

FEEDLINE

NOVEMBER 2008



Noah KCØSKE working the Phone ARRL November Sweepstakes
on Saturday November 15, 2008
(for more Sweepstakes news see page 7)

The **FEEDLINE** is the official journal of the *Forx Amateur Radio Club, Inc.*, PO Box 14773, Grand Forks, ND 58208-4773. The Forx ARC is incorporated in the State of North Dakota and is a non-profit organization as defined in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

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Articles are solicited for publication. Content must be geared towards amateur radio or advancement of the communications art. Articles that will not be published are those of a personal nature or that constitute an attack against an individual. The editor reserves the right to revise all material for space consideration

MEETING MINUTES

October 28, 2008

Due to a lack of a quorum no formal meeting was held – informal discussions ensued by those attending

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DATES OF INTEREST

November 2008

- 22 CQ WW
DX – CW
- 25 Club
Meeting

December 2008

- 6 SKYWARN
Recognition
Day
- 13 ARRL 10-meter
Contest
- 30 Christmas Party

January 2009

- 1 ARRL Straight
Key Night
- 3 Kids Day 2009
- 3 ARRL RTTY
Roundup
- 17 ARRL VHF
Sweepstakes
- 27 Club Meeting

February 2009

- 21 ARRL
International DX
Contest – CW
- 24 Club Meeting

March 2009

- 7-8 Red River Dog
Sled Race
- 7 ARRL
International
DX Contest –
Phone
- 31 Club Meeting

2009 DUES ARE DUE

Once again it is approaching the end of another year. Now is the time to renew your dues with the club for the year 2009. Your dues provide the club with funds, which pay for newsletter postage, correspondence postage, club repeater maintenance, club activity insurance premiums, club activities, and other expenses. Club activities include Field Day and the Hamfest among others. Please support your club and renew your dues today.

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Are YOU an ARRL Member?

If not, your joining will be money for the club. Contact John KA0SVY, Club Secretary for ARRL membership forms or checkout the club web site.

You may be asking yourself...

Why should I be a national member of ARRL, if I can just participate locally with my club?

ANSWER: Your national dues support ARRL and many of our national and local initiatives. Your dues support an organization that represents ham radio operators in governmental matters-such as working to protect our frequency privileges. Your dues go towards communications research, educational outreach, and help supply local volunteers with the materials they need to provide excellent public service. Your club IS ARRL.

FEEDLINE

2008 FIELD DAY RESULTS POSTED

The results from this year's Field Day are now available online <<http://www.arrl.org/members-only/contests/results/2008/FD/>>. "The addition of the online ARRL Field Day Locator site was a huge success, as more than 1500 sites were listed in this first year of use," said ARRL Field Day Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND. "When you scan the Online Soapbox <<http://www.arrl.org/contests/soapbox>>, Field Day continues to be the most popular on-the-air event in Amateur Radio." You can find the results in the Members Only section of the ARRL Web site.

The ARRL Letter
Vol. 27, No. 43
October 31, 2008

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FOR SALE

Kenwood TS140S
HF Transceiver
\$300

MFJ Versa Tuner
\$150

Bencher Low Pass Filter
\$30

Harold N0SAA
yllek@mncable.net
218-686-8617
1602 Greenwood St. E # 120
Thief River Falls, MN 56701

NOVEMBER 2008

SKYWARN RECOGNITION DAY SET FOR DECEMBER 6

The 10th Annual SKYWARN Recognition Day (SRD) Special Event will take place Saturday, December 6, 2008 <<http://hamradio.noaa.gov/>>. SRD is co-sponsored by the ARRL and the National Weather Service (NWS) as a way to recognize the commitment made by Amateur Radio operators in helping to keep their communities safe. According to SRD Coordinator David Floyd, N5DBZ, Amateur Radio operators can visit their local participating NWS office <http://www.crh.noaa.gov/hamradio/participating_offices.php>, working as a team to contact other hams across the world throughout the 24 hour event.

The idea for the first SRD took shape in the summer of 1999. Meteorologist-in-Charge of the Goodland, Kansas NWS office Scott Mentzer, N0QE, tried to find a way to recognize the valuable contributions storm spotters make to the National Weather Service. "Since many of those storm spotters were also hams," Floyd said, "it seemed like a natural fit for the recognition to be centered on Amateur Radio."

With the approval of NWS headquarters and a commitment to participate from many local NWS offices across the country, the first National Weather Service Special Event took place on November 27,

1999. "At the end of the event, an amazing 15,888 QSOs were logged, with contacts made to all 50 states and 63 countries," Floyd recounted. "The Des Moines forecast office took the honor of making the most contacts of any office that first year with 761 QSOs, and went on to lead the pack until 2003 by logging between 1300-1500 contacts each year!"

Floyd said that feedback from that first event was "overwhelmingly positive" from both the NWS staff and the local ham clubs: "Suddenly there was incentive for more NWS staffers to either obtain a license or upgrade so that more people could work ham radio during severe events. In addition, many club members had never visited an NWS office before. When they came for the special event, they learned the value of their reports and how they were used in conjunction with existing technology."

And so began an annual tradition. The following year, 85 of the 122 NWS offices -- almost 70 percent -- participated in the event, making nearly 24,000 QSOs. "Perhaps the most unusual contact occurred in 2000 with an airliner 39,000 feet above Utah," Floyd said. "The pilot ended the QSO with a request for a 'spot weather forecast' for his arrival at Salt Lake City airport."

In 2001, the name of the event was changed to SKYWARN

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Recognition Day, a name Floyd said better relayed what the day was all about: "Each year since the inception of SRD, the number of NWS offices and local ham clubs participating has increased, until now more than 100 offices sign up each year to take part. The most contacts made during any SRD occurred in 2006 when -- thanks to the staff and local hams in the Grand Junction, Colorado area -- 1640 QSOs were logged!"

Station call signs have also changed over the years. Floyd said that some NWS offices and clubs apply for a special event call sign, "such as W3B in Brownsville or N0Y in Aberdeen, South Dakota. Other call signs hint at office location, including WX9GRB in Green Bay and WX4NHC at the National Hurricane Center. Still others represent more of the big picture, as in KC0SKY in Pleasant Hill, Missouri."

Floyd said that as SKYWARN Recognition Day has grown throughout the years and is mainly an SSB event, he has seen a greater use of digital communications in addition to CW, RTTY and packet radio: "Each year, more and more contacts are being made using EchoLink and Winlink."

2008 SKYWARN Recognition Day will be held on December 6 from 0000 UTC-2400 UTC. Last year, contacts were made in all 50 states and 40 countries during the 24 hour

event. If you haven't joined in the fun, make 2008 your year to do so!

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ARRL VEC ANNOUNCES EXAM FEE INCREASE

On November 6, The ARRL VEC <<http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/>> announced that as of January 1, 2009, the fee to take an ARRL Volunteer Examiner (VE)-administered Amateur Radio license exam will increase by \$1, from \$14 to \$15. According to ARRL VEC Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM, ARRL VE teams may retain up to \$7 of this fee to directly reimburse their teams' out-of-pocket examination expenses; currently, VE teams keep \$6. This is the first time in four years that the examination fee has been adjusted.

Somma said that the FCC allows VECs to collect an examination reimbursement fee from each candidate who takes one or more exam elements. "VEs and VECs may be reimbursed by examinees for out-of-pocket expenses incurred in preparing, processing, administering or coordinating an examination for an amateur operator license (FCC Rule

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97.527)," she said <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2002/octqtr/pdf/47cfr97.527.pdf>. "These exam fees help the VEC recover its costs of providing its services."

Saying that every examinee at each ARRL coordinated examination session is charged the same fee in accordance with the annually-established fee schedule, "Any person sitting for an exam, or having a new license or upgrade processed at a test sessions, must pay the exam fee applicable for the calendar year," Somma explained. "The ARRL VEC's exam fee for calendar year 2009 is \$15. Each time a candidate pays one exam fee, they are entitled to take tests for Elements 2, 3 and 4 as needed, up to all three elements under the single exam fee. Each time an examinee retakes an exam element (assuming the VE Team has different exam design available), another exam fee is charged."

VE teams may elect to keep a prescribed portion of each exam fee collected exclusively to offset expenses that are directly incurred in administering the VE program. "All out-of-pocket reimbursable expenses shall be necessary and prudent, and must relate to the examination process in some way," Somma said. "VECs and VEs are expected to use good business judgment with respect to reimbursement amounts. The examination reimbursement fee

cannot be used to offset non-session related costs and must be kept separate from other accounts."

Somma pointed out that business expenses such as postal, utility, fuel and printing charges, are increasing: "Our VE teams are feeling the effects of the current economy, too! Teams are retaining reimbursement at amounts considerably larger than previous years. The amount of out-of-pocket costs that our VEs and the VEC are expending to provide authorized services in connection with Amateur Radio operator examinations continues to rise."

Recent ARRL VEC cost-cutting steps have included staff reduction, reduced printing charges of ARRL VE training material and exam software, renegotiating shipping and printing contracts and eliminating lesser-used services.

"Only so many cost-cutting measures can be justified without cutting back significantly on services essential to our VE teams, our customers and our program," Somma said. "As a result, an adjustment was needed in the 2009 exam reimbursement fee if we intended to maintain the basic levels of service that our VEs, VE teams and candidates have come to expect."

Somma said that the ARRL VEC permits its VEs to retain a portion of the exam fees they collect to

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directly reimburse themselves for out-of-pocket expenses incurred in setting up and conducting their examination sessions. "As long as the expense is warranted and has been prudently incurred -- and the expense is specifically related to exam administration -- then the fee can be retained," she said. "The team should keep a complete record of the expenses paid (with receipts) in team records for two years. Records must be made available to the ARRL VEC upon request. Costs not related to the exam session processes or paperwork are not reimbursable."

"We believe that the ARRL VEC's level of assistance and services are outstanding," said ARRL Chief Operating Officer Harold Kramer, WJ1B. "Exam supplies, such as paperwork and software, shipping costs both to and from the VEC and ARRL VE accreditation, as well as credentials, are all free of charge for our VEs. We maintain a toll-free number for our VEs and we even offer reimbursement to the VE team for their expenses. We appreciate the dedication and volunteerism of all our VEs in the field. This is why we offer so many services free of charge. This is why we have that same level of duty and commitment here. Every test fee we collect goes right back into the VEC program and to serving the Amateur Radio community."

The ARRL Letter
Vol. 27, No. 44
November 7, 2008

FOR SALE

Cushcraft
2-meter
3-element beam

\$35

Jerry KC0GWK
701-775-0084

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WORLDRADIO TO CEASE PRINT PUBLICATION

In a joint statement, WorldRadio Publisher Armond Noble, N6WR, and CQ Publisher Dick Ross, K2MGA, announced that WorldRadio magazine will no longer be published as a print magazine. According to the announcement, CQ Communications Inc has acquired WorldRadio and plans to continue it as an online publication on CQ's Web site. WorldRadio subscribers will have their subscriptions transferred to CQ magazine. Readers will be notified of details as plans are finalized.

The ARRL Letter
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CW SWEEPSTAKES

by Rod Klug, KEØA

The first weekend in November marks perhaps the biggest Morse code contest for hams in the US and Canada: CW Sweepstakes. There are few hams in ND, and fewer that operate CW, which makes ND a tough section to get. So it's one of my favorite contests.

This year the UND club offered the use of their shack and antennas, so I worked the contest mostly from the SIOUX shack during the day, but also from my home shack late Saturday night and Sunday morning.

I brought my Yeasu FT-100MP MK-V HF Rig, ALS-600 solid state amplifier, and tuner to UND. I took advantage of the antennas on the top of the Student Memorial Union, TH6-DXX beam for 20 meters (there was not much to be heard on 15 and 10 meters), the dipole for 40 meters, and my HF6V vertical for 80 meters.

At home I used my Elecraft K2 HF rig with an AL-82 amplifier running 500W and an autotuner. For antennas I just used my 40 meter rotating dipole on my tower and an inverted L antenna for 80 meters since I only operated from home at night when the low bands were active. Luckily my XYL was able to get my laptop to work with both setups.

I worked over 800 stations this year. 327 contacts came from working a four hour long pileup Sunday morning. That reminded me of my DX-pedition to St Croix. Lots of fun! But I didn't get my sweep; I couldn't find ND, Manitoba, and Northwest Territories. Guess I'll have to work the context again next year!



COAXIAL ANTENNA FOR EMCOMM

There are many antennas that may be purchased or constructed and carried in your emcomm kit. Small dipoles, J-Poles and many other antennas that can be rolled-up, placed in a zip-lock type bag and stowed in your kit. But what about the all but forgotten coaxial antenna?

The coaxial antenna is basically a quarter-wave piece of 52 Ohm coax. (RG8X or RG174 are my cables of choice). Construction for a two meter coaxial antenna follows:

1. Remove 19 inches of the outer jacket from a four foot or long piece of coaxial cable.
2. Carefully remove about 18 inches of the exposed shield. The shield will be used as a sleeve.
3. Slide the shield (removed in the above step) up the coax from the far end to the point where the jacket begins and the one inch of shield remains.
4. Using a relatively low Wattage soldering iron, tin the top of the sleeve.
5. Carefully fold the one inch of shield over the top of the sleeve.
6. Using the low Wattage soldering iron, solder the shield the top of the sleeve.
7. Check all work. What you should see is eighteen inches of dielectric along with the center conductor and eighteen inches of sleeve with any length of coax after the sleeve.

8. Check for shorts and opens with an Ohm meter.

9. Add the coax connector of your choice to the end of the length of coax.

10. Check for shorts and opens again.

11. Carefully affix a loop of string or a plastic wire tie to the top of antenna using a good quality tape or heat shrink. The whole antenna can be covered with heat shrink. You may utilize the extra one inch of wire at the top by stripping of the dielectric from the top and soldering the wire into a loop. The extra one inch must be removed or utilized so as not to be part of the antenna.

12. The antenna can now be hanged from the support of your choice and when finished, it can be stowed very easily.

Some additional thoughts:

Coaxial antennas are quite useful above 30 meters. However, they become physically unwieldy below 30 meters. This type of antenna does have a lower angle of radiation than the popular J-Pole with the added bonus of some slight gain.

If the numbers look familiar, that is because we are dealing with quarter-wavelength sections. The upper portion is a quarter-wavelength and the lower (sleeve) is a quarter-wavelength. - Jay Muskar, AF2C, District EC, East-Central District, Northern Florida Section

The ARES E-Letter
The American Radio Relay League
September 26, 2008

GLOBAL EMERGENCY NETWORK MARKS RECORD

The Global ALE High Frequency Network (HFN) <<http://hflink.net/>> -- an international Amateur Radio Service organization of ham operators dedicated to emergency/relief radio communications -- has become the first network to operate continuously for more than 500 days on all international Amateur Radio shortwave bands simultaneously.

According to HFN International ALE Coordinator Bonnie Crystal, KQ6XA, the main purpose of the Network is to provide efficient emergency and disaster relief communications to remote areas of the world. "Beginning with a core group of six North American radio operators in June 2007, HFN rapidly expanded to cover large areas of the planet with 24/7 digital communications," she said. "HFN was designed to be an open framework for global Amateur Radio emergency services to interoperate on HF using the Automatic Link Establishment (ALE) system." <<http://www.arrl.org/tis/info/ale.html>>

Relying on ionospheric radio communications, interconnected HFN base stations scan the radio bands every 10 seconds, from 3.5 MHz-28.0 MHz. Through this Net, Crystal said, ham operators stay connected with each other at all

hours of the day or night in any mode of operation, and can send Internet e-mail or cell phone mobile text messages from the field.

The ARRL Letter
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November 21, 2008

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FORX AMATEUR RADIO CLUB MEETINGS

**Last Tuesday
Every Month
7:30 PM**

**Basement of
Altru Hospital
Meeting Room E
(next to cafeteria)**

**Come early
for informal discussions
prior to the meeting**

**[Please Note: Use of radios
within Altru Hospital
is prohibited]**

www.wa0jxt.org

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TRIVIA

The following trivia question is taken from *The ARRL Handbook 2006*. The answer will be published in the December 2008 issue of the *FEEDLINE*.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CONDUCTOR
IS PLACED IN A MAGNETIC FIELD?

October's trivia question was:

WHAT IS "SKIN EFFECT"?

And the answer is:

The increase in resistance of a conductor as the frequency increases

This can be found on page 6.12 of *The ARRL Handbook 2006*

ANNUAL DUES FORM

January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2009

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
CHK# _____
DATE _____

As stated in the bylaws of the Forx Amateur Radio Club dues expire on the last day of December (December 31, 2008 in this case). Dues are payable as follows:

Regular Membership	\$20.00
Family Membership	\$27.00
Student/Youth Membership	\$10.00
Senior Membership (62+)	\$10.00

If you have paid your dues for the year 2009, thank you. You will continue to receive the *FEEDLINE* published monthly. If you have not yet paid your dues for 2009, please use the form below.

Please make your check payable to: FORX AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
P.O. BOX 14773
GRAND FORKS, ND 58208-4773

Please do not mail cash. Cash is acceptable if your dues are paid to the Treasurer directly.

Please complete the following form to be included with your dues payment:

Call Sign: _____

License Class: _____

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip+4: _____

Membership Type (circle one): Regular / Family / Student / Senior

To receive the club newsletter *FEEDLINE* via E-mail, please provide your address below:

E-mail Address: _____

Are you an ARRL Member? Yes / No **ARES Member?** Yes / No