



The Feedline

Welcome Back By Ward Silver, NoAX

From the ARRL Contest Update March 16, 2011

I don't know about you, but my reaction to the electrifying conditions during the ARRL DX Phone contest was a huge sigh of relief. To hear 10 meters full of signals — strong signals! — to well above 28.500 MHz filled an empty spot in my radio heart that I'd nearly despaired of ever seeing filled again.

Oh sure, I love the low bands and chase gray line DX with all the enthusiasm of the next guy but those bottomless bands of 10 and 15 meters when the F2 layer lights up...well, there's nothing quite like it. We just missed the big openings during the ARRL DX CW contest - you could feel the band trying its best, leaking a little signal from the biggest stations through path closed for years. On Saturday, the dam began to crack. On Sunday, the floodgates opened!

On the East Coast where I was operating we found ourselves competing to get through to Europe. I have never been so pleased to get beaten out by the 9s and Øs! Out west, call signs from the Land of the Rising Sun filled high-band logs that had been empty for a long time. South American stations pounded in from sunrise to way past sunset. Short skip, long skip, even a smidgen of long path made an appearance.

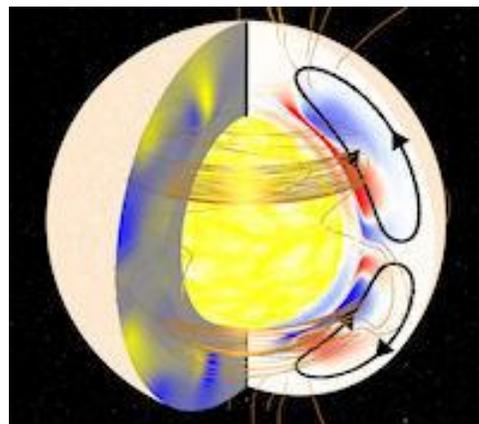
We've been telling the new hams about the wonders of DX contesting without all the massive QRM on 20 meters and down. I'm sure they were beginning to think we were barmy or at least telling some tales. Here was the opening act for several dramas to come, when 10 and 15 swell nigh on to busting at the seams with signals nearly any station can log.

Just two months ago, we were wondering if Cycle 24 was going to flop back into the solar ocean like

a spent booster, remember? Black humor made the rounds — not only was the solar minimum past, but the maximum, too! Arggggh! To be sure, there will be quiet periods and disturbed days when it seems the sunspots have evaporated once again, but not for long.

So the Big Bass Bongo has been beaten and the Palos Verde Sundancers have danced their propagation dance. The Sun has heard their siren song and sung its own verses in response. *Laissez les bons temps rouler!*

73, Ward NØAX



The Great Conveyor Belt sounds like a constellation but it's really inside a star - our Sun - and may hold the key to the sunspot cycle as described by [this NASA article](#). (Graphic by NASA)

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Dates to Remember:

- Apr. 11 — NKARC membership meeting
- Apr. 17 — ARRL [Rookie Roundup](#)
- Apr. 30 — Deadline for Feedline submissions
- May 9 — NKARC membership meeting
- May 20-22 — Dayton [Hamvention](#)

NKARC Directory

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Repeaters (K4CO): 147.255+ and 444.350+ Edgewood (PL 123.0), 147.375+ Walton, 146.895+ Highland Heights. The 147.255 repeater is a linked Echolink node, accessible via N4IJS-R.

NKARC Net: Tuesdays, 8:30 PM on the 147.255 repeater

VE Testing: Testing sessions are held by appointment only on the 2nd Monday of each month, prior to the NKARC membership meeting. Testing begins at 6:00 pm. To make an appointment, contact Lyle Hamilton at VETesting@k4co.org or tel. 513-315-4032

NKARC Web Site: <http://www.k4co.org>

NKARC Membership Meetings: 2nd Monday of each month at 7:30 pm at the [Hilltop Church of Christ](#), 5300 Taylor Mill Rd (Ky. 16), Taylor Mill, KY. Visitors are always welcome!

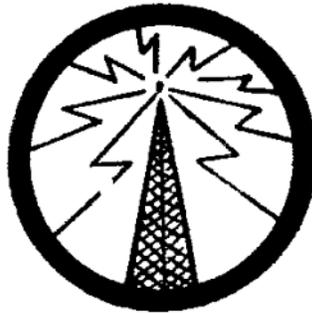
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Top of the Tower

In case you haven't heard, as of this writing, the K4CO 444.350 repeater is down. The trouble started early in March when a circuit board failed in the 147.255 repeater. Since the two machines are at the same location, both Motorola equipment, and very similar in design, it was possible to take a board out of the 440 repeater to replace the faulty one in the 2 meter machine. That put the 147.255 back on the air and available for the weekly Tuesday night club net at the expense of the 440 machine. Estimates for repair parts run from less than \$100 to over \$1000 depending on whether the circuit board can be repaired or needs to be replaced. Efforts are underway to get the job done but it may take a bit longer. If you're inclined to help out with the repair costs, I'm sure Tony, AI4IP, chairman of the repeater committee will be overjoyed to hear from you.



On a grander scale, I just saw in the national news yesterday that the whole 440 Mhz ham band is under attack. It seems that Representative Pete King of New York and chairman of the Homeland Security Committee wants to take the 440 band away from Amateur Radio and auction it off to the highest bidder. On February 10, King introduced HR 607, the Broadband for First Responders Act of 2011 in the US House of Repre-

sentatives. For more information, see the web page

<http://www.arrl.org/news/spectrum-management-bill-threatens-amateur-frequencies>.

Frankly, I've never operated on 440, but I have several friends who really enjoy amateur TV on 432. I also know that many of you enjoy 440 FM. To each his own, but we must stay vigilant. 440 today – 10 meters tomorrow. The point is that the ham bands are a privilege, not a right, and sometimes we have to work for them. Public service activities such as providing communication support for Paddlefest and participating in weather watch nets are great ways to do that. Stay tuned to the progress of HR 607 and be ready to express your opinion to your US congressmen.

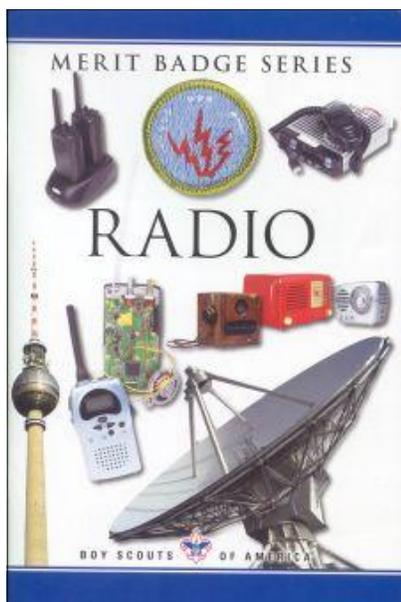
Lastly, although it doesn't feel much like it today (33 degrees and snow), Spring is here and outdoor activities are close at hand. Please remember to be safe!

73,

Dave - K8WDA

Mark's Mutterings

For the second consecutive year, I was asked to serve as a merit badge counselor for the [Merit Badge Challenge](#), an annual Boy Scouts of America event sponsored by the Dan Beard Council. The event takes place across three Saturday mornings in February and March at Dixie Heights High School. The mornings are split into three 75-minute sessions, during which the boys have the opportunity to earn up to three different merit badges.



Last year I taught the Electronics class to five eager Scouts; this year I taught

the Radio class to seven boys.

The [requirements](#) cover a broad range of topics, including broadcast vs. two-way radio, propagation, the radio spectrum, block diagrams, schematic diagrams and safety.

I managed to complete most of the requirements in the first two Saturdays, leaving the final session free to work on the last requirement: making an actual QSO! Fortunately, I was assigned Jim Hicks' (WB4CTX) classroom, which serves as home to the Dixie Heights Amateur Radio Club (KY4DH). The club has a nice HF/VHF station. Robert Kluck (N4IJS) is the station trustee, and was kind enough to assist me in helping the boys complete their QSOs. Two of the boys managed to complete HF QSOs with a ham in Illinois. As we were short of time, the rest of the boys made their QSOs on VHF, with one boy using the club radio and the other boy using my handheld out in the hallway. All of the boys clearly enjoyed themselves.

Three of the boys managed to complete all of the requirements and earn their badge. The remaining boys still have some work to do.

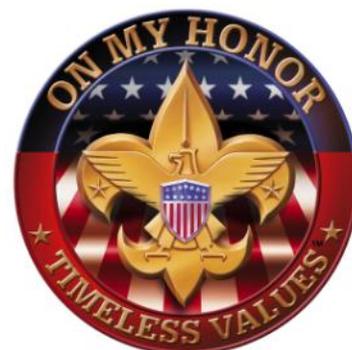
So have I managed to recruit some new, young blood into the Amateur Radio ranks? Well, when introducing youngsters to Amateur Radio, I always take

the long view and assume that the seeds may take up to several decades to germinate.

By the way, I found that the pamphlet that the BSA publishes for this badge is an excellent introduction to radio in general and Amateur Radio in particular. It includes instructions for building a crystal radio set. They can be purchased from the BSA [web site](#) for just \$4.49 a copy — a bargain if you ask me. Perhaps our club should consider purchasing a quantity and donating them to the scout troops in our area. Most troops cannot afford to maintain a complete collection of merit badge pamphlets.

73,

Mark, AI4BJ



March NKARC Net Report

By Robert Kluck, N4IJS

DATE	NCS	CHECKINS	TIME (MINS)	TRAFFIC
March 1	AJ4DK (Don)	9	20	0
March 8	KB4VKS (Mike)	8	31	0
March 15	KB4VKS (Mike)	10	17	0
March 22	KG4SBG (Dennis)	7	28	0
March 29	AJ4DK (Don)	9	24	
TOTALS:		43	120	0

March Meeting Minutes

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 14, 2011 MEETING OF THE NORTHERN KENTUCKY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

The March 14, 2011 meeting of the NKARC was called to order at approximately 7:35 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance and introductions of attendees followed. A sign in sheet was circulated.

A motion to accept the minutes of the February meeting was made by John, WD8MNV. Seconded by Dave, KI4QH. The motion passed.

There was no Treasurer's report.

There was no VE testing this month.

Brian, K4BRI, reported that the 147.255 repeater has been out of service since Friday, March 11. The failure has been isolated to the component level and repair activity is underway. Robert, N4IJS, advised that the Tuesday evening 147.255 net will be conducted on simplex until the repeater is back in service.

Brian also provided a follow up to the access code issue which he reported last month. The code has been successfully reset and it is believed that the problem was related to a power outage at the repeater site. A backup power pack is under investigation.

Robert, N4IJS, donated 5 new ARRL books to the club to be used to establish a lending library for club members. The books may be checked out at a club meeting and returned a month later.

A Field Day chairperson is still needed. Anyone interested in leading or assisting with Field Day planning should contact Robert or Dann, KI4AVO. The shelter house at Lincoln Ridge Park in Independence has been reserved for the event.

Robert stressed the need for program ideas.

Dann, KI4AVO, requested volunteers for the annual audit of the Treasurer's books. John, KY4JD, volunteered.

It was reported that Echolink is down. Robert will look into it.

Robert, KJ4FZS, suggested that the club take advantage of improving HF band conditions and consider setting up a temporary station to demonstrate DX potential to newcomers. Discussion followed. No formal action was taken.

Tony, AI4IP made a motion to adjourn the business meeting. Seconded by Dave, KI4QH. Motion passed. The business meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:05 pm.

After refreshments, Ron Malinowski, N9QGS, presented a very interesting program on [Co-CoRaHS](#), the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network.

Respectfully submitted by Dave, K8WDA.

Weaver's Words

Spring is Springing

Jim Weaver, K8JE
Great Lakes Division Director, ARRL
E-mail: k8je@arrl.org; Tel.: 513-459-0142

Volunteers Needed for Hamvention Booth

The Great Lakes Division has been requested to manage a Legislative Action booth at the Hamvention(tm) again this year. A few assignments remain open. If you are interested in helping at this booth, please get in touch with me at k8je@arrl.org for further information. Please let me know the day(s) and time you are available. Assignments will be for three hours, each throughout the two and one-half day event.

The objective of the booth is expected to be to obtain letters in opposition to the 440+ MHz clause in HR 607.

Volunteers who assist at the booth will receive an ARRL polo shirt. Because of this, it is important for me to know who has volunteered by April 3. I will also need to know your shirt size.



Your Help Urgently Needed

To the many of you who have already written letters to your US Representative on HR 607, thank you. To you who have not gotten "around tuit" and have not yet written, please do. The fate of the amateur secondary allocation 440 MHz band is at stake. This is a battle I truly believe we can win. We are not the only group that would suffer from having HR 607 pass in its present form. Combined with the other groups, I feel confident we can prevail in having the offending part of the Bill removed. For example, the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC) has stated its support of the ARRL position (<http://www.arrl.org/news/npstc-says-hr-607-needs-to-be-amended>). If you wish additional information go to <http://www.arrl.org/news/arrl-members-respond-to-hr-607>.

To let your US Representative know you oppose the present bill, go to <http://www.kd4pyr.net/hamletter.htm> and follow the simple instructions. All that is needed is to insert your call sign where indicated and to click twice more to generate a letter addressed to your US Representative. The letter will be ready to print and for you to sign.

- Be sure to sign your letter. Letters without a handwritten signature are not effective.

- Send signed letters to John Chwat our legislative spokesman in Washington. His addresses are:

US postal mail: John Chwat, Chwat & Co.,
Suite 103, 625 Slaters Lane, Alexandria, VA
22314

E-mail: john.chwat@chwatco.com. Scan and send signed letter as an attachment.

Fax: Number (703) 684-7594.

Do not send this letter or any letter about HR 607 to your US Senators at this time. The bill is only in the US House of Representatives.

Why send your signed letter to John Chwat? First, all postal mail to members of the US House (and other government bodies) is delayed 6 to 8 weeks in being searched for hazardous materials. Second, Mr. Chwat will increase the value of your individual letter by combining it with others and delivering a stack of letters directly to your Representative's office. This manner of delivery makes a particular impact on Congressmen.

If you feel it necessary to mail your letter directly to your Representative, do it. However, please also send a signed copy of it to Mr. Chwat for the reasons outlined above.

Thanks for your help and support in this important effort. Please let me know if you have any questions or suggestions.

ARRL Membership through Local Club

Club officers and members are reminded that Affiliated Clubs can retain part of any ARRL dues paid through the club. Clubs may keep \$15.00 of the first year's dues for new ARRL members or returning members whose membership has been lapsed for two years or longer. Clubs may keep \$2.00 for each ARRL renewal handled through it.

This is one benefit you can bank on. It makes recruiting ARRL members by club members very worthwhile financially as well as philosophically for the club. Go to <http://www.arrl.org/affiliated-club-benefits> to learn the benefits of affiliation with ARRL. The dues benefit mentioned above is described under Club Commission Program.

Great Lakes Division Convention Sept. 11

As previously reported, the 2011 Great Lakes Division Convention will be held concurrent with the Findlay Hamfest in Findlay, OH on Sunday, September 11, 2011. The Convention will be on the Hamfest grounds as a coordinated activity with the Hamfest. Allan Pitts, W1AGP, ARRL Media & Public Relations Manager will be the principal speaker. Allan is very knowledgeable in emergency communications and, of course, in media relations. Allan's keynote presentation will include "How Amateur Radio has Changed since 9/11." This September is the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attack on the Trade Center and the Pentagon.

A series of interesting seminar topics and speakers is being developed for this event. These will include National Traffic System (organized by the Ohio Single Side Band Net), EmComm (organized by Michigan SM WA8EFK who also chairs the ARRL's Emergency Communications Advisory Committee), DX (organized by the South East Michigan DX Association), ATV-Digital TV (Art Tosely, WA8RMC).

In addition to the seminars and speakers, Great Lakes Division Awards will be presented. See below for the call for nominations for these awards.

The final event of the Convention will be a buffet

brunchquet at a nearby restaurant for those who are able to remain. The brunchquet will begin at 2 PM. Convention sessions will be from 9 AM-1 PM.

Division Awards are Open For Nominations

The Great Lakes Division makes six special awards available to Great Lakes Division members at each bi-annual convention. In addition, the Director typically provides special Director Awards to members who have performed particularly notable service to the public, Amateur Radio or ARRL. The awards that are open for nomination are:



- * The George S. Wilson, III W4OYI Lifetime Achievement Award
- * The Great Lakes Division Amateur of the Year Award
- * The Great Lakes Division DX Achievement Award
- * The Great Lakes Division Young Radio Amateur of the Year Award
- * The Great Lakes Division Technical Achievement Award
- * The Great Lakes Division Joseph J. Phillips, K8QOE Newsletter Award

Previous winners of the awards can be seen at <http://arrl-greatlakes.org/> by clicking on AWARDS at the left side of the opening screen. The criteria for the awards may be found by clicking on AWARDS CRITERIA at the top of the succeeding page. Nominations will be accepted through 1 August and should be directed to Scott Yonally, N8SY at n8sy@arrl.net. Attendance at the Convention is free with the purchase of a Findlay Hamfest ticket.

Michigan QSO Party this Month

The 2011 Michigan QSO Party will be April 16-17. Full information and rules are available at <http://www.miqp.org/> which also has information on previous Parties. Dave Pruett, K8CC is MiQP Chairman. Dave is also chairman of the ARRL VUCC Advisory Committee.

A Note to Hamfest/Swap Chairmen

Hamfest chairmen, please remember that ARRL no longer automatically sends boxfuls of goodies to you. A few weeks before your hamfest/swap, you will receive an envelope that principally contains two items. These are the \$50 and \$100 coupons to be used as prizes at your 'fest, and a list of free handouts you can ask HQ to send to you -- at no charge; their free; gratis. The only thing is that someone needs to review the list of freebies and contact HQ a couple of weeks before the event to have the ones you select sent to you. There is good stuff among the free goods. Some of these handouts are good for use in the shack; others work well as leave-behinds when meeting with government or relief agency officials. Still others are very useful to give to audience members when you speak about Amateur Radio to community groups.

These free handouts are to be displayed on the ARRL table you provide during your hamfest. In addition to the free items, there are additional materials available to purchase. These are nice items that may be helpful to your club's speaker's group to dress-up displays. There is no requirement to buy these items, but don't overlook the free goods on the sheet.

State QSO Parties Listed on Online

Great Lakes Division member Tim Scott, WA4TS knew I was interested in knowing when QSO parties were set for states in the Division. He sent me a link to a list of state parties. To check when state QSO parties are scheduled and to obtain details of these go to <http://qsoparty.eqth.net/>. Information is not available for all states, however. Presumably the list host has not yet received information for some states. It is a fairly comprehensive listing, though.

Tnx, Tim

Incidentally, the Kentucky QSO Party is scheduled for November 12. The Ohio QSO Party will be August 27. Web sites for these QSO parties are <http://www.wkdx.com/mainsite/> and <http://www.ohqp.org/> respectively.

Several ARRL Awards Open for Nomination

Six awards for ARRL members are open for nomination. These awards were established by the Board of Directors to recognize outstanding accomplishment and service to Amateur Radio, the community and ARRL to an ARRL volunteer Amateur Radio instructor or to an ARRL professional classroom teacher who uses creative instructional approaches and models the highest values of the Amateur Radio community.

The awards are:

- The ARRL Herb S. Brier Instructor of the Year Award for an ARRL volunteer Amateur Radio instructor or to an ARRL professional classroom teacher who uses creative instructional approaches and models the highest values of the Amateur Radio community. .
- The Hiram Percy Maxim Award for a full ARRL member under age 21 whose accomplishments and contributions are of the most exemplary nature within the framework of Amateur Radio activities.
- The ARRL Microwave Development Award to a radio amateur who contributes to the development of the amateur microwave bands.
- The ARRL Technical Service Award for a radio amateur who provides technical assistance or training to others.
- The ARRL Technical Innovation Award for development and application of new technical ideas or techniques by a radio amateur.
- The Knight Distinguished Service Award for exceptional service by a Section Manager.

A brief discussion of the awards is at <http://www.arrl.org/news/nominations-for-arrl-awards-now-open>. Links to details of the awards and nominating procedures are included in the online article.

This Month's Final

It is said that Amateur Radio operators are often similar to members of a large family. For me, this is true. We sometimes tolerate each other and we sometimes bicker with each other, essentially as happens in a large fam-

ily. Mostly, though, we enjoy and love each other — again, just as happens in a large family.

One piece of evidence that we mostly love each other is the outpouring of good wishes and prayers sent to me the last few weeks regarding my wife. For these and for the friends in this Division who sent them I am eternally grateful.

As most of you probably do not know, my wife, Janice, died on March 7. She had been fighting health issues for several years. I have not made her passing known widely until now.

Even so, the word of her death spread and I received cards, telephone calls and messages from many members. Please know that these expressions of friendship and love have helped me work through the difficult days since her death.

Thank you very much.

Tentative Travel, Hamfest and Activity Schedule

Hamfests in the following list have received ARRL sanctioning as of press time. Hamfests and other events for which a Great Lakes Division representative is scheduled to attend are identified with the representative's name. Now that I have additional free time, I intend to attend more hamfests than initially planned. The schedule can be expected to be fine-tuned from time to time.

Patronize ARRL-sanctioned hamfests. Hamfests, conventions, symposia and similar events sponsored by ARRL-affiliated clubs may be eligible to be sanctioned by the League. For information on sponsoring and sanctioning a hamfest or convention, go to www.arrl.org/hamfest-sponsor-support. To have your hamfest sanctioned, go to <http://www.arrl.org/hamfest-convention-application> to apply on line. Hamfests are already being sanctioned for 2012!. Please be sure to read the requirements for having an event sanctioned before submitting a request.

Hamfest Chairmen, please remember to order your free

handouts that are available from ARRL. These handouts are to be displayed on the ARRL table you provide. These replace the box of assorted goodies HQ previously sent automatically. The reason for the change is to allow you to select only the materials you believe will be of value and interest to your attendees.

- 2 Apr: Lincoln Trail ARC Hamfest, Elizabethtown, KY
- 2 Apr: ARGYL Hamfest, Lowell, MI - Jim
- 9 Apr: 55th Cuyahoga Falls ARC Hamfest, Cuyahoga Falls, OH
- 9 Apr: A&F Committee, Newington, CT - Jim
- 12 Apr: Highland ARA, Hillsboro, OH - Jim
- 16 Apr: Milford Swap and Shop, Milford, MI
- 16 Apr: OH-KY-IN/QCEN 1- Day Licensing Class, Cincinnati, OH - Jim
- 23 Apr: Jackson Co. ARC Swap, Jackson, OH
- 30 Apr: River Cities ARA Hamfest, Ashland, KY - Jim
- 1 May: Athens Hamfest, Athens, OH - Jim
- 7 May: Cadillac Hamfest, Cadillac, MI
- 14 May: Louisa Hamfest, Louisa, KY (QSL Checking)
- 20-22 May: Dayton Hamvention(TM) w/ARRL Expo, Dayton (QSL Checking), OH - Gary, Jim
- 4 Jun: "Good Old Days" W8IRA/R Hamfest, Hudsonville, MI (QSL Checking) -Jim
- 4 Jun: Fulton Co. ARC Hamfest, Tedrow, OH
- 5 Jun: Chelsea Radio Swap n Shop, Chelsea, MI - Jim
- 11 Jun: LARS Hamfest, Newberry, MI
- 10-11 Jun: ARRL National Convention/Ham-Com, Plano, TX
- 18 Jun: Milford Hamfest, Milford, OH - Jim
- 18 Jun: Midland Hamfest, Midland, MI (QSL Checking)
- 19 Jun: Monroe Hamfest, Monroe, MI - Jim
- 14 Jul: A&F Committee Meeting, Newington, CT - Jim
- 15-16 Jul: ARRL Board Meeting, CT - Gary, Jim
- 17 Jul: Van Wert Hamfest, Van Wert, OH
- 31 Jul: Portage Hamfair 11, Randolph, OH - Gary
- 6 Aug: Voice of Aladdin Hamfest, Columbus, OH - Jim
- 6 Aug: UP Hamfest, Escanaba, MI
- 14 Aug: Central Kentucky ARRL Hamfest, Lawrenceburg, KY - Jim
- 21 Aug: Warren ARC Hamfest, Cortland, OH
- 28 Aug: Cambridge ARA Hamfest, Cambridge, OH
- 10 Sep: Louisville Sunrise Hamfest, Shepherdsville, KY
- 11 Sep: Findlay Hamfest & Great Lakes Division Con-

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**FIRST
CLASS**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



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