

# THE BLACK HOLE



**Official Journal of The Society of Midwest Contesters**

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## SMC FEST 2015



A lot has already been mentioned on the SMC email list about the upcoming SMC Fest on August 22 at the Marriott at Bloomington-Normal, IL and if you are on the fence, hopefully this will give you that last nudge to get you go. Speakers scheduled are NN1N (ARRL), K2DRH (on VHF contesting), K9WX and AI9T (on RTTY), W9RE (on WRTC), NOAX (on filters), K9ZO (on station design), K3WA (on SO2R) and K9CT (on the state of the SMC) and possibly a couple more. There are many experts willing to share their knowledge and experience with our group, something you likely will not ever be close to getting at any other place outside of a national convention. There will also be plenty of time for off-line discussions, K9CS will be available for card checking, and there will be a table for swap meet stuff.



This will be a great time to meet many of your brother and sister contesters that you seldom get to see, and to enjoy a weekend of trading secrets, ideas and questions about improving our contesting.

If you plan to spend a night or two there, you want to reserve your rooms now!

**Please register on the SMC web page and make use of the link to the hotel to make your reservations.**

<http://www.w9smc.com/smc-fest/>



## **The 2015 Indiana QSO Party,**

sponsored by the Hoosier DX and Contest Club (HDXCC), was held May 2 and 3. For the second year in a row, all 92 Indiana counties were activated. There were 248 logs submitted, exactly the same number submitted for scoring in 2014, although 2014 also had 4 check logs submitted.

These SMC members will be awarded a plaque for having the top score in their respective entry categories:

- WT9U, Jim, Indiana Low Power
- N9FN, Dave, Indiana Portable, multi-op with N9LJX, Scott
- KJ9C, Mel, Indiana Mobile
- K9FO, Will, Outside Indiana QRP

Additionally, the Lafayette DX Association took top honors in the club category, thanks to efforts by SMC members Andy, K9ELF; Tim, K9WX; Dave, N9FN and Scott, N9LJX.

Two rule changes have been approved for 2016. First, the contest will shift forward one hour, running from 1500Z to 0300Z instead of 1600Z to 0400Z. This will benefit the mobile, rover and portable stations, especially the first two categories. These operators frequently find themselves in uncharted and unfamiliar territory after dark, so moving the event forward one hour will allow them to conduct more of their operations during daylight hours. This change will also provide greater overlap between the INQP and the 7QP, which is held on the same day. Second, all stations will be able to use packet or spotting networks without having to enter as a multi-op. Each year, a significant number of counties are covered by mobile stations, and allowing entrants in all categories to use packet assistance should aid activity by helping everyone find and work the mobile and rover stations.

Changing the county abbreviations is also being discussed for 2016, with no conclusions yet reached. The INQP, 7QP and NEQP are all held the first weekend of May, and each uses a slightly different way of abbreviating the counties, adding some confusion for stations operating in all three events. This year, the DEQP moved to that same weekend, increasing the opportunity for confusion. HDXCC members have discussed trying to coordinate a common abbreviation strategy among all four events and it appears the INQP would be willing to modify its county abbreviations, but the willingness of the other contest sponsors to change their abbreviations has not yet been explored.

*Photo: the K9WX mobile station on the Posey/Vanderburgh county line. Photo by K9ELF.*

## **MEMBER PROFILE - N9FN**

I first became interested in ham radio as a youngster while watching my Dad (Phill - WA9GAA) work on various projects and talk with friends on old Motorola FM gear that he converted to 6 meters and 2 meters. I passed my Novice exam in 1973 at the age of 14 and was licensed as WN9NBT but never got on the air. After 2 years the license expired, and back then it couldn't be renewed. In early 1978 I went to the FCC Field Office in Chicago and passed my Technician exam and the FCC examiner asked me if I'd like my original call back. I said yes assuming I'd get WA9NBT, WB9NBT, or something in the appropriate technician pool at the time, but when my license came with WN9NBT as a Technician call; I thought it was an error. I called the FCC and they assured me that WN9NBT was now a valid Technician call.

Anxious to get on the air, I called Dad on 2 meter simplex for my first QSO. During that first QSO a few "helpful" hams broke in to tell me that Novices did not have 2 meter FM privileges and I should not be on 2 meters without a control operator. I assured them that I was a technician, but they didn't believe me until Dad vouched for me, but I think they were still skeptical! I ended up keeping that call as I upgraded to General, Advanced, and Extra until 2003, when I changed to N9FN.

In the fall of 1978 I came to Purdue to pursue a degree in Electrical Engineering and quickly joined W9YB, the Purdue Amateur Radio Club, where I was first exposed to HF. I was amazed how Ted (N9NB) and Tom (N9NC) could hold a verbal conversation with me and others at the club while at the same time working someone else on CW. The club had an 8080 based CW trainer, and I started playing with it and slowly my CW speed and confidence improved. One day I was listening to Phil Temples (K9HI) make a CW QSO on the club's Drake C-line, and when he finished, he slowed the Hallicrafters TO Keyer down to about 5 wpm and started calling CQ. Someone came back to his CQ, and he pushed the paddles over to me and said "This one is for you!" I was terrified but managed to answer the call. Phil helped me fill in the blanks I missed, but I had made my first CW QSO! During my years at W9YB I became interested in RTTY and resurrected an old teletype machine and a HAL ST-6 interface and worked somewhere around 40 states and quite a few DX stations on RTTY from the club.

After graduation I started working at Purdue and a few years later purchased a house. I bought a used 40' Rohn tower with a 4 element TET tri-bander and used a Ten-Tec 580 Delta to start chasing DX. My first exposure to contesting was primarily getting on to work new DX countries, bands, and modes, but I also enjoyed the competition.

In 2002 the Lafayette DX Association (W9LDX) invited me to join and participate in Field Day with them. I had a great time and really enjoy being part of a group where everyone pulls together to make it a successful and enjoyable operation. As much fun as that was, I was curious if I could pull off an operation on my own, but I didn't want to give up the fun and camaraderie of the group effort; so I decided to give some of the state QSO parties a try. I came up with various portable configurations and participated in the Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio QSO parties. I kept refining equipment and antennas but eventually grew tired of putting up a tent for shelter, having to find locations with trees suitable to support the antennas, and having a lengthy tear down after the contest ended.

In 2007 I got a deal I couldn't refuse on an old broadcast truck that was being scrapped. The truck was a rusted out Chevy Suburban, but it had a 42' Will-Burt pneumatic mast that was in great shape. I hauled the truck home and removed the mast and remaining equipment. I disposed of the truck itself and stored the parts for one of those infamous "some-day" projects. A month or two later a friend called and told me about some used delivery vans that were being sold, and I got a great deal on one of them and the project began. Ken (WB9WYR) helped install the mast and roof rack, and Dave (K9FN) and I did the rest to make a ham shack on wheels that rivals many modest home stations. The van has made operating in QSO parties a lot more fun, but convincing K9FN to join me as my secret weapon CW operator in the QSO parties has resulted in us winning at least one plaque in each state we've operated from, and I believe we have set the all-time high scores in each county we've operated from.

At my current QTH I have a 60' Pi-Rod tower with a Force 12 – 5BA/D antenna for 10-20, dipoles for 40 and 80, and an end fed longwire I use for 30 and 160. For HF rigs I have an Icom 756 Pro3 with PW1 amp and an Elecraft K3 with KPA-500 amp. For the last few years I've been chasing DXCC Challenge, where I'm currently at 2045 and have been more active on RTTY with 205 confirmed. South Sandwich Island and South Georgia Island are my only two unconfirmed countries, so I'm looking forward to the DXPedition going to both in January 2016. Future plans include getting better antennas up for 160 and 6 meters to increase totals on those bands.

In addition to Ham Radio I've been a Volunteer Firefighter and Emergency Medical Technician for 32 years, have been researching my family genealogy, and enjoy playing racquetball.



## SMC Outreach Field Day 2015 by Bill Axelrod K3WA

Craig (K9CT), Ralph (K9ZO), and I are pretty avid CW contesters. Each year, we look for a place to do Field Day (FD) where we can get into serious CW contester mode. Last year it was as W1AW/9 where we, and a number of others, had a blast making over 10,000 FD QSOs.

The year before that, we joined the outstanding crew at W9CA for FD 2012. And came in second in the USA in that one. So, early in 2015, we started casting around to decide what we would do for FD this year. Ralph lives in Bloomington, Il where he is a member of the Central Illinois Radio Club Of Bloomington (CIRC). At a meeting, the subject of FD came up. The members talked about some of the challenges they faced every year with intra-station interference, organizing their station, logging software, and operating in a contest-like mode. There are few contesters active in CIRC. After a very short discussion, the three of us decided to join the CIRC team for Field Day 2015. Thus was born the SMC Outreach program for FD 2015.



We agreed to provide pre-FD technical expertise for the CIRC setup, training in the use of logging software, and operating assistance. We also provided an additional station, one for CW with the three of us as the CW operators.

Before FD, we worked with the CIRC members in designing their antenna choices and placement – all with an eye towards reducing intra-station interference while maximizing hardware efficiency. Ralph conducted training sessions in the use of N1MM Logger+ contest logging software for CIRC members.

We established a location at the FD site for a CW station to augment the phone/digital and VHF (6 Meter) stations. Craig brought an updated Elecraft K3 radio and power supply, AC generator, a three element SteppIR antenna, and a 50 foot tower on a travel trailer for the CW station. Ralph brought a 60 foot Spiderbeam mast with the wire to build an 80 Meter helical vertical antenna with radials. And I brought a laptop, large monitor, keyboard and mouse for radio control and logging along with two sets of W3NQN bandpass filters to help with the intra-station interference problem. One of the CIRC members brought a camping trailer that popped-up, bulged-out and made a great home for the CW station.

The CIRC team brought their two radios (HF and VHF), dipole antennas for the HF bands, a four (4) element 6 meter beam on a mast, an AC power generator, computer, etc. for the SSB/Digital station.

Together, it worked out pretty well. We made over 1,850 CW QSOs (not counting dupes), helped the CIRC operators with making SSB QSOs, and generally had a ball. And, who knows, perhaps the contesting bug bit one or more of the CIRC members, some who may soon join SMC.

The CIRC members were generous and gracious hosts. It was an excellent adventure.

After FD we came to believe that it would be beneficial for SMC to put together an even larger SMC Outreach Program offering our technical and operating expertise to other ham clubs in Nine Land helping others get more proficient in contest-like operations while spreading the joy of contesting to even more radio-active hams. The board is working on the details of that plan now. Want to help? Drop me (K3WA) an email and let me know. [bill@axelrods.org](mailto:bill@axelrods.org)

73... Bill K3WA



Gary AB9M



Score - 4,271 Points			
Band	Mode	QSOs	Pts
3.5	CW	147	294
3.5	LSB	71	71
3.5	PSK3	11	22
7	CW	656	1312
7	LSB	193	193
7	PSK3	1	2
7	RTTY	11	22
14	CW	649	1298
14	RTTY	3	6
14	USB	28	28
21	CW	402	804
21	USB	16	16
28	USB	87	87
50	CW	4	8
50	USB	107	107
420	FM	1	1
Total	Both	2387	4271
Score: 4,271			

Another FD photo.... Want to share your club's story and photos??? Send 'em in!



## Headsets ???



A few months back, Joe, WB9SBD raised a question about what boom mic/headset everyone recommends, as he was in the market for a set. Here is a synopsis of what came through the reflector in answer to Joe's request:

The **Yamaha CM-500** seemed to be preferred by many of those responding being very comfortable and at a pretty fair price (\$55). K9CT agreed that the CM-500 is good but he said for those wanting something top end, **Radiosport** made some that were the way to go. <http://www.arlancommunications.com/products/amateurRadio/radioSport/Headsets.asp> K9GS favored the **Sony MDR7506**, but you would need to add a boom microphone. Gary also liked the **Koss SB-40**, very much like the CM-500 but with a dynamic mic element instead of an electret element. W9RE had used **Bose QC** series noise canceling for 15 years but he had to add a boom mic. Mike commented he also thought the CM-500 were very good. K9CC liked using a **Bluetooth** headset in conjunction with his hearing aid, but there was no noise canceling. A couple people mentioned the **Heil Proset Elite** but none thought they were as comfortable as some others.

The SMC reflector archive is a gold mine of great information, they can be viewed by any member of the list at [http://mail.w9smc.com/mailman/listinfo/smc\\_w9smc.com](http://mail.w9smc.com/mailman/listinfo/smc_w9smc.com) You will have to enter your mail.w9smc.com/mailman password to access.

## *NAQP Challenge 2015*

The second round of NAQP is fast upon us. **NAQP RTTY is July 18**, and we need operators on the air! Unfortunately, this is the same weekend as the CQWW VHF contest, but don't skip out of the RTTY contest even if you do want to work the VHF contest, do both! The SMC is in a really good position to win this year, but only if we can turn out the masses for the next RTTY event. If you have never tried contesting with RTTY, there are several SMC members that will be able and willing to help you get your feet wet. Even if you only can log a handful of QSO's, your entry makes an impact on the total score, so don't think a small log is not worth turning in. Overall, the 2015 NAQP Challenge results so far are very promising with the SMC leading the PVRC by just under 200 M points and the NCC C by just over 200 M points. That sounds like a lot of margin, but you can be sure the other clubs will be loaded for bear and will try to their best to make their comeback. You can view the current year to date standings on the SMC web page at <http://www.w9smc.com/naqp-club-challenge/> We cannot sit back and think we are so far in front that we can't be caught; we have to put in at least as much effort as we did earlier this year. NAQP is a short (10 hours) contest and it is low power, and DX does not count, so we have as much advantage as anyone else. Get on and do the best you can. If you know you can go full time, great! If you can only manage a few hours, squeeze in as many as you can. If you have no time, at least get on and work all those loud SMC stations you can. No matter how big or how small, make sure you **send in your log** and **post it on 3830** as well as to the SMC email reflector so your score will get added to the totals.

## So, You Want To Try RTTY Contesting...PART two

Bill Axelrod K3WA

There's a rumor making the rounds that you *still* want to try your hand at RTTY contesting. That's great. Last issue we talked through some of the basics of RTTY contesting and pointed out some key references. That was your reading assignment for the month. Did you do that? Or did the dog eat your homework?

Let's take a big breath, escape reality, and assume you did. Then you got your station set up and ready to go. So, in this article let's talk about actually getting on the air and getting into a RTTY contest.

There are a lot of people who proclaim that it is impossible to win a major contest from the black hole. And, for sure, it is not at all easy. But the team at the K9CT station did it during last fall's CW World Wide RTTY contest. How about Number 1 in the USA and Number 4 in the world? Those are the draft numbers. And we would have been Number 3 in the world if I had stayed home and let the really good ops handle the load. Here's the team...



*You could be next!*

RTTY testers, like any group, have their own ways of operating, habits, and even terminology. For example, we call the code used for RTTY the Baudot code. That's where it came from. Baudot code is a five bit code evolved from codes developed in the 1600s (and obviously not for electronic systems). In the 1920s, the Baudot code evolved into the Western Union code called ITA2. That is the code we use for RTTY today. But we still call it the Baudot code.

Using five bits we get enough bits to encode the entire alphabet, a shift function to switch between the letters and the numbers (which

share some of the five bit arrangements), and some special characters for spaces (SP), a bell, carriage return (CR) and Line Feed (LF).

Every letter, every character, etc. takes five bits. Whether it is the letter E or Q, it takes five bits, not at all like CW, the original digital mode. Same for every other character. For example, a nine (9) is five bits. The letter N is five bits. That's why we send 599 and not 5nn when doing RTTY – same total number of bits, same amount of time.

And time is critical in RTTY contests. That's why we send 5nn in CW contests, less time equals faster rate. Most Amateur HF RTTY is run at a rate of 45 baud (actually 45.45 baud which is the same as 60 WPM). Baudot (RTTY) rates supported by WriteLog (and other applications) are 45, 50, 57 and 75 baud. Most RTTY contests are run at 45 baud.

You will find lots of good info on the syntax used in RTTY contesting on the web site. RTTY testers can become zealots at times. You might even come to believe that we are dinosaurs. That is especially true when you read reflector discussions on whether one should send 599 IL IL or 599 IL – IL (don't use that dash) to speed up your exchange.

And a test question: Why do you see RTTY operators send RY RY RY....?

The answer: RYs are used for test messages. Since R is 01010 and Y is 10101, the sequence exercises much of a teleprinter's mechanical components at maximum stress. Even though very few of us teleprinters these days, it is a complete test of your system. If your RYs are copyable, anything else you send will also work. Back in the day, hams sent RY RY RY... at the start of each transmission. As a rule, we don't do that any more. The shift from mechanical teletype machines to computer hosted software obviated the need. Some guys still do that. I think they just like the sound.

Also, at one time, fine-tuning of the receiver was done using two colored lights (one for each tone). 'RYRYRY...' produced 01010101..., which made the lights glow with equal brightness when the tuning was correct.

So, there's a little history to warm up a very cold day (right now it is 0 F here in East Peoria). Get on RTTY and add another mode to your repertoire. If you have questions, ask the experts on SMC (and I am not one). We are always willing to help.

73 and see you in the 'tests... *Bill*

## **The CW Open** - *By Rob Brownstein, K6RB*

CW Open is a unique CW contest. Unlike most contests, you don't have to sit in the chair operating for 16 hours to be in contention for an award. CW Open is actually three separate, four-hour CW contests held within a 24 hour period. Each contest is separately scored and awarded. So, someone could spend just four hours in one session and win a beautiful solid-glass trophy or one of the many plaques. To make the playing field a little more level, one competes against others in one's region. So, identical awards are given for each session to winning participants in ITU regions 1, 2 and 3. CW



Open starts at 0000Z on the first Saturday of September (e.g. September 5 2015) and ends at 2359Z, but the three sessions are held at 0000-0359Z; 1200-1559Z, and 2000-2359Z on that Saturday.

Each session uses a new log where QSO and multiplier counts begin at zero. Technically, if someone participated in all three sessions and operated on all six HF bands, they could work the same person 18 times that day. Actually, though, during any four-hour session, depending upon where one lives, propagation will favor either the higher bands or the lower bands. The times were chosen so that in every ITU region, participants would have one favorable high-band session; one favorable low-band session; and one compromise session. Of course, these will differ with regions and locations.

Several computer logging programs support the CW Open including N1MM (and N1MM+), WriteLog, SD, CQPWIN, CQ/X, DXLog, GenLog, Skookum, TR4W and YFKtest. The scoring is very simple. You receive one point for each QSO, once per band per session. You receive one multiplier for a callsign, the first time you work it, once per session. The final score is simply QSO points multiplied by multipliers. So, for example, if you spent the whole four hours on 20 meters and worked 300 valid QSOs, you would have earned 300 points and 300 multipliers, for a total of 90,000 points. If you worked, say, 300 QSOs during the four hours, with 150 on 20 meters and 150 on 15 meters, but 100 of those QSOs were with the same callsigns, you would earn 300 points and 200 multipliers for a final score of 60,000 points. In other words, it is strategically best to work as many different callsigns as you can, and only change bands once rates begin to plummet.

Etched glass trophies are awarded to top scores in each session based on ITU region. Plaques for high power, low power and QRP entries are awarded for categorical winners in each session, in each region. Finally, each entrant's session points are aggregated to produce an aggregate score. These, too, are awarded with trophies and plaques. Participants must submit a log for each session in which they participated to be eligible for awards for those sessions and for aggregate awards.

Teams may participate, too, and there are no geographical limitations. Teams can register right on the CWops website by going to the CW Open tab and submitting the team information data. Currently, other than bragging rights, there are no awards for winning teams, and because there are no geographical limitations, there is only one top scoring team.

The CW Open is managed by the CW Operators club (CWops) and awards are sponsored by CWops and ICOM. For more information go to [www.cwops.org](http://www.cwops.org) and click on the CW Open tab on the left. See you in CW Open on September 5 at 0000Z.

Good luck and have fun.

## W1AW/9 in the Hoosier State by Mike AJ9C



When Dave NN1N sent me the email asking if Jerry/KE9I and I wanted to coordinate/operate as W1AW for ARRL Centennial I certainly was honored. My first thought was "a boy and his radio" just like my DX trips for CQWW. The plan was Jerry and I would take a week off and have at the bands like mad men. That idea went away after the first weeks of 2014 when it became apparent this event was going to be more like a DXpedition to a top 100 needed country and not a week long field day.

You never really think about how much time and how many band/mode slots there are to cover till you see it visually. We had a "Big Board" set up showing the different bands/times/modes that needed to be covered, and it looked overwhelming. Multiply that by 7 days and you have a "moment of clarity". Initially I thought "SMC contesters" to fill the void, but even that didn't fill enough slots. Like Paul Revere on his ride a call to arms was made for hams in Indiana to operate during the third week of July. Luckily volunteers came from all corners of the state.

I tried to warn the volunteers who had never operated contests or from overseas that this would be a totally different radio experience. From the comments of the 35 different ops who took part a new appreciation for what its like on the other side of the pileup exists in Indiana along with a few new radiosport enthusiasts. "What a rush" was the common theme.

I can't really describe the feeling and thoughts I had when I received the letter from K1ZZ authorizing the use of W1AW/9 in IN. Pride for sure, and a sense that our group had to bring their "A" game to the bands. The ARRL stands for a certain standard for competence in operating and it was a hope that as a state we would measure up to expectations. The final raw number for July was over 35k QSOs, I think we did!

It was a blast, and I can't wait for the ARRL Bicentennial in 2114.

*(The other 9C's note - I don't think anybody expected the nice acrylic desk plaque each operator received from ARRL. I got one for W1AW/9 Indiana and another for W1AW/7 Montana, both operated the same week in December. How did I know where I was? However, that story will have to wait for another time, when beers are involved )*

### New CWA 'HF On The Air' Advisors Program for rusty or beginning CW operators

CWOps Club has a new CW Academy-led program where a CW Academy Advisor is available on HF (40 meters - 7.035) and where **anyone** with interest can come and have QSOs/Rag-chews.

It's called CWA HF On The Air Advisors. CWops members sign up as HF Advisors. A Google linked Spreadsheet will track the weekly Advisor sign-ups. <http://cwops.org/cwa-aota.html>

This spreadsheet will be updated weekly. Please check back regularly.

We hope to see you on the air with us soon. **Times are usually 6 pm to 11 pm local.** CWOps members can also drop by 7035 and call CQ if there's no activity. Be sure to QRS.

73, Jerry Weisskohl, AC4BT, CW Academy Co-Manager, [jweisskohl@gmail.com](mailto:jweisskohl@gmail.com)

## CONTEST CALENDAR

These are but a few of many, but ones in which SMC'ers often play. Starred contests are SMC TEAM events..... Your score can count for SMC or a club team. Watch the SMC reflector to join a team or toss in your score.

More info and more contests at WA7BNM website: <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/>

IARU HF World Championship	1200Z, Jul 11 to 1200Z, Jul 12
<b>***North American QSO Party, RTTY</b>	<b>1800Z, Jul 18 to 0559Z, Jul 19</b>
County Hunters CW Contest	1400Z-2400Z, Jul 25 and 1400Z-2400Z, Jul 26
<b>***North American QSO Party, CW</b>	<b>1800Z, Aug 1 to 0559Z, Aug 2</b>
WAE DX Contest, CW	0000Z, Aug 8 to 2359Z, Aug 9
<b>***North American QSO Party, SSB</b>	<b>1800Z, Aug 15 to 0559Z, Aug 16</b>
Ohio QSO Party	1600Z, Aug 22 to 0400Z, Aug 23
CW Open three separate 4 hour events	0000Z, 1200Z, and 2000Z Sept 5
<b>*** North American Sprint, CW</b>	<b>0000Z-0400Z, Sep 13</b>

## \$MC ... From the President

You are all probably enjoying the outdoors now that it is summer. Some of you include ham radio and others not so much. We all probably had a hand in a Field Day activity somewhere.

There are a lot of summer contests, and you could probably get in one most any weekend. CWops has a weekly short contest just to keep you sharp, and there are some sprints on Thursday nights to consider. As I write this, IARU is imminent, and it won't be long before we engage in the summer NAQPs. SMC has a heady start to the NAQP competition, and we need to be all -in to maintain our lead. Actually, the summer NAQPs have a propagation advantage for the Black Hole that we can enjoy, in contrast to other times of the year.

So have you made any contest plans for the summer? Do you have some skills that you want to improve before this fall? Maybe you want to set up RTTY for a new mode to try? See the RTTY article this issue.

It is difficult to compete in the domestic contests from SMC land. That has challenged me. NAQP and SS are two of the biggest contests that require a different set of antennas and strategy than a DX contest does. So that is my summer project....doing one thing to improve my domestic antenna coverage.

What is something you could do this summer that might make a difference? This is great antenna weather and it is much easier to build antennas now than in late fall or early winter. If you are going to build a tower, you have some time constraints built into your project...application for permit, base installation and wait for concrete cure, tower build, cable installation and then the antenna. So time to start...

SMC is growing. We have gained many new members in the last few months. Some were members before and others have found our website and joined us. Thanks! We can keep the momentum going by offering as much value as possible to our membership. All of you encounter other contesters and you should always ask "are you a member of SMC?" Maybe you found a potential contester at your FD site. Please volunteer to mentor/Elmer them and encourage them to join SMC.

Speaking of Elmering...please consider talking about ethics with your student. There has been a lot of talk lately about CQ disqualifying so many hams from the CQ WW. They were found to be putting calls of stations in the log that they did not work, rubber clocking (editing the times to fit a break, band change or end time), running too much power, or using the spotting networks when they claimed unassisted operating. Please tell them NOT TO CHEAT. Read the rules and understand them. Once found cheating, it is very difficult to change the opinion of your peers that you have changed your ways....so don't cheat EVER.

I am excited with the response to the SMC Fest. We have some very good programs lined up. I can guarantee you that you will leave with at least one good idea to take home and use. Not only that, you get to mingle with other contesters and learn their secrets. And by the way, there are no secrets...anyone of our members will be glad to tell you how he/she does it. Just ask!

So see you soon at SMC Fest! If not, we'll see you on the air.

**73, Craig K9CT** SMC President

[craig@thompsonet.com](mailto:craig@thompsonet.com)



## KC9FD

SOCIETY OF MIDWEST CONTESTERS

Club badges can be ordered from:

**Midwest Engraving**      **Ph: 414-228-8654**  
**6657 N. Sidney Place**      **Fax: 414-228-8655**  
**Glendale, WI 53209**

Be sure to note that it is for a "Black Hole" badge and please allow a couple weeks for delivery.

### SMC Clip-on Badge

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). Order now from **The SignMan**.

Price: \$ 13 (plus s & h).

Visit his full color web page to see other items you can get with the SMC Logo:

<http://www.thesignman.com/clubs/smc.html>



## The Black Hole



**The Black Hole** is published periodically, maybe 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.

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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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