

Squelch Tale



CHICAGO FM CLUB • EST 1965

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Greetings, CFMC Members

Summer has officially arrived in Chicago, bringing longer days, warmer temperatures, and plenty of opportunities to enjoy amateur radio outdoors. Of course, if there's one thing we know about June weather in the Midwest, it's to expect the unexpected. Whether we're enjoying sunshine or keeping an eye on the radar, it's shaping up to be an exciting few weeks for our club.

Before we head to Camp Reinberg for Summer Field Day, I encourage everyone to attend our upcoming club meeting on Wednesday, June 24, at 7:30 PM at the 16th District Police Station. This meeting will be our final opportunity to review plans and share important updates before Summer Field Day. If you're planning to participate in any capacity, this is the meeting to attend.

I'd also like to thank our Education Lead, Charlie, W9CEF, for his continued efforts to bring educational presentations to our membership after each monthly meeting. This month's program will focus on Microwave Communications, offering another chance to explore a fascinating area of amateur radio. I encourage everyone to stay and enjoy the presentation.

Of course, Summer Field Day is just around the corner. Field Day is more than making contacts—it's about learning, and sharing our hobby with others. Whether you're helping with setup, operating as W9C, visiting for a few hours, or staying the entire weekend, I hope you'll join us at Camp Reinberg. Remember, *"come for the knowledge, stay for the FUN."*

And don't forget our annual club picnic at the camp on Saturday, June 27. It's always one of the highlights of the weekend and a wonderful opportunity to enjoy great food and even better company.

Thank you for your continued support of the Chicago FM Club. I look forward to seeing you at our June meeting and at another memorable Field Day weekend.

Until then, enjoy the start of summer, stay safe, and keep an eye on the weather.-----

73,

Paul Gris | N9JZY, Chicago FM Club President

Upcoming CFMC Events

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

Fri - 6/19 | 7:00pm

Friday Night Social

D'Agostino's Pizza and Pub

3131 N Thatcher Ave
River Grove, IL 60171

Wed - 6/24 | 7:30pm

CFMC Monthly Meeting

16th District Police Station

5151 N Milwaukee Ave
Chicago, IL 60630

Friday - 6/26 - Sat - 6/28

Friday Night Social

Camp Reinberg - Cabin #3

1801 North Quentin Road
Palatine, Illinois

Sat - 6/27 & Sun - 6/28

CFMC Summer Field Day

Camp Reinberg - Cabin #3

1801 North Quentin Road
Palatine, Illinois

Fri - 7/03 | 7:00pm

Friday Night Social

Gulliver's Pizza & Pub

17W517 Roosevelt Rd
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

Fri - 7/10 | 7:00pm

Friday Night Social

Portillo's

7308 W. Lawrence Ave.
Harwood Heights, IL 60706

Fri - 7/17 | 7:00pm

Friday Night Social

D'Agostino's Pizza and Pub

3131 N Thatcher Ave
River Grove, IL 60171

Wed - 7/22 | 7:30pm

CFMC Monthly Meeting

16th District Police Station

5151 N Milwaukee Ave
Chicago, IL 60630

CFMC Repeaters

70 cm Repeater

443.750 (+5MHz) PL 114.8

EchoLink: 62478 or WA9ORC-R

AllStar: Node 555492

Regarded as the crown jewel of the Chicago area ham community, CFMC's 443.750 MHz repeater offers exceptional coverage spanning from Northwest Indiana to Southern Wisconsin — even reaching parts of Michigan. Connected to AllStar (Node 555492) and EchoLink (Node 62478 / WA9ORC-R), this system consistently delivers impressive long-range performance. It's also home to the long-running Night Watch Net, held nightly at 10:00pm, welcoming operators from near and far for friendly check-ins and conversation.-----

2-Meter Repeater

146.760 (-0.6MHz) PL 107.2

EchoLink: 448319 or KD9YDD-R

AllStar: Node 555491

The club's flagship 2-meter repeater operates on 146.760 MHz with a PL tone of 107.2 and is available on both AllStar (Node 555491) and EchoLink (Node 448319 / KD9YDD-R). This robust Motorola GTR-800, known for its clarity and dependability, supports nets, public service events, and daily traffic, serving as a reliable meeting point for hams across the region. The 146.760 output frequency also serves as the CFMC emergency frequency should repeaters go offline.-----

WIRES-X (System Fusion)

145.350 (-1.6MHz) DCS 072

Located in Park Ridge with an antenna elevation of 180 feet, the CFMC System Fusion repeater on 145.350 MHz supports both C4FM digital and analog operation (DCS 072 on the analog side). Integrated with the WIRES-X network, it allows operators to connect to hundreds of rooms and repeaters worldwide at the push of a button. Whether operating locally or checking into nets across the globe, this repeater offers flexibility and reach while remaining accessible to analog users.-----

220 MHz North

224.100 (-1.6MHz) PL 110.9

AllStar: Node 555490

CFMC proudly supports the often-overlooked 1.25-meter band with two well-placed repeaters. The northern site, located in the suburbs and operating on 224.100 MHz, runs a 15-watt DX Radio repeater and is connected to AllStar Node 555490. Though modest in power, its performance and reach are impressive, offering solid coverage across northern Chicagoland. This repeater provides a quiet, low-traffic space for ragchews and exploring a less crowded portion of the amateur spectrum.-----

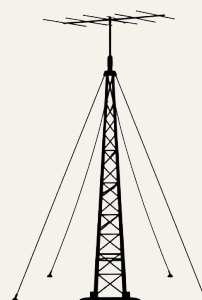
220 MHz South

224.180 (-1.6MHz) PL 110.9

Strategically located in Worth, IL, the southern 220 repeater mirrors the performance of its northern counterpart. Operating on 224.180 MHz, it uses a DX Radio 15-watt single-site repeater. This system extends CFMC's reach into the southern suburbs and offers hams another opportunity to explore the 220 MHz band — an excellent option for clear, local communications with minimal QRM.-----

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.

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 for those who use the repeaters often.-----



The Night Watch

443.750 - Every Night at 10:00pm
CFMC’s most attended net offers a great mix of camaraderie, conversation, and community. Come for the knowledge, stay for the fun each and every night of the week!-----

Monday “Drive at Five”

443.750 - Monday at 5:00pm
Do you have a case of the Mondays? Kick off your week with the Drive at Five! This relaxed, mobile-friendly net is perfect for your commute or your shack.-----

Tuesday 2-Meter Info Net

146.760 - Tuesdays at 9:00pm
The 2-Meter Info Net is a casual, ragchew-style net where members and guests can hear the latest updates about club events, activities, and announcements.-----

Wednesday 220 Round Table

224.100 - Wed at 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.-----

Thursday 2-Meter Tech Net

146.760 - Thursdays at 8:00pm
Got a question about radios, antennas, software, or anything ham-related? The Thursday 2-Meter Tech Net is your place to learn and share. Bring your questions and join the discussion. No question is too small, and everyone is welcome!-----

Sunday

Night Watch - 10pm
Kevin E Suddoth | KD9ZDR

Monday

“Drive at Five” - 5pm
Kevin E Suddoth | KD9ZDR

Night Watch - 10pm
Paul Gris | N9JZY

Tuesday

2-Meter Info Net - 9pm
Tom Stobble | KB9AJM
Alan Moyzis | KC9IMF

Night Watch - 10pm
John Cerza | N9SRY

Wednesday

220 Round Table - 8:00pm
Jim Fanning | KD9WNR

Night Watch - 10pm
Bill Deans | KD9TWA

Thursday

2-Meter Tech Net - 8:30pm
Charlie Sonnenberg | KE9ESC

Night Watch - 10pm
Joshua Hamlett | KD9MXV

Friday

Night Watch - 10pm
Marc Holland | AA9HM

Saturday

Night Watch - 10pm
Naeem Ahmed | N9DDD

Night Watch May Check-In Stats			
	Call	Name	Check-Ins
1	WX9LAR	Larry	29
2	N9SRY	John	27
2	W9BAZ	Mikey	27
4	KC9KXG	Jim	26
5	KD9ZDR	Kevin	25
6	AA9HM	Marc	18
6	KD9TWA	Bill	18
8	KC9MSG	Brian	17

Night Watch Monthly Check-In Stats		
Month	Call Signs	Check-Ins
Oct	81	486
Nov	79	466
Dec	102	560
Jan	91	489
Feb	75	457
March	84	528
April	84	518
May	110	529

RADIO of the MONTH

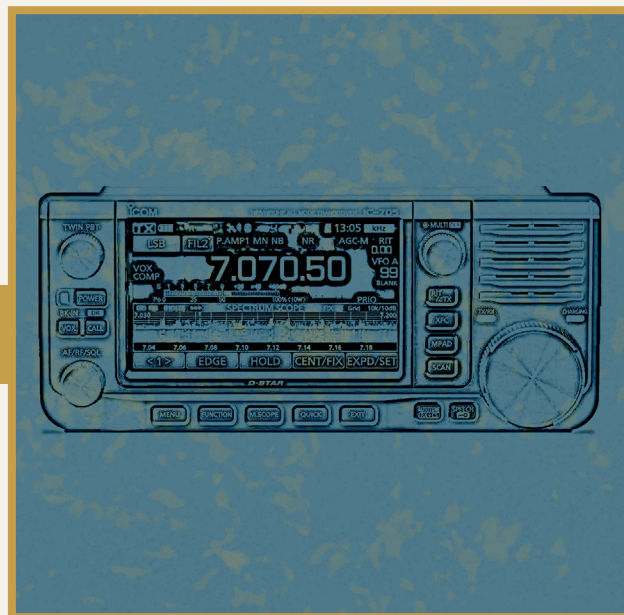
Icom IC-705

Since its introduction, the IC-705 has earned a reputation as one of the most versatile transceivers available, blending the capabilities of a modern base station with the portability needed for operating wherever adventure takes you.

The IC-705 covers HF, 6 meters, 2 meters, and 70 centimeters, providing all-mode operation in a package small enough to fit comfortably in a backpack. Whether you're in the shack, activating a park for POTA, participating in Field Day, or simply experimenting from the backyard picnic table, the IC-705 is designed to adapt to the way many amateurs operate today.

One of the radio's standout features is its exceptional connectivity. The IC-705 includes a built-in USB sound card and CAT control, allowing it to integrate seamlessly with a wide variety of computer applications. Operators interested in digital communications will appreciate how easily the radio interfaces with modern software for messaging, weak-signal work, logging, and station control. Built-in Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, and GPS functionality further expand its capabilities, while the bright color touchscreen offers an intuitive user experience that feels both modern and familiar.

Despite its compact size, the IC-705 never feels like a compromise. Its excellent receive performance and advanced DSP filtering help pull weak signals from crowded bands, while the familiar Icom menu structure allows operators to transition quickly from VHF repeater work to HF DX chasing without missing a beat. The radio's flexibility has made it equally popular among contesters,



portable enthusiasts, emergency communicators, and operators who simply appreciate having one radio that can do just about everything.

Whether you're setting up under a pavilion during Field Day, checking into a local net, exploring digital applications, or introducing a newcomer to the hobby, the IC-705 is ready for the challenge.

For many operators, the IC-705 becomes more than just another radio in the shack. It serves as a capable HF station, a VHF/UHF companion, a portable field radio, and a gateway to the ever-expanding world of computer-assisted amateur radio.

Whether your next operating session takes place at your desk, in the woods, at a club event, or somewhere far off the beaten path, the Icom IC-705 is ready to answer the call.-----

Jeff Wuerth | *KD9RVJ, Squelch Tale Editor*

IC-705

- **Transmit:** HF / 50 MHz / 144 MHz / 430 MHz
- **Receive:** HF: 30 kHz–29.999 MHz
- **Modes:** SSB, CW, AM, FM, D-Star
- **Output Power:** 5W (Battery) 10W (DC)
- **Antenna Tuner:** None

Meeting Minutes

Chicago FM Club (CFMC) Meeting Minutes				
Date			Wednesday, May 27, 2026	
Location			16 th District, Chicago Police Department	
Meeting Called to Order			19:39	
Officers Present			Board Members Present	
President Vice President Secretary Treasurer	Paul, N9JZY John, N9SRY Jim, KD9WNR Barry, K9FMB	Present Present Present Present	Doug, KD9YFR Paul, N9ISP Kevin, KD9ZDR Alan, KC9IMF Charlie, W9CEF Joshua, KD9MXV (Trustee)	Present Present Present Present Not Present Not Present
Member Introductions - Recitation of Pledge of Allegiance - Roll Call of All Present - Total of 36 Members. And 1 Guest were present				
Announcements - Jim, KD9WNR announced - Eleven New Members - KE9FQB, Calvin - KD9JOM, Larry - KE9FBH, Mark - Noah (Associate) - W9ML, Michael - Six New Hams from the May Exam: - KM7FWZ, Amelia - KE9FON, Angelo - KE9FOR, Kathryn - KE9FPC, Ken - KM7FXQ, Sophia - KE9FPH, Hannah 149 Total Members 64 on Discord				
Reading and Approval of Minutes 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 Alan, KC9IMF; The Minutes were accepted by voice vote.				
Treasurers Report - Barry, K9FMB 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 Brian, KC9MSG; The Treasurers Report was accepted by voice vote.				

Committee Reports

- VE Team:
 - Bill, KD9TWA
 - Test Session was May 9th
 - 9 Tested; 7 Passed
 - 6 New Technicians; 1 Upgrade to General
 - Next Session Saturday, June 13th
- Radio Expo:
 - John, N9SRV
 - Working on printing of Tickets
 - Waiting to sign contract with Fairgrounds
 - Deposit increased from \$400 to \$1300
 - Start thinking about Volunteering!

<https://chicagofmclub.org/radio-expo-2026/>
- Tech Committee:
 - John, N9SRV
 - 2m Repeater still down
 - Part coming to repair the Kenwood
 - Motorola GTR8000 2nd Gen may be available for approx. \$3,500
- Website:
 - Jim, KD9WNR
 - Online and downloadable Membership Application Forms were updated
 - Added “New Hams” and Associate Members options.
- Squelch Tale:
 - Jeff, KD9RVJ (Not Present)
 - Email distribution changed
 - Members present were polled and all received the Squelch Tale as normal; in their Inbox.
- Field Day:
 - Bill, KD9TWA
 - Saturday and Sunday, June 27th and 28
 - Camp Reinberg, Cabin #3
 - Using Callsign W9C
 - Friday, June 26th 1:00 PM for Set-up

<https://chicagofmclub.org/field-day-2026/>
- Education
 - Charlie, W9CEF (Not Present)
 - Presentation Cancelled; No Projector

Unfinished Business

- Resolution: Revision to the CFMC Constitution and By-Laws
 - Whereas, the Constitution and By-Laws of the Chicago FM Club (CFMC) have not been revised since February 9th, 2019; and,
 - Whereas, the advent of social media and on-line applications have been adopted into CFMC operations; and,
 - Whereas, membership policies have changed over the years and have not been documented in the current Constitution and By-Laws.
- Therefore, be it Resolved, that the CFMC Constitution and By-Laws shall be revised to reflect current policies and procedures as outlined below:
 - Constitution
 - Article III – Membership
 - Revised Categories of Membership
 - Article IV – Board of Directors
 - Format changes only
 - Article V – Duties of Officers and Board of Directors
 - Removed reference to Scrap Book maintained by Secretary
 - Article VI – Meetings – Board of Directors
 - Removed periodic meeting requirements; Allow for teleconference
 - Article VIII – General Meetings
 - Changed “mail” to “email” and removed “mail-in ballots”
 - Article IX – Order of Business
 - Revised order of business
 - Article XII – Elections
 - Revised to allow for electronic voting
 - By-Laws
 - Article III – Resignation and Expulsion
 - Revised guidelines for handling complaints
 - Article V – In General
 - Removed Section 2, Secretary petty cash
- The resolution was voted upon by all members present by hearing of the Yeas and Nays. The Revised CFMC Constitution and Bylaws were adopted unanimously.
<https://chicagofmclub.org/about/constitution-bylaws/>

New Business

- Motion for a vote by the Board Members present made by John N9SRY and seconded by Jim, KD9WNR to purchase the 2m Motorola Repeater (see Tech Committee above). All eight Board Members present voted Yes by show of hands.
- Kevin, KD9ZDR announced POTA @ Pullman is being planned for July 25th and 26th.
 - In conjunction with Railroad Days
 - 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM both days
 - Details to follow...
<https://chicagofmclub.org/pota-pullman-2026/>

Adjourn

- A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Alan, KC9IMF and seconded by Kevin, KD9ZDR The motion was passed by voice vote.
- The meeting was Adjourned at 20:35

50/50

- Tim, WD9DZV ran the 50/50; Won by Joe, KD9WXE

Post Meeting Presentation

- Brian, KC9MSG led a discussion on Weather

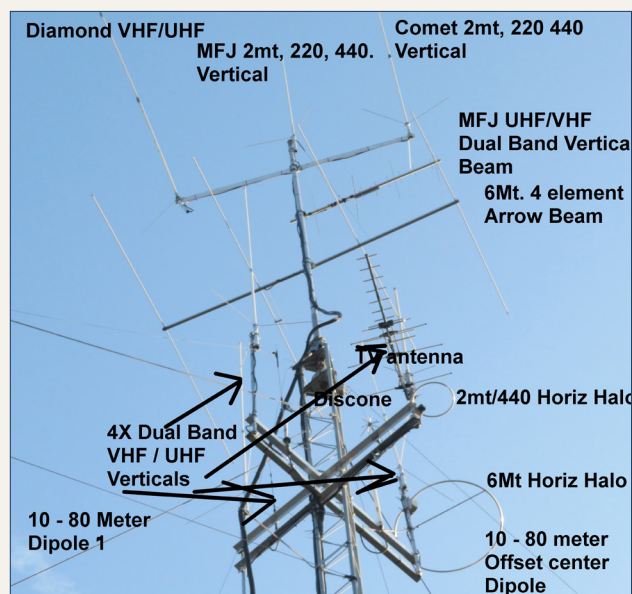
K9OY's Antenna Farm

If you've ever thought you had enough antennas, Greg, K9OY, might convince you otherwise.

Centered around a 55-foot tower with an additional 20 feet of mast, Greg's station reaches nearly 80 feet into the sky and supports an impressive collection of antennas covering everything from HF through UHF, including beams, verticals, satellite antennas, wire antennas, loops, and even plans for future expansion.

One of the highlights of Greg's station is a stunning photograph he captured of the Moon appearing to perch atop one of his antennas against a brilliant blue sky. It's a beautiful reminder that amateur radio isn't just about equipment and operating—it's also about appreciating the view from beneath the antennas.

Thank you to Greg, K9OY, for sharing these photos of his remarkable antenna farm. His station is proof that in amateur radio, there's always room for just one more antenna.-----



Summer Field Day 2026 is Almost Here

One of the highlights of the Chicago FM Club calendar is finally here. Field Day 2026 is just around the corner, and we invite all club members, their families, friends, and anyone interested in amateur radio to join us at Camp Reinberg for a weekend filled with operating, fellowship, good food, and fun.

This year's ARRL Field Day theme, "Amateur Radio: A National Resource," reminds us of the unique role amateur radio continues to play in emergency communications, public service, technical education, and community engagement. While Field Day is often described as amateur radio's annual open house, it's also an opportunity to demonstrate our ability to establish communications under less-than-ideal conditions while showcasing the many facets of our hobby.

CFMC will once again be operating from Camp Reinberg, Cabin #3, located at 1801 North Quentin Road in Palatine, Illinois. Official Field Day operations begin at 1:00 PM on Saturday, June 27, and continue through noon on Sunday, June 28, as we take to the air using the special event callsign W9C.

Friday: Setup Day and Social Gathering

The festivities begin on Friday, June 26, and volunteers are needed to

help transform Camp Reinberg into our Field Day headquarters.

We'll be unloading equipment, setting up radios, organizing operating positions, and preparing the campsite for the weekend ahead. If you've ever wanted to learn what goes into building a portable Field Day operation, setup day is one of the best opportunities to get involved.

After the work is done, join us for our traditional Friday Night Social at the cabin. The club will provide pizza and soft drinks, giving everyone a chance to relax and catch up before Field Day begins. Please remember to Bring Your Own Chair (BYOC) for the evening gathering.

Saturday: Field Day in Full Swing

At 1:00 PM Saturday, W9C officially takes to the air. We plan to keep multiple stations active throughout the event, giving members the chance to experience a variety of



A colorful poster for CFMC Field Day 2026. At the top, it says "CFMC FIELD DAY 2026" in large, bold letters, with "2026" in a red banner. Below this, it says "W9C AMATEUR RADIO: A NATIONAL RESOURCE". The background features a log cabin labeled "CABIN #3" and "CAMP REINBERG 1801 N. QUENTIN RD. PALATINE, IL", a radio tower, and a ham radio on a table. The poster is divided into two main sections: "FRIDAY, JUNE 26TH" and "SATURDAY, JUNE 27TH".

FRIDAY, JUNE 26TH

- ✓ SETUP ANTENNAS
- ✓ SETUP RADIOS
- ✓ SETUP CAMP

FRIDAY NIGHT SOCIAL IN THE EVENING
BRING YOUR OWN CHAIR!

SATURDAY, JUNE 27TH

CFMC FIELD DAY

OFFICIAL OPERATING FROM 1PM SATURDAY-NOON SUNDAY

CLUB PICNIC ON SATURDAY
BRING A SIDE DISH!

★ DETAILS AT CHICAGOFMCLUB.ORG ★

operating styles and bands.

One of the great things about Field Day is that there is no wrong way to participate. You can operate for hours, stop by for a quick visit, assist with logging, help newcomers make their first contacts.

VE Testing

Thinking about earning your first license or upgrading to the next level?

Volunteer Examiner testing for all license classes will be offered on Saturday from 11:00 AM until 1:00 PM. Those planning to test are encouraged to register online in advance at chicagofmclub.org.

Please help spread the word to friends, family members, coworkers, and anyone who has been considering getting into amateur radio.

GOTA Station

We'll once again have a Get On The Air (GOTA) Station available during the event. The GOTA station allows unlicensed visitors and newly licensed amateurs to experience the thrill of making contacts under the supervision of experienced operators.

It's one of the best ways to introduce someone new to the hobby.

Annual Club Picnic

Field Day isn't just about contacts—it's also about the friendships that make this club special.

Saturday's annual club picnic remains one of the most anticipated parts of the weekend. The club will provide the main courses, and attendees are asked to bring a side dish, snack, dessert, or other item to share as part of our Field Day potluck.

A very special thank you goes to Paul, N9ISP, and Alan, KC9IMF, who have once again graciously volunteered to provide their

outstanding premium beef for the weekend. Their generosity has become a favorite Field Day tradition, and we sincerely appreciate their continued support.

The event is also BYOB, so if you'd like to enjoy an adult beverage while relaxing around camp, please bring your beverage of choice and enjoy responsibly.

The club will provide soft drinks, coffee, and water throughout the weekend.

Spend the Night

The air-conditioned cabin has bunks available for members who would like to stay overnight and enjoy the full Field Day experience. In addition to the cabin accommodations, Camp Reinberg offers electricity, picnic tables, a fire pit, nature trails, and plenty of parking.

If you'd like to reserve a bunk, please email: wa9orc@gmail.com. Bunks are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Everyone Is Welcome

No reservations are necessary to attend Field Day itself. Stop by for an hour or stay for the entire weekend. Field Day represents the very best of amateur radio: learning new skills, sharing knowledge, serving our communities, and building friendships that last a lifetime.

We hope you'll join us next weekend as W9C takes to the air once again.

Camp Reinberg – Cabin #3

1801 North Quentin Road

Palatine, Illinois

Friday, June 26 – Sunday,
June 28

We'll see you at
Field Day!!-----



CFMC Summer Field Day 2026

The countdown is on! In just a few short days, the Chicago FM Club will once again gather at Camp Reinberg as W9C takes to the air for one of the most anticipated weekends of the year.

If you've been considering spending the weekend at camp, this is your last chance to reserve a bunk! A limited number of spots remain in the air-conditioned cabin. To claim one, email wa9orc@gmail.com before they're gone.

Planning to stop by for the day? Don't forget to bring a chair and settle in for an afternoon of operating, conversation, and camaraderie. We especially hope you'll join us for the annual club picnic on Saturday, one of the highlights of the weekend.

The club will provide the main course, soft drinks, coffee, and water, and we're once again grateful to Paul, N9ISP, and Alan, KC9IMF, for generously providing premium beef for everyone to enjoy. Please remember to bring a side dish, snack, dessert, or other item to share as part of our Field Day potluck tradition. And, as always, the event is BYOB for those who wish to enjoy an adult beverage responsibly.

Whether you're staying all weekend or just stopping by for an hour, we invite you to be part of this year's Field Day experience. Bring your family, bring a friend, and help us showcase the very best of amateur radio.

We'll see you at Camp Reinberg as W9C takes the air once again!-----

June Meeting

Don't forget that the Chicago FM Club's monthly meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 24, at 7:30 PM at the 16th District Police Station.

With Field Day just around the corner, we'll be using this month's meeting to finalize plans and share the latest updates for the weekend's Summer Field Day activities. If you're planning to attend Field Day, this is the perfect opportunity to get the most up-to-date information, ask questions, and find out how you can get involved.

Following the business portion of the meeting, our Education Lead, Charlie, W9CEF, will present an informative program on Microwave Communications. Whether you're already experimenting above 1 GHz or simply curious about another exciting aspect of amateur radio this is a must-see.

We hope to see you there for an evening of fellowship, Field Day preparations, and learning something new!-----

CFMC on the Web



Check out our website

<https://www.chicagofmclub.org/>



Chat with us on Discord



Connect with us on Groups.io

<https://groups.io/g/CFMC/>



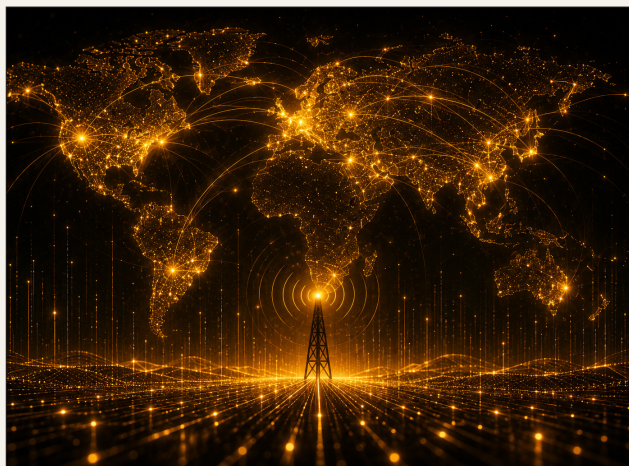
Join us on Facebook



Follow us on X

https://x.com/CFMC_WA9ORC

Tech Talk



JS8Call: Digital Messaging Beyond Signal Reports

For many amateur radio operators, digital communication means one thing: FT8. Over the last several years, the weak-signal digital mode has become enormously popular, filling waterfalls with rapid-fire exchanges of callsigns, signal reports, and confirmations. But what if those same weak-signal capabilities could be used for actual conversations and message passing?

Enter JS8Call.

Built upon the same proven technology that powers FT8, JS8Call takes weak-signal digital communication a step further by allowing operators to exchange free-text messages, relay traffic, and even leave messages for stations that aren't currently on the air. It's part keyboard-to-keyboard chat, part messaging network, and part experiment in what amateur radio can become when efficiency and creativity intersect.

So, What Exactly Is JS8Call?

JS8Call was developed by amateur radio operator Jordan Sherer (KN4CRD) and uses

the same modulation techniques found in the popular FT8 mode created by Joe Taylor, K1JT, and the WSJT-X development team.

The difference is simple:

- FT8 is designed to exchange information automatically.
- JS8Call is designed to communicate.

Instead of exchanging a handful of structured messages, JS8Call allows operators to type and send actual text. Want to ask someone about their antenna? Discuss propagation? Coordinate an upcoming POTA activation? You can do it.

The tradeoff is speed. Because JS8Call transmits longer messages and provides additional functionality, contacts generally move more slowly than FT8. But many operators find that to be part of its charm.

Messaging Beyond the Contact

One of JS8Call's most interesting features is its ability to function more like a messaging system than a traditional digital mode.

Stations can send:

- Directed messages to a specific callsign.
- Group messages to predefined groups.
- Broadcast announcements.
- Heartbeats that advertise their presence on the air.
- Relay messages through other stations.
- Store-and-forward messages that can be delivered when another station becomes active.

Imagine leaving a message for a fellow club member that gets delivered later when conditions improve and their station comes online. That's not science fiction—it's built

into the software.

Some operators use JS8Call as an informal messaging network, while others see it as a valuable emergency communications tool capable of functioning when internet-based systems are unavailable.

What Equipment Do You Need?

Getting started with JS8Call doesn't require anything exotic.

Most operators already have everything they need:

- An HF transceiver capable of SSB operation.
- A computer running Windows, macOS, or Linux.
- A sound card interface between the radio and computer.
- Reliable time synchronization on the computer.
- The free JS8Call software.

If you've successfully operated FT8, chances are you're already only a few clicks away from trying JS8Call.

Why Should You Care?

In an era where so much of amateur radio communication has become automated, JS8Call reminds us that communication itself remains at the heart of the hobby.

It combines:

- The weak-signal performance of FT8.
- The conversational nature of keyboard-to-keyboard modes.
- The flexibility of message handling.
- The experimentation that has always defined amateur radio.

It also encourages patience. Messages are sent in timed intervals, propagation still

matters, and operators quickly learn to think carefully about what they want to say. Many users describe JS8Call as feeling more intentional and personal than some of today's faster-paced digital modes.

Applications in the Real World

JS8Call has found its way into a variety of operating activities:

- Portable operating and POTA activations.
- Emergency preparedness exercises.
- Long-distance weak-signal messaging.
- Informal ragchews.
- Traffic handling experiments.
- Off-grid communications testing.

Because of its efficient use of spectrum and ability to function under challenging conditions, some operators view it as an intriguing option for situations where traditional communications may be difficult or unavailable.

Give It a Try

Perhaps the greatest strength of amateur radio is its ability to evolve while remaining rooted in experimentation and discovery. Modes like CW, packet, PSK31, FT8, and now JS8Call all represent different answers to the same question:

"How can we communicate more effectively?"

If you've ever found yourself wishing FT8 involved a little more conversation, or if you're simply curious about exploring another corner of the amateur radio world, JS8Call might be worth loading onto your computer.

After all, exchanging signal reports is fun.

But sometimes it's even better to actually have something to say.-----

Jeff Wuerth | *KD9RVJ, Squelch Tale Editor*

Chicago

FM Club

Club Officers

President.....*Paul Gris* | N9JZY
Vice President.....*John Cerza* | N9SRY
Secretary.....*Jim Fanning* | KD9WNR
Treasurer..... *Barry Friedman* | K9FMB

Board of Directors

Doug Harland | KD9YFR
Paul Abernathy | N9ISP
Kevin E. Suddoth | KD9ZDR
Alan Moyzis | KC9IMF
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VE Testing.....*Bill Deans* | KD9TWA
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Website Editor.....*Bill Deans* | KD9TWA
Refreshments.....*Joe Degrazia* | K9CTA
Newsletter.....*Jeff Wuerth* | KD9RVJ
Announcements.....*Kevin E Suddoth* | KD9ZDR
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Education Coordinator..... *Charlie Ferreira* | W9CEF

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Joe Genovese | WA9KOD
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