

SCARC September - 2016

Newsletter of the St. Clair Amateur Radio Club

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www.scarc.net

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ARES/RACES net is a Directed Net and is normally conducted by Gene Kraemer, WA9TZL (Tuesdays following the Club "on-the-air" meeting.

Greetings to all the members of **SCARC**, this is the September edition of the SCARC newsletter. You may catch up on earlier newsletters by visiting our website at <http://www.scarc.net>. There is additional information about the club as well as history, special events, club officer information, etc... check it out.

Meeting Date, Time and location: The September meeting will be on the 29th at the Belleville Fire House #4, with gavel sounding at 8:00PM.

News and Special events: The main event that our club and club members has participated in since the last newsletter has been the **MS Bike Ride** that took place the weekend of Sept 10 and 11. The Club members that took part as volunteers were Larry, KB4FIO, club president, Al, KC9TPD, Michael, KC9HNT (and Michael's wife), Chris, WX9SVR, as well as Key MS personnel Rebecca, KC9CIJ, and Bill, KC9CIK. Bike MS Gateway, Getaway Ride 2016, is a 2 day fundraising cycling event, taking place in Godfrey, IL, and the surrounding area. The ride is supported by local groups such as safety provided by medical personnel, **HAM radio operators**, law enforcement and motorcycle escorts. The ride begins and ends both days at Lewis & Clark Community College at Godfrey, IL. This was the first year for Larry, KB4FIO, and I was greatly impressed by the many "moving parts" that had to be synchronized and the behind the scenes organization that had to take place to make this a successful event. And successful it was. There were reports that around six thousand riders had showed up on Saturday to ride the routes ranging from 25 miles up to 100 miles. The number of rider participants was later estimated to be about 27 hundred or so. Whatever the number was it was obvious all the riders were having a great time and getting a lot of exercise that is certainly good for their health. If you can get up early in the morning and have a good 2-meter rig, we would love to include you in next year's volunteers. As a Ham Radio volunteer you do not ride a bike for the many miles of the various routes. What you do is ride in an air-conditioned van (cargo van) and respond to calls from the Net Control to go to various rest stops along the route and respond to the needs of the riders. We are called SAGs and we also travel the routes looking for riders that may need assistance due to broken bikes, blown tires, or physical over-exertion. I served as a driver this year, and Al was the communicator. That is how you work, in teams of two, driver and communicator. **Continued on pg 2**

New Members: We did not have any new members to introduce to the club at the Aug meeting, but keep asking your friends and relatives if they would like to be Amateur Radio Operators (HAMS) and if so, we can help them get their license, then they can join the club... we all win... win-win is a good thing. We have several new VEs.

MS Bike Ride *continued*: It would be nice if we, the SCARC could field 4 or 5 teams of driver and communicator for next year MS Bike 2017. Think about it and when the call comes for volunteers, sign-up right away. There is an evening of training that is required, but it is generally only about 2 to 2 ½ hours of time required. This year, our club and a number of St Louis area (metro) clubs supported the event. I am very happy and impressed that SCARC had a very respectable presence in the line of volunteer groups. If you wonder if you get anything for the time, well sure, they give you a nice lunch (it is a cold lunch consisting of delicious sandwich, chips, fruit (banana or apple) and cookies. The Chocolate Chip cookie was worth it all by itself. (I think they were the “Grandma” cookies). On Sunday, we had the chance to get a “superbolus” ice cream root beer float, which I have not had one in so many years I thought I was a kid again! There was really no “downers” for the weekend except maybe the height of the van I was driving. It seemed to need a ladder to be able to get into it. I thought it might be because I am kind of short, but we picked up one rider that was much taller than I am, and he also mentioned that getting into the van was a challenge. By the end of my shift on Sunday, I had climbed up and in and jumped out of the van so many times my knees starting sending me messages that I would be hurting later if I didn’t stop it. Well it was the end of my shift so all ended well. It also gave me a kind appreciation for my personal van which is just the right height... That is all I have to report to you on the MS Bike Ride for the Gateway area, just please think about next year, 2017 and join us for the fun...

Repeater site follow-up: Previous discussion concerning the location facility for the repeater required a meeting of the executive committee, which took place before the August meeting. The results of discussion during the executive committee meeting was that further research into ways to strengthen and improve the K9GXU repeater will be required. The executive committee determined that the falling sand is not that much of a problem, and that to enclose the repeater cabinets in an inside enclosure/shelter, would be too restrictive to any technician that would have to perform maintenance on the repeater. As President, I disagree with that analysis of the situation, but will abide by the decision of the majority of the executive committee. This part of the facility upgrade will be tabled for the time being and may be re-introduced if the situation changes and a new discussion is warranted. The next item that was discussed at the executive meeting was the situation with the tower and the antennas. All agreed the tower needs strengthening as it currently doesn’t appear to be in a shape that would allow climbing and replacement of antennas. A manufacturer of that type of tower will be contacted as to additional supports and how much additional stability they add. Also the addition of guy-wires will be investigated. A search for “bucket trucks” will be conducted to see what it would take to remove the antenna currently on top of the tower and replace it with a new dual band antenna and new lead wiring. As this research is completed, a report to the general membership will be made and approval to make the changes will be sought.

Antenna Builders: Mr. Dennis Miller, KM9O is the sponsor, for the September meeting, at Pleasant Ridge Park, FVH. It will be on Sept 17 beginning at 10:00 AM and lasting till 2 PM (or so). Come on out and get your antennas made and set up for the Illinois QSO party coming in October (Oct 16 and 17). For more information, go to <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/stateparties.html>

New Members: One new applications was submitted for club membership at the August meeting. Applications will be vetted by the Sgt. at Arms and will be brought forward for a vote at the next monthly meeting after being submitted. We look forward to meeting/greeting any new member because to grow our club, we must find people that love to talk (should not be too hard) and that would love to be on the radio. So putting the two together can make a dedicated enthusiast for HAM Radio. We welcome all new members and prospective members and thank them for their interest in Ham Radio.