



Ham Gab

Next meeting: February 3rd

February 2017

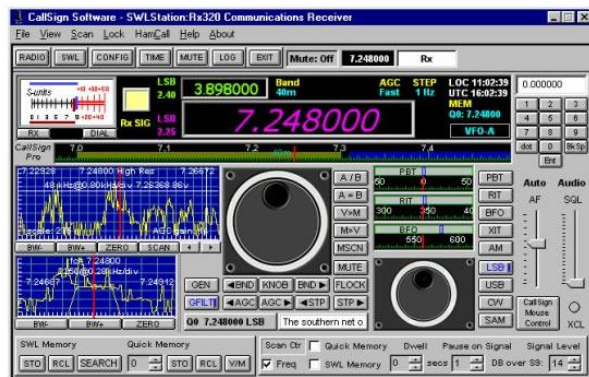


Don KC9EQQ and Kathy Liston

Lasts month's meeting was a trip down memory lane. We had a special tribute to some of the Hamfesters silent keys. Group members recounted some of the funny stories and special memories we have of these Hamfesters. It was a nice chance to reminisce and to realize the special bond that Hamfesters have. Jim Liston's wife Kathy was able to attend and we hope she found some comfort in hearing the stories of Jim's many accomplishments and good times as a Hamfester.

We also had a video of the 1997 Hamfesters and Starz contact with the MIR space station at Jerling Junior High School in Orland Park. Our members were able to establish the radio contact which allowed the students to ask the astronauts questions during the 11 minute overhead pass of the MIR. What a thrill that must have been for the students and our Hamfesters. This is Ham radio at its best.

We have a couple of good articles this month. Ed Stroh K9EGS will let you know about the **Parks On The Air (POTA)** on page 4 and Mike Kiley WA9ZPM will help you with your sound quality on page 6.



Next month Gregg AB9MZ will discuss the software useful for Ham radio. He will talk about logging, satellite tracking and radio operations software. If it's anything like Gregg's other presentations, it is sure to be very informative. Hope to see you there.

DON'T FORGET YOUR SPLIT THE POT TICKETS AT THE NEXT MEETING!

PO Box 474
 Crestwood, IL
 60445-0474
www.hamfesters.org

Special Interest Articles
 POTA pg.4
 Sound Quality pg. 6

February Birthdays
 Matt KA9BBQ
 Ben KC9CXT
 James KA9GUC
 Ray NW9S
 Ronald N9STU

Officers
 President-Nora KC9MLV
 Vice President -Jim KB9CYL
 Secretary-Patty KC9LYE
 Treasurer- ED WA9EOL
 SGT at Arm-Dave W0COP
 Trustee-Granville W9PNG

Board Members
 Nora KC9MLV
 Steve W9KXT
 Kurt WB9FMC
 Cindy N9CAS
 Cathy KC9NRH
 Brian W9HLQ

Hamgab Editors
 Steve & Eric
 KC9OOL & KC9OOM
 Scapstone@aol.com

THE PRESIDENTS BEAT

NORA POINTER KC9MLV

FEBRUARY 2017

Hello everyone and Happy Valentine's! First I would like to thank everyone for getting their dues paid and sticking with the Club another year. It was a solemn beginning to our meeting last month as we had a memorial to our SK members who have passed this last year. I believe Nostalgia Night was a hit. Wish we had more time to hear more stories from the past. It was great being in the front part of the hall where we use to set up. It felt very warm and cozy. A big thank you to Cindy and Cathy for all the help in the kitchen with the goodies set up and clean up. I will need continued help in that area to keep up the coffee and pop. And thank you to Cathy and Bob for their continued efforts in getting us the best tasting donuts each month.

At our February meeting, we will again have Gregg AB9MZ doing a program on Software for Ham Radio which should be very interesting. Gregg is highly knowledgeable about this topic and no doubt will be quite interesting. I also have a special raffle planned for all our couples that come to the February meeting.

Again, Don will need help as he takes over the reign as Hamfest Chairman. Please be sure if you attend any Hamfests this year, that you get some of our Flyers for our Hamfest to pass out at these events. We need to publicize in order to get more attendance.

March meeting, will be the White Elephant sale. So bring your goodies to sell and some change to buy.

Are you prepared for the upcoming Spring with all of its fickle weather in the way of storms, and rains and floods oh my??



If not, please join us Friday, April 7th, for our annual Weather Spotters Class/Program. This is our fifth year for fellow member Dave Bukowski's presentation of this worthwhile event for the public, Ham operators and First Responders alike to refresh skills necessary to keep an eye on the sky for severe weather. Don KC9EQQ says this year's program is getting a lot of early buzz out there especially among his fellow First Responders, so make it a date to be there and learn some great things presented in a very informative and fun manner! That night we will start around 7pm and due to the amount of info to be had, please expect this class to conclude between 10pm and 10:30pm. More info coming soon regarding this program.

See you all at the next meeting and thanks for everything you bring to our club!

Nora Pointer KC9MLV

General Meeting Minutes de Patti, KC9LYE

Hamfesters amateur radio club January 6, 2017 meeting began at 7:30 PM

Roll: Nora KC9MLV, Jim W9JPR, and WA9EOL, Patti KC9LYE, Dave W0COP (Sergeant at arms),

Tonight there were 27 members, and 9 visitors. We held a Memorial service tonight for all of the hamfest members we lost in 2016. The following Hamfesters are silent keys; Kerry Nelson AB9SB, February, Bob Koran, N9JYX August, Bruno K9QKB August, Bob N9TOE August, Jack W9MJB August, Jimmy Liston N9HSH December, Also, two of our club member's lost their wives in December; Rich Bacorn KB9NTX, George Young N9VOK, wife Barb Young. George was President of Hamfesters, he stepped down in 2005.

Jimmy Liston's wife, Kathy Liston was with us tonight.

Former President's report: by Don KC9EQQ, Don presented our new President (his wife, Nora KC9MLV) with the club's gavel. Don was club president from 2010-2016, he is now our hamfest chairman, along with Kurt W9FMC.

Our Christmas party December 3, 2016 at Papa Joe's in Orland Park. Don KC9EQQ, received an Appreciation Award for his years as club president. Don KC9EQQ, presented 2 awards; the President's Prize Award, and Field Day Award to Gene Phillips W9PNG.

Bob and Cathy Fleischmann KC9NRH, and N9KWG, 2015 winner's of Hamfester the Year Award announced that the winner for 2016 was Jimmy Liston N9HSH, Jimmy was in the hospital.

Thank you to singer Lori London for her performance at the Christmas party.

Congratulations! To all of our prize winners that night.

Vice President's report: by Jim Riley W9JPR, Judy Riley, Jim's wife has made a batch of cookies for tonight's meeting. Please eat all of the cookies so that Jim can take home an empty cookie tin. Also, Jim W9JPR, Don KC9EQQ, Nora KC9MLV, Kurt WB9FMC, and Dave W0COP, traveled to Milwaukee Wisconsin to visit HRO Ham Radio Outlet. Hamfesters has invited HRO to attend our 2017 hamfest. The field day site for 2017 is been secured, field day is June 24 and 25th.

Minutes: There were no board meetings held in November or December.

Treasurer's report: by Ed WA9EOL, our 2016 hamfest made a profit, we didn't overspend.

Programs: Tonight's program A video showing schoolchildren using ham radio in contact with the space station. Also, Hamfesters mementos on display.

February software presented by Gregg AB9MZ

March annual white elephant sale.

April weather spotting by Dave N9KPD.

May Collins radios by Brian W9HLQ,

June field day 2016 by Jim W9JPR

July our annual veteran's picnic,

August hamfest by Don KC9EQQ, and Kurt WB9FMC.

Hamgab: by Eric KC9OOM, if you have any articles for Hamgab, please submit them. And, thank you for your past contributions.

Adjournment: by Kurt W9FMC, and John KB9FQB 9:15 PM

Split the pot winner: Dave N9KPD.

Door prize winners: Judy Hennenfent, Patti KC9LYE, Bob N9KWG, Don KC9EQQ, Jim W9JPR, Cindy N9CAS, Peggy K9QLM, Herb W9HEM



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The ARRL National Parks On The Air program is over. What do we do now?

The ARRL National Parks On The Air (NPOTA) program is now officially over. It seems to have been very successful. During that year long event, from January 1, 2016 - December 31, 2016, QSOs were made from 461 of the 489 National Park sites throughout the United States that were listed on the ARRL NPOTA website. There were over 1 million QSOs made and over 20,800 activations made from those 461 parks. There were over 16,500 people who participated as "Chasers" and over 1400 people who participated as "Activators." I was fortunate enough to make contact with and confirm 187 National Park sites so far as a "Chaser", with 3 more pending verification in Logbook of the World. I also activated 2 nearby National Park sites, the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore which is just northwest of Porter, IN and Pullman National Monument located in the Pullman neighborhood of Chicago. When I say that I "activated" these 2 sites, I mean that I set up a portable station at each of those 2 sites and made contacts with people all over the USA and even a few foreign stations. There were 2 fellow hams, Ron WB9JYZ and Steve K9SGB, who traveled with me to those 2 locations and they also activated those same sites. I believe that the ARRL NPOTA program was a very good thing for amateur radio because it encouraged radio activity during a period of somewhat lackluster propagation conditions. Those propagation conditions that we have experienced lately are not going to improve any time soon either. They will be on the decline for the next several years as we head toward the 11year solar cycle minimum. So that probably means fewer DX contacts over the next several years and more challenging radio operating conditions in general even within the continental United States.

So now that the NPOTA program is over, what can we do to keep active on the air? Well, we can participate in some of the usual annual contests that occur throughout the year and maybe do some occasional rag-chewing. But I would like to suggest another activity.

Recently I discovered a program called **Parks On The Air** (POTA). It is also known as **World Wide Flora and Fauna** (WWFF) which has been in existence since 1983. If you are wondering about the words "Flora" and "Fauna", they are scientific terms given by biologists



to describe the collective whole of plant and animal life. So in other words, this program is referring to getting out into nature and doing some portable operating. Just as it states on the main website for World Wide Flora and Fauna, "Make nature your shack!" The POTA program is the USA portion of the WWFF. Surprisingly I have never heard of it until about 2 months ago. It is quite similar to NPOTA but includes State Parks as well as National Parks and even Nature Preserves, National Wildlife Refuges, State Recreation Areas, etc. There are over 3000 entities/sites included in the USA program, of which 65 are located right here in Illinois and 31 in Indiana. That is a big difference in the number of sites compared to the NPOTA program that had only 6 National Park sites in Illinois and 3 in Indiana. There are about 30 POTA sites in Illinois, Indiana and Michigan that are within about a 100 mile radius from the southern suburbs of Chicago where I live. That gives us a lot of great opportunities to activate many more sites/parks without having to travel such long distances. When you look at the map on the POTA website, <http://wwff-kff.com>, you can zoom in to our northeast Illinois area and see how many places there are that are not very far away.

All of the National Parks, State Parks and other entities in the USA that are on this list, have reference numbers (designators) for the POTA program, just as the National Park sites did for the ARRL NPOTA program. There are even sites outside of the continental United States scattered throughout the world, which include Alaska and Hawaii. These are sites that are connected with territories or areas controlled by the United States, such as islands in the Pacific and

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Caribbean and even Antarctica. There are hundreds of other international entities/sites scattered throughout the rest of the world in many countries.

There is an award program connected with the POTA program. Each country has its own sub-group in the program so there are awards and scoring both in the USA group as well as internationally. The POTA award program gives out award certificates for various levels of activity as an "Activator" or as a "Hunter." The "Activators" are those amateurs who operate portable from within Parks on the Air (POTA/KFF) designated parks, and "Hunters" are those amateurs who make contact with the Activators who are operating portable from within Parks on the Air (POTA/KFF) designated parks. Most of the time the Hunters are sitting in the comfort of their home shack when they contact the portable park Activators. In order for an Activator or a Hunter to qualify for an award the Activators must send their logs in .adif format via email to Jason, W3AAX, who is the North America KFF Coordinator for the World Wide Flora and Fauna program. His email address is w3aax@outlook.com. This procedure of sending logs is somewhat similar to the ARRL NPOTA program where Activators uploaded their loggings to LOTW, (Logbook of the World), but in the POTA program the Hunters do not send in their loggings. The Hunters only register in the program with their call sign and a "LogSearch" program on the WWFF website matches up their call sign with logs uploaded by the Activators and then keeps a count of how many parks that they have contacted. The LogSearch program also keeps track of how many parks the Activators have activated so that award credits can be accumulated there too. There is a bonus if you participated in NPOTA last year. You can apply most of your NPOTA contacts toward the POTA program, as long as the NPOTA activator sends in his/her loggings to Jason, the POTA North America KFF Coordinator mentioned above. I figured that many of the NPOTA activators that I had QSOs with throughout the year probably were not aware of the POTA program. So I sent a bunch of emails out to many of them informing them about POTA and asked them nicely if they would consider sending in their NPOTA activation loggings to the POTA program. Fortunately the POTA website contains a cross reference list for NPOTA sites to POTA sites. That was a big help in identifying those sites.

If you go to their website at <http://wwff-kff.com> you can find out about the rules, see a map of all the entities that are within the program and read about the awards program. By the way, the awards are free. Once you apply for an award, the certificate is emailed to you so that you can print it out on your printer. The award certificates look quite nice. The WWFF runs a DX Cluster that lists current activations in real time. You can also list your upcoming planned activation on their website as well as look up other scheduled upcoming activations. Up until recently it appeared that the majority of the participation in this program was by foreign amateurs, although I am now starting to see more POTA activations in the USA showing up on DXWatch ever since January 1st. So it appears that the POTA program is definitely catching on. I suspect now that NPOTA is over, and once the word spreads more about this POTA program, that it may become even more popular.

Once the weather gets nice in the Spring I plan to participate in this program and activate some of our not too distant state parks. I had never operated portable until I participated in the ARRL NPOTA program last year with 3 activations at 2 different National Parks. Last year was also the first time that I operated portable during Field Day. If you have never operated portable you should try it sometime. It can be somewhat of a challenge sometimes but it is also fun and is something to do to keep active in this wonderful hobby of ours. It is nice to get outside and enjoy the fresh air while emitting some RF into the atmosphere.

73

Ed Stroh - K9EGS

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SOUND QUALITY

The general quality of electronic sound reproduction today is, for the most part, utterly odious. It is worse now than it was a few decades ago. Most sound and audio/video devices convey only the midrange frequencies, missing both the low and high tones. Furthermore, most products have quite a resonant peak at 200 Hz or higher, giving a hollow, drummy sound. Finally, noticeable distortion makes the sound mushy, harsh, or unclear. If movies, photography, and television did to pictures what 99% of today's electronics does to sound, the images we would see on these would look like cartoons. Granted, there is no perfect sound reproducing system, and those which come closest to it are probably too large, complex, and expensive for most of us. However, some standard of sound reproduction decency should be developed, and products which achieve this simply and economically should be produced and marketed. I suggest the following:



1. The range of sound frequencies which will be reproduced should be from 80 Hz to 12 kHz, as smoothly and evenly as possible, without resonant peaks. This frequency response will provide a very clear, natural presentation of the human voice and most musical sounds, and perhaps, in general, give the most faithful sound quality for the size and cost.
2. Power output and distortion specifications can be quite controversial, and I will not argue about numbers. The device or system should be able to deliver any reasonable and expected volume level into the space it is intended to fill. Distortion should be low enough so as not to be noticeable to even a critical listener who is hearing it blindly.
3. Tone controls, and "equalizers" (I use that word loosely because these are often not adjusted to truly equalize the tonal response of the sound) are not all bad, but, by far, they more often make the resultant sound less, not more, faithful. A flat, accurate, response should still be attainable, and the control settings which will provide this should be clearly indicated on the controls. Almost all "bass boost" functions sound hollow, drummy, or otherwise rather unnatural. Many systems have a "smiley curve" response where the highs and lows are emphasized and the midrange is depressed; voices sound somewhat far away and less clear. The boom and sizzle may seem impressive at first, but this becomes tiring after hearing it for a while. I have seen graphic "equalizers" (again named loosely) where the sliders appear to be in a very random pattern and the resulting sound is like it is coming from the bottom of a barrel. I have hit the bypass switch when I saw this!
4. Even monophonic (one channel only) models should be provided for applications where size, cost, or priorities of visual aesthetics make it difficult enough to have one good speaker and channel of sound in a given space, let alone more than one. Having one faithful channel of sound is preferable to multiple poor channels. Can anyone even notice the stereo separation from several feet away if the two speakers are only a foot apart anyway?
5. Modern digital recording and playback and transmission systems, by and large, are more faithful and accurate than most legacy analog media if done properly. Even MP3 at 192 kbps or greater is better than all but the very best vinyl disk records and magnetic tape, and is more convenient and durable. Web streaming sounds terrible; what are the formats and bit rates?

Probably the biggest obstacle to better sound is that the loudspeakers, and the cabinets which house them, will need to be larger and more rigidly constructed than is now generally commonplace. Low pitched sound waves are physically large and a lot of air must be moved to produce them. Yes, ways have been found to extract better sound from smaller speakers than was possible decades ago, but this can only be done to a limited extent. Small speakers which give a faithful sound are very inefficient, cannot fill large spaces, and cost at least as much as better, larger models.

Educating the general public as to what more faithful sound reproduction is and making more easily available is much needed.

Hamfesters VE Testing de Al Bukowski N9ZD VE Coordinator

Hamfesters VE Testing Report for HamGab February 2017

Hamfester's Radio Club VE's team assembled the morning of January 14, 2017 at Oak Forest City Hall to administered Amateur Radio exams. We had three candidates who passed their Technician exam and one individual who passed the Extra class exam. Congratulations to all. And a big Thank You to all VE's who help me at the test sessions.



Information to Read before attending any Amateur Radio VE Test Session

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 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). For Technician candidates. If you would prefer not use your Social Security Number on your application, we suggest obtaining a Federal Registration Number (FRN) from the [FCC website](#) - otherwise please bring your Social Security Number. This is a requirement on the FCC form. Licensed amateurs upgrading can use the FRN number on their amateur license in place of the SSN.

Retaking a 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.

Upgrade Examinations:

Important: If you are already licensed and are taking an upgrade examination: Please bring your printed *and signed Current Amateur Radio License*, and a copy of your current license that we can send with your paperwork. 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 the CSCE* that we can send with you paperwork.

New License or Upgrade!

Candidates, Congratulations on passing your Exam(s). It may take the FCC 5 to 10 business days (average 6 days) before your new or upgraded Amateur License is posted on the FCC website. Please check often the FCC Website for your license info. <http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls/index.htm?job=home>

FCC 'Paperless' Amateur Radio License Policy Now In Effect:

How to Print your Official FCC License:

Download and Print License: The licensee can log into the FCC ULS License Manager System <http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls/>. The FCC site will present a FRN number and request a password when you search your full name and address. Read the instructions to 'Download the Electronic Authorization' for the official license. On the 'Download Authorizations' page the license holder will add their call sign to the 'Authorizations to Download' and then click download. A PDF of the license can be saved to your computer and/or printed immediately on any paper you desire.

Location's and Time of the next Hamfesters VE administered Radio Exams:

We start a New Year for the next exam, February 11, 2017 at the Oak Forest City Hall 15440 S. Central Ave. Oak Forest, IL 60452. Please arrive by 9:00 AM. We begin testing promptly at 9:15 AM. Enter through the marked Police door entrance and look for the Amateur Radio testing exam signs for directions.

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

N9ZD@arrl.net. Walk-ins are welcome and the test fee for 2017 remains at \$15.00 (cash only -- no credit cards or checks).

Hamfesters Monthly Raffle

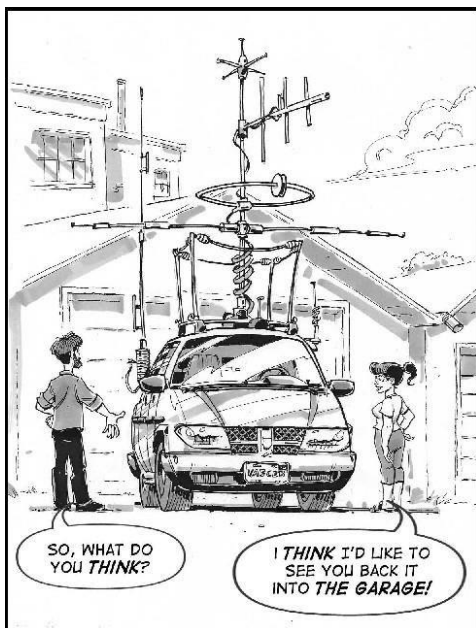
We try to do the best we can for prizes for the monthly Hamfest meetings. We however have a limited budget we can work from. We would encourage all members to contribute an item for the monthly raffle. It might be something that would be useful to others, but is no longer of use to you. It could also simply be something you just choose to donate. We try to get as broad a variety of prizes as we can. With your donations, we can have even more variety and nicer prizes for our monthly raffles. If you can help we would greatly appreciate it.

Your prize doesn't have to be electronic in nature; it can be any- thing even if it doesn't deal with ham radio. Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of making a prize donation and hope to hear from you very soon.

Feel free to contact me by email at

kb9yxh@yahoo.com or call me at (708)234-0280.

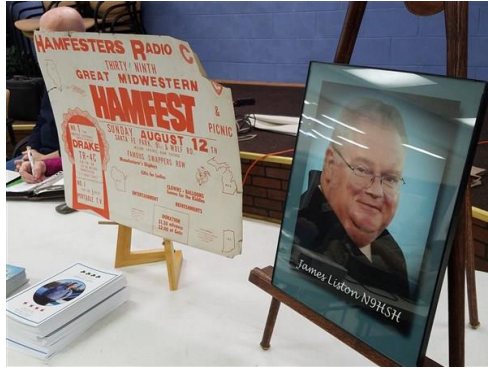
73' Bob Richter KB9YXH Raffle Chairman



January 2017 meeting pictures courtesy of Don KC9EQQ



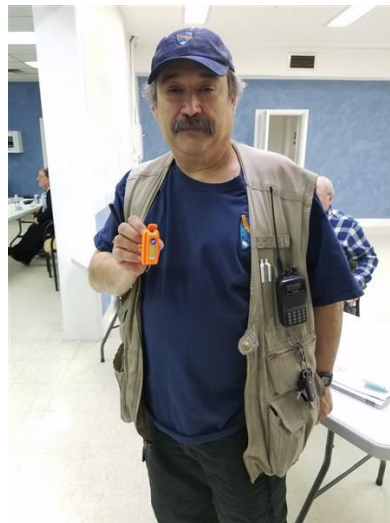
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Hamfesters Amateur Radio Club

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 81st annual Hamfest coming August 6, 2017-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 24 & June 25 2017 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.