THE FEEDLINE

Volume 50, Issue 4 The Voice of the Western Illinois Amateur Radio Club April 2026

AI-Free Ramblings from the Shack in the Boonies

If you missed the club dinner at Sprouts, we missed you! Good food, good conversations, and it's always nice to get better-acquainted with club members and their significant others. Thanks, W9WE, for organizing it!

Did you work the Bouvet DxPedition? Did you try? This was a 1.7 million dollar operation complete with all of the contingencies and redundancies developed from last successful (and aborted efforts). Bouvet is about as far from anywhere you can get on the face of the earth, stuck out there between southern Africa and the continent of Antarctica. When you read this, "it's over." They wrapped up operations on about March 17 with a couple of hundred thousand contacts in the log.

I heard them on FT8 on 40 and 30 meters and spent some time in the morass without success. I'd hoped to find them on CW, where I felt like I had a bit more "control" than on digital modes….but….no…. it's a long way from Illinois to Bouvet.

I continue to be amused (and a bit amazed) by WY0L's activity on digital modes. I get an average of a couple of texts a day: "Malta #133…Lithuania #134….Austral Islands #135….Turks and Caicos #136….Bonaire #137…..Crete #139…" Pretty impressive for the guy who was "the fixer" instead of "the operator" for all of those years. And yes, he can still do cw….

I'm still holding out the possibility of the club doing something from one or more parks during the Missouri QSO Party on April 11-12. It looks like Pike and Lincoln have no scheduled activations so far? I have SAR training on the 11th but will try to get out on the 12th, probably at a park in PIK or LCN.

See you at the meeting! 73, Jim N9JF

Moved and Seconded: Minutes of the March 2026 WIARC Meeting

Start on 3/4/26, 7pm
Introductions
N9JF, KB9GIY, KD9VUW, AB9DU, KD0DKE, KE9DQJ, W09UFO, W9US, KB9FIN, WB9EWM, WA9GBC, KA0SNL, W9WE, KD9PPJ, KC0QMI, KE0OAA, WA0VHI (17 PEOPLE)
Approval of February meeting minutes
MOTION KB9FIN, WA9QBC,
Treasurer's Report – KB9GIY
$4633 CHECKING, NEW MEMBERS HAVE PAID, motioned John KB9EWM, seconded by KD9PPJ.
Repeater Board Report -- WB9EWM, nothing to report and no issues that we are aware

of. Current membership: TRUSTEE WB9EWM, and four members KD0DKE, KB9FIN, KB9GIY, NR9Q. John wants the executive committee to look at wording of Constitution about the repeater board and Trustee.
Station Committee Report – KB9FIN or WB9EWM, some cable needs replaced suggestion to donate some LMR400 and just scrap the old cable.
Contest Committee Report – W9WE
I did some contest and passed around some papers. DX is hard to get. Dave worked 150 CW South Carolina QSOs. This weekend March 7-8 th SSB contest 48hrs. Novice Rig roundup
Membership Committee --
On line dues payment – KA0SNL. Most people are paying online.
Membership cards – KE9DQJ (Bill), in charge of membership cards not required but available if you want one.
Old Business
Dinner Meeting – W9WE (Dave), going to Sprouts. CLUB DINNER AT SPROUTS. March 19 th at Sprouts 530pm Thursday. Motion,

Report of ByLaws Review Committee – KD9PPJ
A presentation of the changes was given to the Club. John suggested we add trustee to executive committee.
ILQP log procedures report (ongoing)
Clarification of repeater board membership:
KB9GIY, NR9Q 2026

WB9EWM Trustee 2027
KD0DKE, KB9FIN 2028
Laptop search report-nothing to report.
Applications for Membership-none
New Business
Ed and Chris have been doing Meshcore. Sending text messages over 900mhz.
This is on the free band so anybody can do it. No internet. Meshcore, transmitting at 24dbm 1/10 watt. 2 meter/440. Motion (allow them to mount meshcore repeater) made by John and seconded by Dave. Does it have use in emergency communication self contained run on its own.
MOQP/POTA club activity Apr 11-12 Sat 1400-0400, Sun 1400-
2000. Jim asked if we could do a Missouri QSO party club get together. Rules change Ed had sent that to Jim something to look at if you plan on participating.
Expedition category?
Field Day-coming up Shawn and the raccoon.
Net control
4/8 Jack KD9PPJ
4/15 Shawn
4/22 Jim
4/29 Danny
5/6 Dave W9WE
Adjourn
Program by KC0QMI
To the best of my ability I have created this document.
Sign WIARC secretary Jackie Wilson KD9PPJ 03/04/2026.

Net Control Stations upcoming

4/1 W9WE
4/8 Jack KD9PPJ
4/15 Shawn WD9VUW
4/22 Jim N9JF
4/29 Danny W9DP
5/6 Dave W9WE

Speaking of which….

Checkins on the Wednesday night net have been pretty sparse. I'm a fine one to talk as I usually forget about it.
Let me know: Would it be helpful to have a note on the reflector late in the day on Wednesday as a reminder? Good? Bad? Useless? An aggravation? Please advise….
N9JF4/1 W9WE
4/8 Jack KD9PPJ
4/15 Shawn WD9VUW
4/22 Jim N9JF
4/29 Danny W9DP
5/6 Dave W9WE

Growing an Army of Young Hams in New York

A high school teacher in New York City, with help from the ARRL Teachers Institute on Wireless Technology (TI), has successfully licensed nearly 700 students in the past two years as part of a wide-ranging program that is teaching students in two schools that radio today is a central part of just about everything! On March 12, ARRL Director of Education and Learning Steve Goodgame, K5ATA, and Hudson Division Director Ed Wilson, N2XDD, traveled to Staten Island Technical High School to help lead teacher Everton Henriques, KD2ZZT, administer license exams to 143 students, resulting in 131 new hams and 14 upgrades. According to Goodgame, Henriques's formula for success is "getting kids engaged, with lots of hands-on stuff." He says everything is project-based and there is lots of crossover to the school's robotics program. "Now," adds Goodgame, "he's working with a teacher at the adjacent McKee High School, which is a vocational high school, and the students are working together on a solar car program." Wilson noted that he's very impressed to see "the vocational kids and the technical kids working together, teaching each other their respective skills."

Goodgame says Staten Island Technical High School is the donor-funded Teachers Institute's first "model school," which makes it eligible for additional resources and equipment. He notes that the school was the site of a TI session last year and will host another this year. Goodgame adds that Henriques has completed two TI modules and is now an institute instructor, as well as being a facilitator for Math for America and co-developer of a 9-week course for teachers on "How to Use Amateur Radio in the Classroom."

Wow! 700 new hams in two years? That's quite a feat!

Indiana bill passed to give relief from HOA regulations for antennas!

House Bill 1152 "Prohibits a homeowners association from adopting or enforcing a regulation, rule, or other policy that prohibits a person from maintaining an amateur radio antenna."

Field Day…..it will be here before you know it!!

This year's Field Day theme is "Amateur Radio: A National Resource." Combined with the ARRL Year of the Club, it provides the perfect opportunity for radio clubs to set up stations in public places to demonstrate ham radio's science, skill, and service to our communities and our nation.

All of the information you need to get started can be found on the Field Day web page, including how to join the ARRL Field Day Facebook Group, where you can share your plans, tips, and tricks for a successful Field Day.

The overall objective for Field Day is to contact as many stations as possible on the 160-, 80-, 40-, 20-,15- and 10-meter HF bands, as well as all bands above 50 MHz, and to learn to operate in less than optimal conditions. Many clubs choose to set up in camp-style fashion with portable equipment, temporary antennas, and off-grid power sources.

Field Day is open to all amateurs in the areas covered by the ARRL/RAC Field Organizations and countries within IARU Region 2 (North and South America). DX stations residing in other regions may be contacted for credit, but are not eligible to submit entries. Each claimed contact must include contemporaneous direct initiation by the operator on both sides of the contact. Initiation of a contact may be either locally or by remote.

Also check out the Field Day site locator page to help find participating stations near you.

As an added incentive for anyone participating in ARRL's yearlong America250 Worked All States (WAS) Award, contacts made with ARRL Affiliated Radio Clubs all year, including during Field Day, will count toward your America250 WAS Affiliated Club Endorsement. Check out those details at www.arrl.org/america250-was.

For more information about ARRL Field Day, visit www.arrl.org/field-day.

DX News Cheerfully Stolen from *ARRL DX News*

ARLD010 DX news QST de W1AW DX Bulletin 10 ARLD010

From ARRL Headquarters Newington, CT, March 12, 2026 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.

SOUTH ORKNEY ISLANDS. Ramon, LU1DMZ, plans to be active as LU1DMZ/Z and LU1ZA from Base Orcadas on Laurie Island, IOTA AN-008, during all of 2026. Activity is in his spare time. QSL via the operator's instructions.

GREECE, SV. Members of the Radio Amateur Association of Western Greece are QRV with special callsign SZ40A until May 31 to celebrate forty years of continuous presence, service, and contribution to amateur radio. Activity is on various HF bands and modes. QSL via ON3UN.

BENIN, TY. Red, DL1BUG is QRV as TY5FR from Cotonou until April 5. Activity is on 80 through 10 meters using CW and SSB. QSL to home call.

ANTARCTICA. Tom, VK2TBC, plans to be QRV as VK0TBC from Casey Station until the end of the year. Activity is in his spare time on the HF bands using SSB and FT8. QSL to home call.

VANUATU, YJ. Aki, JK1JXZ, will be QRV as YJ1JXZ from Port Vila, IOTA OC-035, from March 15 to April 3. Activity will be on 80 through 6 meters. QSL to home call.

HELENA ISLAND, ZD7. Jun, JL8AQH is QRV as ZD7AQH. Activity is on 40 through 10 meters using CW. His length of stay is unknown. QSL direct to home call.

Please see March QST, page 79, and the ARRL and WA7BNM contest websites for details.

How Radio Waves Are Downing Drones (thanks, NB4C!)

The British Army's Radio Frequency Directed Energy Weapon (RFDEW) was designed was developed by a consortium led by Thales UK, with partners including QinetiQ, Teledyne e2v, and Horiba Mira, and can neutralize drone swarms using radio waves, reports Global Defense News.

RFDEW is capable of neutralizing targets, such as drones, at distances up to more than half a mile with near-instantaneous effects. Each shot costs only 13 cents, making it a cost-effective complement to traditional missile-based defenses.

Unlike laser systems like DragonFire, the RFDEW disrupts or damages drones' critical electronic components using high-frequency radio waves, immobilizing them, or causing them to crash. Its high automation allows operation by a single person and deployment on mobile platforms like the MAN SV.

The first live trials, conducted in Wales by the Royal Artillery's Trials and Development Unit and the 7th Air Defence Group, successfully neutralized uncrewed aerial systems (UAS) in varied scenarios. Developed under the Team HERSA program, a collaboration

between the U.K. Ministry of Defence, DE&S, and Dstl, the RFDEW represents a major step in enhancing the British Armed Forces' operational capabilities.

While RFDEWs are effective against drone swarms, they face limitations, such as reduced effectiveness against fiber-optic-controlled drones, anti-jamming systems, or large-scale, high-altitude threats. Despite these challenges, the RFDEW offers a versatile, rapid, and cost-efficient solution for modern defense, addressing the growing security risks posed by drones in both civilian and military contexts.

The British Army's successful test of a high-energy laser weapon for neutralizing drones is particularly timely given the surge in unknown drone sightings over sensitive sites in both the U.S. and U.K. These incidents have raised concerns about national security, highlighting the need for cost-effective and efficient counter-drone systems. With its ability to track and disable drones at distances over half a mile, this laser system offers a promising defense solution against such threats, providing a potential safeguard against increasingly sophisticated drone incursions.

"Twenty-eight things every ham has said at least once…."…courtesy NB4C, author unknown….

1. **"I'll just put up a quick wire…" This harmless-sounding statement usually precedes two trips to the hardware store, 45 minutes staring at a tree branch, followed by a surprise thunderstorm. The "quick wire" takes anywhere from three hours to three days.**
2. **"This tuner will match anything." Translation: I have given up trying to actually fix the antenna.**
3. **"I'm just going to the hamfest to look, not to buy anything." Within an hour, you've purchased an SWR meter from 1970 and considered dragging a Heathkit boat anchor home.**
4. **"Propagation is terrible today." This useful phrase applies to no one answering your CQ, someone hearing you but not understanding you, or working a station across town and blaming the ionosphere for the embarrassment.**
5. **"I'll only be on the air for a few minutes." This comment is always made right before a rare DX station appears, or when you're stuck rag-chewing with someone who wants to talk about their recent gallbladder surgery.**
6. **"It's not the radio's fault." Often this is followed by hours of troubleshooting. Then you realize that it was the radio's fault, or the coax, or your cat walking across the keyboard and changing the settings.**
7. **"I'll fix that cable later." No, you won't. That coax with the suspicious crimp connector will survive for years, only to fail the moment you try to impress someone with your station.**
8. **"My audio sounds fine on my monitor." Your monitor is lying. The guy on frequency who says, "You sound a little bassy" is being gentle.**

9. **“Why is my noise floor S9?” This comment is usually followed by turning off every breaker in the house, then hunting for RFI as if it owes you money.**
10. **Does anyone copy this?” This is usually said when you use a simplex frequency that hasn’t been used since 1997, or you accidentally bumped the mic.**
11. **“Okay, just one more contact.” Always famous last words. This is why you still find yourself on the air at 1:30 a.m., working a station in Uzbekistan with a signal report of “You’re barely there, but let’s try it!”**
12. **“Someone must be sitting on my frequency.” Not really—you’re just drifting, fading, or slightly off-frequency. Blaming others is a ham tradition.**
13. **“I can work that guy if he’d just stop talking.” Said during every DX pileup when the same person keeps giving 10-minute signal reports.**
14. **“I’ll upgrade eventually.” Every Technician since 1971 has said this at least once. Some even meant it.**
15. **“I’ll log that later.” Which means you will absolutely not log it later. The QSO will vanish into the void unless you wrote it on a napkin somewhere in the shack.**
16. **“This is the last radio I’ll ever need to buy.” A standard joke among hams who frequently upgrade or expand their “shack” with new transceivers and accessories.**
17. **”I got this at a great price.” Often told to XYLs to justify the high cost of specialized radio gear—ones who will never know what it really costs.**
18. **“It worked just fine yesterday.” A phrase usually uttered with frustration.**
19. **“I’m only checking in.” Translation for nets—you fully intend to stick around for the entire hour, listening to weather reports from people two towns over.**
20. **“I swear this antenna worked last week.” But not today. They detuned themselves out of spite, in addition to swaying into branches that weren’t there yesterday.**
21. **“My antenna farm is complete.” No ham in history has ever said this truthfully.**
22. **“That meter can’t be right.” Whether it shows high SWR, low power output, or something smoking, the meter is always wrong, never you.**
23. **“I’ll fix the shack wiring someday.” You will someday discover a bundle of wires that looks like a nest built by a gang of over-caffeinated squirrels with access to cable company leftovers.**
24. **“I’m going to operate QRP today.” You begin with the best intentions, right before you remember you haven’t slept enough to decode weak signals. You don’t have the patience to battle kilowatt stations shouting their callsigns like auctioneers. You eventually switch back to 100 watts…or more.**
25. **“That’s odd… it was working a minute ago.” This comment precedes troubleshooting sessions lasting from 10 minutes to 10 hours—and occasionally a small fire.**
26. **“This is the last radio I’m buying.” Yeah, right. You’ll be shopping for another one within six months, possibly sooner if Yaesu, Icom, or Flex releases some shiny new box.**
27. **“I think band conditions are improving.” Sometimes it’s said with genuine hope, or because you’re trying to justify the amount of time you’ve already spent calling CQ. It could be that you heard one whisper of an FT8 signal and are now convinced the band is opening.**
28. **“QRM! QRN! RFI!” These three little letters explain everything from a neighbor’s grow light, solar inverter, or possibly a toaster with malicious intent. It must be shouted into the mic, as if that will make the interference go away.**

What you may not have known about the Titanic (I didn't…..)

Way back when, all communications were by spark gap transmissions. The Titanic was equipped with the best Marconi equipment of the era. The Marconi company did not sell radio equipment, but leased it to the various ship lines and ships sailing the oceans. There were essentially no commercial use of 'wireless' for domestic traffic. That all went via the hundreds of thousands of telegraph lines and systems, including under the seas.

With the technology of the day, radios used 'long wave' – typically below 600 KHz. Marconi favored 500-600 and 250 meter frequencies. Antennas were huge – in the case of the Titanic – from one end of the ship to the other with the center on a high mast. Range during the day was 250 miles or so and up to 2000 miles and night.

The Titanic had one of the most powerful ship board transmitters – a 5 KW rotary spark. The main reason for the radio equipment was to sell wireless messages to those who could afford them. They were VERY expensive, the equivalent of hundreds of dollars per 10 word message in 2026 dollars. However, with dozens of millionaires on board, there were always messages waiting to be sent. For a good part of the trip, the ship during daylight hours was out of range of land stations. At night, messages could be sent most of the way but there was still a gap in the middle until night late arrived.

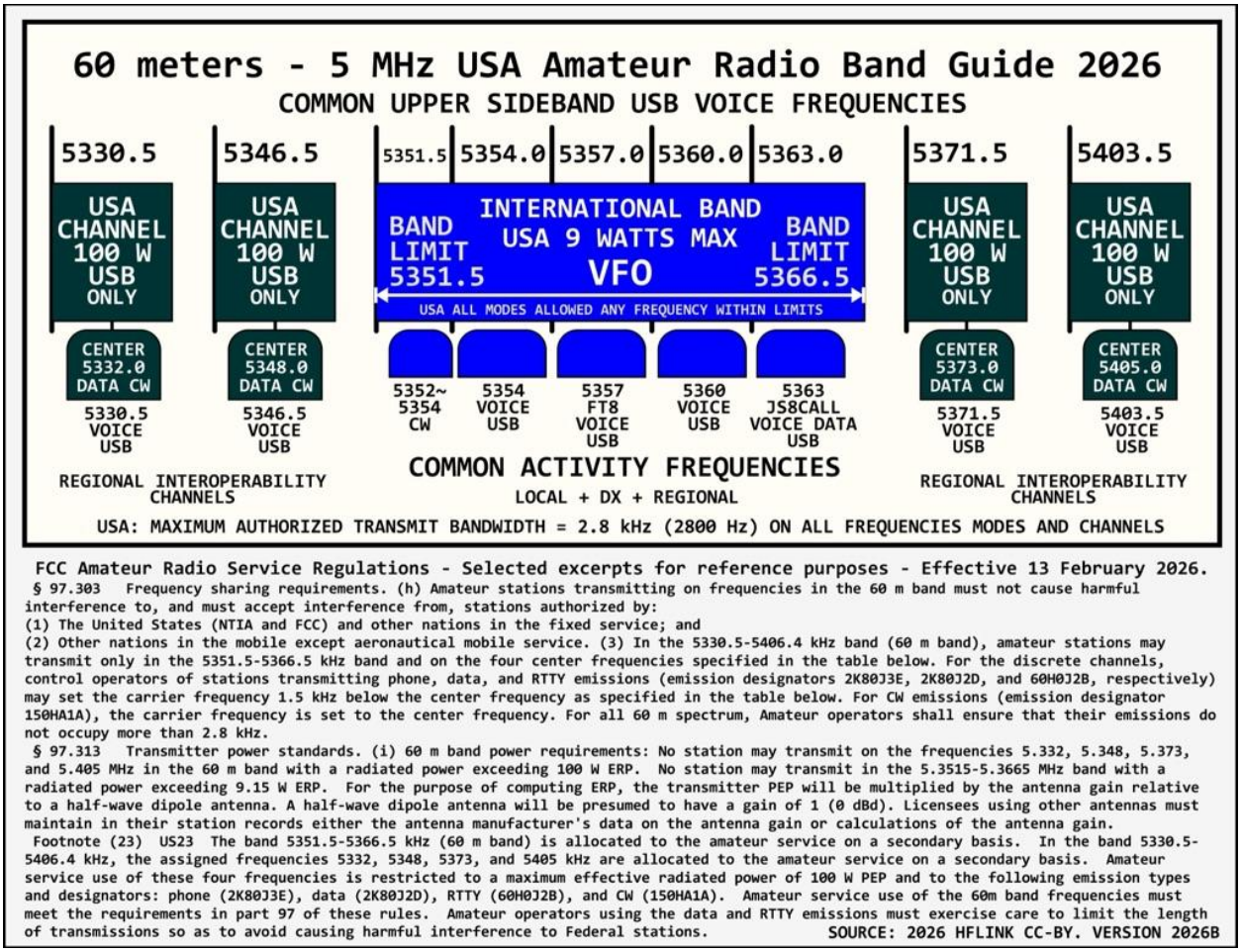
One of the main reasons why the Titanic didn't get and pass on 'ice warnings' was that the 5 KW transmitter had broken down – and it took much of the day getting it repaired. When back in service later in the evening there was a large backlog of messages to be sent. When a nearby ship tried to pass a 'routine' ice warning messages about an ice field south of where it was supposed to be – the Titanic operator told that breaking station to 'standby'. Well, that other operator was on the California – about 10 miles away – and while the Titanic sent message after message for hours, the operator on the other nearby ship turned off the radio and went to sleep. At that time, there was no requirement to monitor the radio for emergency traffic.

Blast from the past: Zenith!

What happened to the factory that put a television in every American living room? This is the Zenith Electronics plant in Chicago. Abandoned, burned, and forgotten. But this crumbling 4-block complex holds the secrets of America's television golden age.

In 1918, two radio hobbyists started building equipment on a kitchen table. By 1960, Zenith controlled over 20% of America's TV market alongside RCA. They invented the wireless remote control (the original "clicker"), employed thousands of Chicago workers, and made products with their famous motto: "The quality goes in before the name goes on."

Plant #1 at 6001 West Dickens Avenue was where it all happened - from World War II radar equipment to Space Command remotes to color TVs. Workers remember it as the best job they ever had. But cheap imports, factory relocations to Mexico, and corporate buyouts destroyed this American success story. The last U.S. Zenith factory shut down in 1998. LG Electronics bought what was left in 1999.



FCC Amateur Radio Service Regulations - Selected excerpts for reference purposes - Effective 13 February 2026.

§ 97.303 Frequency sharing requirements. (h) Amateur stations transmitting on frequencies in the 60 m band must not cause harmful interference to, and must accept interference from, stations authorized by:
(1) The United States (NTIA and FCC) and other nations in the fixed service; and
(2) Other nations in the mobile except aeronautical mobile service. (3) In the 5330.5-5406.4 kHz band (60 m band), amateur stations may transmit only in the 5351.5-5366.5 kHz band and on the four center frequencies specified in the table below. For the discrete channels, control operators of stations transmitting phone, data, and RTTY emissions (emission designators 2K80J3E, 2K80J2D, and 60H0J2B, respectively) may set the carrier frequency 1.5 kHz below the center frequency as specified in the table below. For CW emissions (emission designator 150HA1A), the carrier frequency is set to the center frequency. For all 60 m spectrum, Amateur operators shall ensure that their emissions do not occupy more than 2.8 kHz.

§ 97.313 Transmitter power standards. (i) 60 m band power requirements: No station may transmit on the frequencies 5.332, 5.348, 5.373, and 5.405 MHz in the 60 m band with a radiated power exceeding 100 W ERP. No station may transmit in the 5.3515-5.3665 MHz band with a radiated power exceeding 9.15 W ERP. For the purpose of computing ERP, the transmitter PEP will be multiplied by the antenna gain relative to a half-wave dipole antenna. A half-wave dipole antenna will be presumed to have a gain of 1 (0 dBd). Licensees using other antennas must maintain in their station records either the antenna manufacturer's data on the antenna gain or calculations of the antenna gain.

Footnote (23) US23 The band 5351.5-5366.5 kHz (60 m band) is allocated to the amateur service on a secondary basis. In the band 5330.5-5406.4 kHz, the assigned frequencies 5332, 5348, 5373, and 5405 kHz are allocated to the amateur service on a secondary basis. Amateur service use of these four frequencies is restricted to a maximum effective radiated power of 100 W PEP and to the following emission types and designators: phone (2K80J3E), data (2K80J2D), RTTY (60H0J2B), and CW (150HA1A). Amateur service use of the 60m band frequencies must meet the requirements in part 97 of these rules. Amateur operators using the data and RTTY emissions must exercise care to limit the length of transmissions so as to avoid causing harmful interference to Federal stations.

SOURCE: 2026 HFLINK CC-BY. VERSION 2026B

MISSING Q signals

by John Queen, KA0SEY & Mike Colyar, K7ITL

Additions by Thom LaCosta K3HRN and members of QRP-L

Some Q signals have never made it to the ARRL's official list. Here are some that may agree would be useful in appropriate situations. As with regular Q signals, each can be a statement or a question, depending on whether a question mark follows it.

QBA My antenna is BIG!
QBA? How big is your antenna?
QBO Don't sit next to that guy in the meeting.
QBO? Buddy, can you spare some soap?
QBS It's getting deep in here.
QBS? Did I tell you about the one that got away?
QBS (2) Clean the bird %@#* off your antenna so you can hear me
QBS?(2) Should I clean the bird %@#* off my antenna so I can hear you
QCP I am using Cat Power (From Rotary Cat Power Wheel)
QCP? Are you using Cat Power?
QCW I am going to whistle Morse Code on FM (or SSB)
QCW? Why are you whistling Morse?
QET Phone home.
QET? Has anyone called me from another planet?
QEW Copy is difficult due to Ear Wax.
QEW? Is copy difficult due to Ear Wax?
QFH This frequency is MINE! - go elsewhere.
QFH? Is this frequency hogged?
QHI I am jumping in quick to say hi, then going QRT.
QHI? Are you leaving after only one transmission?
QLF I am sending with my left foot.
QLF? Are you sending with your left foot?
QLK I am sending with my left foot and keyboard.
QLK? Are you sending with your left foot and keyboard?
QNO I am sending through a non-standard orifice.
QNO? Are you sending through a non-standard orifice?
QOK Your last transmission was Okie Dokie.
QOK? Was my last transmission OK?
QPM Your signal is purr modulated.
QPM? Is my signal purr modulated?
QRC Warning, rag chewer on frequency.
QRC? Are you a rag chewer?
QRW Means Qrp - Really Weak
QRW? Qrp, you are Really Weak?
QWC? Who cares?
QWC I don't care
QWC (2) I have to go to the bathroom
QWC?(2)Do you have to go to the bathroom
QZZ I fell asleep at the mike.
QZZ? Is that a 60Hz hum, or are you snoring?


STOP BEING SO DRAMATIC, IT'S JUST A WIRE ANTENNA!
FIRST AID

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

April meeting: Wednesday, April 1 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
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@arrl.net