

# The Feedline



Summer, 2009

The Feedline

## Special points of interest:

- The Mayor, a County Commissioner, and the EMA director visited Field Day.
- A full article in the *Pharos Tribune* covered the club's field day activities.
- The new chairman is a shoe-in for reelection!

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## Field Day scores a hit with members, guests

New CCARC Field Day Chairman, Tom Murray, KB9WSL, is pleased with the results of Field Day with many of the nearly 1,500 points garnered during the 2009 event came via "bonus points."

"We might as well go for all the points we're entitled to," Murray commented. Bonus points were added for many areas including running on emergency power, good media publicity, and being visited by several local elected officials.

Besides HF contacts on 40 with the traditional bob-tail curtain antenna, numerous contacts were made on PSK. Digital mode contacts counted as two per contact.

"Not having CW operation this year hurt us a little," Murray said. Those

contacts also counted 2 points each.

This year, club members attempted contacts via satellite. Although operators were able to copy satellite signals



with homebrew antennas, no contacts were achieved due to the excessive interference from other stations.

Again, the highlight was the carry-in meal on Saturday evening for members and guests.

## Local businesses help with donations

Nearly two dozen area businesses contributed to Field Day. Thanks largely to the efforts of member, Rae Ervin, N9YFW, contributions were received ranging from food items to gift certificates. Many items were raffled off to provide money for the

club to be used toward operational expenses.

Framed certificates of appreciation were given to each business to thank them personally for contributing to the CCARC.

## DTV getting complaints from viewers

Now that all major TV stations have switched to digital broadcasts, many are now having to deal with reception problems. Broadcast engineers from major cities like Philadelphia and Nashville are hearing from viewers who can no longer receive their favorite programs.

Problems seem to be plaguing stations using VHF channels much more than those using UHF, according to a recent article in VHF-UHF Digest.

This is likely because VHF antennas have little, if any, gain, whereas UHF antennas will usually show several db in

gain, according to one engineer. "A viewer called to complain that she couldn't pick up our signal 90 miles out with her "rabbit ears"," he reported.

He blamed part of the problem on stores that sell woefully inadequate antennas to customers who have no clue. The problem is aggravated by the decoder box's computer chips. A relatively strong signal is required or the box delivers no signal to the TV set.

Some stations that switched to their former analog VHF channels are now wanting to go to UHF, which is not possible if no channels are available.

**"It appears that Amateur Radio's retention rate is about 90%"**

## Does ham radio need to fear social network sites?

Not if a recent Neilson Online survey holds true that showed people leaving Twitter outnumbered joiners 3 to 2 after one month. Twitter ranks behind networking giants MySpace and Facebook.

According to Neilson, Facebook had over 69 million unique users and MySpace numbered just under 14 million. This represented 41% and 33% respectively of the U.S. Web users.

While there are no regular research numbers, it appears that Amateur Radio's retention rate stays at around 90% from month to month.

According to the FCC, there are currently over 672,400 licensed amateur radio operators in the U.S.

*(Information from WorldRadio.)*

## AM stations to use FM to improve coverage

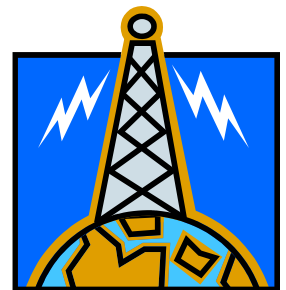
After experimenting for years, the FCC will now approve the use of FM translators to relay AM radio stations. Stations that operate daytime only on AM will be allowed to operate 24 hours daily with a FM translator.

The FCC's Report and Order contains two conditions: the translators are already authorized and that the 60 dbu signal does not go beyond the AM station's 2 mv/m contour, or 25 miles from the transmitter, whichever is

smaller.

AM on FM translators have been allowed previously through special temporary authorities issued by the FCC.

*(Information from DX News)*



## Which Amateur Radio database is the best?

When a ham hears a station on the amateur bands that he wants to know more about, he has several databases to choose from, like QRZ.com, and ARRL.org. But all of these databases get their information from the same source, the FCC.

The best and most accurate source for callsign information is found at <wireless.fcc.gov/uls/> the Commission's Universal Licensing System. All others are just copies of this.

What the other databases can do however, is to add additional information

that the FCC doesn't provide, like grid squares, e-mail addresses, and years of birth. But the FCC provides some information that no other databases seem to use, licensee issue, expiration, and cancellation dates.

It is rumored that the FCC plans a major overhaul of the Universal Licensing System and a new consolidated licensing system will be available by next year.

*(information from CQ Magazine)*

## "Most trusted man in America" dies

Many people knew Walter Cronkite, news anchor for CBS television for nearly two decades. But far fewer knew that Cronkite was also a licensed Novice class Amateur, KB2GSD.

Cronkite passed away at age 92 in New York City this past June. He had retired from CBS in 1981.

An ARRL member, Cronkite had provided the narration for a League video

produced in 2003 showcasing the public service aspects of Amateur Radio called *Amateur Radio Today*. The video is still available.

Cronkite reported on several monumental news events including the assassination of President Kennedy, and astronaut Neal Armstrong setting foot on the moon as part of the Apollo XI crew.

**He received numerous awards, most recently the Armstrong Award from the Radio Club of America in 2007.**

## Stepping back in time with 6 meter AM? Yes, AM!

Are you old enough to remember the Gonset Communicator? Or even the Clegg 99'er? If you happen to have such a rig, and it still operates, you might fire it up. Graham, WE5I, is ready and waiting to talk to you.

Graham, whose QTH is Oklahoma City, is standing by waiting to communicate with good old fashioned full-carrier AM. WE5I is on daily keeping watch on 50.4 Megacycles, er, Megahertz.

Graham, located in grid square EM15, is listening for callers who would like to contact middle America using AM. He says his operating schedule is posted on the W6YX VHF Reflector. He adds that even if you don't hear him, call anyway. He might be listening for you to call.

*(Information from WorldRadio.)*





**Newsletter of the Cass  
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**WE'RE ON  
THE WEB!**

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**Cass County Amateur Radio Club Officers**

**President:** Phil Snyder, W9LVY

**Vice President:** Dave Rothermel, K9DVL

**Secretary:** Tom Murray, KB9WSL

**Treasurer:** Dave Wandrei, N9WCQ

**Directors At Large:** Ed Norris, K9PSR; Bob Minnick, K9AWH; Tom Denton, KB9VMW

**Testing Coordinator:** Chuck Hendrickson, N9PMW (on leave)

**Emergency Coordinator:** Chuck Hendrickson, N9PMW (on leave)

**The FEEDLINE Editor & Publisher:** Ed Norris, K9PSR

**Trustee of Repeaters:** Phil Snider, W9LVY

**Education & History:** Anna Hendrickson, KC9IDO

**Mailing Specialist:** Dave Wandrei, N9WCQ

**Color Copy Guy:** I. C. Clearly

**Web Site Specialist:** Brandon DeLorenzo, KC9LVB

**Club Radio Engineer:** Mr. R. F. Burns

**Club Pessimist:** C. F. Icare

## Dots and Dashes

### Repeaters

The primary repeater operates on 147.180 MHz and is located at the Chase Park water tower with an open receiver. An additional receive site is located at the Cass County EMA building. These are accessed with a 77 HZ sub-audible tone. The VHF transmitter also transmits a 77 Hz tone. Setting your receiver to *decode* will reduce unwanted signals. A second VHF repeater also is located at the Emergency Management building and operates

on 145.230 MHz. A UHF repeater transmits on 443.650 MHz from the EMA building. All transmit offsets are standard.

Repeaters may be out of service from time to time for repairs or upgrades. The club station is W9VMW.

### CCARC Meetings

Meetings are held the third Saturday of each month at 9:00 AM at the Cass County Emergency Management Agency building, 2 miles North of Logansport on SR 17. Dues are \$15.00 per

year. Immediate family members may join for an additional \$5.00.

### Amateur License Tests

Test sessions for all classes of amateur radio licenses are offered the third Saturday of each month at approximately 10:00 AM, immediately following the club meeting. Testing is held at the Cass County EMA building, 2 miles North of Logansport on SR17. Pre-registration is not necessary. The CCARC is affiliated with The W5YI Group.



**The Cass County Amateur Radio Club is an Indiana Not For Profit Corporation in continuous existence since 1953.**