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# THE FEEDLINE

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Volume 31, Issue 8 The Voice of the Western Illinois Amateur Radio Club

August 2007

## From the Desk of the President

*by Danny Pease NG9R*

We again lived through Field, but not without some stress and sweat. We had good help to set up and tear down, a good attendance for the picnic, but operators were in very short supply. In his column last month, N9JF hit it right on the head, without more operators, Field Day will have to be scaled back considerably. I consider this year's operation a success in terms of getting a station on the air, but not without hard work by a small group of individuals. We had a good crew that helped set up Saturday, but when time to start rolled around, there was a total of four operators ready to put stations on the air. I seem to remember a few years ago (well maybe more than a few years ago) that one of the complaints was from operators showing up and the stations were all busy. Well, that sure wasn't a problem this year! The way it turned out, the SSB stations had to be torn down Saturday evening and the equipment moved to the CW operating positions just so the equipment was safe. No one showed back up to operate SSB Sunday at all!

Once again, the CW station pulled the load and

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## DX & Computer Horizons July 2007

**by Cliff Ahrens K0CA**

There's not a lot of rare DX planned during August. But there will still be lots of DX on the air from vacation spots around the world. Although we're at or near the bottom of the sunspot cycle, the DX is there. We just need to turn on the radio and tune the bands. If you're like me, there's always lots of other things to do during the summer, and DXing often takes a back seat to outdoor activities. But when we come in to cool off, that would be a good opportunity to head to the ham shack and make a contact or two. Here's some good DX to look for during August.

4O Montenegro. Emir, 9A6AA, plans to be on the air as 4O6AA August 13-19 on the HF bands. For more information, check out: <http://www.inet.hr/9a6aa/4O6AA.htm>.

CU2 Azores. Look for Ann WA1S signing CU2/WA1S from the Azores between July 27 and August 10. She plans to be on 80-10 meters, except 30 meters. QSL via home call.

FM Martinique. Seven FM operators will sign TO1YR from Martinique July 29 to August 5.

HS Thailand. You may have met Champ, E21EIC at Dayton this year. He plans to be on the air from southern Thailand until August 10. QSL via home call.

JA Japan. There will be a special event station 8J1ESP from the Esperanto World Conference, in Yokohama, Japan, between July 31 and August 31. Operation between August 4 and 12 will be from the conference itself. Operators PY3DF, JA1FXZ, and others plan to be on 40, 20, 15 and 10M. They have a web site at: <http://www.esperanto.org/internacia/ILERA/> QSL via JA1YAR or JA1FXZ.

TK Corsica. Fabrizio IK5WOB plans to operate CW only as TK/IK5WOB from

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did very credible job considering there were only 2 operators running 2 CW stations for the event. Once again Jim, N9JF, pulled the all nighter with help from Dave, W9WE. Not only was Dave and Jim there early to set up, both stayed all night, operating in shifts during the middle of the night and both were there to tear down. A9DU spent the night there as well and I hear he again provided breakfast for those that spent the night. The SSB positions saw a total of 5 operators that actually got on the air as well as a couple of others helping with technical and moral support. Bob, AB9DU, was again on digital modes with moderate success.

Thanks to all that came and made the event worth while. My highlight of the weekend was seeing the enthusiasm of WM9DX and WM4D working SSB Saturday evening. Next year may require a really hard look at planning an operation to match the membership's willingness to participate.

August will see a lot of activity, at least the first couple of weeks of the month. Since we did not have a business meeting in July due to the club meeting night falling on the 4<sup>th</sup>, we have a very short time to prepare for the WIARC Swapfest on August 11. Please come to the meeting prepared to help where you can.

There has been a lot going on behind the scenes, both preparing for the upcoming Swapfest and Field Day. A handful of people have been doing the majority of the work and now it is time for the rest of the club to step up and pitch in. When you are asked to help out, please give your best. This is a club effort and it needs total club support.

The August WIARC meeting will be Wednesday August 1<sup>st</sup>, so don't miss it. I plan on seeing all of you there.

Danny NG9R

## July Meeting Agenda

Minutes from June meeting  
Treasurer's Report  
Repeater Board report  
Contest Chairman Report  
Constitution Committee Report  
Club Station Committee Report  
Old Business  
New Business  
Swapfest 2007 final planning

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Corsica between July 28 and August 11. QSL via home call.

VP6 Pitcairn Island. There are two stations active this month from Pitcairn Island. Al, ZL1UFB is operating as VP6AL until late August. And Tom, ZL2HGR is also active as VP6TD until early September. QSL both stations via home calls.

The 2007 Scarborough Reef Dxpedition QSL cards are starting to go out in the mail. The first ones were mailed July 23. QSL manager Steve KU9C has received more than 10,000 envelopes and estimates it will take him approximately 2 months to answer all the cards. So we need to be patient and not send second requests for cards until they announce that all cards have been sent. Steve will also upload QSOs to LOTW as he processes the cards. That should come in handy to avoid mailing the QSL cards in to ARRL DXCC Desk.

Thanks to the Daily DX and the Ohio/Penn DX bulletin for some of the information in this month's column.

73 and good DX, Cliff K0CA

## Band-Waggin' from the Fringes of Oblivion

*by Jim N9JF*

Welcome to the heat of summer, complete with thunderstorms, cicadas, lightning bugs, park band concerts, E-skip on six and ten meters, and the Quincy Hamfest. Yes, I mentioned contacts on six and ten. Never mind that there are almost NO sunspots; E-layer propagation doesn't need them. There have been almost daily openings to one portion of the country or another on those bands, usually about 1200-1500 miles away. Unfortunately, the ham community as a whole isn't really "geared into" the idea of those bands providing good opportunities for QSOs, so the signals, while strong, are often few and far between.

I don't have a lot to report about band activity this month. Spending two weeks flying to the

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## Call for New Members!

A half-year membership in WIARC is half-price!  
There have been several recently who have joined.  
Keep looking for new members!

## Treasurer's Report:

Come to the AUGUST meeting and find out where  
your money went.

## 2007 SWAPFEST! AUG 11 !!

## EAGLES ALPS !!!

## Upcoming Events

August 1<sup>st</sup>

WIARC monthly meeting 7:30 PM

August 4<sup>th</sup>

West Central Illinois Hamfest, Carlinville, IL

August 4 & 5<sup>th</sup>

ARRL UHF Contest

August 5<sup>th</sup>

Illinois State Convention

Bolingbrook Hamfest, Bolingbrook, IL

August 11<sup>th</sup>

WIARC Swapfest, Eagles Alps, 7:00 AM

August 19<sup>th</sup>

St. Charles ARC Hamfest, St. Charles, MO

August 24 & 25<sup>th</sup>

Missouri State Convention, Joplin, MO

September 8 – 10<sup>th</sup>

ARRL September VHF QSO Party

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East Coast meant no radio in the car, and my last two weeks have been spent "in the office" in Minnesota rather than putting out exotic counties in Nebraska, Georgia or West Virginia. The shack at home is in a shambles after Field Day. Oh well...

When I'm not on the radio, I sometimes at least \*think\* about radio. One question that crossed my mind recently was, "What one thing has changed ham radio the most in the past fifty years?" I'd like to throw out some possible answers and solicit others from those of you who can actually \*remember\* ham radio of fifty years ago...or forty...or thirty...or even twenty. These are not in any particular order....

- The Internet
- Computers in the shack
- Solid-state radios
- Affordable, high-quality equipment "off the shelf"
- Single Sideband
- The demise of the Novice license
- No-code licensing
- Antenna modeling by computer
- "Band rage"
- The aging of the ham population

I'd like to get your opinions, your "votes" for the most important changes and the reasons for your votes; and I'll include those in a future column.

Departing from ham radio for a bit, what would get your vote for the most influential change in society at large in the last fifty years (or more)? Would it be computers in general? Vaccinations against polio and smallpox? Hard-surfaced roads? Rural electrification? Television? The Internet? I've spent some time lately reading one of my mom's books in which she quotes several of my ancestors who settled in West-Central Illinois during the 1830's. These were tough people. They had to be brave, adventuresome and a bit foolhardy to travel from the relative security of Western Europe, or even the Northeastern USA, to the frontier of western Illinois. No roads, few neighbors, rude transportation, and a hand-to-mouth economy greeted them, but they stuck it out. Can you imagine how those folks would react if they were to see our world today? To travel from Beverly to Quincy in

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September 14 & 15<sup>th</sup>

W9DXCC Convention, Elk Grove Village, IL

September 15 & 16<sup>th</sup>

Peoria Superfest, Peoria, IL

September 28 & 29<sup>th</sup>

Radio Rendezvous, Macon, MO

## Where have all the Hams Gone?

After spend the last several years of monitoring the bands, I really am perplexed. Where have all the hams gone? It used to be a daily occurrence I would hear someone "local" on HF, whether it be 20, 40 or 80 meters. I think the total number of locals I have heard directly on HF can be counted on one hand! The ham population has not decreased that significantly in the past several years, so my assumption is nor one is getting on as much as they used to. Does anyone have a regular event or net they frequent? Any operating event you make sure you participate in? Any paper chasers? DX'ers? Traffic handlers? Contesters? I am pretty sure I know about the majority of the DX'ers and contesters locally, I am not too sure anyone else gets on.

If you are active, let me know. If you are not, why not? I have also noted to myself that the majority of the most active hams are within our own club, but there are a large number that used to be very active that are neither active nor WIARC members any more. Is it lack of interest, lack of time or just apathy? Maybe we need to make a concentrated effort to get as many hams to consider getting back on the air and maybe inviting them to a club meeting is the first step. If you run into someone, either in person or on the air and you haven't seen them at a meeting for a while, ask them to come or better yet, offer to bring them if you can.

See you at the meeting and the Swapfest. I'll be the guy asking everyone where they have been.

NG9R

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30 minutes by car over a hard-surfaced road instead of walking or riding a horse to Barry and then taking the train. To drive to Springfield, fly to Chicago and then to England and be there within a few hours instead of spending weeks or months in transit by water. To have available an almost unimaginable variety and quantity of fresh fruits and vegetables and fresh meats year-around in a convenient store instead of depending upon what you can raise or shoot. To have a reasonable expectation of your children reaching adulthood instead of having the majority of them die before the age of ten. To be able to communicate around the world by phone, radio or the Internet almost instantly instead of sending a letter that could take months. These are mind-boggling changes.

Spend some time on the radio this summer, but also spend time doing something really low-tech. Take a walk through the park. Lie out in the yard and look at the stars. Visit with the neighbors down the block. Teach a kid to play checkers. Read to someone at a nursing home.

Yes, I'm getting old and nostalgic.

See you at the Hamfest and on the bands.

73, Jim N9JF

## Ham Radio Prices

After seeing a bit in QST and being reminded by N9JF's article above, I thought I would do a little sharing of what I see as good deals for anyone looking for a used HF radio, beginner or experienced ham.

First off, always buy for the future if you can. From experience I can tell you, buying equipment that you want to replace in a few months can be expensive. You almost never go wrong when making quality one of your top priorities.

First rather than starting with a dollar figure in mind, try to decide how the radio is going to be used and what features are important to you, then set your budget. You can buy a lesser radio and trade up over a period of time, but it usually costs more in the long run and if you get a radio that does not do what you like, it may impact

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## Net Control Operators Needed!

I neglected to ask for net control operators through July and August at the last club meeting, so it appears I will try to call the net each week unless I find some “volunteers: to help, out.

If you would like to call net on Wednesday evening, please let me know. All dates from August 1<sup>st</sup> on are available, first come, first served.

Contact me at [ng9r@arrl.net](mailto:ng9r@arrl.net) or call 217-430-2046.

Can you identify this radio?



Mention it at the meeting if you think you know what brand and model it is.

NG9R

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how much enjoyment you get out of the hobby.

Now on to prices. On the ham radio related internet sites I frequent, I have seen a very wide range of prices for the same brand and model of radio. There are also “tech specials” and “collector quality” radios for sale, so watch closely before you jump in. A good entry level HF radio can be had for \$200 to \$300 if you don’t need lots of extras. There are a lot of good older radios still in use that use tube finals and can be a great bargain, if you don’t mind having to do a little tuning as you change bands. The TS-520 and TS-820 series come to mind and can be had for \$300 or less. Kenwood also has many solid state radios available, TS-120, TS-130, TS-140, TS-430, TS-440, and the TS-930 are all good radios and don’t normally sell for much over \$300 to \$500. Solid state radios are a bit more desirable and bring a bit more money, but several are still sold for \$300 or less if you watch out for the right deal. TenTec made several radios that sell for \$200 to \$500 and have excellent receivers as well as good filter options. The Corsair and early Omni series are a couple that come to mind. Icom 730, 735, 740 and 745 are good radios and fall in the same \$300 to \$500 price range. Yaesu FT-107, FT-757, FT-901 and 902 are all good radios in the same price range. I have seen a couple of different Alinco HF + 6 meter radios sell for just over \$300.00. Bear in mind any solid state radio will most likely not have a power supply included, so they need to be factored into the budget and is something to watch for when pricing. Also, optional filters are desirable and will add to the price to the point of doubling the costs of some used radios.

Next month I’ll try to cover a few radios in the \$500 to \$1000 range, which will include a few new radios as well.

NG9R

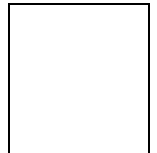
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WIARC email reflector: [wiarc@mailman.qth.net](mailto:wiarc@mailman.qth.net)

**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 147.795/.195 Quincy**  
**Voice repeater W9AWE/R on 448.900/443.900 Quincy**  
**All voice repeaters use 103.5 sub-audible tone**  
**APRS digi-peater W9AWE-1 on 144.390 Quincy**  
**Digi-peater W9AWE-2 on 145.910 Quincy (ILQDX)**  
**PacketCluster© node W9AWE on 144.910 Quincy**

## **ILLINOIS QSO PARTY**

**Newsletter input due by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month**  
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**Next meeting August 1<sup>st</sup>**  
**7:30 PM, Blessing at 13<sup>th</sup>**  
**Conference Room C**

**SWAPFEST Aug. 11<sup>th</sup>**  
**Eagle Alps, Quincy**