
THE FEEDLINE

Volume 50, Issue 1 The Voice of the Western Illinois Amateur Radio Club January 2026

Miscellaneous Mental Ramblings from an Old Guy

Welcome to 2026! The first thing I noticed when I began this issue is that it's VOLUME 50!! Wow. Fifty years of The Feedline. What a hoot it would be to go back to the first issues and find out how things have changed....

We do have access to several of the earlier issues courtesy of NB4C. WB9EWM is in the process of converting those issues to digital format, so you may anticipate reading them at some future date.

Speaking of ancient, I recently received a bit of a surprise in the mail:



Yes, it looks like I joined ARRL shortly after I became a ham. Back in the late 70's, I was ready to send in my hundred bucks to become a Life Member, but something else got the \$\$ at the time. Years later (and a lot more \$\$), I did make the jump to LM.

Why? Because, despite its occasional hiccups, ARRL has been the best advocate for those of us the hobby for many, many years.

Moving right along....

We're into another year as a club, with a lot of opportunities and challenges. Thank you for your confidence in electing me as club president to embark upon 2026. I look forward to working with a great group of officers and members to accomplish fun and worthwhile "stuff" this year!

Here are some things I anticipate tackling in the coming months:

Various Exec Comm meetings, including the annual audit, a budget meeting, a by-laws review and committee assignments

Revival of monthly programs

Figuring out how to make the "Elmer Program" work

Planning a club dinner in the spring

Website updates, working with our webmaster

Possible licensing class

A BIG push to increase club membership and licensed amateur population locally

More extensive use of the club station

Continued interest and activity in parks, contesting, DXing and other operations

Continued and enhanced cooperation with our local served agencies

None of this will be possible without cooperation from a lot of you. We want people to feel involved, needed and appreciated. Please let the club officers know how we can make this happen.

73, Jim N9JF

Moved and Seconded: Minutes of the December WIARC Meeting

The December 3rd 2025 meeting of WIARC was called to order at 7pm by Dave KB9FIN, President with the following members and guests present:

WB9EWM, WA9GBC, KD9VUW, KB9FIN, W9WE, KB9GIY, KD0DKE, KD9PPJ, WA0VHI, N9JF, and W9US, AD9HS, WD9UFO, and NR9Q via Microsoft Teams.

Introductions were made...

John WB9EWM made a motion to accept November minutes as posted in the newsletter, seconded by Dave WA9GBC. The motion was accepted by membership present.

Treasurer's Report:

Jack KD9PPJ reported that he and Phil KB9GIY met at Mercantile bank and got Phil's credentials added to the CD when it was renewed. The CD currently contains \$15,508.50 and is a 6 month CD at 4.1%. They also added Phil to the checking account which contains \$4382.51. John WB9EWM turned in a bill for \$92.18 which is for shipping the repeater to Yaesu to be repaired. A motion was made by Dave W9WE to pay that bill, which was seconded by Shawn KD9VUW. The motion was passed by the membership present. Jack also reported that we received a \$150 check from the Clay County Amateur Radio Club for the ILQP. Dave W9WE made a motion to accept the money, which was seconded by John WB9EWM. The motion was passed by the membership present. Jack will also get Phil set up as an admin for the Stripe payments on the website and the online banking through Mercantile. Jack will also pay the liability insurance which costs \$200 before Phil takes over. Jim N9JF made a motion to accept the treasurer's report, which was seconded by John WB9EWM. The motion was passed by the membership present.

Repeater Committee:

John WB9EWM reported that the 443 machine had no power output. He and Dave pulled the unit and swapped it with the spare. John has shipped it back to Yaesu, but is unsure if it is still under the 3 year warranty or not. John said that there was a complaint of an issue with the 94 machine, but it seems to be working fine now. He said the plan is to check all the repeaters after the first of the year and test the receiver, transmitter, duplexer, and antenna.

Station Committee:

John WB9EWM reported that he has posted an updated copy of the club license in the club station, and plans to post a copy at all the repeater sites as well.

Contest Committee:

Dave W9WE reported that he wasn't able to participate in any contests recently, but there are some coming up. He said he's been asked to operate as one of the W1AW stations during a 2026 event. Jim N9JF reported that the logs are scored for the ILQP and have been posted to the website. The certificates still need to be sent out. There were a total of 375 logs and 52000 contacts for the ILQP.

Nomination Committee:

John WB9EWM reported that after all their effort the slated roster is as follows:

President- Jim N9JF

Vice President- Dave W9WE

Secretary- Jack KD9PPJ

Treasurer- Phil KB9GIY

Repeater Board- Dave KB9FIN

Repeater Board- Scott KD0DKE

After asking fruitlessly for nominations from the floor, John WB9EWM made a motion to close the nominations, which was seconded by Shawn KD9VUW. The motion was passed by the membership present.

John WB9EWM made a motion to elect the nominations by acclamation, which was seconded by Scott KD0DKE. The motion was passed by the membership present.

A big thank you to our nomination committee, previous officers, and newly-elected officers for stepping up and putting in the effort.

Unfinished Business:

Jack KD9PPJ has been working on the flyer/ad for Muddy River New. He also suggested that we could print a bunch of copies and hang them up on bulletin boards and in businesses.

Membership Applications:

Sam Clanton AD9HS requested membership in the club. Jim N9JF made a motion to accept his application, which was seconded by John WB9EWM. The motion was passed by the membership present.

New Business:

Jack KD9PPJ suggested that we could host a class as a club to get a license. It was discussed by the membership with some interest. Dave W9WE reported that with the advances and conveniences in online testing for licenses, he is really not interested in testing with the paper tests anymore. He has been testing as a VE with the Greater Los Angeles group and the Ham Radio Crash Course group. Both groups are well staffed and the process is ironed out. Dave said the Hannibal club still has dates for paper testing if people want to test in person.

Dave KB9FIN brought up that Shawn KD9VUW has been supplying the club with the zoom/teams meetings out of his own pocket. John WB9EWM made a motion to spend up to \$110 for a yearly subscription for Microsoft Teams capability. Jim N9JF seconded the motion, which was passed by the membership present.

Net Control:

December 10th - W9WE

December 17th - KD9VUW

December 24th - No net by vote

December 31st - No net by vote

January 7th - N9JF

January 14th - KD9PPJ

January 21st - KD9VUW

January 28th - WB9EWM

John WB9EWM made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Shawn KD9VUW. The motion was passed by the membership present. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:40pm.

Respectfully submitted, Alex, WA0VHI, Secretary

Looking for new members....

I'm looking for new members and for ideas....

There is strength in numbers. "Numbers" alone don't accomplish much unless you are trying to send an impressive statistic to a politician or to the possible source of grant money, neither of which applies to us. However, we know that there are a lot of licensed hams in the area who have never darkened the door of the Red Cross building during a WIARC meeting. Why is that?

I began by trying to contact area hams by e-mail. QRZ.com has an available lookup by county, and I started with a listing of all hams in Adams (350+) and Pike (53) Counties. That seems like a lot until one begins to dig into them, at which point one uncovers some sobering facts.

The data on QRZ.com goes back quite a ways. A large percentage of those listed in the two counties are “Silent Keys”. A much larger percentage are listed as “License Expired”. Some of those have probably passed, but a good number probably (I’m guessing) simply did not bother to renew their licenses when the initial 10-year period was up. Most of those have fewer than 300 “lookups” on QRZ.com, indicating a very low amount of activity, especially on HF.

Many of those who are still “out there” have no email address listed. No one is obligated to furnish this so that’s not surprising. Several of the emails I used have bounced. Out of the 400+ hams I looked up, only 19 had useful email addresses. That was an entertaining exercise but not very fruitful. At least, I don’t think it was.

I appreciate the efforts KD9PPJ and AB9DU have put into some publicity that will be going to Muddy River News, and I hope that will generate some interest both in new licensees and in new members for the club from those who already possess a license.

One thing pointed out by my research is something we already knew: an awful lot of new hams never get off the ground. I’d like your help in figuring out how to remedy that situation!

The fact that the club maintains some good repeaters on 2 and 440 used to get us quite a bit of publicity. Many non-members used the repeaters, and it was a good way to “meet people” and invite them to participate in other club activities. The repeaters are still in good shape, for which I thank our Repeater Board! However, my impression is that they are not used very much? This is an observation from someone who seldom operates on either repeater, so I could be drastically mistaken. Please fill me in if that is the case! I *do* have capability for both bands in one of my vehicles, even if I sometimes hook up the wrong antenna when I try to call the weekly net. <sigh>

This discussion will be brought up at a future meeting, but don’t wait until then to share your thoughts! For one thing, I’d like to know if anyone reads my ramblings.....

73, Jim N9JF

Tribute to a good friend: NM2L

Another “feature” of getting older is that I search the “Silent Keys” sections of QST and other publications a bit more carefully and often find familiar callsigns. One of those recently listed, in the County Hunter News, was that of Greg Potter, NM2L.

Greg was a frequent caller when I was running counties beginning in the late 1990s, usually on CW. I’m pretty sure he owned a microphone but seldom used it. One advantage of the life I lived from 2003 to 2019 was that while I was traveling, I could often manage to meet one of the county hunter crowd along the way. If I recall correctly, I met

Greg for lunch somewhere in either Vermont or New York. He lived in New York at the time, but we were both traveling. We had a great visit and pledged to keep in touch.

Greg and Nancy moved to Georgia just northeast of Atlanta. I frequently worked in the area and visited them a few times. On one such occasion, I called Greg and found that he was planning to attend an Atlanta Braves game. He coached me into taking a couple of mass transportation links to meet him at the ballpark and I thus attended my only Braves game.

In the early 2010's, Greg was nearing completion of his "Worked All Counties" but needed a large number of Georgia's 150 counties to finish off the task. The Georgia QSO Party was coming up in April and most of the counties he needed would be on the air, but Greg lamented, "When they are on 20 meters, I'm simply too close to work them!" "Hey, come up to Illinois and use my station!" The offer was partly in jest, but Greg took me up on it! He flew to St. Louis, rented a car and inhabited my shack for the weekend. He worked about 140 of the 150 counties, including all of the ones he lacked for USACA and placed in the top ten in the contest.

Living in Georgia, Greg became an Atlanta Falcons fan. One day when we were talking on the phone, I casually stated, "I have no dog in the NFL hunt, but for a price I'd be a Falcons fan." About a week later, the postman brought a package containing a Falcons cap and a Falcons coffee mug!

Greg's call is one I always enjoyed hearing, and I will miss it greatly. RIP NM2L SK.

Parkie Stuff

This time of year finds a greater percentage of park activations from the southern states. Wonder why....duh! Sitting out at a picnic table, or even sitting in a cold car, is not all that much fun in December-February. That doesn't stop all of us, but it does make one plan ahead. Quick setup and teardown, thinking more about safety than shade and "what's the worst thing that could happen here after dark" are seasonal considerations.

There will be Winter Field Day opportunities in parks. I plan to find some park in which to do a 160 meter activation, though probably not for WFD. More likely I will try it in late January during CQ 160 when there are a lot of stations active and ripe for the picking.

We might even find a warmer climate for a week or two, though that is not in the works at the moment.

Here are the club stats as of December 8, 2025:

W9DP	18 activations of 13 parks	4726 parks worked
NU7J	214 activations of 156 parks	2576 parks worked
W9US	30 activations of 12 parks	1004 parks worked

NR9Q	31 activations of 12 parks	772 parks worked
AA9GL		362 parks worked
KB9FIN	32 activations of 26 parks	1432 parks worked
KM9DX	170 activations of 118 parks	883 parks worked
WM4D	285 activations of 157 parks	788 parks worked
WM9DX	63 activations of 59 parks	263 parks worked
N9JF	1006 activations of 553 parks	1624 parks worked
K9AJC	84 activations of 25 parks	3931 parks worked
KW9Q	35 activations of 14 parks	698 parks worked
KB0V		200 parks worked
KA0SNL		134 parks worked
KE0MHJ	3 activations of 3 parks	127 parks worked
WB2UFO		97 parks worked
W9WE	1 activation of 1 park	656 parks worked
KD9VUW	126 activations of 30 parks	544 parks worked
KB9GIY	46 activations of 11 parks	226 parks worked
KD9TVM		5 parks worked
K9WAY		166 parks worked
NA9DM		14 parks worked

Incidentally, there are now three members of my “500 Club”: more than 500 entries in my POTA logs: W6LEN (559), NU7J (609) and W9DP (843).

On the WWFF front, W9DP is hanging in there at #8 on the list of WWFF references worked in 2025 with 375!

ILQP Report

The 2025 Illinois QSO Party is in the bag. I’d call it a success, if for no other reason, people seemed to have fun, there were few complaints, the logs are scored and some are already talking about 2026

We received about 375 logs with about 52,000 QSOs. Those are not record numbers, but they're not bad. Logs were due 15 days after the contest. I did not send out any reminders this year to stations who appeared in a lot of logs but had not submitted a log. That usually brings in a few dozen more logs, but I decided I was already having enough fun with those submitted.

Please note: I really would like for someone to feel inspired to work with me as an "understudy" during the log checking for 2026. It is not a "difficult" job, but it takes some training. I would not want the contest to die for lack of a log processor, and I don't expect to be doing this forever. If you have a reasonable acquaintance with Microsoft Excel, some interest in the ILQP and some spare time during the evenings in late October, please let me know and we'll get started. It probably doesn't hurt to be slightly OCD....

This year's plaque winners included:

IL Fixed HP: KI9A
IL Fixed LP: KG9X
IL Mobile: AD4EB
IL Rover: W0ZQ
IL Portable: KF9D
IL 2-county Portable: K0GR
IL Unlimited: K9I
Outside IL HP: K5CM
Outside IL LP: N0HJZ
Most Phone QSOs: KJ9B
Most CW QSOs: AD4EB
Most Mixed QSOs: KI9A
IL Club: Metro DX

Full results are at <https://w9awe.org/ilqp/>

A Great After-Holiday Gift ... ARRL Kids Day!

Twice a year, ARRL offers an event designed to promote amateur radio to our youth ... Kids Day! Kids Day number one takes place on the first Saturday of the year and for 2026, that's January 3. The event runs from 1800 UTC through 2359 UTC. You can operate as much or as little as you like. It's all designed to give on-the-air experience to young people and hopefully foster interest in getting licenses of their own. It is also intended to give older hams a chance to share their station and love for amateur radio with their children.

Here's how it works: You can invite your kids or grandkids to your station, explain how it works, and then take turns talking on the radio. You could also share the excitement with your neighbors, a Scout troop, a church group, or the general public at a library or a shopping mall.

You can use most any frequency from 10 - 80 meters. You can also use one of your favorite repeaters... with permission from the repeater's owners. Be sure to observe third-party restrictions when making DX QSOs. Then the real fun starts...take pictures, write your story, and send them to ARRL. With a [signed release form](#), your story can

appear in ARRL publications like *QST*, as part of the Kids Day and Youth write-ups, Strays, Up Front, and more. Send stories to contests@arrl.org.

Then, the part that will light up the kids' eyes even more...a [Kids Day Certificate of Participation](#) (PDF). It's downloadable, and every kid who has participated gets to take one home to hang on their wall!

Signup is easy at [Kids Day](#) on the ARRL website. You'll get all of the information you'll need to make this after-holiday gift a yearly event! And remember....there is another ARRL Kids Day on the third Saturday in June!

Get Your Keys and Bugs Ready for ARRL Straight Key Night

ARRL Straight Key Night (SKN) is just 2 weeks away! Every year on January 1, Straight Key Night is on the air from 0000 UTC through 2359 UTC.

This 24-hour event is not a contest; rather it is a day dedicated to celebrating our CW heritage. Participants are encouraged to get on the air and simply make enjoyable, conversational CW QSOs. The use of straight keys or bugs to send CW is preferred. There are no points scored and all who participate are winners.

All authorized amateur frequencies may be used, but activity has traditionally been centered on the HF bands. Logbook entries for Straight Key Night must be received by January 31, 2026. Votes for "Best Fist" and "Most Interesting QSO" will be tabulated and included in the results.

The 2025 SKN results indicated that 144 participants reported 945 contacts. While many were seasoned CW operators, some participants noted that they made their first CW contacts in many years during the 2025 event.

All you need is your favorite straight key or bug. Many participants dust off vintage radios and keys and put them back into service each year just for this event! So get your fist ready, grab your key, and enjoy a fun New Year's Day on the air.

For more information, visit [Straight Key Night](#).

Update on 60 meters

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on December 9, 2025, released a long-awaited Report and Order adopting a new amateur radio spectrum allocation in the 60-meter band that was approved for world-wide use on a secondary basis in the WRC-15 (World Radiocommunication Conference 2015) *Final Acts*. The Commission also agreed with a petition from ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio® to continue to allow amateur operations on four existing 60-meter channels outside the international allocation with a full 100 watts. The new rules will go into effect 30 days after publication in the *Federal Register*, when amateurs may then begin using the allocation.

Specifically, the Commission allocated 5351.5 - 5366.5 kHz (60 meters) to the amateur service on a secondary basis with a permitted power of 9.15 watts ERP. The Commission

also authorized amateurs to continue using four existing channels outside of the 5351.5 - 5366.5 kHz band centered on 5332, 5348, 5373, and 5405 kHz on a secondary basis with a permitted power of 100 watts ERP. There are no antenna restrictions but antenna gain must be used to calculate ERP.

The 60-meter allocation is available to amateurs holding a General Class or above license. The maximum permissible signal bandwidth is 2.8 kHz.

Amateurs are cautioned that this allocation is strictly on a secondary basis, and amateurs must avoid interfering with non-amateur stations using this spectrum. This obligation includes the responsibility to monitor for such stations using appropriate receiver bandwidths. The FCC emphasized that “allowing amateur operations in this band while fully protecting incumbent primary Federal operations is our priority, and even intermittent interference in this band could jeopardize important Federal operations.”

The Commission left open ARRL’s 2017 Petition for Rulemaking to implement this WRC allocation (RM-11785), stating that “we expect the Commission may address any necessary power adjustments for the new 15 kilohertz international allocation in that proceeding.” ARRL will be observing operations in the new band to evaluate the effect of the 9.15-watt limit and already has been monitoring the regulations and experiences of amateurs in other countries.

Finally, in the same Report and Order, the FCC updated 420 - 450 MHz coordination and contact information for geographic areas where the peak envelope power (PEP) of amateur stations operating is generally limited to 50 watts. There was no substantive change to the areas covered by the power limitation.

DX News shamelessly purloined from ARRL DX News

**QST de W1AW DX Bulletin 51 ARLD051 From ARRL Headquarters
Newington, CT December 18, 2025 To all radio amateurs**

This week’s bulletin is made possible with information provided by The Daily DX, 425 DX News, DXNL, OPDX, Contest Corral from QST, and the ARRL Contest Calendar and WA7BNM websites. Thanks to all.

JAMAICA, 6Y. Lester, W8YCM, is QRV as both W8YCM/6Y and 6Y8LV until mid-January 2026. Activity is holiday style on 17, 12, and 10 meters using SSB. QSL direct to home call.

THE GAMBIA, C5. Andre, ON7YK, is QRV as C5YK from Kotu until January 25, 2026. Activity is on 20 through 10 meters using SSB, RTTY, FT8, FT4, and some CW. QSL via LoTW.

CAPE VERDE, D4. Beni, HB9HNT, is QRV as D4NT until January 1, 2026. Activity is on the HF bands. QSL to home call.

FRENCH GUIANA, FY. Jean Pierre, F4GPK, will be QRV as TO2FY from Kourou from December 22 to 24, December 29 to 31, January 5 to 9, and January 12 to 15. Activity will be mostly on 20, 15, and 10 meter using SSB. QSL direct to home call.

SOUTH SHETLAND ISLANDS. Ivo, LZ1AAW, will be QRV in his spare time as LZ0A from St. Kliment Ohridski on Livingston Island, IOTA AN-010, from late December until mid-February 2026. QSL via LZ1JZ.

SURINAME, PZ. Joe, OZ0J, will be QRV as PZ5OZ from December 21 to January 2, 2026. QSL via LoTW.

CENTRAL AFRICA, TL. Joao, CR7BNW, is QRV as TL8BNW until June 2026. Activity is on 40, 20, 15, and 10 meters using SSB and FT8. QSL via LoTW.

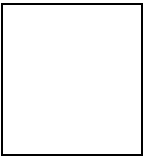
CAMBODIA, XU. Tom, DL7BO, will be QRV as XU7GNY from December 22 to January 18. Activity will be on 160 through 6 meters using CW, SSB, and FT8, and concentrating on the lower bands. QSL direct via DJ4WK.

SOUTH SUDAN, Z8. Diya, YI1DZ is QRV as Z81D from Juba until March 10, 2026. Activity is in his spare time. QSL to home call.

ANTARCTICA. Oleg, ZS1ANF, is QRV as ZS7ANF from Whichaway, IOTA AN-016. Activity is in his spare time on 17, 15, and 10 meters using CW. QSL via RK1PWA.

Please see December QST, page 78, and the ARRL and WA7BNM contest websites for details.

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



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**January meeting: Wednesday, January 7,
2026
Adams County American Red Cross
Building, 24th and Koch's Lane, Quincy (west
½ block from intersection then north on
driveway)**

**W9AWE – W9OAB
The Western Illinois Amateur Radio Club, Inc.
WIARC homepage: <http://www.w9awe.org> e-mail to w9awe@qsl.net
WIARC email reflector: wiarc@mailman.qth.net**

**Sponsors of
Analog repeater W9AWE/R on 147.630/.030 Tone Rx and Tx 103.5
Analog repeater W9AWE/R on 146.340/.940 Tone Rx and Tx 123.0
Analog and Fusion repeater W9AWE/R on 448.900/443.900 Tone Rx and Tx 103.5
Analog and Fusion repeater W9AWE on 147.795/147.195 Tone Rx and Tx 103.5**

**All repeaters are located on the north side of Quincy IL
ILLINOIS QSO PARTY**

**Newsletter input due by the 20th of the preceding month
Editor Jim Funk N9JF
n9jf@arrrl.net**