

# THE BLACK HOLE



Official Journal of The Society of Midwest Contesters

Volume XVII Issue V

May 2009

## Comments from the Prez

By Mike Kasrich, AJ9C

It's been a while since I have posted Prez comments in the BH. For that I apologize. For those of you that don't know I work in the unemployment benefits field and since the fall, work has been crazy to say the least. Couple that with the top section of my tower doing a corkscrew upside down and radio has taken a bit of a back seat.

We have a summer full of events coming up that the membership needs to get behind and support. The ARRL June VHF QSO Party is rapidly approaching and we are defending Champs in Unlimited club competition. While this has been a nice feather in our collective caps, we can not become complacent. We should all ask ourselves what are "we" going to do to improve our score from last year. That could be as simple as getting on for an extra hour if possible, adding a band, or just participating where you did not in previous years.

This is important. We have had the numbers to qualify for unlimited but we do need the quality and quantity of scores to improve so we can remain number 1. Without that, it would be possible for the top clubs in Medium to get a few more scores and challenge us if not beat us in unlimited. Kevin has done, and continues to do, an excellent job in organizing and beating the drum for this contest. Lets all pull together and do it again.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Rock the QSO Parties

In an effort to increase SMC activity, we're encouraging everyone to actively participate in state QSO parties in 2009. A calendar listing the state QSO parties for 2009 has been posted on the SMC website. Let's make a concerted effort to rock the state QSO parties.

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7th Call Area QSO Party	13Z, May 2 to 07Z, May 3, 2009
Indiana QSO Party	16Z, May 2 to 04Z, May 3, 2009
New England QSO Party	20Z, May 2 to 05Z, May 3, 2009 and 13Z-24Z, May 3, 2009

## Adventures in SO2R Land - Part 5

By Bill Axelrod ND9E

So, here I am in Central Illinois. Much to my surprise, I have received a number of notes asking me to continue this series. So here goes.

Prolog. And then fate intervened. I decided it was time to retire. Sold my 40 acres of radio heaven (almost heaven, West Virginia – right?) along with towers, antennas, beverages, etc. and moved to East Peoria. If the snow ever melts I'll be putting up a whole new set of antennas, re-establish my SO2R station, et. al. But will I do it right this time? Have I learned

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# The Black Hole



The **Black Hole** is published monthly, September through June, by The Society of Midwest Contesters. Permission for use of the materials is hereby granted on the sole condition that credit is given to the source of those materials.

## EDITOR

Brian Maves, K9QQ

Material for **The Black Hole** should be forwarded to:

**k9qq@arrl.net**

Membership in **The Society of Midwest Contesters** is open to all persons with a bona-fied interest in amateur radio contesting. For more information contact one of the following officers:

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Vacant

## AWARDS COORDINATOR

Chuck Schneebeli, KI9A

## SMC Dues

Dues are \$10 a year, but may be waived based on the fulfillment of participation requirements:

**In the SMC SS circle:** Make 100 total Sweepstakes QSOs over the two weekends and submit your score(s) for "Society of Midwest Contesters." In addition, submit one other score for an SMC club competition in one of the following contests: ARRL VHF, 160m, or 10m, NAQP, CQWW, ARRL DX, etc.

**Outside of the SMC SS circle:** Submit two scores per year for SMC club or team competition in any of the six NAQPS and four Sprints.

Qualifying scores are those submitted during the calendar year prior to January 1.

Donations are still accepted

You can make your payment two ways:

1. Send a check, money order, or cash to:

Zig Markowski - KM9M  
50 E. Eureka Drive  
Lemont, IL 60439-3970

2. Use Paypal and email your donation to [dues@w9smc.com](mailto:dues@w9smc.com).

# W9SMC

Callsign of Society of Midwest Contesters

SMC Web Page: <http://www.w9smc.com>

## SMC Stuff

To get your SMC stuff, see the last page of the newsletter or visit the SMC website, <http://www.w9smc.com/merchandise.htm>



**Badges**

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**Shirts**

# VHF Column

By Kevin Kaufhold, W9GKA

## Upcoming VHF Events

The June VHF Party is fast approaching. Time to get everything in operating order! We have won the unlimited club competition for the last two years. Please let me know if you are planning on working this contest, as we should be able to win again if we get everyone on for this event.

The July CQ VHF is also a popular contest, please plan on getting on for this contest. It is a 6 and 2 band shoot-out with no low power class, so the name of the game is to get as much power on the air as possible. This is a portable class for the low power guys, however.

6 Meter FFMA Grids. There are a number of rare US grids being activated this summer on 6 meters. On page 5 is a list of grids that I know of. Please check into the FFMA Yahoo user's group for updates. Often, there will be trips announced on very short notice, and usually, the FFMA group contains posts on such trips.

Central States is also upon us. SMC is co-hosting as suite this year. We need volunteers for the suite. Who can help? Please let me know. The event is in Elk Grove this year, so please make plans to attend. I would love to see a great turn-out of SMC members at CSVHF. Here are the details:

## 43rd Annual CSVHFS Conf. Conference Schedule

This schedule is subject to update. This is **generally** what you can expect...

### Thursday, 23 July 2009

- Registration Desk 1500 - 1900
- Thursday Night Social 1730 - 2000 Pig Roast - Poolside
- [Hospitality room](#) 2000 - later
- BoD meeting 2030

### Friday, 24 July 2009

- Registration Desk 0700 - 1900
- [Antenna Range](#) 0700-1130
- [Rover/Dish display](#) 0800-1130

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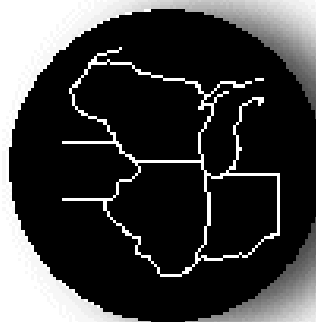
We are still co-sponsoring a hospitality suite at the Central States VHF conference in July. Be sure to put that event on your calendar. This year it will be held near Chicago. It's an excellent opportunity for our Chicago area members to volunteer to run the suite and get together to show the flag. I know I plan to attend if my schedule falls in place.

Finally the 2009 edition of ZOfest will occur again in the first part of August. We are still looking for folks wanting to make presentations. Contact Ralph K9ZO if you have a hankering to be presentation famous. Just ask Craig K9CT how easy it is! This year we are not going to fill the day with presentations and will include more face/social time. Make your plans to bring your excess radio items to sell, demonstrations to set up, and tall stories to tell.

For those of you on a limited radio time operation budget keep the weekly high and slow speed Sprint ladders in mind. These contests are only a half hour in length and give you a whole bunch of contesting in a short period of time. Our own Mike/W9RE sits on the board for this contest and helps promote it each week. More details can be found at <http://www.ncccsprint.com/default.htm>. The contest even has it's own email reflector [nccc-blue@kkn.net](mailto:nccc-blue@kkn.net). Feel free to contact W9RE.

All of us on the Board are keeping our ears open for activities to get the club involved in. This is a club with a large membership and the Board doesn't have a monopoly on ideas. If you have suggestions, ideas or odd thoughts on how this club can better serve you all, please drop any of us an email or a land line. This is not a cult of personality, and as an organization will only be as good YOU all in the membership. Get up, speak out and participate!

for now 73. Ninecee



*(Continued from page 1)*

some lessons? You bet. Will I learn from these lessons? Wait and see.

On Wednesday, November 12 2008 My wife, dog, and I arrived in East Peoria late one evening after a 14 hour drive from the Washington DC area. We had bought a house here and already had the first shipment of furniture delivered and set up, food in the fridge, and drinks on the sideboard. It would seem that the next step would be to set up a radio, throw an antenna up, and get ready for the coming weekend's SSB Sweepstakes. And, of course, air out my new call sign ND9E.

Not gonna happen. One great thing about moving to Peoria is that we have family here. One not-so-great thing about moving to Peoria is that they were there waiting for us with a hot dinner on the table and drinks poured. By the time they left that night it was time to quietly pass out in the bed after a very long day.

Thursday morning brought an orgy of unpacking stuff and making the house habitable and get ready for the following Monday the day the final movers delivery was due. It takes a more dedicated ham than me to tell the XYL "Hon, you unpack the first 50 cartons while I play with my radios". I ain't gonna do that; no way. I wanted to live long enough to enjoy my hard won retirement.

But Thursday night I did find room for my operating table. Found and set up my computer and one radio. And I threw up a vertical wire from the second story window and ran a coax into my basement shack tuner and called CQ. Wow! Did I ever get out well.

All 12 of my telephones started ringing. The lights in the living room flashed with my keying. Most of the GFI power outlets tripped. My alarm system alarmed. Darn, that thing is loud. The dog started yelping and howling with all this activity and noise. Darn, that thing is loud.

Discretion being the better part of valor, I stopped my first CQ, told the police that the alarm was in error and that we were all safe, and reset everything. Subsequent investigation indicated that I could not operate at 100 watts. Anything above 5 watts would set-off the whole mess all over again.

What to do? The shipment with my decently long coax and other needed stuff to throw up antennas anywhere but on the house would not arrive until Monday. But I couldn't just couldn't ignore the upcoming SSB sweepstakes, especially as a brand new member of SMC. So, operate QRP I did.

Let's do the math – I don't like SSB contests. Life really is too short for QRP. So, QRP SSB SS – here I come.

So by now you probably got this hint that I don't much care for SSB contests. In fact, after my last SSB SS I opined that my next SSB SS would only happen after Hades froze over. Turned out that was a prophetic statement for a guy who just moved to the Black Hole.

Friday brought another exciting day of unpacking, moving furniture, getting telephone, television, and internet installed and operating. And Friday night, getting my, ugh, QRP station ready for the SS to start on Saturday.

Saturday morning got on 20 meters CW with 5 watts and my wire stuck to the side of the house. Wow – worked some DX. Saturday afternoon and SS time. Wow – worked about 100 QSOs with my puny 5 watts. Got some pretty good comments about my signal strength. And thought "You know, this Black hole stuff really isn't so bad". Little did I know.

Preview... So there I was, the Saturday morning one week after the SSB sweepstakes, contemplating my boxes of radios, wire, coax, miscellaneous junk, trees, open land, hills and valleys and trying to lay out my systems engineering plan to rebuild my SO2R station square in the middle of the black hole.....73 and GL... Bill ND9E



*(Continued from page 3)*

- [Vendor area](#) 1000
  - Family Program start - Buses Leave for the Museum Campus at 0830
  - [Technical Presentations](#) 1300
  - Test equipment 1230
    1. [Active devices](#) (noise figure) testing
    2. [Passive devices](#) testing
  - Luncheon - 1130 - 1300 at the Old Chicago Restaurant on site
  - [Technical Presentations](#) (time TBD\*)
  - Family Program buses arrive Back at the Elk-GroveVillage Holiday Inn 1730
  - Dinner on own
  - [Flea Market](#) 1900 - 2200
  - [Hospitality room](#) 2100 - later
  - BoD [meeting](#) (time TBD\*)
- SNOTTS meeting Special Board Room first floor 2221 - Sharp

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## Summer 6 meter FFMA Grid Activations

Date Start	Date End	Call	Grid(s)	Notes
23-May-2009	24-May-2009	NS7F	DM31/32	Not sure whether two activations or boundary activation.
29-May-2009	31-May-2009	K5N	EL58	N5OMG et al. May be extended into June if ops can be
10-Jun-2009	12-Jun-2009	WA7JTM	DM36	Pre-contest
12-Jun-2009	13-Jun-2009	WØETT	DN63	Pre-contest
12-Jun-2009	15-Jun-2009	KT1J	FN55/56/65/66	Around June ARRL Contest. Dates are estimates.
13-Jun-2009	14-Jun-2009	WA7JTM	DM46	Contest.
13-Jun-2009	14-Jun-2009	N5XYO	DL88/89	Contest. With N5WDK.
13-Jun-2009	14-Jun-2009	WØETT	DN64	Contest.
13-Jun-2009	14-Jun-2009	WA6HXD	DM23	Contest.
23-Jun-2009	28-Jun-2009	K5M	DL89	W5CEM. FD and following.
29-Jun-2009		K5M	DM70	W5CEM. End date uncertain.
17-Jul-2009	20-Jul-2009	KT1J	FN56/57/66/67	Around July CQ Contest. Dates are estimates.
		K6EU/M	CM86	As needed. Phone number to be provided later.
		AA4SC	Yellowstone area	Dates/details to be determined
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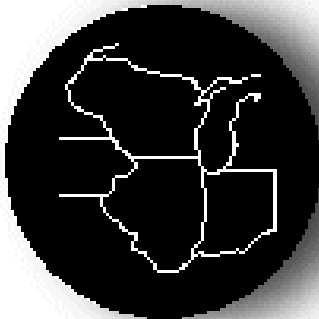
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## Saturday, 25 July 2009

- Registration Desk 0700 - 1630
- [Technical Presentations](#) 0830 - 1545
- ["VHF+ 101"](#) 0830 - 1130
- [Vendor area](#) 0930 - 1700
- Family Program start 0900 - Buses Leave
- [Technical Presentations](#) 0830
  1. [Active devices](#) (noise figure) testing
  2. [Passive devices](#) testing
- Lunch on own 1130 - 1245
- [Technical Presentations](#) 1300 - 1545
- ["VHF+ 101"](#) 1300 - later
- Business Meeting 1545 - 1615
- BoD meeting 1630
- Family Program finish 1600
- Open (pay as you go) bar prior to banquet
- [Banquet](#) Dr Joe Taylor K1JT 1830
- [Hospitality room](#) 2000
- [Child care](#) 1800 - 2030

## Sunday, 26 July 2009

- Parting Shots Session - [Atrium](#) 0900



## SMC Stuff

### SMC Clip-on Badge

by NV5A

The SMC logo appears at the top-center of the badge in black and white. Your call sign, first name and city & state appear in dark blue. The SMC name badge as shown with the slot & strap with swivel alligator clip, but there are other choices.

Price: \$14.50 (includes s&h).



# KC9FD

**SOCIETY OF MIDWEST**

Club badges can be obtained by sending a check for \$5.50 to:

Midwest Engraving

Ph: 414-228-8654

6657 N. Sidney Place  
Glendale, WI 53209

Fax: 414-228-8655

# Contest University

Thursday, May 14, 2009  
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dayton OH

<http://contestuniversity.com/>

## 17th Annual Dayton Contest Dinner

Saturday, May 16, 2009 -- Crowne Plaza Hotel

Cash bar 5:30pm/Dinner 6:30pm

\$39 per seat/\$290 per table

<http://www.contestdinner.com/>

## Dayton Contest Forum

Saturday, May 16, 2009

Afternoon

Location and Presenters TBD

## Member/New Member Information/ Update Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Call: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send updates to:

**Zig Markowski - KM9M**  
50 E. Eureka Drive  
Lemont, IL 60439-3970

## We need your input for the next 'Hole!!

- ⇒ **Operating stories**
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## The Society of Midwest Contesters

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