



# KARS KEY KLICKS



JOURNAL OF THE KANKAKEE AREA RADIO SOCIETY

Volume 81 Issue 5

Editors: K9QT, K9NR, Photos: N9CHA, NI9H, K9QT  
Contributors: K9BIG, KC9FAV

May 2006

## THE SWEET SOUND OF CW!

The next KARS meeting will be May 2nd, 7PM at St. Mary's Hospital. Everyone is invited to attend. The program, to be presented by Brian, KC9FAV will feature:

### CW from W9 A—Z!

Who invented "Morse Code" and how we came to use it in communications. The next meeting will feature the history of CW...from it's beginning and into the future. Hopefully I can answer these Questions.

I will have a Power Point presentation with lots of pictures and stories.

*Don't miss it!!!*

73 de Brian, KC9FAV



**Jim, K9BIG and Maury, W4HYB pose after the very successful ARISS contact at Bradley/Bourbonnais HS**

### KARS KALENDAR

- May 2.....KARS General Meeting
- May 6-7.....Indiana QSO Party
- May 13.....FISTS Spring Sprint
- May 16.....KARS Board Meeting
- May 19-21.....HAMVENTION!!!**
- May 27-28...CQWW WPX CW Contest
- June 14.....Exam Session

*The Kankakee Area Radio Society operates repeaters on:*

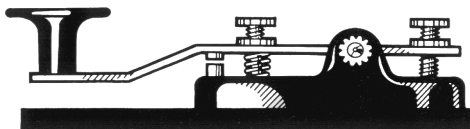
**146.34/.94      107.2 PL Access**  
**449.8/444.8      114.8 PL Access**

*Also, co-sponsors:*

**145.130      107.2 PL Access**

*Additionally, KARS sponsors:*

**144.39      Wide Area APRS digi-peater**  
**145.53      KARS DX Cluster**



# W9AZ

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY

MAY 8th      K9FO

Let the newsletter editors know if we miss your birthday or get it wrong.

### TOUR OF NEW EOC

Sgt Craig Long of Kankakee County ESDA hosted the April KARS meeting at the new county building adjacent to the new county jail. The installation is impressive with a communications control center reminiscent of a NASA launch complex. Ham equipment figures into the mix. See page three for pictures.

### EXAM SESSION

An exam session will be held at 6PM, Wednesday, June 14th. At St. John's Church on W. River St. in Kankakee.

Exams for all classes of license may be taken. Be sure to bring a photo ID. If you are upgrading, bring your present original license and a copy thereof.

If you are a certified examiner, please attend and help out. It will help keep your certification current.

### EMERGENCY DRILL

On Wednesday, March 29th, an emergency drill was held with local emergency personnel. The communication abilities of ARES were tested at this event. For an extended period of time, emergency personnel simulated a communications failure of their equipment and relied solely on the hams for the passing of all messages. John K9BYT, coordinated the event. He was assisted by Greg WR9L, Brandon K9BAC and Billie K9QT. By all accounts it was a success!

### NCS FOR MAY

- May 1      KC9FAV
- May 8      K9FO
- May 15      KE9MG
- May 22      K9BAK
- May 29      WD9AYI

Don't forget the net!  
Mondays at 2100 hrs. local time

## SEE YOU AT THE DAYTON HAMVENTION!!!

# KARS HOMEPAGE— WWW.W9AZ.COM —KARS HOMEPAGE

## ISS Contact Wrap-up

The ISS contact on March 28<sup>th</sup> was more successful than I could have ever hoped to imagine. I very much appreciate everyone's kind words about a job well done. However, the only reason why it was so successful is due to all the people who came together and pitched in to make it happen. I sincerely would like to thank all the members of KARS who came to the set-up or helped in your own way. I would especially like to thank Clay, N9IO, for his outstanding work in public relations via e-mails and the KARS website. Also, I would like to thank Maury Shumaker W4HYB, who was such a great influence on everyone who attended. I couldn't imagine anyone who could have done it better than Maury. Obviously, many people from KARS and BBCHS put effort into making this a big success. I thought Brian KC9FAV, should have pitched a tent up on the roof of the school he was working up there so much. He was a great help. Jamie, KC9DEP drove down from Milwaukee to be part of the program and basically ended up running the whole audio feed with his mixers and the like. If he didn't show up, I think we would've had problems. Greg WR9L, Don, K9NR, Carl K9CS, ran the equipment flawlessly. Thanks to Ken, W9WNI for setting up the 440 repeater to stream audio during the contact. Thanks to Charlie Sufana AJ9N, who came down and spoke at our March meeting and was instrumental in making the contact a success. By the way, Charlie is asking for help in some upcoming local contacts. He can be reached at AJ9N@aol.com if you'd like to help. Thanks to Billie K9QT and Don K9NR, for their continued work on the newsletter. The list of thank you's goes on and on. I just wanted to let you know I appreciate all of your help and apologize if I missed thanking anyone.

All in all, the effort for those "10 minutes" was well worth it in my opinion. It was a good day for Ham Radio! The Kankakee Area Radio Society received much attention in the media as well as being featured on the ARRL homepage. Many people tuned in to the audio and video streams. More listened in on the downlink. I know this to be true--- I was traveling back home from Tennessee on a family vacation and working HF mobile.

W1AW was on the air, so I called and the operator came back by saying "K9BIG... you're in the KARS group...we listened to the ISS downlink mountain top motorcycle mobile...our club is from St. Charles..." After the QSO with W1AW, my wife said my head got about 2 sizes bigger. I told her I was popular on the ham bands before the

ISS contact and she shouldn't have been so surprised by that...

Don't forget to send off for your QSL's - FYI--you can apply for a SWL card if you were in attendance or listened via W9AZ.

On to the next project...

**73 de Jim, K9BIG**

## 12 Reasons Why CW is my "FAV" Mode

1. Simplicity - If anyone would really take a good look at what Morse Code consists of, they would see that it is truly a very simple system. Consisting of on and off keying, CW is a "Digital" mode. The duration of each tone and combination of long and short tones tells us what letter, number or punctuation is being sent. Could it be possible that we try to oversimplify it to the extent that it becomes difficult and an unreachable target or goal?

2. Fun - To me this simple language is like a secret code known only to those select few who dare to take time and effort to learn it as a communication tool. It is fun to communicate with others, who have become a member of this sort of "Secret Society." Although it is not that secret, there seems to be a calling for other Hams to partake in it.

3. Relaxing - There are times after a long and stressful day that just sitting down and trying to relax just doesn't work out. I have found that working CW takes my mind off of things as I try to decipher what my fellow ham is trying to tell me. There is some concentration needed to copy code and there is relaxation in the transposition of these Dots and Dashes.

4. Exciting - The ability to communicate using a language that only the world of CW operators know and use is exciting. I heard an operator working a contest that was collecting SSB contacts and then for some reason I thought he was talking to himself and as I re-tuned a little to his signal, I heard the tones from a CW signal. Even though it wasn't a true 2-way conversation, I was still impressed that he was able to talk to a CW operator as well as a SSB operator.

5. Frustrating - Yes...it is true...CW can be frustrating. There are times when I would like to contact that much needed station, only to not get the return QSO. Then there are times when I get a station that is sending a little faster than I am, and when I try to match his speed, he speeds up even faster, as if I was not allowed to send as fast as he could send. CW is a means of communications NOT a race to see who can send the fastest. More often than not, the operators who try to send faster, make

so many mistakes, it would have been better if they just slowed down to start with.

6. Unique - CW is a very unique way to communicate as in, not every Ham throughout the world uses Morse code but the ones who do are very respectful.

7. Respectful - of each other and the code that we use has become sort of "code". That is good radio practice, not to step on the other guy as he speaks, and

to always treat each other as ladies and gentlemen whichever the case may be.

8. No reports of enforcement's from the FCC. If you were to look into the FCC enforcement's listing on the ARRL web site, you will see actions towards people causing interference on repeaters, some about RFI, and others about advertising on the Ham air waves, which I believe are against FCC rules. But you will find very few if any actions about Code. As stated above that is where the respect comes into play.

9. CW cuts through propagation - I have read and heard where CW played a large part in saving the lives of people in danger during Katrina.

10. First line of communications - I believe that CW was the first form of communications that brought on the rescues early on during this tragedy.

11. Historical - CW was the first means for the Railroads and Western Union to communicate within their infrastructure. It became the grandfather of Ham radio, and the only way to communicate at the beginning of amateur radio.

12. Defeated! (Fearfully) - This in not a reason that I enjoy CW but in my opinion, the entry level has become downgraded to where getting a license has become very easy. As more and more operators acquire a license they really don't want to or value CW. Yes it is old, and yes there are newer more up to date means of digital communications but they require a computer and the internet to run them. If there is a power loss it is almost impossible to maintain contact. If this infrastructure is damaged or challenged in any way communication becomes difficult. It is my hope that the ARRL and the FCC will see the value in CW and keep it in the licensing structure.

**73 de Brian, KC9FAV**

## KARS BOARD MEETING

The KARS May board meeting will be held on May 16th in the banquet room of El Campesino Mexican restaurant. All KARS members and spouses are welcome to attend.

Eat at 6:00. Meet at 7:00.

### Images from the ARISS contact at Bradley Bourbonnais High School



Charlie, AJ9N (ARISS mentor) holds gift from BBCHS



Award created by Clay, N9IO and presented to Jim, K9BIG



The big day Students contact the International Space Station



Rooftop view of the antennas used for the ARISS contact

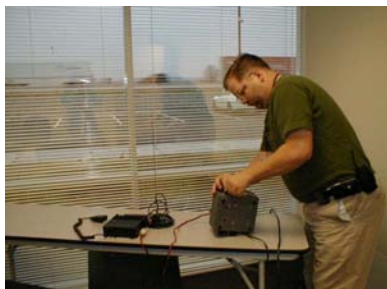


Featured speaker, Maury, W4HYB, preparing for the event.



Jim, K9BIG models the special ARISS contact Tee shirt supplied by KARS

### Images from the County Emergency Exercise



John, K9BYT sets up temporary radio at the EOC for use in the Emergency Exercise



County officials hold a critique of Emergency Exercise at the new command center



Billie, K9QT operating at county HQ during the Emergency Exercise

### Images from the KARS April Meeting



KARS holds meeting inside the command center of the EOC



John, K9BYT, conducted an informative program about emergency communications



Craig Long, Kankakee ESDA, took members on a tour of the building after the meeting.