Part Two

“Once all other possibilities have been eliminated, that which remains is the solution.” -- Sherlock Holmes

“It’s amazing what you can see just by looking.” – Yogi Berra (paraphrased)

My 160 meter inverted L was giving me fits. One end of it had been down for a couple of years because the tree to which it was attached had fallen. For a long time, I’ve had it just tied to a post in the yard. It wasn’t really an “inverted L”....more of an “inverted elbow”. It sort of worked, but with the ARRL 160 contest coming up, it needed to “be right”. Darren stopped by and heaved a projectile up into another tree, and we got the antenna secured. It worked! For awhile. It was noisy, and it would intermittently cut out, especially when the wind was blowing. I finally put a couple of standoffs between the tower and the vertical portion of the antenna to fix that problem, and all was well. I strung out the three elevated radials. I was ready for ARRL 160!

Until I wasn't. The antenna still cut out periodically. I tried different coax. If I put a dummy load out at the feed point, it seemed fine, so the coax and the link to the house were apparently ok. The connector at the base of the tower was at least 20 years old, so I changed it out and redid the connections. It seemed to work.

On the first night of the contest, I could work just about anyone I could hear as long as I was using the inverted L. As a backup, I had an open-wire dipole (only about 25 feet high). The inverted L started acting up again. I might be able to call someone, but it would cut out while I was giving my exchange. Finally, it didn't work at all. The dipole was an extremely poor substitute. Strong stations "CQd in my face". I made a couple of trips out to the tower in the dark and couldn't see anything wrong. On a night when I should be "making hay on 160", I simply shut down about 10 pm and went to bed....stewing....

On Saturday, I redid the connector at the bottom of the tower. No change. Okay, *what is left to change????* The only left is the wire itself. Surely there can't be anything wrong with *that????* Standing at the base of the tower and looking up, it appears that the horizontal portion of the antenna is *touching the top guy wire....* The fact that we used a different tree as the support seems to have done a number on us and pulled the wire over into the guy wire.

I detached the guy wire from the anchor and moved it to a different support. The antenna now worked. <insert massive sigh of relief>

The second night of the contest, I "owned the band". Stations who couldn't hear me at all the first night were now calling me when I CQd. Not one stateside station I called failed to respond. Three Europeans called. A couple of nights ago, two Russians called on 160 meter FT8.

"If I only had a brain." – Scarecrow in *The Wizard of Oz*

## Upcoming Contests and Operating Events

**ARRL Kids Day: January 4, 2020 1800z – 2359z** Get those kids off their iPads and on the air! Everybody works kids. Call "CQ Kids Day". Exchange is name, age, state and favorite color! Recruit a kid or borrow one (with parental permission...)

**North American QSO Party -- CW: January 11, 2020 1800z to 0559z Jan 12.** Exchange name (or pseudonym....) and State. Great way to work on your multi-band W.A.S.!

**North American QSO Party – SSB: January 18, 2020 1800 to 0559z Jan 19.** See above, but with a microphone....

**ARRL VHF Contest: January 18, 2020 1900z to 0359z Jan 20.** Six meters *might* open..... Exchange Maidenhead grids. Don't know yours? It's probably either EM49 or EN40; ask NG9R!

**CQ 160 meter contest --- CW: January 24, 2020 2200z to January 26, 2020 2200z.** This is the best chance you'll have until next winter to work stuff on 160 meters. Fire it up!

**DID I MENTION THAT IF YOU COME TO THE MEETING ON THE FIRST WEDNESDAY (JANUARY 1), BRING YOUR OWN REFRESHMENTS....AND A KEY....MEETING IS THE NEXT WEEK....JANUARY 8!!** -.ed....

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**NOTE NOTE NOTE!!!!**

January meeting: Wednesday, January 8,  
2020.. NOTE!! DIFFERENT DATE THAN  
USUAL!

Adams County American Red Cross  
Building, 24<sup>th</sup> and Koch's Lane, Quincy (west  
½ block from intersection then north on  
driveway)

**W9AWE – W90AB**

**The Western Illinois Amateur Radio Club, Inc.**

WIARC homepage: <http://www.w9awe.org> e-mail to [w9awe@qsl.net](mailto:w9awe@qsl.net)

WIARC email reflector: [wiarc@mailman.qth.net](mailto:wiarc@mailman.qth.net)

**Sponsors of**

**Voice repeater W9AWE/R on 147.630/.030 Quincy**

**Voice repeater W9AWE/R on 146.340/.940 Quincy**

**Voice repeater W9AWE/R on 448.900/443.900 Quincy  
147.03 and 448.9:103.5 sub-audible tone; 146.94 123.0**

**D-STAR repeater W9AWE on 147.795/.195**

**D-STAR 446.89375/441.89375**

**ILLINOIS QSO PARTY**



**Newsletter input due by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month**  
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