
THE FEEDLINE

Volume 50, Issue 3 The Voice of the Western Illinois Amateur Radio Club March 2026

Miscellaneous AI-Free-Zone Ramblings

It was diplomatically pointed out to me by someone who apparently actually READS the newsletter (THANK YOU!) that much of this document concerns the editor. My response to that observation was that it's because people don't send me stuff. I have been sent some stuff this month and will try to cut back on the personal info.....

I took the opportunity in February to attend the HARC meeting. Nicely done, and I enjoyed the time with the folks across the river.

My only other news of the month is that I took a carload of problems west to brother Dave in Kansas City and came home with most of them resolved. Sixty-one years after our first licenses, I still break stuff and he still fixes it. An unbeatable combination!

Moved and Seconded: Minutes of the February 2026 WIARC meeting:

Call meeting to order at 7PM FEB 4th 2026

Introductions:

KD9VUW, KD0HDL, KB9FIN, WB9EWM, KE9DQJ, AB9DU, N9DM, N9BZ, WA9GBC, N9JF, KB9GIY, KC0QMI, W9WE, KD9PPJ,

Approval of January minutes

JOHN WB9EWM MAKE MOTION, DAVE KB9FIN 2ND

Treasurer's report and approval KB9GIY

WE HAVE \$4481.70, \$15,580 CD 6 MONTH TERM MATURE MAY 23 4.1%
-ONLINE DUES PAYMENTS - JOHN WB9EWM MAKE MOTION, DAVE KB9FIN 2ND
TREASURE REPORT APPROVED

Repeater Board report WB9EWM or KB9FIN

EVERYTHING WORKING OK, NOBODY SAID ANYTHING. JOHN COMMENTED HE TRIED TO CHECK IN ON 147.030. PROBLEM LIKES TO GO TO AMS. FINE WHEN WE GO TO 443. USER ERROR.

Station Committee report WB9EWM or KB9FIN

NOTHING NEW. DAVE WANTED TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION THAT WE BUY A TOWER WITH WHEELS. LOTS OF CONVERSATIONS ABOUT GETTING ANOTHER LABTOP WITH MICROSOFT 365 IT CAN HAVE EXCEL/WORD/ETC. AMMENDMENT TO GET A LABTOP FOR \$500, WAS \$1000 BUT REDUCED IT DOWN. AMMENDMENT MOTION BY JACK KD9PPJ AND SECONDED BY JOE KD0HDL.

Membership Committee Report KB9GIY or KD9PPJ

41 MEMBERS PAID W9BLW BRANDON Wants to be a member again. A motion was made by John and 2nded by Dave.

-Nobody has had a problem paying single membership. Only people paying for multiple memberships has had a problem on the website. Jack will check with Andy.

Contest Committee Report W9WE

GEORGE GROSS (SILENT KEY) ALDEN SHIPP (SILENT KEY)

211 ANDERSON CT QUINCY IL, SIDE STREET OFF APPRENTICE HAD DIPOLE, TRIBAND BEAM AND VERTICLE.

ILQP plaques and certificates progress W9DP and AB9DU

Old Business

CLUB DINNER AT SPROUTS. March 19th at Sprouts 530pm Thursday. Rough figure to give them.

BYLAWS AND CONSTITUTION-WAS WANTING TO KNOW IF ANYONE WANTED TO VOLUNTEER TO REVIEW THE CONSTITUTION AND COME UP WITH CHANGES. DAVE WILL HAVE A COMMITTEE TO DO THIS. Reviewing Bylaws (Dave, Dave, Jack, Jim). If you have any bylaws suggestions reach out to Dave, Dave, Jack, and Jim.

Contest Committee Dave W9WE

This week we have freeze your butt off winter sprint. Some other QSO Parties. Winter Field was completed.

QSO Plaques were all sent out last year.

Bob-says he is working with people on these QSO. DL3GA (Andy) has worked with Bob and he has worked every county in Illinois except Perry County (Duquion State Fair).

New Business

Field Day will be coming up the last weekend in June 26th and June 27th. (Last rainy weekend in June, as always).

Jim (President) was asking if anyone would like to meet at Bob Bangert park to do a POTA day. Maybe late April. 6th and 7th of March Tri State Winter Preparedness. Emergency Management System. If you part of EMA.

Net Control

March 4th Dave W9WE

March 11th Jim N9JF

March 18th Shawn KD9UVW

March 25th Danny W9DP

April 1st Dave W9WE

Adjourn: Motion from Dave and 2nd from Bob Mitchell.

Post-adjourn Program: Presentation on wave presentation

To the best of my ability I have created this document.
Sign WIARC secretary Jackie Wilson KD9PPJ 02/04/2026.

Thu, Mar 19 at 5:30 PM *(Mark your calendars and RSVP!!!)*s
[Western Illinois Amateur Radio Club's Sprouts Get Together Supper](#)



PLEASE OPEN FACEBOOK LISTING Created by [David Scranton](#)

<https://fb.me/e/3p4JtkjUW> PSE RSVP TO W9WE@ICLOUD.COM

From *The ARRL Letter*:

Digital or Paper?

In a digital world, everything works correctly. But what happens when it doesn't?

Tina Milenovic, K8RBQ, a member of the All Things Amateur Radio Association (ATARA) in Lancaster, Ohio, said her club began asking that question a couple of years ago. "What happens in a grid down situation, when the internet, tablets, laptops, and GPS are not available? In an emergency, how can first responders quickly navigate and travel to their intended destinations?" Milenovic said that after some thought and discussion, the answer was, well, old school ... use paper maps!

I've heard it said that the best way to confuse a Millennial is the given them directions in cursive, a paper map and a clock with hands on it.

Take a look at a paper map once in awhile. It's good to practice! N9JF

Resurrection of a SK (Sleeping Key) Ham

Yes, I admit to have been essentially SK for the last 25 years except for a few CW Sweepstakes expeditions to Nebraska with brother Jim, N9JF. The Ham bug was hibernating. N9JF had urged me to try the digital modes, but I had brushed off the suggestion. But in early December I hooked up my SDR-Play RSP1 SDR radio to the WSJT-X program and was fascinated by what I saw. It was like a scene from "The Matrix", with data streaming down the monitor at an amazing rate. All that data in 3 kHz bandwidth???

So I put in a request to Santa for a Xiegu X6200 transceiver. My standing with Santa must be pretty good, since an X6200 appeared under the Christmas tree on Christmas morning. I had great fun running FT-8 on the X6200 for about a day and a half, when the X6200 apparently got hot and tired from running 8 Watts out—and decided to no longer yield RF output. I think the "magic smoke" may have escaped from something. I was bummed!

Fortunately, Radioddity support was quite responsive, and a warranty replacement unit was on its way from China within a few days. In the meantime, I figured out how to run FT-8 with my rather “long of tooth” FT757GXII, and I kept making contacts. But I found that running 100 Watts was more successful than 5 Watts, so I ordered a Xiegu XPA125B linear amplifier to give the X6200 an “outside voice”.

The replacement X6200 and the new XPA125B arrived on the same day, and they were quickly put to work. I didn’t want to take chances on smoking this batch of equipment, so I put a 12V fan alongside the XPA125B. The X6200 only needs to put out about 0.6 Watts to drive the XPA125B to 100 Watts out, so it isn’t being overworked. The XPA125B seems to be fairly bullet-proof, with over-temperature, over-voltage, over-power, and over-SWR detection.

I have only one antenna up—a 40 meter dipole up about 25 feet, strung from the chimney to a tree in the backyard, but its performance has been surprisingly good. With my MFJ-949D tuner I can get 1.2:1 SWR at FT-8 and FT-4 frequencies for 160, 80, 40, 30, 20, 15, and 6 meter bands. I haven’t been using the internal automatic tuner in the XPA125B. Instead I used my SAA-2N Vector Network Analyzer to find the optimum MFJ tuner settings—and then preset to those whenever I change bands. The 40 meter dipole is resonant right at 21.074 MHz (FT-8 frequency) and seems to do really well. I typically receive signal reports that are the same or better than I send on 15 meters. For other bands, the sent and receive signal reports are about equal on 40 meters, and the received reports are a bit lower than sent for other (non-resonant) bands.

Besides the amazing WSJT-X program, I’ve been using GridTrackerII to identify and map every decoded FT-8/FT-4 signal and log contacts. It also shows contacts in progress with dotted lines that look like “flight tracking”.

So...since the X6200 arrived on Christmas day, I’ve logged 1279 contacts, including all states (without really trying) and 111 DXCC entities! The thrill that I remember from my first contacts in November 1965 is back! Chasing DX on FT-8 and FT-4 is all the fun of CW without the work. Yes, I need to get back on CW, but can I break my addiction to FT-8?

Dave Funk

WY0L

(Now I just need to get him logged into Logbook of the World....N9JF)

Club POTA event with Missouri QSO Party?

Topic for discussion at the March WIARC meeting: How about a “mass activation” of a Missouri park during the MOQP on Saturday, April 11? Pick a park: Wauconda SP maybe? Set up multiple stations and have fun? Or maybe more than one park? Let me know your thoughts!

N9JF

Honoring the Titanic (from *The ARRL Letter*):

Amateur radio operators worldwide will have an opportunity to honor the passengers and radio crew of the RMS Titanic that sank in the early hours of April 15, 1912.

A Spanish special event station, EG1912T, will be on the air from 0000 UTC on April 10, the date on which the Titanic set sail from Southampton, England, until 2359 on April 15, the date on which it sank after hitting an iceberg. The call sign is unique for this event. EG identifies Spain, 1912 signifies the year the ship sank, and T stands for Titanic.

“Radio station managers and telegraph operators Jack Phillips, Harold Bride, and Harold Cottam, who played a leading role in the telegraphic communications during the rescue, will also be honored,” said Carlos Reboreda, EA1PJ, president of the Vigo-Val Miñor Amateur Radio Union, which is sponsoring the 2026 special event operation.



From right to left: Jack Phillips, head of the Titanic's radio room. Harold Cottam, telegraph operator on the Carpathia, the ship that was first to arrive at the scene of the shipwreck. Harold Bride, second operator in the radio room. [Photos courtesy of the Vigo-Val Miñor Amateur Radio Union]

All amateur radio operators are invited to participate. Bands used will be HF, VHF, UHF, and SHF (amateur radio satellite). All modes will be available with special emphasis on telegraphy. All stations that contact EG1921T using CW will receive a special QSL card. All other stations making contact on any frequency or mode can receive a confirmation via eQSL and LoTW.



From W9WE:

ARRL Learning Center / Take a look.
<http://learn.arrl.org/>

Scroll down to the courses area:::~::~:

March meeting program: KCOQMI will present a short demo on running "open Hamclock" in a Docker container.

Why POTA/WWFF? Some thoughts from Michael, WA7SKG:

Hi Jim,

Here's a couple pictures. One is Kelsey KM7BTU after he made his first ever HF contact. He is a new Technician, but this really got him fired up and he is working hard on his General. That's me behind him. The other picture is our county Communications Van, a former ambulance. We have Amateur, Public Safety, GMRS, and CB radios in there. Our normal HF antenna is a Chameleon 60 ft end-fed. A little hard to see in the picture, but we have a flagpole mount into a hitch receiver mounted on the bumper, three sections of fiberglass mast and the antenna runs to a 20 ft kite pole bungee corded to a sign post at the edge of the parking lot. This is at one of our training sessions where we also activated US-9546 Ft Yamhill State Park.

POTA is super EMCOMM training. Our local ARES unit takes their Communications Van out almost weekly for training in field HF deployment. We have several POTA parks in our county. The new operators are trained in finding suitable locations to put up antennas and get the radios to work. But how do they know it actually works? How do people who have never used HF or SSB before learn how to find and tune in a station, make a contact and log data? The instructor, checking the spotting page gives the frequencies to try, they tune in, find a station and make a contact, then log it. They learn what areas they can reach at what times on what bands. Using the County callsign with a Control Operator present, Technicians are on the air making HF contacts! In the past couple months we've had three operators make their first ever HF contacts thanks to POTA. And all were greatly excited. The POTA program is providing valuable training for our field operations. Not only do they learn and become proficient at setting up, they validate their work by making contacts, win-win. Absolutely invaluable experience.

Thank you POTA participants for helping train our operators and for your patience with new folks. Our trainees have been chastised when trying to check into nets ("Learn how to operate before coming back!") and ignored by the random CQers, but always welcomed and generally congratulated by POTA Activators.

In a separate email, you'll get a link to our latest newsletter. We have a POTA article every month. Newsletter archives can be found at W7ORE.org. Unlike most clubs, we do not require club membership to subscribe to our newsletter, so feel free if you are interested. We only have about 30 members in our club, but I have about 175 subscribers to the newsletter.

73,
Michael WA7SKG

Greetings from the sunny South:



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



**March meeting: Wednesday, March 4, 2026
7 pm
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
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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@arrl.net**