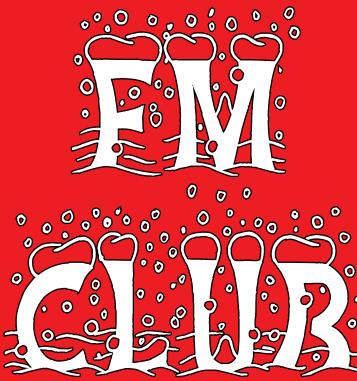
# solution.

VOLUME 59 | ISSUE 12

**DEC 2024** 





# **Presidents Message**

# HO! HO! HO! Merry Christmas!!



Happy Holidays, whatever it may be for you...

First, I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge the loss of one of our good friends and members who has now become a silent key. Joe (KC9BUF), "The Buff Man," will be deeply missed by all. Joe served on the board of directors and ran the 50/50 at our meetings. He was always ready to lend a hand wherever he could. His meatballs at Field Days were legendary and will surely be missed. Joe often liked to say he coined the phrase, "Come for the knowledge, but stay for the fun," used nightly on our Night Watch Net. I beg to differ on who coined it, LOL, but I'll let him have it! Joe, may you rest in peace, my friend. Let us all take a moment this holiday season to think of him, as he was truly a part of our CFMC family.

As we come to the end of another year for the club, I believe we've made great strides in becoming more visible to the ham community. Let's take a moment to look back at what we've accomplished. Winter Field Day was a great success. We had some wonderful POTA (Parks on the Air) gatherings. Our CFMC Summer Picnic and Summer Field Day brought us together for great times. The many Friday Night Socials kept the camaraderie alive. Radio Expo, as always, brought hams together from across the state and beyond. Our monthly meetings offered knowledge and fellowship. Let's not forget that we've also welcomed many new members to our club family this year. Next year can be even better, with the help of all our members. Remember, the more you put into your club, the more you'll get out of it!

The election is over, and I'd like to congratulate and welcome our new officers for the next two years: President, Paul (N9|ZY); Vice

# Upcoming CFMC Events

Fri - 12/14 | 7pm CFMC Christmas Party Dino's Italian Restaurant

7004 W. Higgins Avenue Chicago, IL 60656

Wed - 12/18 | 7:30pm CFMC Club Meeting 16<sup>th</sup> District Police Station

5151 N Milwaukee Ave Chicago, IL 60630

Fri - 12/20 | 7pm Friday Night Social D'Agostino's Pizza

752 N Ogden Ave Chicago, IL 60642

Sat - 12/21 | pm CFMC Fox Hunt Centennial Park

1776 W. Centennial Pl. Addison, IL 60101

Fri - 12/27 | 7pm Friday Night Social Ricobene's

252 W 26th St, Chicago, IL 60616

Fri - 1/3 | 7pm Friday Night Social Gullivers Pizza & Pub

17W517 Roosevelt Rd Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

Fri - 1/10 | 7pm Friday Night Social Portillo's Harwood Heights

7308 W Lawrence Ave Harwood Heights, IL 60706

Fri - 1/17 | 7pm Friday Night Social D'Agostino's Pizza

752 N Ogden Ave Chicago, IL 60642

# **Presidents Message**

President, John (N9SRY); Secretary, Jim (KD9WNR); and Treasurer, Barry (K9FMB). I also want to extend my heartfelt thanks to Bill (KD9TWA) for serving as Secretary for the past three years. He has stepped up many times in his role and has been a tremendous asset to the club.

A big thank you as well to our Board of Directors: Bill (N9WRP), Dave (KD9JFH), Barry (K9FMB), who is stepping down to serve as Treasurer, Vern (K9VRT), and, of course, Joe (KC9BUF).

Thank you to the VE (Volunteer Examiner) staff, including Vern (K9VRT), Bill (KD9TWA), Paul (N9JZY), John (N9SRY), Dave (KD9JFH), Bill (N9WRP), Dennis (KD9YUO), Scott (N9ASI), and Mike (W9MJD). I also want to recognize the members working behind the scenes to set up and maintain the EchoLink and AllStar nodes for the club repeaters, specifically Taylor (K9TAY) for AllStar and Bill (N9WRP) for EchoLink.

Thanks go to myself, John (N9SRY), and Greg (K9OY) for handling repeater repairs, and to Jim (KD9WNR) and Len (N9LEN) for maintaining the website. A big thank you to Mike (WA9FTS), Nate (N9BBM), and Jeff (KD9RVJ) for their work on the Squelch Tale newsletter. Sometimes it takes the entire club working together to make it better for everyone to enjoy.

#### **CFMC Club Meetings**

This month's meeting will be held on December 18th at 7:30 PM at the 16th District Police Station, located at 5151 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago. Why not come out to a meeting? This is your club. Come enjoy the night with coffee, donuts, and good friends. Don't forget, VE testing starts at 6:30 PM. Please let Vern (K9VRT) know if you'd like to test by emailing him at K9VRT@att.net or calling 773-777-2802.

73, and Merry Christmas, Paul | N9/ZY, President

# Official Merch

Prepare for Winter Filed Day 2025 with an offical CFMC Limited Edition Winter Field Day Tee Shirt! -------



## **New Gear Alert**

AnyTone AT-D168UV



The AnyTone AT-D168UV is a compact dualband handheld transceiver that supports both analog FM and Digital Mobile Radio (DMR) modes on VHF (136-

174 MHz) and UHF (400-480 MHz) frequencies. Designed a more accessible alternative the popular AT-D878UV series, it offers a balance of functionality and affordability for amateur radio enthusiasts.

#### **Key Features:**

- Covers VHF and UHF bands.
- Supports traditional FM and DMR Tier I & II.
- Accommodates up to 4,000 channels, 10,000 talk groups, and 500,000 digital contacts.
- Features a 1.77-inch color TFT screen with a vertical orientation, providing clear and intuitive access to information.
- Satellite Operation includes real-time tracking and automatic Doppler adjustment for amateur radio satellite communications.

#### REPEATER INFO

#### 440 Mhz Repeater 443.750 (+5Mhz) PL 114.8

Echolink: 62478 or WA9ORC-R Allstar: Node 555492

#### 2M Repeater

146.760 (-0.6Mhz) PL 107.2

Allstar: Node 555491

220 Mhz North 224.100 (-1.6Mhz) PL 110.9

Allstar: Node 555490

220 Mhz South 224.180 (-1.6Mhz) PL 110.9

WIRES-X (System Fusion) 145.350 (-1.6Mhz) DCS 072

# CFMC Emergency Frequency 146.760 Mhz

(2M Repeater Output Freq)

All Licensed Amateur Radio Operators are welcome to use the CFMC Repeaters for normal station-to-station calls. If you like using them, and the people you hear consider joining our Club. ------

#### **CFMC NETS**

#### THE NIGHT WATCH

443.750 - Every Night @ 10pm

The Night Watch Net is dedicated to all fallen Law Enforcement, Fire Fighters, and First Responders. CFMC's most attended net. This is a great net for first time check-ins. Come for the Knowledge, stay for the fun! -------

#### **2 METER INFO NET**

146.760 - Tuesdays @ 9:00pm

The 2 Meter Info Net is a rag chew style net which includes club info about upcoming club events and activities. ------

#### **220 ROUND TABLE**

224.100 - Wed @ 7:30pm (Except Meeting Nights)

Grab your 220 radio and join the 220 rebels on a social net focused on keeping the 220 band alive. Don't have a 220 radio? Don't worry, you can still join with allstar on Node 555490. ------

#### **NET CONTROL**

#### Sunday

Night Watch - 10pm Bill Deans | KD9TWA

#### Monday

Night Watch - 10pm Paul Gris | N9JZY

#### **Tuesday**

**2M Info Net - 9pm**Tom Stobble | **KB9AJM** 

Night Watch - 10pm John Cerza | N9SRY

#### Wednesday

**220 Round Table - 7:30pm**Jim Fanning | KD9WNR

Night Watch - 10pm Mike Bazydlo | W9BAZ

#### **Thursday**

**Night Watch - 10pm** T.B.D.

#### Friday

Night Watch - 10pm Marc Holland | AA9HM

#### **Saturday**

Night Watch - 10pm Joshua Hamlett | KD9MXV

The Chicago FM Club is a not-for -profit amateur radio club operating the WA9ORC repeater systems. Membership is open to all licensed amateurs and is encouraged of those who use the repeaters often. For more information, send us an email at WA9ORC@gmail.com. -------

## NIGHT WATCH NET STATS

November Check-In Stats					
	Call	Name	Check-Ins		
1	N9UDN	Larry	25		
2	KD9TWA	Bill	24		
3	W9BAZ	Mikey	23		
4	N9SRY	John	22		
5	AA9HM	Marc	21		
5	АА9КО	Tony	21		

Monthly Check-In Stats				
Month	Call Signs	Check-Ins		
June	78	582		
July	114	709		
Aug	91	616		
Sept	99	609		
Oct	87	706		
Nov	95	504		

# RADIO of the MONTH

The Yaesu FT-991A is a versatile, all-band, allmode transceiver that's perfectly suited for operators looking to explore the full spectrum of amateur radio. Covering HF, VHF, and UHF bands, this compact powerhouse is packed with advanced features, making it an ideal choice for both experienced hams and newcomers eager to expand their capabilities.

One of the standout features of the FT-991A is its integration of Yaesu's System Fusion (C4FM) digital voice mode. This opens the door to crystal-clear digital communication and seamless connectivity with System Fusion repeaters worldwide. Paired with its real-time spectrum scope, operators can easily monitor band activity, ensuring they never miss a chance to engage with a signal.

The FT-991A delivers 100 watts of power on HF and 50 watts on VHF/UHF, making it equally effective for long-distance DXing or local repeater use. The inclusion of a built-in automatic antenna tuner ensures efficient performance across a wide range of antennas, whether you're operating from a permanent station or a temporary field setup.





Designed with a compact form factor, the FT-991A fits comfortably into shacks with limited space and is portable enough for field use, making it a perfect companion for activations like Parks on the Air (POTA) or Summits on the Air (SOTA). The 3.5-inch full-color display enhances usability, providing clear visuals for the real-time spectrum scope, waterfall display, and menu navigation.

Whether you're experimenting with digital modes, connecting with local nets, or chasing rare DX stations, the Yaesu FT-991A offers a reliable and feature-rich experience. Its ability to operate across all bands and modes ensures it will remain a cherished part of any ham's radio setup for years to come. If you're looking for an all-in-one transceiver to round out the year, the FT-991A is a stellar choice. ------

# FT-991A

#### FREQUENCY COVERAGE

- HF/50 MHz: 30 kHz 56 MHz
- 144 MHz: 136 MHz 174 MHz
- 430 MHz: 420 MHz 470 MHz

#### **OUTPUT POWER**

- HF/50 MHz: 5-100W
- 144 MHz: 5-50W
- 430 MHz: 5-50W

# **Meeting Minutes**

#### November 20, 2024 CFMC Meeting Minutes From the In-Person Meeting

All Officers were present.
Paul Gris, N9JZY, President

John Cerza, N9SRY, Vice President Bill Deans, KD9TWA, Secretary

Board Members were present: Vern Thorson, N9VRT Bill Parsons, N9WRP Dave Johnson, KD9JFH Barry Friedman, K9FMB

A note. At the time of this meeting, we didn't know the severity of Joe Gratchner's condition.

Since the meeting, we were all saddened by the passing of our good friend "Buffy". His contributions to all aspects of the club, and his personal friendship will be greatly missed.

The Chicago FM Club had a large turnout at Joe's visitation. Other than family, the largest group of well-wishers. From what his family said, they were very glad to see so many of his radio friends. Amateur radio was a large part of his life, and a hobby he loved. I know he is proud of his buds at the CFMC.

The November 2024 meeting was held at the regular location, the 16th District Police Station, although one week early because of Thanksgiving.

The meeting was called to order by the President, Paul N9JZY at 19:38.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll call of Officers and Board Members.

The first order of business was the introduction of all attendees. There were 22 individuals present at the meeting.

The President announced that the Squelch Tale, with last month's minutes, had been distributed. The minutes of the October 2024 meeting were approved by a voice vote.

John, the Vice President, gave the Treasurer's report which was approved by a voice vote. Cash on hand and status of bills was presented to the members along with an invitation to members to inspect the bank statements.

John, also the Tech Committee Chairman, gave an update on the repeater system. John N9SRY told the group that our repeaters are still working well. The switchable outlet has not yet been installed at the repeater location. The club is still looking at internet options at the hospital repeater site.

Jim, KD9WNR told the members that we are still getting ten to 20 hits per day on the new club website. The website is looking great by the way, Jim. Thank you. The club store now has ID badges for sale, plus Holiday and Winter Field Day clothing. The club will soon be receiving the commission from our CFMC swag sales.

Jeff, KD9RVJ is the new Squelch Tale Editor. Jeff received favorable comments from a number of members at the meeting. Way to go Jeff!

Vern K9VRT, the club's lead VE, announced one new Technician, Richard R.

Winter Field Day at Camp Bullfrog, Jan 24-26, was discussed. The cabin reservations are finalized. President Paul stressed that the club would like to see more radio operating involvement from the participants. Winter Field Day is, after all, an event that, "aims to help participants improve their preparedness for disasters and enhance their operational abilities in adverse conditions." according to the WFD Association.

CFMC Officer elections were to be held during the period from November 20 through December 18, with the results being announced at the end of the December Club meeting. Since all of the Officer candidates were running unopposed, a motion was made to vote for the officers that night, November 23, 2024. The motion carried. The 22 members in attendance voted to vote by a show of hands on the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. All that was needed to win their respective Office was one vote each. The vote for each individual Officer proceeded.

# **Meeting Minutes**

The results are as follows:

President, Paul, N9JZY.

Vice President, John, N9SRY.

Treasurer, Barry, K9FMB.

Secretary, Jim KD9WNR.

These fine gentlemen will serve their terms beginning January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2026.

Congratulations to you all.

There was no unfinished business.

The 50/50 raffle supporting the Christmas Party was held before the meeting adjourned. Congratulations to John. John donated his winnings to the Christmas Party fund. Thank you John.

The President thanked the attendees and adjourned the meeting at 20:35.

Immediately following the meeting Bill, KD9TWA showed three short Ham related videos.

Happy Holidays from the Officers, Board Members, Trustees, and Committee Members. ------

# **5 Tips to Optimize Your Antenna Setup**

Getting the most out of your ham radio setup often starts with your antenna. Whether you're working to extend your range or reduce interference, the right adjustments can make all the difference. Here are five essential tips to help you optimize your antenna setup:

#### I. Choose the Right Location

The placement of your antenna is crucial. Higher locations typically yield better results, as they reduce obstructions and enhance line-of-sight communication. Consider mounting your antenna on a rooftop, a tall mast, or in a location free from trees and buildings.

#### 2. Ensure Proper Grounding

Proper grounding is essential for safety and performance. A well-grounded system minimizes unwanted noise and reduces lightning damage risk. Use quality ground rods and check connections regularly to maintain effectiveness.

#### 3. Fine-Tune for Frequency

An antenna properly tuned to your operating

frequency performs better. Use an SWR (Standing Wave Ratio) meter to adjust the length of your antenna or its tuning elements. Aim for an SWR reading close to 1:1 to improve efficiency and protect your equipment.

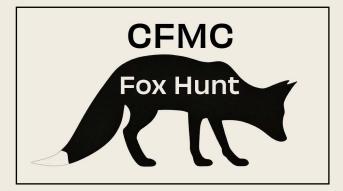
#### 4. Invest in Quality Coaxial Cable

Your coaxial cable connects your radio and antenna. Low-quality or old cables can cause significant signal loss. Invest in high-quality coax, especially for longer runs, and ensure connectors are weatherproofed to prevent corrosion.

#### 5. Reduce Noise and Interference

Interference impacts signal clarity. Keep your antenna away from power lines and electronic devices. If interference persists, consider using a common-mode choke or noise filter.

By following these tips, you'll achieve clearer signals and make the most of your ham radio experience. Happy transmitting! -------



# **CFMC 2M Fox Hunt**

Nov 16, 2024

Fox; Tom | N9CBA

Four hunt teams were ready to find Tom for the 2nd Saturday in a row. Tom got the hunters off at 8:03PM. John and Janet got out of the starting line and headed south on 53. The other hunters were not so lucky as cars drove by from the north and south for about 3 minutes. Finally the rest of the hunters got off south on 53. Matt's team got stronger signals and took Roosevelt Rd west. Don got a reading to the east with John K9JK following. They soon found out it was a bad reading and headed west on Roosevelt. John and lanet got to 88 and soon turned back north to Roosevelt. Matt's team got out with a 6 on the sniffers. Mac saw the antenna and Tom under a bush off of Taft Ave for the win. Shortly after Don arrived for 2nd. John and Janet headed north to Roosevelt to find Tom for 3rd. John K9JK was close but gave up. We all headed to Buona Beef 395 Roosevelt Rd. afterward.

#### Results:

١. Mac | KD9VVU

Matt | KC9SEM

Patty | N9PLS

Jacob | KD9VLF

Mike | WA9FTS

2. Don | W9RA

3. John | WD9EXW

DNF **John** | *K9|K* 

#### Story by Mike | WA9FTS

### Fox Hunt Info

-1st Sat Hunt - Across from Whole Foods, Elmhurst, Rt 83 north of St Charles Rd - CFAR input 147.750 MHz

-2nd Sat Hunt - Downers Grove Fitness & Rec Center parking lot, off Belmont Rd south of Odgen Av - Simplex 146.565 MHz

-3rd Sat Hunt - Centennial Park, Addison, Rohlwing Rd, 0.4 miles south of Lake St - CFMC input 146.160 MHz

-4th Sat Hunt - WoodDale Rd & Sivert south of Thorndale -Simplex 146.34 MHz

5th Sat Hunt - Contact Mike WA9FTS at phone number below as hunt info and rules may vary.

For more info contact Mike WA9FTS or call at 708-457-0966

Hunters gather about a half hour before the hunt. Everyone is invited to participate or ride along — please call in advance.. All hunts start at 8PM.



Pic of hiding spot taken by Tom | N9CBA

#### **December Meeting!!**

Important Notice: Our regular monthly meeting, typically held on the fourth Wednesday, will take place one week earlier in December to accommodate the Christmas holiday. Please join us on Wednesday, December 18th, as we adjust our schedule due to the holiday week. We look forward to seeing everyone at the December meeting on the 18th. ------

#### **CFMC Officer Elections**

Since all of the Officer candidates were running unopposed, a motion was made to vote for the officers the night of the November 23 Meeting. The motion carried. The 22 members in attendance voted to vote by a show of hands on the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. The vote for each individual Officer proceeded.

The results are as follows:

President - Paul Gris | N9|ZY

Vice President - John Cerzal N9SRY.

Treasurer - Barry Friedman | K9FMB.

Secretary - Jim Fanning | KD9WNR.

These fine gentlemen will serve their terms beginning January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2026. ------

#### **Winter Field Day 2025**

CFMC Winter Field Day will be taking place at Camp Bullfrog Lake from January 24-25, 2025. Three days and two nights of all the radio fun you can imagine inside of a heated cabin. Setup begins at 3pm on Friday the 24th and as tradition the Friday Night Social will take place at the cabin afterward. It doesn't matter what class of license you have (or even if you are unlicensed), you can operate on all bands, all frequencies and all modes under the supervision of experienced amateur radio operators. Winter Field Day aims to help participants improve their preparedness for disasters and enhance their operational abilities in adverse conditions. Come for a few hours, or the day. The "operating" event runs from Ipm-Ipm (24 hours) Saturday (1/25)-Sunday (1/26). ------

#### **Buy | Sell | Trade**

- -Pelican Storm Case Carry-On Case \$65 Bill Deans, KD9TWA (Contact - QRZ)
- -BTech GMRS-20V2 \$75 Jim Fanning - kd9wnr@gmail.com
- -Mirage BD-35 Dual Band Amp \$120 Jim Fanning - kd9wnr@gmail.com

For More information and photos, visit the CFMC website and click on CFMC Shop and Swap. ------

#### **Net Controllers**

We are always looking for Net Controllers. If interested, let one of the controllers know, and they would happy to assist you in feeling comfortable doing it. Make it your net. We are Amateur Radio operators, talking is one of our tools so doing a net is just like talking to your friends. ------

#### **Newsletter Submissions**

If you have something to contribute to next month's edition of the newsletter, please send it over to WA9ORC@gmail.com. ------

## CFMC on the WEB



Check out our website https://www.chicagofmclub.org/



Conect with us on Group.io https://groups.io/g/CFMC/



Join us on Facebook



Follow us on X https://x.com/CFMC\_WA9ORC

## **Member Stats**

Total Club Members: 159

# Tech Talk



#### Radio Wave Propagation

Have you ever wondered why your signal sometimes travels halfway around the world but other times struggles to reach the next town? The answer lies in radio propagation—how radio waves travel through the atmosphere. Understanding the science behind propagation can help you make the most of your amateur radio experience.

#### The Basics of Radio Propagation

Radio waves travel in several ways, including line-of-sight, ground-wave, and sky-wave propagation. For VHF and UHF, line-of-sight propagation is dominant, meaning obstacles like buildings or hills can significantly affect your signal. Ground-wave propagation, common on lower frequencies like HF, follows the Earth's surface and can extend your reach beyond the horizon. Sky-wave propagation, also on HF, occurs when signals bounce off the ionosphere, enabling long-distance communication.

#### **Influencing Factors**

#### I. Weather:

Rain, snow, and even humidity can scatter or absorb radio signals, particularly on higher frequencies like UHF.While rain fades are minimal for HF bands, VHF and UHF signals can weaken

significantly during heavy weather.

#### 2. Geography:

Mountains and valleys can block or reflect signals, creating shadow zones where your signal doesn't reach. Urban environments introduce multipath interference, where signals bounce off buildings, causing distortion.

#### 3. Solar Activity:

The Sun plays a major role in HF propagation. During high solar activity, sunspots increase, enhancing ionospheric conditions for DXing. However, solar flares can disrupt communication entirely by flooding the ionosphere with charged particles, causing blackouts.

#### **Seasonal Variations**

Winter often brings better HF propagation due to reduced atmospheric noise and favorable ionospheric conditions. Conversely, summer thunderstorms and higher atmospheric noise levels can make HF more challenging, while VHF and UHF may benefit from sporadic-E propagation.

#### **Tools and Tips**

Operators can use tools like VOACAP or real-time solar indices to predict propagation conditions. The Kp index measures geomagnetic activity, while solar flux levels indicate the likelihood of favorable HF propagation. Planning your operations during low Kp index periods and high solar flux can dramatically improve results.

Adjusting your antenna setup is also crucial. Horizontal polarization is typically better for reducing interference on HF, while VHF and UHF often benefit from vertical polarization for local communication.

#### Why It Matters

Understanding propagation empowers operators to adapt their equipment and strategies for different conditions. Whether you're chasing DX on HF or experimenting with UHF under challenging terrain, knowing how signals travel can make all the difference. -------

# Chicago

# FM Club

# **Club Officers**

President	Paul Gris   N9JZY
Vice President	John Cerza   N9SRY
Secretary	Bill Deans   KD9TWA
Treasurer	(vacant)

# **Board of Directors**

Bill Parsons | N9WRP Vern Thorson | K9VRT Dave Johnson | KD9JFH Joe Gratchner | KC9BUF Barry Friedman | K9FMB

## **Chairs**

Repeater Trustee	
Radio Expo	John Cezra   N9SRY
Field Day	Paul Gris   N9JZY
Fox Hunts	Mike Brost   WA9FTS
Website Administrator	Jim Fanning   KD9WNR
Website Editor	Len Pollack   N9LEN
Website Editor	Bill Deans   KD9TWA
Refreshments	Joe Degrazia   <b>K9CTA</b>
Newsletter	JeffWuerth   KD9RVJ
Announcements	Tom Stobble   KB9AJM
Net Manager	Tom Stobble   KB9AJM

# Silent Keys

Joe Gratchner | KC9BUF Wanda Nagel | KC9LRZ Thomas Wilkus | N9TWE Arthur G. Waner | WB9DQT Michael Moline | KD9NJC Bruce Schrader | N9QIY Robert F. Schiff | KA9HHH Rich Jurgaitis | KA9GQF Anton J. Wenskus | KA9CRV Orson H. Baker | AB9WQ James R. Liston | N9HSH Patrick McPherson | WW9E Marilyn Gardner | W9LUO Thomas J. Dykas | NV9U Andrew J. Galiardo | WD9GCN Robert G. Felix | KF9TB Jerry Aagard | N9IPH Mitch Schweda | WV9MJS Joe Genovese | WA9KOD Elton Caron | WA9AYQ

George Drish | WB9WIP

#### **Club Contact**

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