

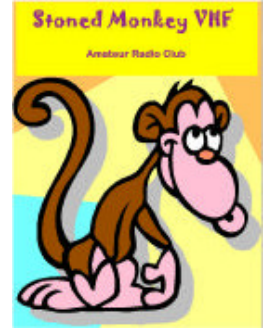
WeLCARS



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Lake County Ham Radio Journal

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www.welcars.org

May 2008

www.stonedmonkey.org

WeLCARS Officers

President: N9IFG - Joe
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Secretary/Treasurer: N9YH - Chris
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Stoned Monkey Officers

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Treasurer: K9PLS - Penny
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Newsletter: K9TMS - Tom
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Meeting Schedule

WeLCARS Project Meeting
May 14 - 7PM
Fox Lake Community Center
23 South St., Fox Lake, IL

VE Testing
May 14 - 7PM
Fox Lake Community Center

WeLCARS Meeting
May 21 - 6:30PM
Dino's Den Restaurant
88 E. Grand Ave., Fox Lake

WeLCARS Meeting
May 28 - 7PM
Fox Lake Community Center

Contesting

CQ WW WPX CW Contest
May 23 7PM-May 24 7PM
www.cqwp.com

Kids Roundup
May 31 9AM - Jun 1 5PM
www.ki3ds.org

State QSO Parties
Alabama: June 7-8
West Virginia: June 14-15

Digital Pentathlon - PSK
June 7: 1PM - 5 PM
dqso.net/start.html

ARRL June VHF QSO Party
June 14 1PM - June 15 10PM
www.arrl.org/contests

Asia-Pacific Sprint
June 15 6AM - June 15 8AM
jsfc.org/apsprint/aprule.txt

Hamfests

Starved Rock Radio Club
Jun 1 - Princeton, IL
www.qsl.net/w9mks

6 Meter Club of Chicago
Jun 8 - Wheaton, IL
www.qsl.net/k9ona

SWAPFEST '08
Jul 6 - Oak Creek, WI
www.qsl.net/wa9txe

Indianapolis Hamfest
Jul 12 - Indianapolis, IN
www.indyhamfest.com

Fox River Radio League
Jul 13 - Aurora, IL
www.frll.org

TechFest III: Revenge of TechFest
Coming in July!!!

The Adventures of Mongo, Lazy Eagle, and Crazy Joe

Chris Burke N9YH

Usually I call the drivel that you find in this space "Meeting Minutes." April was terribly busy for me, and May has started out even more so, so I've been less than diligent in taking notes at the meetings. My new full-time job seems to be crew chief for Jonathan's go kart... So, without further ado...

1. Field Day

Tom K9TMS gave a presentation on our Field Day operation. I would include more information here, but Tom was good enough to write a separate article about our upcoming contest plans. This year Field Day is June 28 and 29. Tom has been good enough to put an operating schedule on the Yahoo Group site in the Database section if anyone is looking to operate during specific times, you can be sure that a station will be open for you.

2. ARRL June VHF QSO Party

The Stoned Monkeys will be out June 14 and 15 for the ARRL June VHF contest at a nursery on the outskirts of Woodstock. Tom was once again good enough to include a separate article about the Monkeys' operating plans. Even if you're not coming out, remember we can always use contacts on 146.55, 223.50, and 446.00 FM!

3. Merit Badge Classes

The Merit Badge classes had their last session on May 7 and the only casualty was one hot dog. The last day of class had the kids soldering a project together whose entire purpose was to make an annoying noise. Thankfully, Jonathan had to partner up with another kid who took the project home.

4. KB9DBC Update

Those of you with longer attention spans than I have will remember from last month that our man Gregg KB9DBC found himself looking for a new job. Well, it seems that Gregg has seen one too many of Joe N9IFG's Animal House references and has decided to go back to school. The bad news for us is he is all set up to attend Southern Illinois University in scenic Carbondale, where he and Robyn WA9YHX have found a lovely apartment in the form of an old neighborhood grocery store. Hopefully we'll hear them on the air from the SIU club station (<http://www.siu.edu/rso/w9uih/station.htm>).

5. The Antenna Project that Wouldn't Die!!!

...is going to finally end Wednesday, May 14! The madness starts at 7PM. Next we'll move on to BIGGER things, like Tom's Field Day antennas.

6. And Finally...

From the Department of Writer's Block...

DXpeditions and Good DX

Dave Cooper KA9OZP, Vice-President MCWA

In last month's article, two great DXpeditions were discussed: VP6DX (Ducie Island) and TX5C (Clipperton Island). Readers were encouraged to pursue two other African DXpeditions: 5T5DC (Mauritania) and 9X0R (Rwanda). Of the two African operations, I give 5T5DC a little higher grade for their expertise, but 9X0R also did a fine job!

I worked 9X0R on 15M phone and 5T5DC on 40m split operation. Because of band assignments in various regions, our phone privileges go down to 7.125 MHz. Other regions can operate phone in what we would call the CW portion. A station may operate at 7.078 SSB and listen on 7.170. This allows US operators to QSO with Europe, Latin America, Canada, and most other regions of the world.

Speaking of split, I received a warning from a volunteer FCC listening station. At first I thought I was receiving a QSL card, but it turned out to be a warning from a station in Sanford, FL. On April 3, 2008 I was heard attempting to call 4O3A in Montenegro on 40M at 0351 UTC "out of band." When attempting split contacts, one uses VFO-A and VFO-B on rigs with this capability. Many hams make a momentary mistake of not setting VFO buttons correctly. Hence, I was heard calling one time on 7.078 MHz at 5-8 in FL. (Tnx 4 the report!) It took me a second to realize my error, but he heard me. I sent a nice postcard to the monitoring station explaining my blunder and assured him I do not do this purposefully or habitually. I hope this may be useful for those who use or plan to use split operation. It happens!

On March 24, 2008, there was a beautiful opening to Europe on 20M. Around 2000 UTC, I quickly scooped up Switzerland, Croatia, and Bosnia. Europe has been workable on 20M nearly every day, but this late afternoon opening was a nice treat during low sun spot days.

Conditions during the WPX SSB Contest could have been better, but I worked over 20 countries in a rather short period of time. This was done with 100W and dipoles. In fact, this is how I do HF. The electric company does not get any revenue for amplifier operation from me (hi hi). We hams are cheap.

During the 2M Sprint, it was neat working WB0SOK in EN34qb (MN). That's about a 300 mile haul. I was working with 50W SSB and my trusty tri-band PVC Dipole configuration.

Tonight there was a nice clear arm chair opening on 60M. Give this band a try with 50W ERP legal limit. I think you will find the dynamics of 60M interesting on low power restrictions.

Ham radio is a great hobby. Enjoy talking with great people near and far.....

73.....Dave KA9OZP

Stoned Monkey June VHF 2008 Plans

Tom Staley K9TMS, President Stoned Monkey VHF



Recently we had a meeting of the troop of Monkeys to discuss our plans on the VHF attack for June. Basically things will be somewhat the same as last June with a few modifications here and there.

The site we will be using is a nursery in Woodstock. I know there are those that will say it is a bit of a drive but it is an additional 200 feet higher than the farm in McHenry. It was a consensus that we give the site a good try before deciding whether to continue going there for June. Results last June were inconclusive and we felt another go was needed.

The setup will change some this year with N9TZL not certain of if he will be in Illinois in June or not. The basic run down by band is as follows:

6 meters will be on K9HA's IC756 into the stacked 6 meter Monkey Beams on top of my new 30 foot tower assembly.

2 meters will use my IC756, Elecraft Transverter with the 400 watt amp into Big Bertha and a stack of HO Loops.

222 will be on my IC7000 into a 2 stack of 15 element boomers with 120 watts.

432 will be on K9BTW's IC7000 and a single 19 element 432 boomer.

Our bottom 4 bands will all be voice keyer equipped for the first time ever!

903 and 1296 will be using my UHF stack consisting of and FT817 driving a pair of DEMI transverters into AA9IL's Loopers.

We will also have equipment on 10GHz and Laser. *(Hopefully it's that gargantuan "laser" that K9HA pilfered from Dr. Evil's ill-fated "Alan Parsons Project." – Ed.)*

Because we will be using a private nursery we need to keep the in and out traffic down. If you would like to come out and contest please let one of the Monkeys know. We are encouraging everyone that has VHF equipment to get out and participate in the contest. Even if you only have FM equipment, there will be plenty of stations looking to work you. For those that have never done this before check 146.55 and 446.00 FM Simplex. Please remember that using 146.52 is not allowed. If you have 223.50 FM you can look there as well. Recent contests have seen a large increase in 223.50 FM activity. SSB activity will be around the calling frequencies of

~50.130, 144.200, 222.100, & 432.100. Generally the upper bands will be scheduled via 432 or 222. Remember to always ask if they have the bands you are operating, many a contact is lost when you don't ask.

WeLCARS Radio and Electronics Training Class 2008

Joe Serocki N9IFG

As we all know, one of the purposes of WeLCARS, even as far as being detailed in our constitution, is "To provide assistance and training to prospective Amateur Radio Operators in the community (license training)."

This year we have a crew of about 15 kids, all Boy Scouts that are working toward their Electricity, Electronics, and Radio Merit Badges. All Scouts already got the joy of the endless drone of the wonderful material of basic Electricity and Electronic Theory, from memorizing the uses of various electronic components to a deeper understanding of Ohm's Law, Power Formulas, Series and Parallel component formulas and other fascinating stuff. This can't help but bring back thoughts of kids trying to stay awake with Ben Stein teaching class in "Ferris Buehler's Day Off" or Donald Sutherland in "Animal House" trying to teach poetry to a Freshman English class. *(Exactly how many times have you watched that movie? – Ed.)*



With the next session started the practical application, such as radio theory, hot dog power and resistance measurements, and other crazy stuff. Yes, after 90 minutes of electrocuting it at 150 volts, some lunatic ate the hot dog. At this point I realized they are starting to scare me.

We then assembled the Directive Systems 2m Rover Beam, more or less successfully. Well, the elements are out of order, but at least no one got hurt!

The most recent session put the kids on the air with Chris Burke (N9YH) and John Nielsen (KC9LFS-Scoutmaster of Troop 90 in Wauconda) teaching the kids about on the air contesting. Even with the adults and about a million kids packed into the rover, they succeeded in making 6 contacts during the UHF sprints, significantly more than yours truly during the January contest from the frozen wasteland of southeast Wisconsin! This was John's first attempt at contesting, and he and the kids did really well!!!

At this session they also covered broadcast radio, building a simulated studio and getting 'on the air' with 500 watts of power, even if it was audio rather than RF. Georgette



(KA9VPG) helped the kids out, making sure they understood what they were trying to accomplish and keeping the volume down to a level that would not make eardrums bleed. Hard to do with a bunch of teenage boys, hard rock tunes, and a killer music system right there in front of them! Each kid had the opportunity to be an on the air personality, get experience with planning a program, directing, and the chaos known as

broadcasting. At this point I understood why I was scared: these kids are The Future of America! All I can say is, "these kids got it."

Of course, by *IT* I might mean something their parents should be worrying about, for they all seem like they will end up like Johnny Fever in WKRP. (If any of them suggest dropping live turkeys out of helicopters on Thanksgiving, watch out. Oh, the humanity!!! – Ed.)

The next and final class session will have the kids building a homebrew digital noisemaker, something their parents are sure to appreciate!

There will be a trip in June to a local production studio creating a full show "All the Hits" with Jeff Davis, radio personality of WRLR, to be broadcast at a later date for all the kids who just can't pull away from the craziness!

All in all, it has been one successful class, and a bunch of the kids will walk away knowing a lot more than they walked in with!



"All right, Cincinnati, it's time for this town to get down! You've got Johnny - Doctor Johnny Fever, and I am burnin' up in here - Whoah! We all in critical condition, babies, but you can tell me where it hurts, cuz I got the healing prescription here from the big KRP musical medicine cabinet. Now I am talking

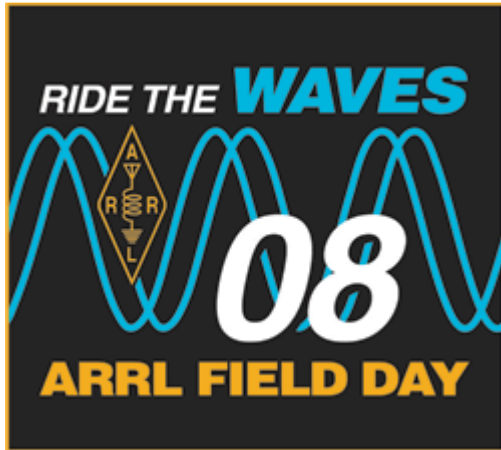
about your 50,000 watt intensive care unit, babies! So just sit right back now, relax! Open your ears real wide and say, 'Give it to me straight, Doctor, I can take it!' Oh, I almost forgot, fellow babies... BOOGER!!!"



Future Dr. Johnny Fevers and Venus Flytraps in training! As long as nobody turns into a Les Nessman... How is it possible that both Nick and Jonathan wore the same shirt on two different days?

WeLCARS Field Day 2008 Plans

Tom Staley K9TMS, WeLCARS Contest Fuehrer



Hey – that’s a decent slogan and logo! Kudos to whoever came up with something much better than last year’s “Bitten by the Bug.”

Field Day 2008 for WeLCARS will be much like Field Day 2007. The operation will again take place at Grant Township Garage on Molitor Road south of Fox Lake. The dates are as follows: Setup to start Friday June 27th ~ 3:00pm. Contest starts at 1:00pm on Saturday the 28th to 1:00pm Sunday the 29th. We will be using the W9WLC call sign for the contest this year. We are hoping to be using most if not all of the upper soccer fields. We will most likely not know this for sure until close to contest time.

At this point in time we will be entering as at least a 4A. If we find that we have additional operators and equipment we can change to a 5A operation. My original plan had been to operate as a 5A, N9QDS will not be able to attend Field Day this year so I have switched back to the 4A class.

As of now these are your Band Bosses:

Terry – K9HA will head up the 20 Meter effort. He will be using his IC756ProII and an afterburner of the 600 to 800 watt class. Terry is currently planning to use his Triband antenna. We have yet to identify a support structure for his antenna, although N9IFG has a couple of towers of which one will most likely get the job. The station will be located in the K9HA smoking room.

Chris – N9YH will head up the 80 Meter effort. He will be using his TS850 and a double zepp. The antenna will need to be built before then and will most likely be a club project in late May or early June. *(He should probably get his antenna up and that radio on the air beforehand! – Ed.)*

Dan – K9BTW will head up and HF station that will “Surf” 6 and 15 meters for contacts. Dan also will be working on getting us that all important satellite contact. Dan will be using His TS2000, one of the Stoned Monkey 6 meter beams and a wire on 15. Dan will also have antennas for satellite work. Dan’s station will be setup in a tent along with the VHF

station. The idea here is that it is possible that 6 meters may open, if it does he will run contacts there. Otherwise concentrate on 15 for what he can get there.

I will be heading up the 40 Meter effort with my IC756ProII, the SB200 afterburner and a double zepp that needs to be built along with the 80 meter version. My station will be setup in one of the blue shelters.

Joe – KC9LFP will head up the VHF station with his FT897. Most likely mainly on 2 meters and 432 using the boomers we use for the Stone Monkey VHF efforts.

GOTA – So far we know that Jason – KC9LWF will be our first GOTA station operator and Joe – N9IFG will be our GOTA coach overseeing the station setup (hey it gets us 100 points for him just showing up!). We can always use more GOTA operators so let me know if you are interested. The rules specifically state that GOTA operators must have been licensed since F/D 2007 in their current class license or an “Inactive Operator.” Definitions of inactive I am sure will vary widely. Crazy Joe will also be manning the propaganda effort.

We will be posting an operators schedule on the WeLCARS Yahoo Group location that people can sign up for operating time *(Check the Database section of the WeLCARS Yahoo Group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/WeLCARS/> -- Ed.)*. I would like to see people changing in and out of the operating chairs every 3 to 4 hours at least. This keeps people fresh and also allows everyone a chance to operate.

The effort is open to all Hams of the area that are willing to come out and operate regardless of their club affiliation.

If there are any questions please contact me or one of the other Band Bosses.

WeLCARS Cheap Yagi Antenna Project

Chris Burke N9YH

Last month we had worked out our specifications for our cheap Yagi beam antennas. In real time, we’ve spend a few months of club meetings assembling our antennas. Most of our intrepid group of assemblers are to the point of being “mostly done.” I was able to get a 440 beam assembled prior to the 440 MHz Spring Sprint contest where I used it on 446.0 FM to make a few contacts. It antenna worked well, and the MFJ antenna analyzer I borrowed from Lee KC9JQX reported a 1.3:1 SWR. Outstanding!

We had to make some design modifications as the project went along, mostly because space was at a premium on the brackets that we made. Since our final project day will be Wednesday, May 14th at WeLCARS Worldwide Headquarters. We’ll cover the rest of the buildup in next month’s issue. *(And that fact that it’s May 12th and the article still isn’t finished has nothing to do with it, right? – Ed.)*