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VOLUME 60 | ISSUE 5

MAY 2025



President's Message

Hello to All CFMC Members,

Memorial Day is upon us, and Hamvention has come and gone. So I ask you—what does it all mean? Well, it means the start of summer is upon us, and that means fun. Fun with the family, fun with your hobbies, but most of all, fun with your brothers and sisters here at CFMC. The club has some exciting things planned for you over the next few months, so why not come out and enjoy the outings taking place in June—like our Friday night socials, the monthly meeting, and of course, the CFMC Summer Field Day and club picnic.

All of these events are here for you, the club members—to have fun and maybe even learn a little more about amateur radio than you already know. During the summer months, the club will also be doing other outdoor activities for you, like POTA @ Pullman in July, National Lighthouse-Lightship Weekend in August, and Radio Expo in September—plus other fun stuff as it comes up.

So I ask all of our members: please come out to the events being put on for you—the members of the club.

Summer Field Day:

There are about 34 days until Summer Field Day 2025—three Days / two Nights at Camp Reinberg in Palatine: June 27–29. Field Day is ham radio's open house!

Location:

Camp Reinberg

1801 N Quentin Rd

Palatine, IL

Volunteers are needed Friday afternoon to help set up radios and antennas. Please plan to arrive at 3:00 PM on Friday, June 27. That evening, our Friday Night Social will be held at the cabin. Pizza and soft drinks will be provided. Remember: BYOB and BYOC (Bring Your Own Chair). We'll have a bonfire on both Friday and Saturday nights.

On Saturday, we're asking everyone to bring a dish, snack, or dessert to share. We'll be using the special event call sign W9C, and plan to operate with three transmitters. Remember—Saturday is also our annual club picnic. The club will provide the main courses, soft drinks, coffee, and water for the weekend. BYOB.

Upcoming CFMC Events

****Please check on the air for the most up to date info****

Fri - 5/23 | 7:00 PM

Friday Night Social

Russell's Barbecue

1621 N Thatcher Ave
Elmwood Park, IL 60707

Wed - 5/28 | 7:30 PM

CFMC Monthly Meeting

16th District Police Station

5151 N Milwaukee Ave
Chicago, IL 60630

Fri - 5/30 | 7:00 PM

Friday Night Social

Ricobene's

252 W 26th Street
Chicago, IL 60616

Fri - 6/06 | 7:00 PM

Friday Night Social

Gullivers Pizza & Pub

17W517 Roosevelt Rd
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

Fri - 6/13 | 7:00 PM

Friday Night Social

Portillo's Harwood Heights

7308 W. Lawrence Ave.
Harwood Heights, IL 60706

Fri - 6/20 | 7:00 PM

Friday Night Social

Portillo's Harwood Heights

7308 W. Lawrence Ave.
Harwood Heights, IL 60706

Wed - 6/25 | 7:30 PM

CFMC Monthly Meeting

16th District Police Station

5151 N Milwaukee Ave
Chicago, IL 60630

Fri - 6/27 | 3:00-11:00 PM

Field Day Setup and Social

Camp Reinberg
1801 N Quentin Rd
Palatine, IL 60074

President's Message

VE Testing will take place from 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM on Saturday for all license classes.

Field Day operations start at 1:00 PM Saturday and run until 12:00 PM on Sunday. For more details, check out the Field Day tab on the club website: chicagofmclub.org.

CFMC May Club Meeting

This month's meeting will be held on May 28th at 7:30 PM at the 16th District Police Station, located at:
5151 N. Milwaukee Ave.

Chicago, IL 60630

There will be a presentation after the meeting by Nate, N9BBM. Why not come out to a meeting? This is your club. Come enjoy the evening with coffee, donuts, and good friends.

Don't forget—we have VE testing at 6:30 PM. Please let Vern, K9VRT, know if you plan to test: K9VRT@att.net
773-777-2802-----

73,

Paul Gris | N9JZY, Chicago FM Club President



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 enjoy using them and like 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, Firefighters, 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

Bob Sunden | N9XCD

Night Watch - 10pm

John Cerza | N9SRV

Wednesday

220 Round Table - 7:30pm

Jim Fanning | KD9WNR

Night Watch - 10pm

Kevin E Suddoth | KD9ZDR

Thursday

Night Watch - 10pm

Craig O Talley | KD9UQE

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

April Check-In Stats

	Call	Name	Check-Ins
1	N9UDN	Larry	28
1	KE9CLW	Mike	28
2	KC9KXG	Jim	27
2	W9BAZ	Mikey	27
3	AA9KO	Tony	26
3	AA9HM	Marc	26

Monthly Check-In Stats

Month	Call Signs	Check-Ins
Nov	95	504
Dec	99	549
Jan	85	501
Feb	93	550
March	96	605
April	89	582

RADIO of the MONTH

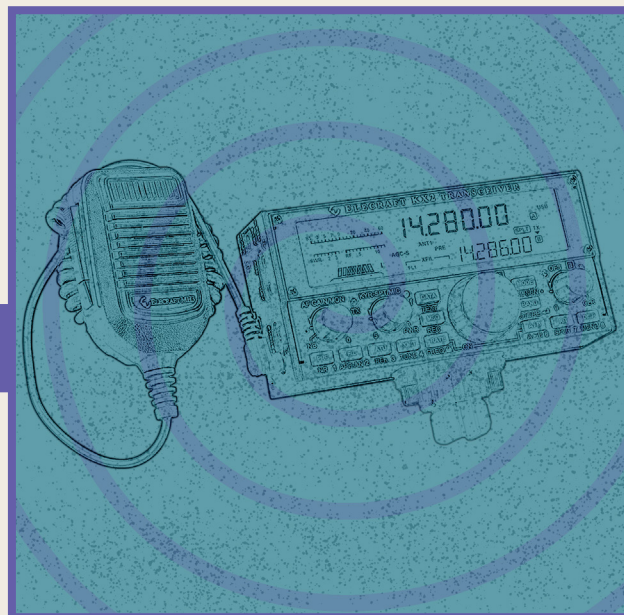
Elecraft KX2

When it comes to portable HF operation, few radios capture the spirit of QRP quite like the Elecraft KX2. Designed for serious performance in a compact size, the KX2 empowers operators to work the world with just 10 watts of power — proving that careful technique and a well-placed signal can accomplish what brute force never could.

At under a pound and small enough to slip into a jacket pocket, the KX2 is perfect for operators who take their stations into the field, whether it's for Parks on the Air (POTA), Summits on the Air (SOTA), backpacking trips, or even a day at the local park. Despite its tiny footprint, it offers a full-featured HF transceiver covering 80 through 10 meters, a high-efficiency internal antenna tuner, and the legendary sensitivity and selectivity that Elecraft radios are known for.

The KX2 isn't just about portability — it's about versatility. The radio's design encourages operators to tailor their station to their specific needs. A variety of modular accessories are available to expand its capabilities:

The KXPD2 paddle keyer bolts directly to the front of the radio, creating an ultra-compact CW station that's ready to go



anywhere. The MH3 hand microphone provides smooth SSB operation for those who prefer voice contacts. Operators can easily pair the KX2 with lightweight external batteries, portable amplifiers, or end-fed antennas to suit a wide range of operating styles and conditions.

The KX2's combination of lightweight build, low power efficiency, and accessory flexibility makes it not just a radio, but a platform for adventure. It invites operators to embrace the minimalist ethic of QRP operation — maximizing performance with minimal equipment — while still offering creature comforts that make operating a joy, whether you're running CW, SSB, or digital modes.

For amateur radio operators who believe that small signals create the biggest connections, and that every ounce of gear matters when you're chasing the horizon, the Elecraft KX2 stands as the ultimate portable companion. It's a radio built not just for making contacts, but for making memories. -----

Jeff Wuerth | KD9RVJ, *Squelch Tale* Editor

KX2

- **Transmit:** 80M-10M
- **Operating Modes:** CW, SSB, DATA
- **Power Output:** 0.1 Watts - 10 Watts
- **Keyer:** Full CW Operation
- **Paddle:** Optional Accessory

Meeting Minutes

Chicago FM Club (CFMC) Meeting Minutes				
Date		Wednesday, April 23, 2025		
Location		16 th District, Chicago Police Department		
Meeting Called to Order		7:37 PM		
Officers Present		Board Members Present		
President	Paul, N9JZY	Present	Bill, N9WRP	Present
Vice President	John, N9SRY	Present	Dave, KD9JHF	Present
Secretary	Jim, KD9WNR	Present	Vern, K9VRT	Present
Treasurer	Barry, K9FMB	Not Present	Bill, KD9TWA	Present
			Doug, KD9YFR	Present
Member Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none">Recitation of Pledge of AllegianceRoll Call of All Present<ul style="list-style-type: none">Total of 24 Members were present, plus 4 guests:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bob, KE9BCEMac, KK7UMB from Seattle, and Lia her guestKat, Not yet a HamIn addition to the normal coffee and tasty treats, we had 4 Large Pequod's Pizzas at the meeting, courtesy of Scott, KE9CLV				
Announcements <ul style="list-style-type: none">Jim, KD9WNR announced<ul style="list-style-type: none">Total of 140 Members4 New Members<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ingrid, K8ZIJulian, KC3REZKristin, KE9CXP*Harley, KE9CXW* <p style="text-align: right;">* New Hams, Tested Last Meeting</p>				
Reading and Approval of Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none">Members were polled to confirm receipt of the Minutes from the previous meeting as published in the Squelch Tale. A motion was made to accept the Minutes by Bill N9WRP and seconded by Joe, KC9EJS. The Minutes were accepted by voice vote.				
Treasurers Report <ul style="list-style-type: none">John, N9SRY presented the Treasurers Report and announced that the Treasurers Report is available for review by any Voting Member.A motion was made to accept the Treasurers Report by Joe, K9CTA and seconded by Paul N9ISP; The Treasurers Report was accepted by voice vote.				

Meeting Minutes

Committee Reports

- VE Team:
 - Vern, K9VRT
 - One Tested, One Passed
- Radio Expo:
 - John, N9SRY
 - Flyers Printed
 - Looking for new Ticket Printer, less expensive
 - John explained Radio Expo for all attendees

<https://chicagofmclub.org/radio-expo-2025/>
- Tech Committee:
 - John, N9SRY
 - Everything OK; 2m maybe a bit Noisy
 - Remote Power Switch approved; To be ordered, received and installed
- Website:
 - Jim, KD9WNR
 - Alvin Monroe, KD9TPL added to Silent Keys
 - <https://chicagofmclub.org/alvin-monroe-kd9tpl/>
 - Pics of the Net Controllers have been added to the "CFMC Nets" webpage:
 - <https://chicagofmclub.org/club-resources/cfmc-nets/>
 - Pics of the Node Hosts have been added to the "CFMC Repeaters" webpage
 - <https://chicagofmclub.org/club-resources/cfmc-repeaters/>
 - Total of 56 Members are on Discord
- Squelch Tale:
 - Jeff, KD9RVJ
 - This month's issue of the Squelch Tale was distributed successfully, with only one email bounce, which was received from K9ZAT - James Limber. The bounce originated from an address listed as uic.eec1@gmail.com, which is the same email address that experienced a bounce last month.
 - I am also currently working on a new feature spread to highlight member ham shacks. Unfortunately, we only received one submission last month. Without additional interest or participation, we will not be able to proceed with this section at this time. If you are interested in submitting a ham shack, please send in a photograph and a brief description.
 - Finally, please forgive any errors you may find in the newsletter. I strive for accuracy, but as a single-person operation, occasional errors may occur. I always welcome corrections or feedback.
- Field Day:
 - Bill, KD9TWA
 - Bill described Summer Field Day to all attendees.

<https://chicagofmclub.org/field-day-2025/>

 - CFMC Picnic on Saturday, June 28th
 - Paul, N9ISP and Alan, KC9IMF are donating Beef for the Burgers
 - Volunteers needed for Setup and Friday Night Social: June 27th
- Education
 - Mike, W9MJD gave a presentation on Antennas and Modulation

Unfinished Business

- None

Meeting Minutes

New Business

- Shelley Frizelis, Office of Community Policing for the Chicago Police Department 16th District, addressed the attendees about her role with CPD and Red Cross, and it's relation to Ham radio.
 - August 5th, Nite Out @ Norwood Park
- Bill, KD9TWA announced the Dekalb Hamfest (Sandwich): May 4th
 - Lunch @ Bull Moose Bar & Grill
 - POTA @ Silver Springs Nature Preserve
- Bill, KD9TWA described POTA for the attendees
 - Another POTA @ Pullman is Coming!; Tentative for the last weekend in July. Details to follow.
 - Link to Retrospect of last years event: <https://chicagofmclub.org/pota-at-pullman/>
 - Another Lighthouse event in planning!
 - Link to Retrospect of last years event: <https://chicagofmclub.org/international-lighthouse-and-lightship-weekend/>

Adjourn

- A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Paul, N9ISP and seconded by Joe, KC9EJS. The motion was passed by voice vote.
- The meeting was Adjourned at 8:55 PM.

50/50

- Doug, KD9YFR ran the 50/50; Won by Brian, KC9MSG; He used part of the proceeds to pay his dues.

Post Meeting Presentation

- Mike, W9MJD gave a presentation on History of Radio, Antennas and Modulation

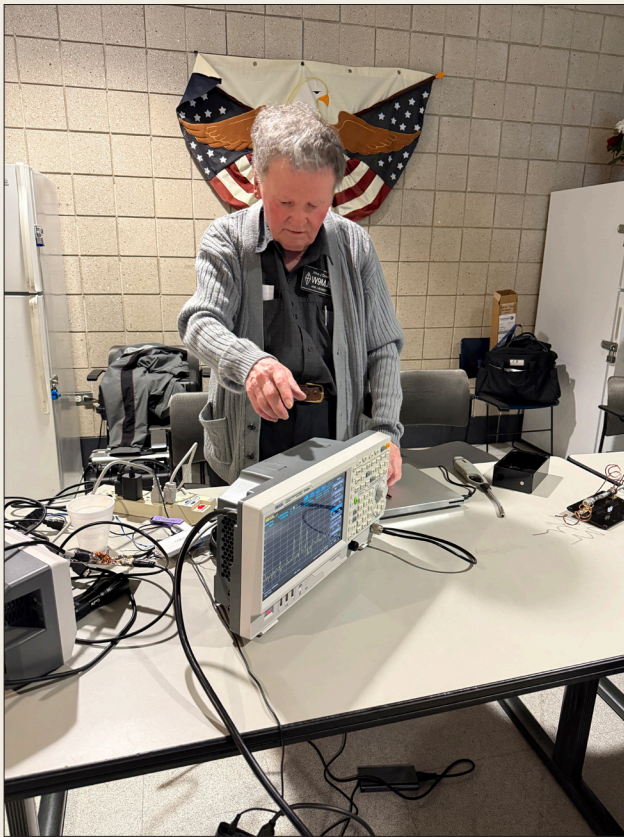
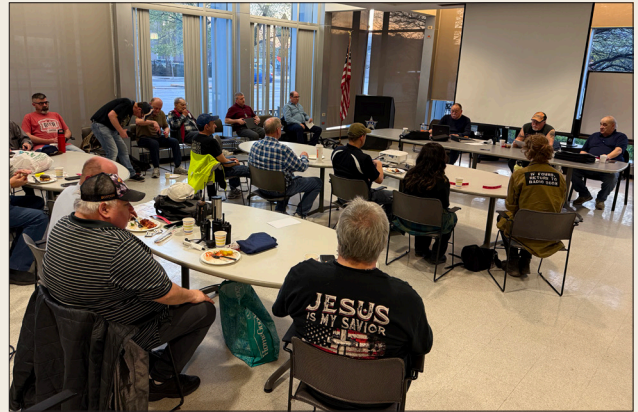
CFMC Highlights

New and Upgraded Licenses

Please join us in congratulating our newest licensed ham from the April meeting!

- **Peter** | KE9DDU – Newly licensed Technician

Be sure to say hello on the air and give a warm CFMC welcome!-----

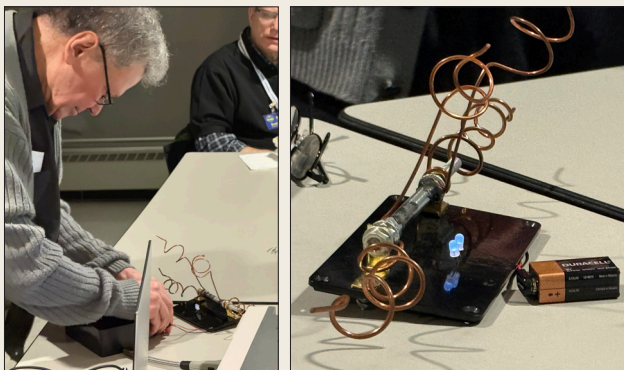


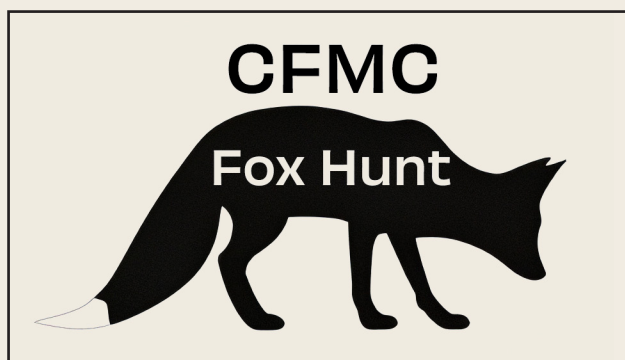
April Meeting Recap

Our April club meeting was a great success, bringing members and guests together for updates and learning. One of the highlights of the evening was the licensing exam success—congratulations to our newest ham KE9DDU for passing the test! We're always proud to see new operators join the ranks, and we look forward to hearing you on the air.

Much of the meeting focused on preparations for this year's Summer Field Day. The Chicago FM Club has built a strong tradition of excellence when it comes to Field Day operations, and we're proud of the reputation we've earned. This year's event at Camp Reinberg promises to continue that tradition with great operating, community, and fun in the outdoors.

The evening concluded with a fantastic presentation by Mike, W9MJD, on electromagnetic fields. Mike's talk was not only informative but interactive, featuring live experiments that brought the concepts to life. It was a true highlight, and we thank him for sharing his knowledge and enthusiasm with the group. -----





CFMC 2M Fox Hunt

April 19, 2025

Fox;

Tom | N9CBA

Three hunt teams were released at 8:06 and headed south and east. Don went south and took Fullerton west to Rt 83 south to St.

Charles and Don found Tom for the win at 8:32. Tom was hiding in the woods near Yorky's. Six minutes later John and Janet arrived for 2nd. Matt and I were in residential areas when Tom started to turn his radio off to end the hunt. He was running 5w to a 4 el vertical 15 ft high. Tom's car was in the parking lot of Yorky's and we saw it when we arrived.-----

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 Ogden 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 - Wood Dale 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 708-983-9288

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

Results:

1. Don | W9RA
 2. John | WD9EXW, Janet,
- DNF. Matt | KC9SEM
Mike | WA9FTS

Ham Hacks: The \$0 Mic Mount

Dave Johnson, KD9JFH shared a clever DIY solution for mounting his handheld microphone in the car, reminding us just how resourceful Hams can be. Using nothing more than an empty tin can, some black tape, and a mic clip, Dave created a functional and secure mic holder that fits perfectly into his vehicle's cup holder. By simply

inverting the can, attaching a magnetic or screw-mount mic clip to the bottom, and giving it a quick decorative wrap, he turned an everyday household item into useful ham radio gear. It's a great example of the thrifty, make-it-work spirit that defines so many in the amateur radio community—after all, who said Hams aren't cheap?-----



SHACK

SHOWCASE

Name	Bill Deans	Club Member Since	2021
Call Sign	KD9TWA	Year Licensed	2021
License Class	Amateur Extra	Current Favorite Radio	Icom IC-7300
Favorite Band	20 Meters	Primary Mode	Digital

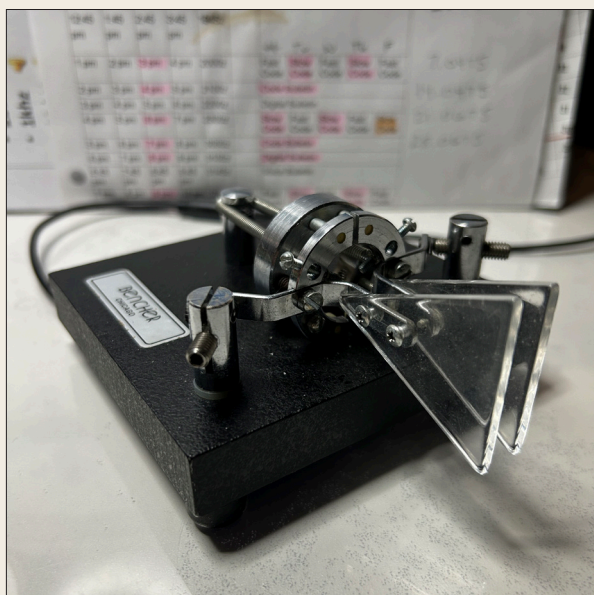


This month's Shack Showcase highlights Bill, KD9TWA, whose station reflects both thoughtful planning and gradual evolution. For Parks on the Air activations, Bill prefers the Xiegu G-90, while at home, his go-to rig is the ICOM IC-7300. His shack is set up in a quiet space in his home and has been fine-tuned over time with an emphasis on operating comfort and efficiency.

Interestingly, Bill's favorite piece of equipment isn't a radio—it's his computer. He finds it essential for logging, spotting, and running digital modes, which make up the majority of his recent operating. That said, he's also making an effort to dedicate more time to CW.

Bill primarily operates from home, but with the arrival of warmer weather, he enjoys taking his gear outdoors for portable ops. One of his most memorable QSOs was an FT-8 contact with Mongolia, which stood out for how unexpected and exotic it felt.

Like many hams, his first radio was a Baofeng HT—and yes, it's still in use today. When it comes to building a station, Bill believes in embracing the process. His approach is a reminder that creating a ham shack is a journey that evolves with time and experience.-----



Jeff Wuerth | KD9RVJ, *Squelch Tale* Editor

May Meeting

The May meeting will take place at 7:30 PM on Wednesday, May 28th, at the 16th District Chicago Police Department, located at 5151 N. Milwaukee Ave, Chicago, IL 60630. Attendance is open to everyone—you do not need to be a club member to join us. -----

Summer Field Day 2025

Mark your calendars and be sure to join us for the annual ARRL Field Day at Camp Reinberg, located at 1801 N Quentin Rd, Palatine, IL 60074.

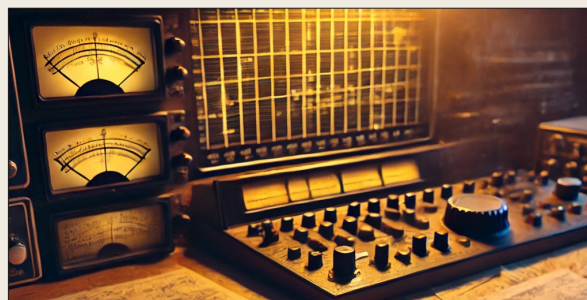
Festivities begin on Friday, June 27, with arrivals in the afternoon and our Friday Night Social at the camp—a casual, relaxing evening to mingle, share stories, and unwind before the busy weekend. Volunteers are needed for setup starting at 3:00 PM, so if you're available to lend a hand, your help will be greatly appreciated!

Field Day operations officially kick off on Saturday, June 28, at 1:00 PM CDT and run through Sunday, June 29, at 3:59 PM CDT. Saturday also features our annual CFMC picnic—a perfect time to take a break, enjoy a meal, and catch up with fellow operators. Everyone is encouraged to bring a dish or snack to share. The club will provide main dishes, soft drinks, coffee and water. Don't forget: it's BYOB (Bring Your Own Beverage) and BYOC (Bring Your Own Chair)!

This is one of the club's most anticipated events of the year, offering a chance to test your gear, improve your skills, and enjoy the camaraderie of the Chicago FM Club in a beautiful outdoor setting. -----

Swap and Shop

Looking to buy, sell, or trade radio gear? We've added a dedicated Swap and Shop section to the club Discord server, where members can post equipment they're looking to offload or pick up. Available to club members only—another great reason to join if you haven't already! -----



Net Controllers

We are always looking for Net Controllers. If interested, let one of the controllers know, and they would be happy to assist you in feeling comfortable doing it. Make it your net. As amateur radio operators, communication is our primary tool. Running a net is simply an extension of talking to friends on the air. -----

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/>



Chat with us on Discord



Connect with us on Group.io
<https://groups.io/g/CFMC/>



Join us on Facebook

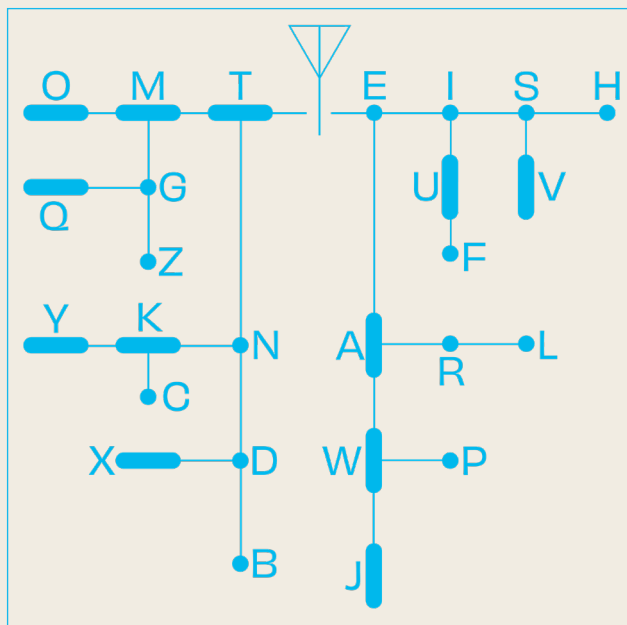


Follow us on X
https://x.com/CFMC_WA9ORC

Member Stats

Total Club Members: 146

Tech Talk



This marked the birth of long-distance electronic communication — a revolutionary moment in human history.

Over time, Morse Code became the global standard for telegraphy and later for wireless communication. Even today, many amateur radio operators continue to learn, practice, and enjoy operating CW (continuous wave) modes using Morse.

Keying the Code: A Look at Different Types of Keys and Keyers

There are several tools available to send Morse Code — each offering a different experience depending on your preference, style, and speed:

Dits, Dahs, and the Art of CW

Morse Code has been called “the original digital mode” — a simple but powerful method of communicating using only dits and dahs. Nearly 200 years after its invention, Morse remains a living part of amateur radio culture, especially among QRP and portable operators.

A Brief History of Morse Code

Morse Code was developed in the early 1830s by American inventor Samuel F. B. Morse, along with his assistant Alfred Vail. Originally intended for use with the electric telegraph, the code evolved from an early system that encoded numbers into dots and dashes, eventually becoming a way to spell letters and full messages.

The first official Morse Code transmission took place on May 24, 1844, between Washington, D.C., and Baltimore, Maryland. Using telegraph wires, Samuel Morse famously sent the biblical phrase:

“What hath God wrought?”

--- .-.-. -.- - .-.-. -.- .-.-. ---
--- .-.-. -.-. -.-. -.-. -.-. -.-. -.-.

Straight Key



- The most traditional way to send Morse Code.
- A simple up-and-down lever — you manually create each dit and dah by pressing and releasing the key.
- Known for its deliberate rhythm, but can lead to “straight key arm” (fatigue) after long sessions.
- Often favored by beginners because it teaches good timing habits.

Paddle and Electronic Keyer

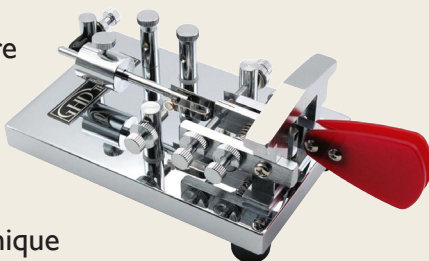


- A paddle consists of two levers: one for dits, one for dahs.
- When paired with an electronic keyer, it automatically generates perfect-length dits and dahs.
- Great for faster sending and smoother operation.
- Single-lever paddles move side-to-side; dual-lever paddles allow “iambic” keying.

Tech Talk

Semi-Automatic Key (“Bug”)

- A mechanical device where pressing one side creates a stream of automatic dits, while manual movement creates dahs.
- Bug-sent Morse has a unique rhythm — sometimes called “bug fist” — loved by many traditionalists.



Keyboard Keyers and Digital Interfaces

- Modern operators can use computer interfaces to send Morse, integrating CW with logging or digital modes.
- While convenient, many purists prefer the hands-on artistry of manual keying.



Getting Started with Morse Code

You don't need much to begin your Morse Code journey — just a little time, patience, and practice. Many hams start by using apps like Morse Toad, Morse-It, or CW Trainer, or by logging in to free websites like LCWO.net (Learn CW Online), which offer structured lessons to improve both receiving and sending skills.

The learning curve can feel steep at first, but it's incredibly rewarding. A great way to stay motivated is to join a CW training net or find a practice buddy.

And if you're part of the Chicago FM Club — good news: you're not alone! Several members of our club actively use and enjoy CW. Ask around at the next meeting or reach out to others on the repeaters — you'll likely find someone willing to share advice or even help you practice.

Speed: From Slow Taps to Lightning-Fast Code

Morse Code is measured in words per minute (WPM), with a “word” typically defined by the length of the word “PARIS.”

Beginners often start at 5 to 10 WPM — slow enough to build recognition, but steady enough to practice rhythm and accuracy.

Morse Code

A		· —
B		— · · ·
C		— · — ·
D		— · ·
E		·
F		· · — ·
G		— — ·
H		· · · ·
I		· ·
J		· — — —
K		— · —
L		· — · ·
M		— —
N		— ·
O		— — —
P		· — — ·
Q		— — · —
R		· — ·
S		· · ·
T		—
U		· · —
V		· · · —
W		· — —
X		— · · —
Y		— · — —
Z		— — · ·

Tech Talk

Fluent operators — particularly contesters or seasoned CW ops — may regularly send and copy at 25 to 40 WPM or more. Some elite operators even reach speeds of 50+ WPM with ease!

One of the goals in CW is to hear the rhythm as words, not individual dits and dahs — and that fluency develops over time.

Keeping Morse Alive

In an age of digital modes, voice repeaters, and instant messaging, you might wonder: why bother learning Morse Code at all? For many operators, Morse offers a sense of tradition, skill, and accomplishment that's hard to replicate with other modes. It also provides practical advantages: CW signals can travel farther than voice on low power, cut through noise in poor conditions, and use narrower bandwidth.

This is one reason why Morse Code is especially popular among QRP (low-power) operators. When you're transmitting with just 1 watt—or sometimes even less—every decibel of signal counts. Morse Code's simplicity and efficiency allow operators to make contacts across states, countries, and even continents using tiny radios, lightweight antennas, and battery power. For

those operating in the field during Summits on the Air (SOTA) or Parks on the Air (POTA) activations, Morse provides a reliable and lightweight solution, perfect for backpackers and portable enthusiasts.

Plus, there's a special satisfaction that comes from logging a distant DX contact with just a few watts and a wire. It reminds us that sometimes, less really is more—and that skill, patience, and perseverance can bridge even the widest distances on the airwaves.

Today, organizations like the Long Island CW Club, CWops, and FISTS continue to promote Morse Code learning and usage. Whether you're tuning up a paddle or tapping away on a straight key, CW remains a uniquely human-centered mode in our increasingly digital world.

In an era of high-speed everything, Morse reminds us that there's beauty in simplicity — one dit and dah at a time. ---

Jeff Wuerth | KD9RVJ, *Squelch Tale* Editor

Did You Know?

The hidden messages of the Squelch Tale

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You may have noticed the string of dots and dashes at the bottom of each issue of The Squelch Tale—and again at the end of every article. That's Morse code!

Morse code is used as a subtle nod to the roots of radio communication. At the very bottom of the newsletter, you'll find a short message

in Morse — a fun “Easter egg” for those who can decode it. Similarly, each article ends with a short Morse code tag, “73” to wrap things up.

It's a small way we keep CW alive, even in a digital newsletter—and a great reminder that Morse code continues to be a fun part of the culture and tradition of amateur radio. ---

Chicago FM Club

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