

Central Division News & Views

Issue #2 - December, 2002

Ft. Wayne Hamfest



Checking DX OSL Cards at Ft. Wayne Hamfest

Standing at back and looking over shoulders:
Indiana Section Manager, Jim Sellers, K9ZBM

Card Checkers seated left to right:
Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA (NCJ Editor - DX Card Checker)
Dan Henderson, N1ND (ARRL Contest Branch Mgr - DX Card Checker)
Vicki Luetzelschwab, AE9YL (Carl's wife - WAS Checker)
Scott Lehman, N9AG (DX Card Checker)

Late-Season Tornadoes

Friday, September 20th brought five late-season tornadoes to Central and Southern Indiana. Amateur Radio Skywarn spotters are credited with saving many lives in this unusual outbreak. The National Weather Service did not believe the severe thunderstorms tracking along a southeastward moving cold front had energy levels sufficient for the formation of tornadoes. The eye-witness reports given by these spotters enabled the NWS to provide more timely warnings as the storms moved through the state.

Monday, November 11th brought an even larger tornado outbreak. The weather set-up was similar to the Indiana event but south and east of our region. This time, at least 30 people died in several states. Amateur Radio operators again rose to the challenge. As long as the temperature difference across a weather front is great enough and sufficient energy in the form of latent moisture is present, tornadoes will happen outside of what is considered to be the "tornado season".

Hams wanting to provide emergency communications should always be prepared for the worst so that our reputation will continue to provide a major reason for keeping the Amateur Radio Service. Most of the time, the general public (and we licensees) take our radio service for granted. But when the stuff really hits the fan, hams are there to provide virtually instant, on-site communications that will never be replaced by cellular telephones or the Internet.

Email From Your Director & Section Manager

It appears that electronic communications had the biggest effect ever in our mid-term federal election. And while my ears are still ringing from all the TV and radio ads, I want to address this issue as it relates to the ARRL. Even though we are licensed as electronic communicators, we many times fail to communicate. I'm not talking about our on-the-air activities, rather the paper modes and now the Internet - the result of our ever expanding use of computers. This web site and newsletter is my effort to harness this technology for the benefit of all the hams in the ARRL Central Division and anyone else who finds this web site informative and useful.

However, I have to depend on you readers to spread the word about this web site. According to the statistics I have been given, about three-quarters of the Central Division members have Internet access. But it appears that many members are not signed up to receive email messages from the division director and their respective section manager. The cost of using the U.S. Postal service for membership communications is very high and getting higher - and in today's world, is slow and getting slower. I therefore urge you to sign up for mass-distributed email messages from your ARRL officers, directors, and section managers. And then get others to sign up. When you change your email address, please update it in "Membership Data" section on the web site.

You have total control over of the types of ARRL-generated emails you will receive. You do not have to sign up to receive ARRL merchandise sales messages, propagation forecasts, etc. You pick what you want to receive. You can also modify your choices at any time in the future. And your email address posted to this menu will not be sold to, or swapped with, other organizations.

Here's how to set up your ARRL email preferences:

1. Go to ARRL web site home page. www.arrl.org/
2. If necessary, sign in to "Members Only" section.
3. Click on "Member Data Page" located in "Members Only" menu box.
4. Review your "Email Notification Options".
5. Click on "Modify Membership Data".
6. Scroll down to part of menu that deals with email notifications.
7. Select or de-select desired email notifications and execute choices.
8. Return to ARRL web site home page.

Notes:

- A. If you are not registered for access to the "Members Only" section of the ARRL web site, you will have to do this first.
- B. At the bottom of the "Modify Membership Data" menu, there is an option to suspend receipt of all ARRL email postings while you are on vacation or unable to access your email. This is a handy choice to keep your email box on your ISP's email server from overflowing.

ARRL Fund Solicitations

I have received a few inquiries and even a couple of complaints about the display ads in QST that solicit the members for contributions over and above their dues. What follows is a discussion of why this is being done.

The short simple answer for these fund solicitations is that our dues do not cover all of the costs of providing member services, defending our spectrum allocations and our ability to erect antennas, and recruiting new hams and ARRL members.

About three years ago, a study of ARRL membership demographics was done. This study, of course, revealed the average age of our members is still rising. But it also indicated a large percentage of ARRL members are in the age groups that make most of the charitable donations in our society - and that this group has the potential to donate several million dollars to the ARRL over the course of their remaining years, if they are asked. Other than special fund-raisers like the WIAW refurbishment many years ago and the annual solicitation for the *Fund For Defense of Amateur Radio Frequencies*, virtually all ARRL income has come from member dues, QST advertising (in recent years it's dropped), and other publication and clothing sales.

With advent of the ARRL's *Education & Technology* program, formerly known as "The Big Project", and the need to defend the use of antennas as well as frequencies, additional funds are required. Based on this data and the knowledge that there are outside funding sources available, the ARRL board decided to tap into these sources of additional income with a professionally run development program.

We now have a group of donation/recognition programs established. Some of them are for specific activities such as *WIAW Endowment*, *Education & Technology*, and *Fund For Defense of Amateur Radio Frequencies*. The *Diamond Club* is for those members who want to provide extra financial support to the ARRL without specifying how it's to be used. And the *Legacy Circle*, is designed to provide recognition to those members who include the ARRL in their estate plans. I want to emphasize that nothing is being taken away from members who only pay dues. The free services and recognition given to donating members and corporate entities are offset many times over by the additional income that is generated. These donations are tax-deductible to the extent current law allows. Membership dues are not tax-deductible.

Now that the ARRL has the professional expertise in this area, it has used this expertise to receive a sizable grant from *United Technologies*, and an even larger *Homeland Defense* grant from the federal government. These two grants are restricted to emergency communications training for hams. But they open the door to many who might not, or could not, participate in this training - at virtually no cost to the ARRL. This would not have happened if the board of directors had not decided to get into the development business.

There will continue to be contribution solicitation advertising in QST and mailings to various groups of members from time to time. The alternative is to raise member dues a lot more, a lot more often, and/or greatly reduce our efforts to insure the viability of the Amateur Radio Service.

Holiday Greetings

I wish you, your families, and friends a very joyous holiday season in what remains of this year. I also wish all of you good health and happiness in the coming year.

73 - George R. (Dick) Isely, W9GIG
Central Division Director