



# HAMLETTER

Published Monthly

Wheaton Community Radio Amateurs

Issue 555

Founded 1948

DEC 2009



MERRY

CHRIST

MAS AND

A HAPPY

NEW YEAR

**WCRA Staff**  
**Elected Officers**

**President** Mark, W9UZ  
**Vice President** John, WT9Y  
**Secretary** Steve, N9OA  
**Treasurer** Ken, N9HQ  
**Custodian** Bob, W9BK

**Volunteer Committee Chairs**

**Club Call Trustee** Tom, N9CBA  
**Christmas Party** Ruth, KA9RZG  
**Club Awards** John, N9MWF  
**Elmer/Know-Code** Charlie, WB9SG  
**Field Day** Dale, NJ9E  
**Hamfest** John, WT9Y  
**Refreshments** John, WT9Y  
**Membership** Paul, KA9RVS  
**Public Service** Steve, N9OA  
**VHF/HF Awards** John, N9MWF  
**Webmaster** Tom, N9WBW

**Amateur License Staff**

**Training Classes** Charlie, WB9SGD  
**Volunteer Exam.** Harry, K9HK

**WCRA Repeater Administrative Board (RAB)**

**Chairman** Don, N9NYX  
**Secretary** George, KA3HSW  
**Member** Rich, N9DKO  
**Member** Larry, KA9KDC

**WCRA Radio Nets**

Sunday 8:00 pm 145.310/(-600) Net Control: Rotates

**WCRA Repeaters**

145.310/ 144.710 103.5(1A) or 107.2(1B) PL Encode/Decode  
224.140/222.540 Carrier Access  
444.475/449.475 114.8 Hz(2A) PL Encode/ Decode

**HAMLETTER**

**Editor** Don, N9NYX  
**Photos** Larry, KA9KDC  
**Features** Jim, W9DHX

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## From the President's Gavel

by Mark, W9UZ WCRA President

It is hard to believe that another year is about to pass.

What are some of the highlights of the past year? Field Day was memorable in some ways. The Green Valley site was certainly unique, including the thunderstorms that occurred during the night. Congratulations to the hearty individuals who stayed all night, including Ken N9HQ, John WT9Y, Viktor AJ9M, Peter N9HDW, Hal AC3Q, Vic K9XWV and all the other support people, like the Co-Chairmen, Dale NJ9E and Steve N9OA.

Our treasurer, Ken N9HQ liked the fact that we are now putting almost \$100 more per month into the Club treasury. This is due to no longer renting storage space. This may change some day, as we do have a fair amount of equipment at various members' houses. Another way to approach it is to "decrapolate" (thanks Dale) and throw 80% of the stuff out. This decision will be made by Club members collectively.

The Don Drake (K9VGN, SK) auction was certainly one of our major events and highest attended of the year. Many people went away with new "treasures". Jim, W9DHX worked almost day and night putting this together. Congratulations to John, N9MWF for winning the Don Drake Estate Scholarship Award for devotion to club emergency preparedness activities.

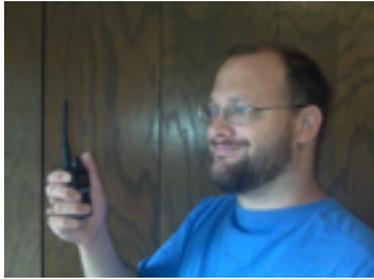
Congratulations to Carol and Larry Schroeder, KB9FYL and KA9KDC, Mark Potter W9UZ and Joe LeFebvre N9WRO, for the Club Lifetime Membership award. These people have devoted much of their time to the Club and to many of its numerous activities.

Mark January 24, 2010, for the Mid-Winter Hamfest at the Kane County Fairgrounds. Contact Steve Peterson, N9OA if you can help out manpower wise, or in any other capacity. If you haven't been to the Fairgrounds before, the building is new and there is plenty of parking space.

We are looking forward to the Christmas Party at the Bavarian Lodge located in nearby Lisle on Ogden Ave. If you like German food prepared the way it should be prepared, you do not want to miss this. We hope to see you there.

# WCRA Meeting Minutes

Steve, N9OA  
WCRA  
Secretary



## Wheaton Community Radio Amateurs Minutes of the General Meeting for November 2009

Meeting held Friday November 6, 2009, at First  
Presbyterian Church, Wheaton, IL

### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Mark

Potter, W9UZ, President

### In Attendance:

W9UZ, WT9Y, N9OA, N9HQ, W9BK, AJ9M, N9MWF, WA9VAA, KB9RTO, N9CBA, KA9RVS, NV9R, N9NYX, K9MUF, W9DHX, KA9HEL, W3MDM, KA9KDC, KB9FYL, KA3HSW, N9WBW, WB9SGD, W9NJM, KA0DSF, KA9H, WA9SYW, KC9JLK, KC9GRH

### Opening Announcements

John, WT9Y, VP announced that the program will be the auction, and the January program would be the Hamfest.

### Special Presentations

Jim, W9DHX presented the Drake Scholarship to John, N9MWF

Steve, N9OA presented a plaque to Don, N9NYX in appreciation to his service as President in 2006.

### Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes for October 2009 as printed in the Hamletter (N9WBW, N9NYX) passed.

### Officer Reports

Steve, N9OA, Secretary reported that there will be an executive board meeting at the home of John, WT9Y on November 15 at 1700, local time.

Ken, N9HQ, Treasurer reported that the checking account balance is \$3042 and the money market balance of \$21,547 for a total treasury of \$24,589

### Standing Committee Reports

Public Service: Steve, N9OA thanked Johns N9MWF and WT9Y for their help at the Chicago Mararthon

Hamfest: John, WT9Y reported that flyers and tickets are available. A committee meeting will be held at John's home following the dinner that will be served following the Executive board meeting.

Christmas Party: Steve, N9OA made inquiries as to location and night as requested by Dale, NJ9E

Hamletter: Don, N9NYX reported that the newsletter was published. He also restated his need for articles.

RAB: Don, N9NYX read a report on improving the 145.31 repeater and made a request for \$700 plus tax and

shipping to buy a power amp.

Website: Tom, N9WBW reported that the website is up and running.

Membership: Bruce, KA9H was approved as a new member.

VE Program: Don, K9MUF reported that 2 new technicians and one extra upgrade were accomplished at the last session.

## Approval of Reports

Motion to approve (KB9RTO, N9MWF) passed.

## Old Business

None.

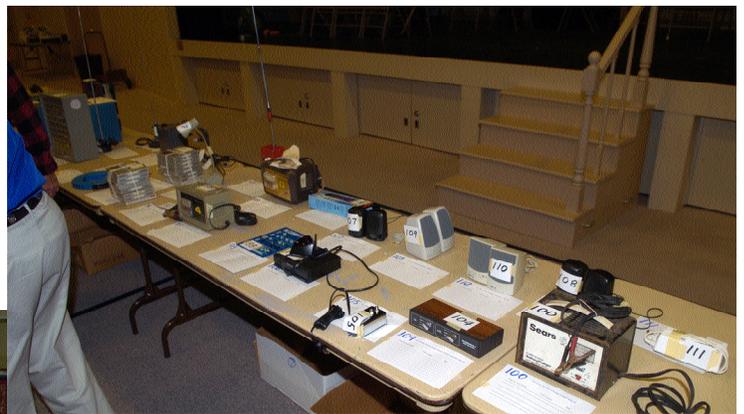
## New Business

None.

## Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (N9CBA, N9MWF) passed at 7:55 pm

Respectfully Submitted,  
/s/ Stephen J. Peterson  
ARS N9OA  
Secretary



Getting ready for the annual November Club auction. Mark bidding on the silent auction.



## MICKEY MOUSE QSO

My 9 year old granddaughter was staying overnight a short time ago. She got bored with watching television. She came into the shack and asked about Morse Code. This may have been a start to answering my prayers. I went over the basics with her. Then she wanted to hear a QSO, although she couldn't understand it at this point. So I fired up Yaesu 1000MP rig and answered a CQ call on 7.057 MHz at 0200 on October 23. Spent about 10 minutes QSO'ing with Ronald Cron, W5CFN, in Oklahoma City, OK. Ron has a good "fist", so it was "armchair" copy. My granddaughter wanted in the worst way to send "Hi", but me, Mr. Meany, wouldn't let her. When she sends CW, I want it to be right, so that will come soon enough. Don't want another "lid" out there.

Anyway, it turns out that Ron and his brother treasure a Mickey Mouse incident. In addition to receiving the W5CFN card, I also received a W6OPU card. On the back, the card reads "In May of 1953, Mickey Mouse comics issued Mickey Mouse #30 comic book. In that comic book, 17 pages were devoted to an adventure about Mickey Mouse being a ham operator. The Disney Company randomly picked W6OPU for a callsign. In QST Magazine in March of 1954 there is a story about the comic book use of the call. A couple of kids in Oklahoma who happened to be avid comic book readers, Dan Cron (now W6SBE) AND Ron Cron (now W5CFN), read that comic book. Fifty five years, they never forgot that the call belonged to Mickey Mouse. Shown below is a reproduction of the original QSL card.

Mark Potter, W9UZ

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## MEETING DATES FOR 2009

The following are the General Membership meeting dates for this calendar year.

**December - CHRISTMAS PARTY**

**Mark your calendars.**

**WCRA Christmas and White Reindeer Party**

**Date: Sunday, December 13, 2009**

**Time: 3-6 pm**

**Location: Bavarian Lodge**

**1800 Ogden Ave, Lisle, IL**

**(North side of Ogden between Yackley and Route 53).**

**www.bavarian-lodge.com**

**Price: \$24.95/person + tax/tip (discount details below)**

**RSVP: rkwarda@aol.com and sjpete75@gmail.com in addition to mailing official reservation (see below) or call Steve at (630) 901-6962 in lieu of e-mail if you lack e-mail abilities.**

Ruth Kwarta suggested we hold our annual Christmas Party at the Bavarian Lodge, so Mark Potter told her, through Dale, that he would be glad to check the place out. Jim Ward and Mark visited the German Restaurant on November 19, 2009. The decor of the place is great. Very nicely decorated in German tradition with steins and mugs all over the place. They have a backroom, which is not closed off, but private enough. There are 2 long tables, each able to seat 14 people. In back of these tables are 4 more tables capable of seating 6 people each. If we do not fill them, they would be filled by other customers. There is a family style dinner menu as outlined below. Soup: Choice of Liver Dumpling, or homemade soup of the day. There are 3 main courses (all included in the price): Three sausage platter (Bratwurst, Knackwurst and Thuringer), Wiener Schnitzel, and Roast Chicken (Lightly seasoned oven roasted chicken quarters). Four homemade side dishes: Braised red cabbage, Chunky apple sauce, Spatzle, and Mashed potatoes. Two desserts: Apple Sturdel and Chocolate amaretto bundt cake. All coffee, tea, iced-tea and fountain drinks are included in the package with unlimited refills. Alcoholic beverages are not. The price for this family style dinner is \$24.95. As an incentive to attend and register early, the first 28 registrants (club members/spouse) will be credited with \$10.00 toward the check, to be paid by the Club. Mail your reservations and a check for \$14.95 per person to: Ruth Kwarta 22W531 Juniper Lane Glen Ellyn, IL 60137 with your check made payable to WCRA. This does not include your tip, sales tax or alcoholic beverages you may purchase. When you arrive at the event you will receive a restaurant credit for \$24.95 per person. If we do not receive 20 reservations, we can still eat there, but we will not have the semi-private room. The Potters ate there last Thursday night and were very impressed. Mark personally guarantees you will not go away "hungry". What is the "white reindeer" part of the party? you ask. It means each person bring a "gift", not necessarily radio related and not necessarily "junk". Anything you don't need or want - package it up and bring it. A number will be assigned and put into a "pot". The Master of Ceremonies will pick the numbers after the meal. After the prize drawing, you may exchange gifts. If you don't bring a gift, you don't get a number. Due to limited table space, please limit your gift size to "smaller than a bread box". Merry Christmas! The WCRA Christmas party committee and Executive Board

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Steve Peterson

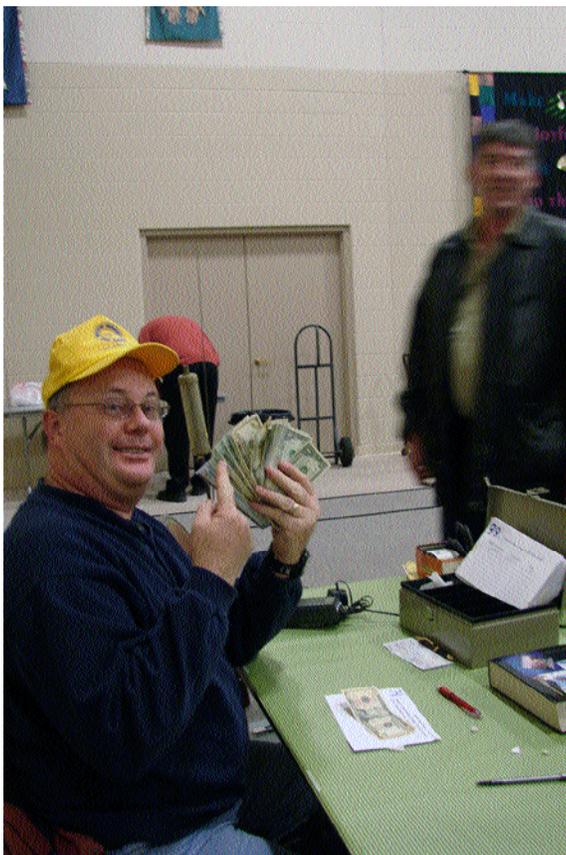
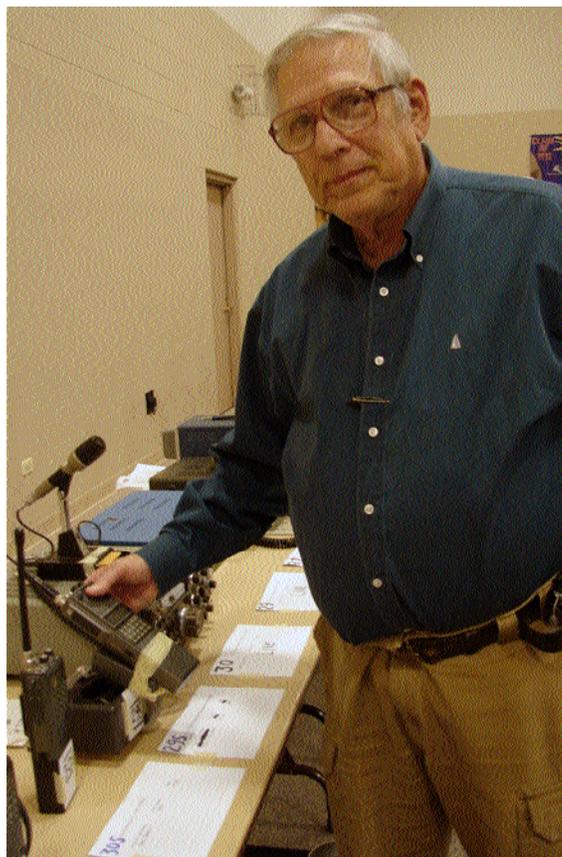
P. O. Box 2146, Bolingbrook, IL 60440-0086

(630) 901-6962



#### SILENT AUCTION SHOPPERS

Bob Schlotzer, NV9R, wants a closer look inside a Transceiver in the left photo, and Jack Feldman, KA9HEL, is considering at handheld purchase in the Silent Auction.



TREASURER RAKES IN THE AUCTION CASH  
Ken Kwasniewski, N9HQ, points to the Auction proceeds that added up to more scholarship years on the trophy. Three more years were added to the Scholarship as a result!

# 2009 AUCTION NIGHT MEETING WILL BE AN UNUSUAL “THREE BAGGER”

Vice President and Program Chairman John Faber has announced that this month’s Friday, Nov. 6th, meeting will have three auctions instead of the conventional one. Members can bring an electronic/ham item for auction, plus there will be both a “live” auction, and “silent” auction of items from the Don Drake, K9VGN, Estate.

The November meeting will be held in the Gymnasium of the Presbyterian Church, located on the lower level. The additional space is needed for the 14 Tables of Don Drake Estate Auction items, plus the “Regular” Auction of Club member materials.

The 120 Plus items in the Drake estate are listed in a multi-page catalog on the WCRA home page ([www.w9ccu.org](http://www.w9ccu.org)). Fourteen pages of photographs show each item in detail relating to the key numbers in the catalog. Minimum bidding prices are also listed. Items not meeting the minimum bids will be offered at the January Flea Market on the Club’s sale table.

“Members who bring their item to the meeting for the regular auction need to tag it with their name, call, and minimum bid,” commented VP Faber. “If it does not get the minimum bid, they get to take it home, or they can donate it to the Club for January HamFest Flea Market sale along with the Estate sale unsold articles.”

Two tables will be set up for the “Regular” auction. Members will be responsible for their cash collections; items which they do not sell may be turned over to the Club Custodian, Bob Krueger, W9BK.

A fourth event for the meeting will be the awarding of the Don Drake Memorial Scholarship. This was established by the family of Don in memory of his service to the Club and Community in public service. A cash award of \$250 will be made each year for five years. An individual Certificate of Award, and the possession of the traveling Award Plaque will be given to the WCRA member selected.

The meeting room will be open early to permit members to get an early start on the silent auction items. Starting time for the Business Meeting will be 7:30 p.m. Cash and local checks will be accepted for the Don Drake Estate Auction, but not credit cards.



## DON MOTZ, N9NYX, HONORED FOR SERVICE

Past-President and Editor of the Hamletter, Don Motz, N9NYX, was presented with a “Gavel & Plaque” at the November meeting by Secretary Steve Peterson, N9OA. Don, a retired United Airline Captain, has a day job as an Attorney.



## TRAVELING SCHOLARSHIP TROPHY

Pictured above is the eight year Scholarship Award trophy that John Cheney, N9MWF, will have in his shack for the coming year. It carries an accompanying award of \$250 and a separate Certificate which is his to keep. John’s contribution to the Public Service work of the WCRA has been outstanding, as well as his leadership in developing the Communication Support Unit, the Club’s Trailer. John’s efforts were involved in the fund raising, the design and finally the actual installation work on the unit.

# DEC-09—HO!HO!HO!—QST HOLIDAY ISSUE IS HERE!

By Jim Ward, W9DHX

## **HOLLY ON THE "Q" TO THE SANTA ON THE BACK COVER –THAT TIME OF YEAR**

The Editors have dressed up the Holiday issue with a snow scene, antenna tower, and crescent moon on the cover. The big multi-page story of the issue is on a Desecheo DXpedition to that warm Caribbean Island. They used four different teams to make 115,787 contacts with 32,807 unique call signs in the log. Many hams have a K5D call sign in their log book to enhance their DX records.

## **TECHNICAL ARTICLES ON ICOM-IC-80D AND TEN-TEC SPEECH PROCESSOR**

Editor Steve Ford reviews the new ICOM dual-band handheld—he thinks it is an inexpensive way to get into D-STAR. Bob Allison, ARRL Test /Engineer, feels that the Ten-Tec Model 715 RF Speech Processor is a good way to raise transmitter output power while maintaining intelligibility and signal cleanliness. Steve's article is on page 40 and the Ten-Tec Review is on page 43.

## **160 AND 80 METER MATCHING NETWORK FOR YOUR 43 FOOT VERTICAL**

This issue gives you "Part I" of a two-part article by Phil Salas, AD5X, "160 and 80 Meter Matching Network for your 43 ft. Vertical." If you want get on top and maximize the low bands, you will want to read this one. It begins on page 30 and runs to 32.

## **FIELD DAY RESULTS ARE IN—THE 4A RESULTS ARE NOT OUR BEST YEAR!**

Now we know—we were a part of a cast of thousands- a total of 1606 Clubs—and a cast of 37,592 participants in a "Hollywood Saga". Dan Henderson, N1ND, reported Field day as a cinematic event, comparing the annual outing to various classic films. Our 4A category was chosen by 148 other Clubs.. Our total was shown on page 74—not a stellar performance. The top scoring club had 34 operators; we had 17. Wait until next year.

## **CW FANS ALERT—TRADITIONAL NEW YEARS DAY STRAIGHT KEY NIGHT**

Page 85 has the invitation to Straight Key Night, including a photograph of a clever home brew key made from a "T" door hinge mounted on a plywood base.

## **AN AGE OLD QUESTION—"HOW WAS THE IONOSPHERE DISCOVERED?"**

The answer is in the Robert Welsh, N3RW's article on page 37. He takes you back to the two scientists who figured it out. It is tricky, and requires a couple of diagrams. Happy Reading and use this issue to pick out your Christmas present!

IT WILL SOON BE TIME TO RENEW YOUR DUES IF YOU HAVE  
NOT DONE SO. REMEMBER THAT ONLY PAID UP MEMBERS  
MAY VOTE.

# OUR MEMBERS THAT CELEBRATE A BIRTHDAY IN THE MONTH OF DECEMBER



BOB	W3MDM
DON	K9MUF
DOUG	W9NJM
JOHN	N9GLZ
LARRY	WA9RTE
GEORGE	KA3HSW

If you do not see your birthday listed here in your birth month, please contact the editor with your information.

YOU! COULD BE FILLING THIS SPACE WITH  
AN ARTICLE YOU HAVE WRITTEN.

# Amateur Radio Supports Bank of America 2009 Chicago Marathon

Amateur radio operators (also known as hams) from the Greater Chicago area, Wisconsin, and Michigan, provided support communication for the October 11, 2009 Bank of America Chicago Marathon, sponsored by the Bank of America. The 69 hams were staged at 21 Medical Aid stations along the race route and provided critical medical communications to the event officials staged at Forward Command (event headquarters) in Grant Park in downtown Chicago. Aid Stations staffed by volunteers provide water, Gatorade and medical support to more than 34,000 runners.

At the event's command tent in Grant Park, the hams also worked alongside numerous City of Chicago agencies such as the Chicago Police and Fire Departments, the Chicago Transit Authority, the Office of Emergency Management and Communications, as well as other organizations including the American Red Cross who are deployed to provide support for the race. This was the first time in many years that amateur radio had been invited to support the race in this way and they joined the almost 11,000 other volunteers who provide assistance to the runners.

This was the 32rd annual Marathon, an event that attracts 45,000 participants and is the second largest marathon in the U.S. The race starts in Grant Park and runs north to Addison, south to 35th street, and back to Grant Park. The course route cuts through some of Chicago's most celebrated neighborhoods and requires precision to close many of Chicago's busiest streets.

The invitation to serve came from race officials in late August of 2009. This gave the ham leadership team a few weeks to quickly recruit volunteers, design a communications plan, and develop procedures. In the tradition of ham radio, however, the hams got the job done and were on-the-air at 6:30 a.m. on race day. During the planning weeks, hams attended nearly every organizational meeting including meetings with multiple city agencies, the medical staff, aid station captains and all Event Command personnel.

The hams set up two radio networks to support the event. There was a Medical net for all medical emergencies requiring ambulance dispatch and a Logistics net to help coordinate the transportation of runners who dropped out of the race. This logistics net was further divided into three districts so they could better handle the radio traffic.

Because of the scale of this event, ham radio operators used 7 radio repeater systems. (A repeater is a radio that simultaneously listens for and retransmits a radio signal, typically at a higher power and elevation than would be possible with handheld or mobile radios.) The repeaters are financed and maintained through the generosity of local ham radio clubs in the Chicago area. For the 2009 Bank of American Chicago Marathon, the repeater systems used were courtesy of the North Shore Radio Club (NSRC), the Suburban Amateur Radio Association (SARA) the Suburban Radio Club, SRO, NORA, Chicago FM Club, the TMC Club and the Peacock Radio Club. Many of these repeaters are installed in some of the tallest buildings in the Chicago area. The hams used repeaters in the Willis (formerly "Sears") Tower, Aon building and the Civic Center. This may be the first time so many clubs joined together to provide support for a Chicago event.

Hams traveled from three states to help out. Many hams belong to ham clubs and other service organizations, like the Red Cross or Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) and many are trained to support events such as the Marathon. The hams bring not only their own radios and equipment, but many have been trained in handling emergency radio traffic.

Amateur radio operators are volunteers licensed by the FCC to use frequencies allocated for their use for education and public service.

## DECEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

5th: Club Brunch **1st & 3rd** Thursdays 10:30 AM at Peppercorns. Peppercorns is located at the corner of President and Geneva Road in the shopping center on the North side of Geneva. All are welcome.

Monthly membership meeting at First Presbyterian Church in Wheaton, 615 W. Jefferson Ave. at 7:30pm. Talk-in on 145..31. This month's gathering will be the Christmas Party on the 13th. See announcement elsewhere in this HamLetter.

20th: DEADLINE FOR HAMLETTER SUBMISSIONS for January.

VEC testing at the Helen Plum Library in Lombard from 6:30 till 8:30pm. Go to the club VE Testing website at [vetesting.harrykamer.com](http://vetesting.harrykamer.com) for the latest details. No testing on November.

Remember the Club net on 2M is held every Sunday evening at 8 PM local on 145.31 (-)

**Next WCRA General Membership Meeting January 8, 2010, First Presbyterian Church 615 W. Jefferson Ave., Wheaton, Illinois 7:30 PM**

WCRA was founded in 1948 and continues to be involved in all facets of Amateur Radio supporting the healthy growth of the hobby through diversification and participation. Our members have always been our most important asset and we would like to see you join us for our next meeting. Our business meetings are followed by a break for conversation, coffee, soda pop, and fat pills. This is followed by an amateur radio related program. We would like to see you there to share the enthusiasm.

## HAMLETTER

Club and HamLetter Mailing Address:

Wheaton Community Radio Amateurs

P.O. Box QSL

Wheaton, Illinois 60187

eMail: [donlin@xnet.com](mailto:donlin@xnet.com)

**First Class Mail**