



#### K9MCE Officers:

- President: Mark Lewis, KD9EFO
- Vice-President: John Nalezty, KD8KVO
- Secretary: Mark Kerhlikar, WD9HBF
- Treasurer: Tim Coonrod, KC9HQA
- Trustee: Skp Riba, WS9V
- **Board of Directors:**
- Mark Osborn, WA9SXX
- Bill Ogle, W9FJ
- Jim Pitchford, N9LQF
- Ron Ochu, KO0Z
- Webmaster: Isaac Pizzo, WX9SRV

Macoupin County ARC  
129 East First Street  
PO Box 253  
Carlinville, IL 62626-0253

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# K9MCE QSN

Volume 6, Issue 12

December 2018

## K9MCE Club Meeting on Wednesday 5 December



#### Carlinville square decked out for the holidays!

Mark your calendars now and plan on attending this month's meeting of the Macoupin County Amateur Radio Club at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, December 5th.

5:30 pm and dinner at 6:00 pm.

We will be gathering at Reno's Restaurant in the Carlinville Square for our annual Christmas Party! Happy hour begins at



## K9MCE TRY GRIDS HONOR ROLL

### Try Grids Certificate Of Achievement

This certificate is awarded to

**Your name**  
**Your Call**



In recognition of making two way  
communications using VHF/UHF  
simplex frequencies with three grid  
squares.



Signature K9MCE President

Date

Signature K9MCE Award Chairperson

Date

*“These club  
members earned  
the Try Grids  
Award and are  
Honor Roll  
members.”*

Wayne, KC9ZYQ is in  
EM58 and Dirk, W9OSI is  
in EM49 and these gentle-  
men are available for VHF  
skeds for those working for  
the Try Grids Award

### HONOR ROLL MEMBERS:

Jim Pitchford, N9LQF  
Mark Kerhlikar, WD9HBF  
Jeff Naville, KC9WZO  
Paul Durand, KC9YCP  
Ed Kallbrier, KC9QHJ  
Bill Ogle, W9FJ  
Skip Riba, WS9V  
Mark Lewis, KD9EFO  
Lou Bartels, KC9YFU  
Debbie Ochu, KC9ULA

Dave Reynolds, WA9OEX

Judy Reynolds, KA9ACM

Ron Ochu, KO0Z

The K9MCE Try Grids Award  
was established two years ago  
to encourage Macoupin County  
ARC club members to experi-  
ence the joys of VHF/UHF  
communications. Members are  
encouraged to learn more  
about VHF/UHF propagation,  
antennas and coax and to im-

prove their stations. Towards  
that end the award was created  
and the goal is to successfully  
establish two-way VHF/UHF  
contacts either from your  
QTH or mobile with amateurs  
in three grids. More infor-  
mation pertaining to grids can  
be found at this ARRL  
webpage: [http://www.arrl.org/  
grid-squares](http://www.arrl.org/grid-squares) QSL cards con-  
firming the Qs need to be pre-  
sented to the committee and  
then you, too, will be eligible  
for this prestigious accolade at  
a club meeting and to have  
your call inscribed in the



### Macoupin County ARC Mission Statement:

We, the undersigned, being desirous of securing for ourselves the pleasures and benefits of the association of persons commonly interested in Amateur Radio, by promoting civic interest, specific application, social activities and developing individual efficiency, while improving the general interest in amateur radio, do ordain and establish this Constitution and By-Laws of the Macoupin County Amateur Radio Club Inc., a non-profit corporation. We do further agree that in pursuit of these purposes, this organization shall be non-sectarian, non-partisan and that it shall lend neither support or influence to any political party or candidate for office. The Macoupin County Amateur Radio Club, Inc., shall afford all persons, regardless of race or creed an equal opportunity to join, participate, hold office and enjoy in the benefits of this organization and the challenges of amateur radio.

## WS9V Presents at November Meeting

Members in attendance at the November club meeting were treated to a very informative presentation over low-band receiving antennas such as beverages, bogs and loops by Skip WS9V.

Skip has extensive experience with these antenna systems and he is very active on 160 and 80 meters with a number of countries worked and confirmed on the low bands!

Skip told the audience that beverage antennas are the best for low-band work, but they do

require a lot of real-estate. WS9V is able to use the farm field behind his QTH for his beverages after harvest and before planting season resumes.

BOGs (beverage on the ground) are the next best antenna for low-band work. 200 feet seems to be optimum for this antenna.

4 square loops are another good choice for a low-band DXer as are directional loops such as the K9AY, Flagg and Pennant antennas.

Skip described a diamond loop that he used for a number of years before going to beverages. It's not hard to make and it does a very reasonable job and a simple TV rotator will turn it towards a desired direction.

Skip is checking into procuring the parts (at cost) to get a club antenna project going. There is a lot of interest in building this antenna. Skip estimates the cost to be in the \$30.00 range.

An antenna similar to WS9V's can be found on page 12 for illustration purposes.



WS9V presenting on antennas.

WD9HBF Photo

## Club Christmas Party at Reno's Pizzeria

Wednesday, December 5 will be the annual club Christmas party instead of the monthly club meeting. At the November meeting, club members voted to have the Christmas party at Reno's Pizzeria. Happy hour will begin at 5:30 pm and dinner at 6:00 pm.

Reno is providing a back room to the club at no cost and he will provide the banquet which will consist of Chicken Marsala, Italian Pork Chops, Italian Sal-

ad, Spinach Lasagna, Fettuccine Alfredo, Dinner rolls and Tiramisu dessert! Best of all, the club is picking up the tab for current club members!

Entertainment will be provided by our special guests from the Okaw Valley ARC, AD9OV. They will be returning the Field Day Traveling Trophy to Macoupin County!

See you at the party!



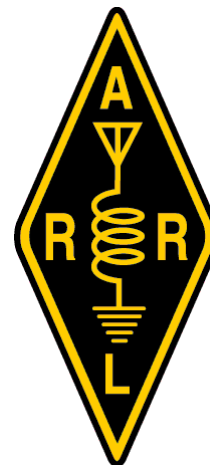
*"K9MCE will  
cover the  
banquet costs for  
club  
members...Merry  
Christmas!"*

## Your ARRL Central Division Contacts:

**Director:** Kermit Carlson; w9xa@arrl.org 630-879-0983

**Vice Director:** Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA, k9la@arrl.org; 260-637-6988

**Illinois Section Manager:** Ron Morgan, AD9I,  
AD9I@comcast.net







## Who's Your Daddy?

Field Day 2017 taught K9MCE members not to underestimate Murphy. That year we were plagued with many obstacles. In spite of those set-backs, club members worked through them, stayed on the air and managed a respectable score. Our score wasn't good enough to overcome the Okaw Valley ARC, AD9OV juggernaut and the traveling FD trophy returned to Greenville.

2018 will be another year.

FD chairman, Mark WD9HBF again took the reins, forgetting that he vowed never to do this

again, but this time we came to FD loaded for bear. We girded our radio loins, put on war paint and set about the task of not being daunted. It helps when there's dedicated FD K9MCE club members to operate. We had two stations running for most of the twenty-four hours and three operating a good part of the time. We operated phone, FT8 and CW.

**K9MCE: 4,344 points!**

**AD9OV: 2,566 points**

Trophy returns to Carlinville!  
We your daddy!

*"Dash organizer  
Matt Dunn is  
very appreciative  
of K9MCE's  
support."*

## Beaver Dam Dashing Through The Snow

K9MCE has provided communications support for the Metro Tri-Club runners for the past four years. Each year, we were blessed with fantastic, fall weather and temperatures except for this year.

Old Man Winter visited a day before the dash and deposited approximately 2 inches of snow. The morning of the dash, Saturday, November 10 began with 18 degrees F and dash time was postponed one

hour until 10:00 am. The temp was now a balmy 20 F. This year, Chuck Baker, N9LVY performed net control and he did an excellent job. Four com positions were filled: Com 1, Jared KC9ZMD, Com 2: unfilled, Com 3: Debbie KC9ULA, Com 4: Ron KO0Z, Com 5: Jim N9LQF and Com 6: Nolan KA9VKC from the Lewis and Clark club.

In past years we've had a field of a few hundred dashers. This

year about 60 dashers participated in the 5K and 10 K dash. Fortunately, there were no cold related injuries, but we were ready to provide race officials with emergency communications if necessary.

The dash was over before noon (two hours) and we grabbed a bite to eat at Full Throttle. Dash organizer Matt Dunn is very appreciative of K9MCE's support. Pictures appear on page 6.



Saturday, November 3 all the planning, all the preparation, all the sweat and all loose ends were coming together to present area scouts with "Last Scout Standing."

"Last Scout Standing" challenges experienced, senior boy scouts with eleven challenges. K9MCE club members, Jim N9LQF, Mark WD9HBF and Ron KO0Z offered their time and resources to make this event memorable for the

scouts. Jim N9LQF was involved with the event's inception. Mark WD9HBF provided "Howling Acres" woods for the scouts to camp and to build rope bridges and Ron KO0Z provided scouts with a DF (direction finding) and Morse code challenge. Scouts started off Saturday morning, bright and early. These young men are go-getters!

The first team of scouts (4 to a team), 8 teams arrived at Ron's

station mid-morning. Ron had hidden a 2 meter transmitter and scouts needed to locate it to get a password that would allow them proceed to the Morse Code challenge. Scouts used flashlights to send half of a scrambled message and their team mates sent the other half. Unscrambling the messages told them of their next challenge which was to paddle their canoes northward in Otter Lake to Howling Acres and WD9HBF. Pictures on page 7.

## Last Scout Standing

## Macoupin IDEN Node Arriving Soon

IDEN (Illinois Digital Emergency Network) exists to offer radio amateurs another tool to pass emergency traffic back and forth to IL EMA officials. IDEN is a wireless backbone system that is independent of the internet; however, it does have internet accessibility through "gateway stations." IDEN operates statewide on 145.610 MHz using packets (AX.25).

Carlos W9FE has a gateway station that is internet accessible and is part of the IDEN network. W9FE's IDEN VHF

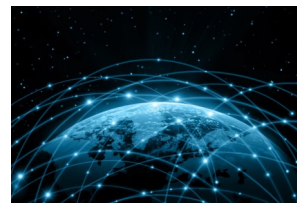
signal covers southern Macoupin and northern Madison county on 2 meters. Central and northern Macoupin county could use an IDEN 2 meter node.

Arrangements have been made with the county to use the 911 tower north of Carlinville to put the node. WS9V is coordinating the placement of a repurposed, 100 watt, state police VHF radio combined with a raspberry pi computer and TNC (terminal node controller) with internet capability

with county officials. The omnidirectional antenna will be located at 180 feet and it should provide excellent coverage county wide and with adjacent counties.

Packet protocol uses FM and to the casual listener, packet sounds like a quick burst with a "burrup" sound.

The new IDEN node will have the club's callsign, K9MCE with an identifier after it; such as K9MCE-10. This tool should greatly aid digital emergency communications.



## Director Kermit Carlson W9XA Reelected

ARRL Central Division Director Kermit Carlson W9XA was declared reelected on Friday, November 16th.

Kermit was challenged by Valerie Hotzfeld NV9L.

W9XZ received 1898 votes and NV9L received 1755 votes.

Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin comprise the ARRL's Central Division.

W9XA will be serving a three-

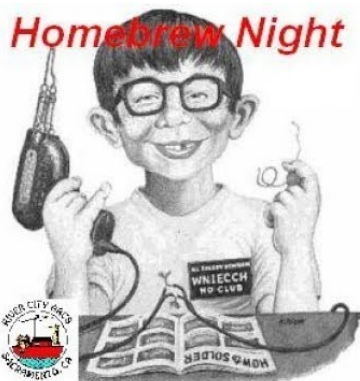
year term as our voice at ARRL HQ.

Carl Luetzelschwab K9LA was unopposed as vice-director and he is declared reelected.



*"Kermit Carlson  
W9XA reelected  
as ARRL Central  
Division  
Director."*

## Homebrew Night Returning to K9MCE



Club members voted at November's meeting to bring back K9MCE Homebrew Night. No, homebrew night is NOT making reference to homemade liquor. Rather, it is a Do-It Yourself (DIY) term for building your own ham radio equipment. The club is talking about offering prizes in the following categories: Transmitter-receiver-transceiver; antennas and station accessories. Station accessories include items such as Morse code keys, TR switches, power supplies, etc.

Although "homebrew" implies made from scratch, kits are acceptable for homebrew night. A date and details haven't been worked out, but this event is certainly at least two months away which is plenty of time to select a homebrew project, get the soldering iron hot, and melt some solder!

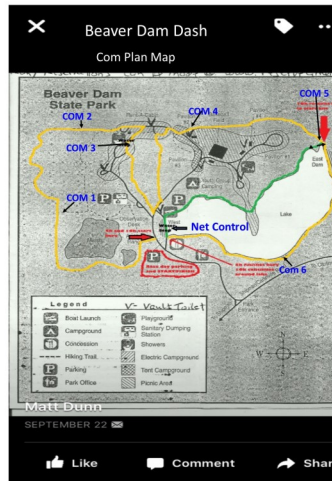
Stay tuned for more details!



## Beaver Dam Dash 2018



Debbie KC9ULA and Kippy Com 3



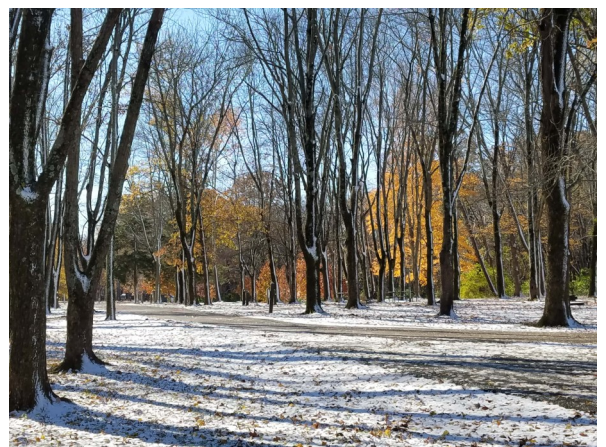
Above: Com plan map.  
Below: Kippy on watch Com 3



Chuck N9LVY (net control) in car and Nolan KA9VKC standing.



Ron KO0Z, Debbie KC9ULA, Nolan KA9VKC, Jared KC9ZMD, Jim N9LQF and Chuck N9LVY.



Old Man Winter provided snow and 18 F temps for the dashers this year.



## “Last Scout Standing 2018”



Left picture: Jeromy WV9L shows Tim video from his drone hovering over the various scout teams.

Right picture: The first scout team arrives at Challenge 5 (Morse code and DF).



Middle left picture: HTs used to find the fox and flashlights for to send Morse coded messages.

Middle right picture: Scouts are sending Morse code messages back and forth between the park benches.



Left: Scouts decoding the message.

N9LQF keeping warm with hot, fresh coffee.



Another scout team decoding the message.

Scouts on to Challenge 6 which is canoeing up Otter Lake



## Weekly 2 Meter SSB Net Formed

Last month after the weekly Thursday ARES Net, Mark KD9EFO wanted to test out his Yaesu FT 857 on two meter SSB. In between the ARES net and the K9MCE weekly net, Mark, Dave, Ron and Tony met on two meter sideband. It was so much fun that the group decided to form a weekly 2 meter sked/net on Thursday evenings at 7:30 pm local time on 144.200.

Although 144.200 is the national 2 meter calling frequency, this time of year there isn't a lot of activity and the group felt that as the saying goes, "make some noise, others may join us!" If needed, we will gladly QSY up or down the band.

Everyone is invited to participate. Most of us will be horizontally polarized and there's a loss of 20 dB operating cross polarization, but if a vertical antenna is your only antenna, by all means, give the sked a try. Who knows, someone may just hear you. Relays are FB!



2 meter SSB Sked

Thursday evenings at 7:30

144.200 USB



A homebrew, plumber's delight 2 meter loop antenna.

## K9MCE QSL Cards Ordered

Hopefully, by the Christmas party, KO0Z will be delivering the club QSL cards. The new cards are on good cardboard stock and in full color. The front of the QSL depicts the club's logo and the backside has all the pertinent QSL information along with a color photo of the Macoupin County Courthouse.

1000 cards were ordered for a total cost of \$120.00 from the QSL shop. These are high quality QSL cards which members can be proud of when QSLing.

## SkyWarn Training January 22, 2019

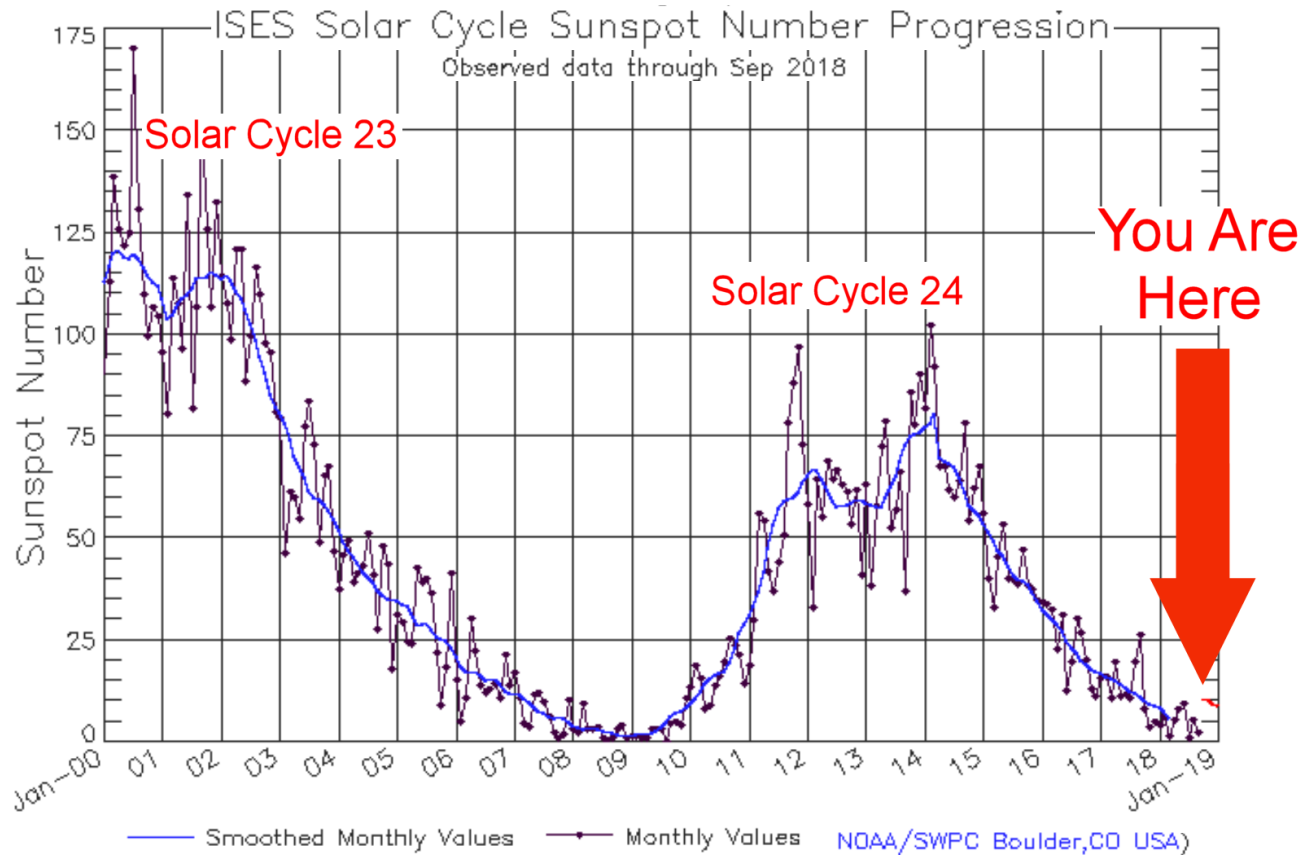
Tuesday, January 22, 7:00 pm, Blackburn College Auditorium, NWS Storm Spotter Training. Free admission.





Happy Holidays

## Solar Cycle 24, Where are You?



At the November club meeting, Skip WS9V gave a great, informative presentation over low-band (160-80 meter) antennas. Hams in the know, know that we're bottoming out in our current 11 year solar cycle # 24. This means that Earth's ionosphere won't be as ionized due to reduced solar UV and X-ray activity. Consequently the MUF (maximum useable frequency) decreases resulting in fewer long distance openings on the higher bands such as 10, 12 and 15 meters. 20 meters is still active, but it will open later and close earlier to North America. 30, 40, 80 and 160 meters now become the work-horse bands. Especially, so during the fall and winter months because thunderstorm static is minimal in the northern hemisphere.

The big question facing solar pundits is how long will it take for Cycle 25 to start and begin to ramp up? Cycle 23 ended and it took 3 years before our current Cycle 24 began to ramp up. Even longer, if you look at the Sunspot Numbers. 10 meters will stay open almost every day when the smoothed sunspot numbers reach 100 or higher. Below 100 ten meters is open, but not for as long. In other words, we have a ways to go before 10 and 15 meter activity will become daily, workhorse bands again.

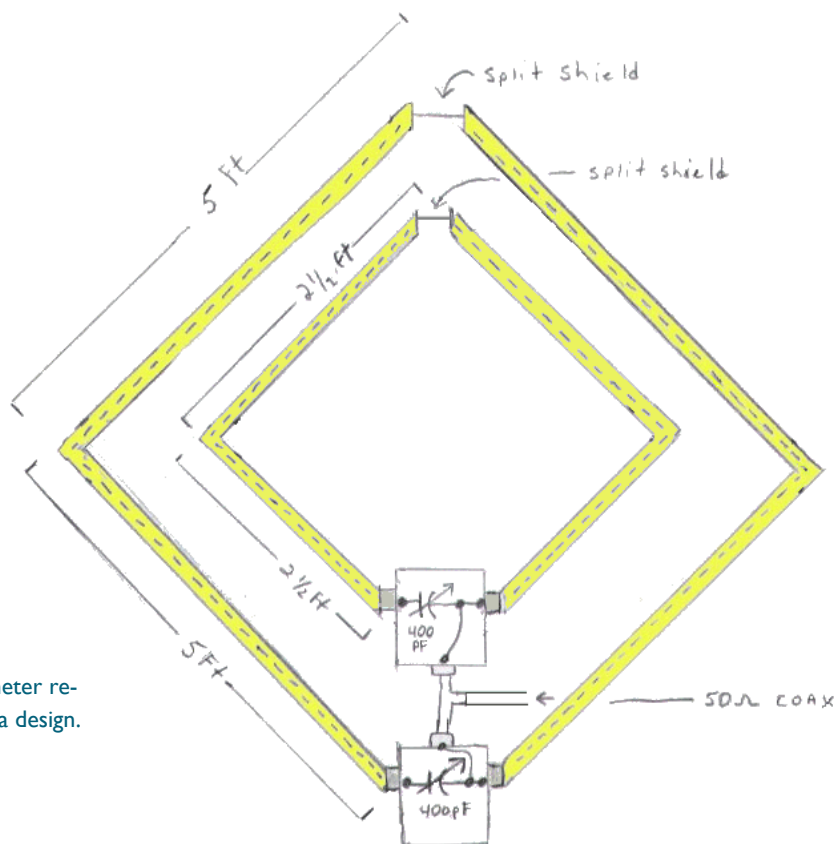




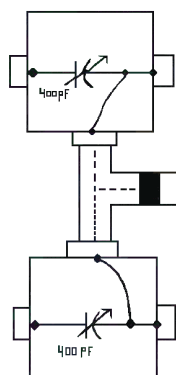
"How can I possibly annoy you  
by disappearing into my radio  
shack for hours on end?"

## 160-80 Meter Receiving Loop Antenna

KC2TX 160-80 meter receive loop antenna design.



At the November meeting, Skip WS9V gave a very informative presentation over Beverage, Bog and Loop low-band receiving antennas. Club members are interested in building a low-band receive loop as a club project. Skip is looking into procuring the parts and coax, at cost, for the club project. Chuck N9LVY is looking for a heated work area for club members to assemble once the loop parts are procured.



Here is a website description of an antenna similar to what Skip presented at the club meeting.

To construct the 160m loop you'll need 20ft on RG-59. Fold the RG-59 in half. On the 160m loop, it would be about 10ft from the end. On the 80m loop, it would be about 5 ft. from the end. You then mark the center, then measure 1/2 an inch on both sides. Strip away the outer cable, the braid, and then the foil covering the center conductor insulation. I then usually use heat shrink to weatherproof what I've cut away. Then cut some schedule 40 one inch pvc pipe into 3 lengths. Each should be 45 inches long. Cut one to 56 inches. That one will be the mast. Assemble the lengths you cut into a "T" configuration. Measure from the center 43 1/4 inches on the three 45inch lengths. Drill a hole large enough to pass through the RG-59. For the 80m loop. Drill three holes 20 1/2 inches measured from the center of the "T". Loop the 20ft RG-59 through the holes drilled at 43 1/4 inches, then loop the 10ft length through the holes drilled at 20 1/2 inches. Install the male type "f" and weather boots on the RG-59 you just looped through the "T". Attach the 20ft cable to the 160m matching box. Also do the same with the 80m box. I find it easier to aim the 160m box with the SO-239 down. And the 80m box with the SO-239 up. That way the it will keep the harness short. Drill the mounting holes through the box, once you pull the loop tight. To tune the loops, attach each loop separately to your transceiver. **DO NOT APPLY RF TO THE LOOP.** This will damage the components, and probably your transceiver. Place the dial of your transceiver to the part of the band you want to use the loop on. Then adjust the the trimmer capacitor for maximum noise. Do this for both loops. Then attach the harness. The loops should be ready for use. I usually weatherproof the boxes and frame. And I add a wood dowling to strengthen the mast.





## The St. Louis and Suburban Radio Club

### Winterfest 2019

January 26, 2019 at the Gateway Convention Center, One Gateway Drive, Collinsville, IL 62234.

We are announcing that advance tickets are now available for purchase online at the SLSRC Store. Save \$2.00 by purchasing them online, in advance. To purchase tickets/tables visit <http://www.slsrc.org/shop/>.

#### Prizes for 2019 include:

Grand Prize	\$500
1st Prize	\$300
2nd Prize	\$200
3rd Prize	\$100

New for 2019 (See Winterfest website for more details):

Forum Speaker is Richard George, KD4CAE - on AUXCOMM and Amateur Radio

Winterfest will continue to have VE testing at 8:00am, courtesy of the Cliff Cave Testing Team.

#### Additional Information:

Tables and tickets:	<a href="http://www.slsrc.org/shop/">http://www.slsrc.org/shop/</a>
Information:	<a href="http://winterfest.slsrc.org/">http://winterfest.slsrc.org/</a>
Contact us:	<a href="mailto:winterfest@slsrc.org">winterfest@slsrc.org</a>

-or-

Rebecca Carroll, KC9CIJ



Dave O'Dell LUTCF  
145 E. Jackson St., Virden, IL 62690  
217-965-5888  
Annuities, Auto, Financial Planning,  
Home, Life & Mutual Funds

Longtime supporter of the West Central Illinois Hamfest!

### K9MCE QSN Contact Information:

**K9MCE QSN** is a monthly publication of the Macoupin County Amateur Radio Club. Our club meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm on the second floor of the Macoupin County Sheriff Department in Carlinville, IL

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**Repeaters:** 444.250 (103.5 pl); 146.865 (103.5 pl).

**Website:** [www.k9mce.org](http://www.k9mce.org)

**Webmaster:** Isaac Pizzo, WX9SRV

**Testing:** Lou Bartels, KC9YFU, 618-977-4658



Macoupin County  
Amateur Radio Club  
P.O. Box 253  
Carlinville, IL 62626-  
0253



# K9MCE December 2018

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

						1 <i>ARRL 160 M Contest</i>
2 <i>Okaw Valley ARC</i> Net@9:00 pm, 444.250 K9MAF Net 146.805 @ 9 pm <i>ARRL 160 M Contest</i>	3 <i>Lewis &amp; Clark ARC,</i> K9HAM 8 pm 145.23 (79.7) W9VEY Memorial Net @8:30 pm, 146.820	4 <i>Old Capital ARC,</i> Vandalia, 146.745, 88.5 pl, 8:00 pm	5 <i>Reno's Restaurant,</i> 6:00 pm 	6 <i>Macoupin County</i> ARES Net, KO0Z net control 147.480 MHz simplex @ 8pm K9MCE Club net, WD9HBF Net Control, 444.250 @8:30 pm	7	8 <i>ARRL 10 M Contest</i>
9 <i>Okaw Valley ARC</i> Net@9:00 pm, 444.250 K9MAF Net 146.805 @ 9 pm <i>ARRL 10 M Contest</i>	10 <i>Lewis &amp; Clark</i> ARC, K9HAM 8 pm 145.23 (79.7) W9VEY Memorial Net @8:30 pm, 146.820	11 <i>Old Capital ARC,</i> Vandalia, 146.745, 88.5 pl, 8:00 pm	12	13 <i>Macoupin County</i> ARES Net, KO0Z net control 147.480 MHz simplex @ 8pm K9MCE Club net, WD9HBF Net Control, 444.250 @8:30 pm	14	15
16 <i>Okaw Valley ARC</i> Net@9:00 pm, 444.250 K9MAF Net 146.805 @ 9 pm <i>ARRL Rookie Roundup CW</i>	17 <i>Lewis &amp; Clark</i> ARC, K9HAM 8 pm 145.23 (79.7) W9VEY Memorial Net @8:30 pm, 146.820	18 <i>Old Capital ARC,</i> Vandalia, 146.745, 88.5 pl, 8:00 pm	19	20 <i>Macoupin County</i> ARES Net, KO0Z net control 147.480 MHz simplex @ 8pm K9MCE Club net, WD9HBF Net Control, 444.250 @8:30 pm	21	22
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