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# THE FEEDLINE

Volume 44, Issue 8 The Voice of the Western Illinois Amateur Radio Club August 2020

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I have had both the honor and pleasure of belonging to five Ham Radio Clubs so far. The W9AWE club is by far one of the best equipped and has some of the best membership that I have enjoyed. It all got that way for a reason. Members for years have stepped up and got the job done. Some of us have health issues and age but we still have the expertise. New members, please don't be afraid to volunteer for a job or responsibility. You can't make an error that has not been done before, and the club is still here.

Any Club lives on membership, both by attracting and doing. The more active a club is, the better it is; that can generate a new membership, and that means survival. Sometimes we have to change our interest in Ham Radio by checking out the new equipment and ways of doing things that seem to always pop up. But it's great to keep the old stuff alive also; that's what makes our hobby interesting.

I want to thank the people who did step up during my term, the ones that took offices, jobs, tasks and quietly did things for the betterment of the club. I hope the next President gets all the cooperation that I did from the membership. THANK YOU W9AWE! David, K9FH and a X.

## **The Radio Amateur is....**

**Considerate** never knowingly operating in such a way as to lessen the pleasure of others.

**Loyal** offering loyalty, encouragement and support to the amateurs, local clubs and the American Radio Relay League through which Amateur Radio in the United States is represented national and internationally.

**Progressive** with knowledge abreast of science, a well built and efficient station and operation beyond reproach.

**Friendly** with slow and patient operation when requested, friendly advice and counsel to the beginner, kindly assistance, co-operation and consideration for the interest of others. These are the hallmarks of the amateur spirit.

**Balance** radio is an avocation, never interfering with duties owed to family, job, school, and community.

**Patriotic** with station and skill always ready for service to country and community.

The Amateur's Code by Paul M. Segal, W9EEA (1928)

**IMPORTANT!**

As Dave Gill, K9FHX, has moved from the area and resigned as WIARC President, a new President needs to be selected according to the club constitution:

***Section 7. VACANCY OF OFFICE. Vacancies occurring for any reason shall be filled by nomination and election at the next regular meeting. Notice of such election shall be given at the previous regular meeting and sent by US Mail or by electronic means to each member in good standing at least five days before the date specified for such election. The term of the replacement officer shall end at the time the original officers' term would have ended.***

Pursuant to these requirements, notification is now given to the membership through this medium of the vacancy of the office of President. Notice of the vacancy was given at the July meeting (conference call). A Nominating Committee consisting of the current Executive Committee will present a nomination to fill this vacancy at the August WIARC meeting. Nominations will also be taken from the floor, and an election of an individual to fill the office of President until the end of the current term will be held at that meeting.

The place for this meeting has not been determined as of this writing. The plan right now is to find a place to have an actual face-to-face (socially-distanced of course...) meeting somewhere in Quincy. Failing that, we may once again hold the meeting by conference call. *It is imperative that we have a quorum for this meeting!! If you are unable to attend the meeting in person (assuming we meet face-to-face) and want to call in to "be in attendance", please let one of the Executive Committee know ahead of the meeting!*

Moved and Seconded

The July meeting of the Western Illinois Amateur Radio Club was called to order by Vice president NR9Q at 7 PM by telephone conference call set up by N9JF with the following members present: NR9Q , W9EMR, N9JF, AA9GL, N9UPG, KB9FIN, NG9R, K9VXD and KB9CES. There were not enough persons in attendance for quorum.

K9VXD said that the only expense in June was \$200 for liability insurance. Year to date receipts are \$1311, year-to-date expenses are \$382, leaving a net of \$928 less the insurance paid in June.

NG9R stated that the Quincy hamfest was still on the ARRL calendar. N9JF said he would take care of it being removed.

N9JF reminded everybody that with regard to field day, there is an online log form to submit and that club members need to be sure to put in their WIARC affiliation.

NR9Q reported that the new antenna on the tower at the Red Cross would be installed when the weather was better.

NR9Q stated the repeater board needed to meet and figure out the antenna on 443.900. He is having difficulty in getting touch with the local engineer about contacting the tower climber for the TV station.

N9JF said that the Illinois QSO party was still on for the third Sunday of October being Sunday, October 18. The plaques are being worked on.

Discussion followed regarding K9FHX moving to Indiana and needing to replace his office vacancy.

Net control stations:

August 12 N9JF 443  
August 19 NR9Q 94  
August 26 W9EMR 443  
September 2 NG9R 94

Respectfully submitted  
W9EMR, Secretary

Local VEC testing resumes!

VEC testing will be held on 22 August 2020 at 1:00 p.m. Bethel Assembly of God fellowship hall upstairs at :

839 S 12th St  
Quincy, IL 62301  
United States

A reservation for any of the above test sessions may be made by call or email to the WIARC VE Team Liaison, Dave Scranton, W9WE, at 210/325-7923 or [w9we.lee@gmail.com](mailto:w9we.lee@gmail.com).

Candidates must bring the following items to the session: two forms of identification, one of which must be a government issued photo ID (driver's License); the 2020 test fee of \$15.00 (exact cash or check, cash preferred); two soft lead pencils; a ball point pen; the original and a photocopy of any currently held FCC amateur radio service license; the original and a photocopy of any current (CSCE) Certificate of Successful Completion of Examination. In addition, a candidate may bring and use a non-programmable calculator (optional, permitted if candidate desires to use it).

\*NOTE: Although walk-in candidates will be accepted at each session on a space available basis, reservations are strongly advised. Standard policy is that if there are no pre-registered candidates by the registration date, the session will be cancelled without further notification. All examiners are volunteers and donate their time and talents to provide the testing service. It is a small courtesy to them for you to register your intention to attend a given session. [w9we.lee@gmail.com](mailto:w9we.lee@gmail.com) 210-325-7923  
Dave Scranton

## Hamfest Update:

In case you hadn't caught on, the 2020 Western Illinois ARC Hamfest on Saturday, August 8, ***IS CANCELED!***

## DX from K0CA

**DXers.** That includes YOU and all hams who are looking for someone new to talk to! There's lots of good DX news available free on the Internet, thanks to the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin and 425 DX News. Much of the news of activity which I'll mention in this bulletin comes from these sources.

The coronavirus has caused lots of planned DX to be cancelled or postponed. But despite the pandemic, the AR-Cluster Network reported 198 countries active between July 12th and 19th. So now's a good time to take a break from house-cleaning and get on the air! Here's some good stuff to be looking for in the coming month.

**9G, GHANA.** Look for IZ4YGS to be signing 9G5GS from Ghana between August 8th and September 15th. He will be mostly on FT8 (F/H and Standard FT8) and SSB. QSL via LoTW, IZ4YGS direct or eQSL.

**CY0C SABLE ISLAND.** The Cy0C Sable Island Dxpediton has been postponed to October 2021 due to the Coronavirus.

**E5, NORTH COOK ISLANDS.** E51WL plans to be on the air around the end of July.

**HA HUNGARY.** Look for HA70MAV until December 1. QSL via LoTW and eQSL.

**FP St. Pierre & Miquelon.** The TO5T DXpediton planned for August 10-17 has been cancelled and will be rescheduled sometime next year.

**W8S SWAINS ISLAND.** Put September 23 to October 6, 2020 on your calendar for an operation as W8S from Swains Island. All HF Bands, and CW, SSB, FT8 and RTTY. For updates go to <https://swains2020.ildxt.eu/>.

**XW LAOS.** XW2DX is active from Laos. He plans to stay in Laos for the next 5 years with activity on 20/15/10 meters.

From *The ARRL Letter for July 16, 2020:*

## Field Day 2020 is Shaping Up to be One for the Record Books

ARRL Contest Program Manager Paul Bourque, N1SFE, reported this week that ARRL has received more than 8,700 online Field Day entries, and paper-only entries have started arriving too.

"As many participants chose to operate from home this year, and given the 2020 rules waivers, we have seen a tremendous increase in entries over last year's event," Bourque said. "Most of the entries received have been through the online [web app](#), and Headquarters staffers have begun processing the paper entries this week." The 2020 waivers allowed individual club members to attribute their scores to their clubs.



Participants who submitted entries online are encouraged to check the Field Day [entries received](#) page to verify that their entries are marked as complete, and that the club name entered is correct. Entries with a status of "pending" are incomplete

entries that are missing one or more items, and these need to be completed for an official entry.

Share your stories and photos using the ARRL [soapbox](#) page or via social media, such as on the ARRL [Field Day Facebook group](#).

Field Day Follow-up from K0CA:

The "friendly" Field Day "contest" between the HARC and WIARC showed good efforts by both clubs. Field Day Entries filed with the ARRL to date for WIARC include N9JF, N9UPG, NR9Q and W9WE. Entries for HARC are K0CA and N0BPA. If you haven't turned in your entry, please do so soon. The Deadline for entries is 2059Z, Jul 28.

And if you don't want to prolong the inevitable outcome, feel free to say that informal review of the scores shows that WIARC will win the "bragging" rights!

Cliff K0CA

ARES Today

Many of you know and some may not, I am the Amateur Radio Emergency Service Coordinator for Adams County as well as the Illinois District 6 District Emergency Coordinator. District 6 covers 16 counties in Western Illinois. Since I wear both hats, I am aware of the appalling shortage of volunteers in many counties. With this article, I hope to increase awareness of ARES and a couple of other emergency communication groups, AUXCOM and RACES. While there may be different groups, they all may share one of the same resources, Amateur Radio operators.

ARES is organized and driven by the American Radio Relay League and has been in existence quite a while. ARES volunteers answer to local ARRL appointed volunteers, with the head ARES title in Illinois being Section Emergency Coordinator. The SEC may have several Assistant Section Emergency Coordinators and should have a District Emergency Coordinator for each Section. Every county in Illinois should have at least one Emergency coordinator; and in cases where there are large population areas in a county, there may be ARES city Emergency Coordinators. These county and city coordinators should not be confused with state and county offices of Emergency

management as each county has an Emergency Management Director. ARES groups get little to no funding and are responsible for their own training and drills.

RACES is a county level organization and exists at the pleasure of the county EMA Director. RACES stands for Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service. The EMA Director makes the choice of whether he wants to organize a RACES group or not. Adams County has a group of volunteers that function as a RACES group under the Adams County EMA Director, John Simon; but John has chosen to not make them an official RACES group for a number of reasons. That group of volunteers is used for storm spotting and emergency communications, public service and other jobs that may not involve using a radio at all. Training and funds for RACES come from the county level; many county's budgets do not allow for a paid staff, so volunteers are very helpful.

AUXCOM is a more recent group driven by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. AUXCOM stands for Auxiliary Communications. AUXCOM is funded at the federal and state level, and the emphasis is on interoperability with other emergency communication groups and local county and city employees during disaster and emergencies. AUXCOMM will include Amateur Radio operators as well as other volunteers and paid staff. Training and funding for AUXCOM can come from the Federal, State and local level.

As I noted earlier, a common resource for all three groups is Amateur Radio volunteers, but all three have different training needs. The local ARES unit does not require as much training as the county RACES unit, and the AUXCOMM group may require the most training. One very serious issue with all three groups is recognition of training and vetting of personal. Emergency management agencies usually will not use volunteers they do not personally know or have been vetted by someone they trust. This is an issue that sorely needs to be addressed across the board. The days of showing up at an emergency with your radio gear and saying you are willing to help are pretty much gone. If you have not been trained in many aspects of Incident Command, you are of little use to professional emergency groups. Thankfully, most of that training is available at little to no cost; some is free online. To take the initial AUXCOMM course, you will need to have already taken several FEMA IS courses. So far, the 28-hour AUXCOMM class has been funded by federal and state funds. Since many states are having budget issues, these classes are currently few and far between. (Of course the current pandemic keeps even the ones scheduled from taking place for a while).

Getting back to ARES in Adams County and in Illinois. Out of the 16 counties I am responsible for in Illinois, only three have active ARES groups. That is right, only three! Other districts are not much better. There is a bi-monthly ARES HF net on 3.905 MHz; and on a good day, they might have stations from 30 counties check in and maybe 60 different stations total. That is for all 102 counties in Illinois. A couple of districts do pretty well, and some have a lot of activity; but most are pretty bare of an organized ARES group, quite often due to no one wanting to be the leader. Others have issue with divisions, whatever the reason. Some simply lack active Amateur Radio operators. One thing Adams County has is a good number of active radio operators. The current Adams County ARES group numbers about 13 while the Adams County Communications team is about that number or a few more. Many are in both groups, but some are only in one group or the other. I don't think there are more than two or maybe three Adams County Amateur Radio operators that have been through the AUXCOM training.

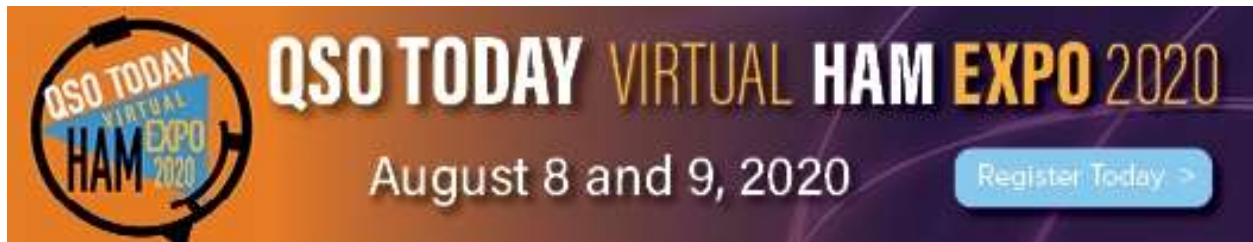
What can you do? If you are not an ARES volunteer and want to know more, I will be glad to fill you in on what is expected of you. There is an ARRL online training course the is highly recommended for all ARES members, but not required to be a member, There are also several FEMA classes that can be taken online for free that would make you more valuable to the local group and other emergency communication groups. The ARRL Introduction to Emergency Communication, EC-001, is a good starting point <http://www.arrl.org/online-course-catalog> The ARRL is working on an online ARES volunteer system that will handle getting volunteer s connected to local groups and will eventually provide scheduling and training calendars. The state ARES has a web site as well <https://ilares.org/>

Please feel free to ask me if you have questions. Danny NG9R [dpease@adams.net](mailto:dpease@adams.net)

## Virtual Ham Expo

The following was shared by former WIARC member Randy Jackson (ex-N9REY) WT5CR:

Go to <https://www.qsotodayhamexpo.com/> to learn more - get registered by July 24<sup>th</sup>!



We are reaching out to let you know that despite the closure of many ham radio events, there is a great opportunity to join your fellow hams and us at the first-ever

## QSO Today Virtual Ham Expo on Saturday and Sunday, August 8 – 9, 2020.

Attendance is free and registration is now open at

<https://www.qsotodayhamexpo.com>

with early bird prize incentives for registering by July 24, 2020.

Built on a live, virtual platform used by Fortune 500 companies and major universities, this ARRL-sanctioned hamfest will let you:

- Learn from a packed line-up of 70+ world renowned ham radio speakers such as Ward Silver, N0AX, on Grounding and Bonding; Glen Johnson, W0GJ, on DXpeditions, and John Portune, W6NBC, on building slot antennas for HOA.
- See demos of the latest ham radio equipment from the world's top equipment companies. You can ask questions and engage with Exhibitors through video, audio, or chat.
- Share ideas and network with your fellow ham radio operators throughout the Expo.

And if you've never been to a Hamfest or Expo, you can participate from the convenience of your home or office without spending a dime on travel!

This platform simulates a full convention experience with an exhibit hall and exhibit booths staffed by live attendants, speaker auditorium, lobby, and lounges.

Go to <https://www.qsotodayhamexpo.com/> to learn more!  
Don't forget to get registered by July 24th!

We look forward to having you join us at Expo for an amazing and engaging experience.

**Bands Dead? I don't think so...**

With the paucity of sunspot activity lately, it's been easy to moan and groan about "dead bands". That all depends upon your definition of "dead". The past two weekends have seen a lot of activity if you were willing to look for it.

The weekend of July 15-16 was the IARU Radiosport contest. I played around in it for a couple of hours on 15, 20 and 40 meters, all on CW. In the midst of a lot of stateside stations (everybody works everybody), some of whom constituted new band-counties for me for 3<sup>rd</sup> time USACA (rah...rah...), there was a good mixture of DX. Many of the DX stations were IARU headquarters operations from various countries: 9A0HQ, SN0HQ, EF4HQ, GR2HQ, S50HQ, IO9HQ, NU1AW, W1AW/4, LY0HQ, OP0HQ, TM0HQ, YT0HQ, YL4HQ, IO5HQ, SK9HQ, OE0HQ, E7HQ, OL0HQ, HG0HQ, DA0HQ and VE9RAC. These were mostly worked with a hundred watts and a dipole.

On the following weekend, the North American QSO Party, RTTY-version commenced. I'd said I'd be on an SMC team, so I was committed to several hours of nail-biting. RTTY is not my usual "cup of tea". A bit of finagling with FIDigi and N1MM+ produced a workable combination, and I put in almost the full ten permitted hours for single-op entries. The results were something short of spectacular, but there were lots of stations to work. Even ten and fifteen meters were not too bad. The biggest challenge came when I went to eighty meters. I never figured out if it was QRM, QRN or settings that produced so much "gibberish" on the printouts, but I finally had all I could take of trying to interpret what I was seeing on the screen.

On Sunday the 19<sup>th</sup>, I spent a few hours in the CQ VHF contest on six meters, all on FT8. This was a "lazy man's operation". I simply let the computer (and WSJT-X) call CQ just to see who would respond. Conditions were not very good, but I worked a few new band-mode-counties and a total of about 60 contacts. Many of them were "local", but there were a few Floridians, Mexicans and New Englanders thrown into the mix. After the contest ended, I decoded a few JAs but didn't manage to work any of them. Eventually I'll work Japan on six meters...

**So, no...the bands are NOT "dead". Get on the air! 73, Jim N9JF**



From *The ARRL Contest Update for July 22, 2020:*

On August 1, tune in for the [North American QSO Party CW](#). With 12 hours, 100 watts maximum, lots of entry categories, and the ability to team up for a group score, it can be a hoot. If you are entering single-operator in this contest, you are NOT ALLOWED any type of spotting information. You can enter multi-2 if you'd like to use spots. If you've made any station improvements this summer, NAQP is a good chance to test them out.

August 15 features the SSB version of the NAQP.

...and speaking of sunspots....

[One of the most recent forecasts for Solar Cycle 25](#) hints that we could be partying like it's 1959: "...we deduce that Sunspot Cycle 25 will have a magnitude that rivals the top few since records began. This outcome would be in stark contrast to the community consensus estimate of Sunspot Cycle 25 magnitude... We predict with 95% confidence that the Cycle 25 amplitude will fall between 153 and 305 spots." See the [ARRL Letter article](#) for more details.

### Know Your Grid Square and Subsquare

For many contests using grid squares as the exchange, the four-character version is required. For the upcoming [ARRL 220 MHz and Up Distance Contest](#), [six-character grid squares](#) are the exchange. Using six characters, [stations in the same subsquare are no farther apart than 6.5 miles](#).

I think everyone in WIARC (locally) is either in EN40 (NG9R, for example) and EM49 (Quincy and Hannibal). My own 6-character grid is EM49ms. --- N9JF

...and when you don't have propagation....

Propagation as a Matter of Life Or Death (also from *The ARRL Contest Update:*)

On May 25, 1928, the airship *Dirigible Italia* crashed on pack ice northeast of the Svalbard Islands, on its way back from a survey of the North Pole with 16 passengers and crew on board. At impact, one person was killed, and the cabin carrying nine people was separated from the hydrogen-filled airframe. Six crewmembers on the dirigible structure were never seen again as the airship became airborne again. The survivors on the icepack turned to their 5 watt wireless set to attempt to tell civilization they needed rescue, but it was only after nine days of trying that they were able to get the attention of a radio amateur 1900 km away.

The recently published article "[The Shipwreck of the Airship "Dirigibile Italia" in the 1928 Polar Venture: A Retrospective Analysis of the Ionospheric and Geomagnetic Conditions](#)" provides the gripping historical context, and tries to answer the questions of why it was so difficult to establish communications for a rescue. Drawing from sources of geophysical data collected at the time, and using modern theories of propagation -- including some [directly derived from amateur radio observations](#) -- the authors present data including sunspot count, magnetic flux, and F2 layer height, and take the reader through an analysis of the skywave and groundwave paths.

Ultimately, the authors suggest that groundwave path losses likely exceeded 100dB, leaving only the skywave as a potential link. In the initial few days after the crash, the ionospheric path was impossible at the frequency being used, due to disturbed

conditions. It was only after conditions had settled that communication became possible, and only became reliable when a lower frequency was chosen.

We may complain about poor propagation, but the stakes are nothing like what the *Dirigible Italia* faced.

Even after communications were established, 15 rescuers were lost in the search and recovery operations, including Roald Amundsen, Norway's famed polar explorer. Finally, on July 12, 1928, 48 days after the initial crash, a Russian icebreaker was able to reach and rescue the survivors.

---Given our experiences of operating from the Far North (Yukon and Alaska), I can imagine just how difficult it might have been, in 1928, to reach anyone from up there with five watts!!! --- N9JF

Western Il. Amateur Radio Club  
PO Box 3132  
Quincy, IL 62305-3132



August meeting: Wednesday, August 7, 2020

Location to be determined! Watch the club reflector and tune into the Wednesday night net for information!

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 Editor Jim Funk N9JF [n9jf@arrl.net](mailto:n9jf@arrl.net)