

Ham Gab

Next meeting: March 4th

March 2016



PO Box 474
Crestwood, IL
60445-0474

www.hamfesters.org

Special Interest Articles

Field Day pg. 5

Martians pg. 7

March Birthdays

John K9DRS

Kurt WB9FMC

Daniel W9GOB

Wayne KC9IC

Matthew N9JXR

Robert W9LNQ

Granville W9PNG

Jerry K9PY

Joe WB9SIK

Walter KC9SYX

Mel K9ZAV

Dennis KA9ZZT

John WB9JTS

Officers

President-Don KC9EQQ

Vice President -Jim KB9CYL

Secretary-Patty KC9LYE

Treasurer- ED WA9EOL

SGT at Arm-Jim N9HSH

Trustee-Granville W9PNG

Board Members

Nora KC9MLV

Steve W9KXT

Kurt WB9FMC

Kerry AA9SB

Cathy KC9NRH

Hamgab Editors

Steve & Eric

KC9OOL & KC9OOM

Scapstone@aol.com

The White Elephant sale will be during the next meeting on March 4th. There is no charge to set up your table: however, you must leave your space clean at the end of the evening. It is not permitted to use the Centers trash receptacles. Don and Nora could use some help with setup so arrive early if you can. Now's your chance. Sell your stuff and get some cash or find that piece of equipment you've been waiting for!



Microcontrollers by Gregg AB9MZ



1970's Computer by Mike WA9ZPM

Gregg AB9MZ gave a fantastic program last month on microcontrollers. Hopefully, you all now know the difference between microprocessors and microcontrollers. Who knew there were so many Ham Radio projects available for Arduinos and Raspberry Pies, not to mention all of their other myriad uses. Gregg also gave away some nice prizes at the end including an Arduino controller and Raspberry Pie project books. Thanks Gregg.

Mike WA9ZPM topped the night out with a display of a 1970's computer with some of its elements. It's amazing how far we've come in 40 years.

Thank-Yous also go out to Granville W9PNG for giving away some extra class material, to Granville and Brian W9HLQ for updating the website so the birthday list is easier to get in the Hamgab and to Mike KC9OPV for supplying pictures from the last meeting. Hamfesters is truly blessed with some great members.

Editors Note: We just learned of the passing of Kerry AA9SB minutes before the release of this month's HamGab. We are saddened by his loss and our sympathies go out to his family. See Don's column below for more information.

**"WE HAVE LOST A GIANT
OF A MAN"**

THE PRESIDENTS BEAT

DONALD POINTER KC9EQQ
MARCH 2016

I fully believe that the toughest job of any leader of any organization, no matter how big or how small that group may be is that of notifying his or hers groups colleagues of the passing of one of its own. Tonight that job belongs to me.....and it's a tough one...

Past President Kerry Nelson AA9SB passed away somewhere between February 21st and 22nd of 2016 from a bout with a recent illness. I do not as of this writing have any information on any possible Funeral Arrangements, but we will notify you his fellow Hamfesters club members via the club's website should that information become available. I am still trying to reach his family as of this reading.

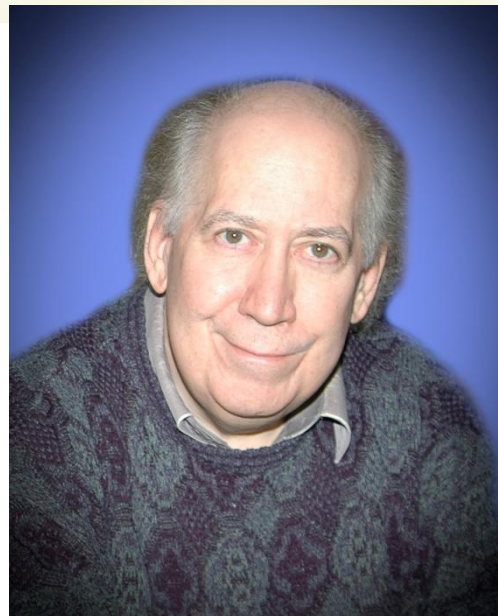
Kerry wore the love for this club not just on his sleeve, but also in his heart as was evident in the many positions he held during his tenure with our club. Past President, Past Hamfest Chairman, Past Field Day Chairman, Past Vice President and most recently our current Publicity Chairman and assistant to our current Hamfest Chairman Kurt Pawlikowski WB9FMC. Albeit a quiet member he was not shy about caring about his fellow members. Nora and I were recipients of his caring manner when he personally called us recently extending his heartfelt condolences regarding the recent passing of my father, and on top of that he sent us a very kind handwritten note pertaining to the same.

He had seen a lot of changes during his time with the club, but you know what? A lot of those changes that were for the better of the club were created due in part because of Kerry. He stepped in, and ran with the ball to the best of his ability. All the while dealing with his own personal struggles. Because of his commitment to Publicity, we no doubt saw many visitors who heard of our club through his newspaper submissions of our monthly events, become Hams and become OUR members. I am sure I speak for many of you when I say I have lost one heckuva friend and his contributions to this club will be positively felt for years to come. May he now Rest in peace, knowing he paved the way for future growth of the Hamfester Radio Club- a club that he so loved through and through. God bless you Kerry and 73. You may be a silent key in our club, but your memory will never go silent nor still in our hearts.

By the way, at the start of the **APRIL 1st** meeting we will have a short tribute in memoriam of Kerry for a few minutes prior to that month's program. Please be sure to be there if I may ask you please for that tribute and of course that evening's given program. Thank you.

And might I add, our condolences, thoughts and prayers to the family of Kerry and his friends.

BACK ON THE BEAT: *Thank you Gregg Rosenberg AB9MZ for the fine program you presented in February on the new. Micro Computer. It was very informative and provided a new line of interest for computer savvy Hams to explore and enjoy.*



Almost LAST BUT NOT LEAST: White Elephant time is here at Hamfesters! On March 4th, 2016 you will get to see what kind of goodies you can bring home and sneak past the XYL! OOPSIE! DID I SAY THAT??? Now as a reminder, please arrive early, bring your own power cords to demo anything needing juice, and please DO NOT throw out any electronics in or around the big trash can out back behind our building as Village of Crestwood has an ordinance against that. Kindly take any unsold items back home please so that we can stay in the good graces of the good Village of Crestwood. They will appreciate it and so will I. Nora and I will not be there that night due to a photo shoot we will be covering that night.

For sure last but not least, Mark your calendars folks! Friday, April 1st is when our very own Dave Bukowski N9KPD will present his annual Basic Weather Spotters class! This program will start by 7:15pm sharp and will run for a minimum of about two and half hours just so you know as there is much info that needs to be properly covered. We will have a donut break for all you coffee and donut lovers! Every year we average over 100 attendees to see Dave's excellent presentation which is free to the public. For those who need certification of attendance for your work place Dave will explain that night how to obtain it. Arrive early for a good seat, and bring a friend. Till we meet again my friends, 73 and please take care of yourselves.....

Don Pointer KC9EQQ President of the best darn Ham Radio club there is- Hamfesters!

Questions, comments etc., for Don? Please email him at: hamprezlistens@mail.com or call him between the hours of 10am to 8pm at: 773-426-1936.

Board Meeting Minutes de Patti, KC9LYE

Hamfesters W9AA board meeting Tuesday, January 26, 2016 start 7:20 PM

Roll: Don KC9EQQ, Jim KB9CYL, Ed WA9EOL, Patti KC9LYE, Jim N9HSH, Cindy N9CAS, Cathy KC9NRH, Nora KC9MLV, Steve W9KXT, Kurt WB9FMC, Gene W9PNG

President's report: Don KC9EQQ, thanks everyone for your support, after the death of my mom, Barbara Pointer. Also, thank you for the support for the Go Fund Me page.

Trustee: The board voted Gene W9PNG, our new club, trustee, replacing Bruno K9QKB. Bruno was replaced because he is difficult to contact. Ed WA9EOL, will contact the state, concerning the change. Steve W9KXT, will contact the FCC.

Health and welfare: Steve W9KXT, will contact Kerry AA9SB, who has not been heard from since the Christmas party. Ed WA9EOL, will undergo eye surgery.

Minutes: The November 2015 board minutes were approved by Jim N9HSH, and Kurt WB9FMC.

Treasurer's report: by Ed WA9 EOL, the board approved a \$50.00 donation to Handi-Hams. We have paid Papa Joe's for the 2015 Christmas party.

Programs: February Gregg KB9MZ microcomputers, March the white elephant sale, April Dave N9PKD, weather spotting, May Brian W9HLQ, and Gene W9PNG, Flex radio, June Jim KB9CYL, field day 2015, July annual veteran's picnic, August Kurt WB9FMC, hamfest 2016, September Gregg KB9MZ, emergency preparedness, October Steve Cooper

Hamfest 2016: Kurt WB9FMC, our hamfest is registered with QST magazine.

We are inviting; Bob Heil, Joe Walsh, (guitarist for the Eagles, and he's a good friend of Bob's), Gordon West to our 2016 hamfest. Steve W9KXT, will arrange airline tickets.

Field day 2016: Jim KB9CYL, he needs proof of the club's insurance before he can secure the site. The call sign for the GOTO station will be KC9LYE.

New business: Cindy N9CAS, is working on the club logo for clothing orders.

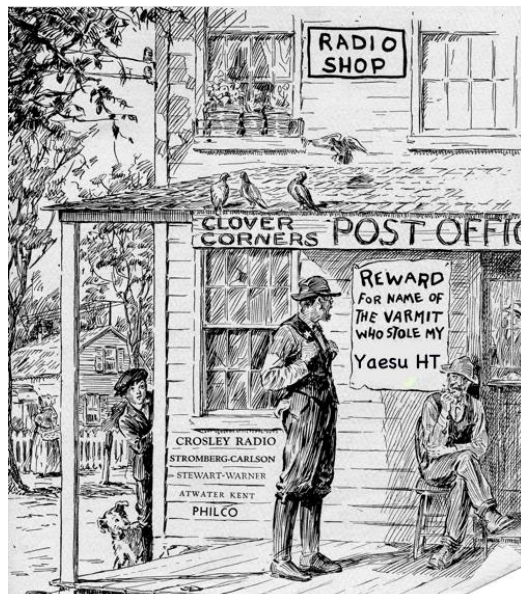
Jim KB9CYL, is working on national parks on the air, he would like Hamfesters to participate.

Gene W9PNG, and Steve W9KXT, will scan old issues of Hamgab for display on the club's website. The board meeting in May will began at 7 PM and will clean out the club's trailer.

Adjournment: 8:45 PM



"\$659.00 worth of equipment and I can't get a signal past the city limits."



General Meeting Minutes de Patti, KC9LYE

Hammfesters W9AA amateur radio club. February 5, 2016 start 7:40 PM

Roll: Don KC9EQQ, Ed WA9EOL, Patti KC9LYE, Jim N9HSH.

Tonight there were 41 members, and 4 visitors.

President's report: by Don KC9EQQ, thank you everyone for your support concerning the death of by mom, Barbara Pointer. And, thank you for supporting the Go Fund Me page.

Health and welfare: Judy Riley, Jim KB9CYL's, wife is in the hospital.

Steve W9KXT, is trying to contact Kerry AA9SB.

Treasurer's report: by Ed WA9EOL, our club's insurance has been paid.

Membership: by Brian W9HLQ, we have two new members.

Education: If anyone would like to use the club's Flex 5000 radio contact Brian W9HLQ.

Gene W9PNG, has donated extra class license study guides for anyone that would like to use them.

Website: Brian W9HLQ, if you find there are errors in the website, please contact Brian or Gene.

Programs: Tonight Gregg KB9MZ, microcomputers, March the white elephant sale, April Dave N9PKD, weather spotting, May Brian W9HLQ, and Gene W9PNG, Flex radio, June Jim KB9CYL, field day 2015, July annual veterans picnic, August Kurt WB9FMC, hamfest 2016, September Gregg KB9MZ, emergency preparedness, October Steve Cooper

Hamfest 2016: by Kurt WB9FMC, there are hamfest tickets for sale tonight.

Gordon West is not available for our 2016 hamfest. Dave N9PKD, will present his weather spotting program at our hamfest. The night before the hamfest we will have the vendors picnic.

New business: Thanks to Jim N9HSH, for your program last month. Steve KC9OOL, asks if you have any articles for Hamgab, please submit them.

Thanks to Gregg AB9MZ, for a great program tonight on microcomputers thanks, Gregg.

Also, thanks to Mike WA9ZPM, who brought in a computer he build in 1979.

Grand told us all about microcomputers, and Mike reminded us of what computers were like in 1979. Thanks guys!

Winners: split the pot, Marie KD9CAE, and Marie also won, the toy dog.

Door prize: Don KC9EQQ, Pat KB9KRT,

Gregg, AB9MZ donated prizes a microcomputer and books.

Winners were; Ed WA9EOL, Cindy N9CAS, Al N9ZD, Herb KC900K, Bob N9JYX.

Adjournments 9:45 PM

Health and Welfare

Jim KB9CYL's wife Judy is in the hospital. We wish her a speedy recovery. We also wish ED WA9EOL good luck with his eye surgery.

CQ Field Day de Jim Riley KB9CYL

I forgot to mention in my previous column that we will be using a new call for the GOTA station. Our main call will still be W9AA.

A few years ago, we had an election for GOTA call and one of the nominees was our secretary, Patti KC9LYE. She won in a landslide but there was a problem. She was a Technician class. That would have severely limited our frequency options. Now Patti is a brand-new Extra and her new, full privileges will be put to good use this Field Day. The timing is perfect, too. Our previous GOTA call, K9MS, will expire before this year's event. Warning: Kilo Charlie Nine Lima Yankee Echo can be a phonetic tongue twister. I recommend that all you GOTA operators seriously practice it before Field Day. You would be amazed at the number of times my call has come back to me in contests as Kilo Bravo Nine Charlie Lankee Yima.



I still need pictures from last year's Field Day. Are you reading this, Don??? You can put them on a CD, email them, or use the club's Drop Box account.

There's nothing else new this month. Field Day is June 25 and 26 at Altman Park, 115th Street a quarter mile west of Harlem in Worth. Setup begins at 0800 Saturday. Operations run from Saturday at 1300 to Sunday at 1300. Teardown is Sunday and begins no later than noon, unless the weather is perfect, the bands are really hopping, and everyone is still speaking to each other.

Newbies are welcome and encouraged to participate. Our friendly and helpful GOTA team will guide you every step of the way to your first contact and as many more as you are willing to try. Circle the date and we'll see you there.

Hamfesters Roster News

Be sure to welcome these new members to Hamfesters.

Jim Conerty, N8EAT

Jim is an extra class ham living in Palos Heights. He likes music as his other hobby and works at the Secretary of State. Jim operates all HF bands 160 thru 10 meters on SSB.

Bryan Petkus, KE8CXW. He lives in Homewood, IL and is a Tech license. His occupation is a RF engineer in industrial robotics. His other hobbies are automobiles, electronics, and fabrication. He is an ARRL member.

Bryan is interested in club activities such as field day, special events, and net control.

Right now he operates V/UHF bands in both data and voice.

Sounds like he has many tech talents, so let's get him involved in the club!

73,

--Brian, W9HLQ--

Hamfesters VE Testing de Al Bukowski N9ZD VE Coordinator

Hamfesters VE Testing Report for March 2016

On February 13, 2016, Hamfester's Radio Club VE's team assembled to administered Amateur Radio exams at the Oak Forest City Hall. We had Seven Candidates who earned a Technician ticket. One Candidate who earned General and One Candidate who upgraded to Extra. Congratulations to the Nine Candidates. VE's who assisted me were Ron WB9JYZ, James N9HSH, Cynthia N9CAS, and Tim AA9BV. A lot of paperwork was filled out by all the VE's and I Thank You for your dedicated time.

Amateur Radio Exams INFO:

Hamfester's Amateur Radio Club VE's offer License Testing for those who want to get their first ham license, or those who want to upgrade to a higher class license. Examination sessions are available on the second Saturday of each month. We will assist you with completion of all necessary paperwork prior taking your exam. You may bring your Calculator if you choose, however the volunteer examiners must check it prior the exam that all memories are clear. For the Technician Exam there are 35 multiple choice questions. If you are successful passing the Technician exam, you may take the General Class Exam which also has 35 multiple choice questions. If you are successful passing the General exam, you may take the Extra Class Exam which has 50 multiple choice questions. Please make sure you are studying the latest question pool that can be found usually on the internet, through ARRL publications or Gordon West books.

Requirements:

A fee of \$15 dollars is charged for the examination. Payment is Cash ONLY. Please bring a government-issued ID; (one ID could be a driver's license). If you would prefer to not use your Social Security Number on your application, we suggest obtaining a Federal Registration Number (FRN) from the [FCC website](#) - otherwise you'll need to use your Social Security Number. Please remember to bring the FRN number or your Social Security number to the exam.

Upgrade Examinations:

If you are already licensed and are taking an upgrade examination: Please bring your printed *Current Amateur Radio License*, and a copy of your current license that we can keep. Also, If you have recently taken an examination that has not been processed by the FCC, Please bring your *latest CSCE* and a *Copy of that CSCE* that we can keep.

Retaking the Exam:

If you almost passed the exam on your first try, and would like to try again, you may retake a different version of the exam for an additional \$15 fee.

Morse Code Not Required!

Morse Code is no longer required for any level of amateur radio license. All Morse Code testing requirements for the Amateur Radio Service in the USA were eliminated on February 23, 2007.

Location and Time of Hamfesters VE administered Radio Exams:

Oak Forest City Hall 15440 S. Central Ave. Oak Forest, IL 60452. Doors open at 9:00 AM. We begin testing about 9:15 AM. Enter through the Police door entrance and look for the Amateur Radio testing exam signs for directions.

***Special note --- upcoming changes in the Extra Exam:

The Question Pool Committee of the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators ([NCVEC](#)) has released the 2016-2020 Element 4 (Extra Class) question pool. The new question pool becomes effective for all Element 4 examinations administered on or after July 1, 2016, and it remains valid until June 30, 2020.

The question pool files are available in [PDF](#), Microsoft [Word](#) (.doc), and ASCII [text](#) formats.

What this means is that the Extra Exams on July 1, 2016 will be new and anyone wishing to take the Extra Exam AFTER July 1, 2016 should be studying the new question pool prior to the exam.

If you have any questions regarding our test session or about upgrading, please contact N9ZD via e-mail at: N9ZD@arrl.net.

Our next test session will be held on Saturday March 12, 2016. (0900 hrs)

Walk-ins are welcome and the test fee remains at \$15.00 (cash only -- no credit cards or checks).

73's de AL - N9ZD

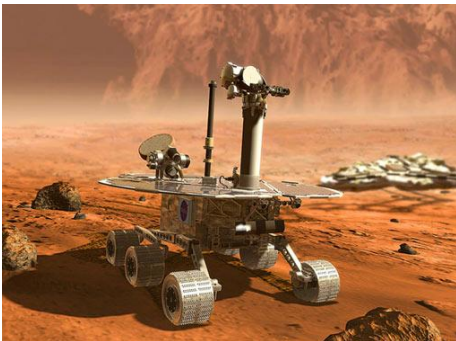


Talking to Martians

We finally got around to seeing the movie *The Martian* a couple of weeks ago. During a manned mission to Mars, astronaut Mark Watney is presumed dead and left behind by his crew. He struggles to survive on Mars and find a way home. He has to figure out a way to communicate with Earth as his communication equipment has been lost in the storm. I won't go into any more detail about the movie albeit to say I enjoyed it and would highly recommend it. The movie got me thinking about the difficulties of radio communication to the red planet.



The first problem is the vast distance between Earth and Mars. At its closest point Mars is 56 million kilometers from Earth. Traveling at the speed of light, a radio signal would take a little over 3 minutes to reach Earth. The farthest Mars is from Earth is 149 million kilometers. At this distance, the signal would take almost 21 minutes to reach earth. Wouldn't it suck to get stomped on in a pile up during some future Earth to Mars net? Another problem is when the Earth and sun are in conjunction in the Martian sky, the noise from the sun makes radio communication virtually impossible. Not to mention always having to deal with the constant interference of cosmic rays.



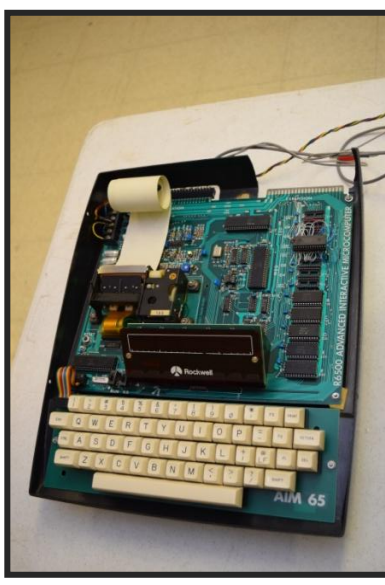
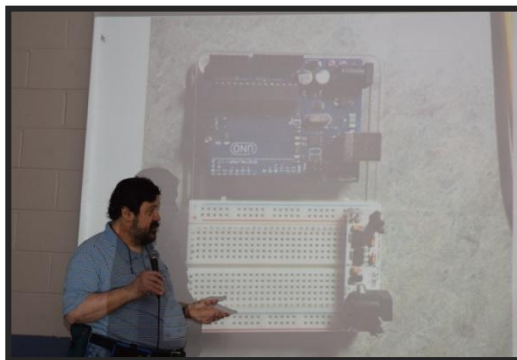
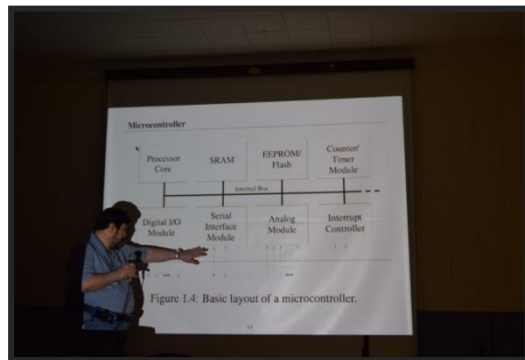
How does a Martian rover communicate with earth? The rovers will have a high gain and a low gain antenna. The frequencies used are in the so called X bands of 8-12 GHz. The low gain antenna is omnidirectional and is used to communicate with earth and the Martian orbiters. The high gain antenna is a steerable beam that can be pointed directly toward earth. The data rate is about 125 bits/ seconds. Your current modem transmits about 200,000 bits/second. How strong is a less than 2 watt radio signal leaving Mars when it finally reaches the earth? Somewhere around the range of 8×10^{-19} watts!

As you might imagine, it's not that easy to receive these signals. Luckily, NASA has something called the DSN or Deep Space Network. This consists of a series of 3 receiving antennas approximately 120 degrees apart in California, Spain and Australia. These antennas are extremely large at about 34 meters or around 37 yards. The DSN can detect signals as low as a millionth of a trillionth of a watt! Now I'm starting to wonder why my cheap Chinese HT can't make actual contacts to China. Note to Chinese government: it's time to build some really big antennas so you won't miss my call. The high gain of these antennas achieve a signal to noise ratio of about 20-40 dB. Not bad for a signal from at least 56 million kilometers away.

So there you have it-talking to Martians 101. I can't wait until the day some astronaut landing on Mars says "This is one small step for a Martian. One giant leap for mankind!"

Sources www.astrosurf.com & mars.nasa.gov

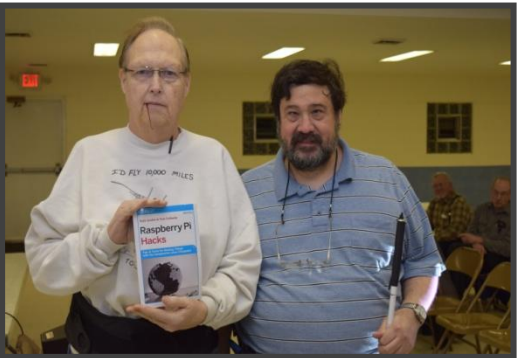
Hamgab, March 2016
Pictures February Meeting



Hamgab, March 2016



Hamgab, March 2016





Hamfesters Amateur Radio Club

PO Box 474

Crestwood, IL 60445-0474

www.Hamfesters.org

Hamfesters Radio Club



Meetings and VE Testing

Club meetings are held on the first Friday of every month at the Crestwood Civic Center, 14025 Kostner Ave. in Crestwood, IL.

Meetings begin at 7:30 PM. September meetings may vary if our meeting date conflicts with the Crestwood Flower show.

Board Meetings: 7:30 PM on the 4th Monday of each month at the Crestwood Civic Center

VE TESTING: Every 2nd Saturday of the Month at the Oak Forest City Hall, 15440 S. Central Ave. Testing begins at 9:00 AM but we ask that you arrive 10 minutes early. Exam fee is now \$15.00. Al N9ZD VE Team Chairman

Special Activities

Hamfesters Big Peotone Hamfest: Our 80th annual Hamfest coming August 7, 2016-Will County Fairgrounds, Peotone, IL. Kurt WB9FMC Hamfest Chairman.

Field Day: Join the W9AA crew for one of the best Field Days ever on June 25 & June 26 2016 at 115th and Oketo Avenue, Worth, IL.

Jim KB9CYL Field Day Chairman

WAHM: Worked all Hamfester Members-work 10 Current members for a beautiful award certificate. Matt KC9JXC Awards

Nets/Contact Info

10 METER NET: Every Sunday Evening at 8:00 PM on 28.410. Jim N9HSH is Net Control

2 METER NET: Every Monday Evening at 9:00 PM on 146.640. Tom KA9ZXN is Net Control

W9AA Mailbox:145.650 24 hours a day.

Bruno K9QKB is Sysop. ILOAK:Node on 145.650

WEB SITE: www.hamfesters.org Webmaster Granville, W9PNG & Brian, W9HLQ

Club's address:

Hamfesters Radio Club

P.O. Box 474 Crestwood, IL 60445

Patti KC9LYE Secretary

Deadline for Submitting to the Hamgab is the fifteenth of the month.