

Sometimes I get very frustrated as your Section Manager. I don't really like the term "Manager". I'd rather it be "leader". A good leader surrounds himself or herself with quality people who can provide the necessary inputs to achieve success. You, every one of you, are those quality people. A good leader also needs to step back occasionally and ask "Why isn't it working?"

So, why am I frustrated?

Recently a message went out to all the ARRL affiliated clubs in Illinois asking for input. The following was sent to the contact listed for each club:

It's tough to work in a vacuum.

The ARRL Illinois Section is about to do something about it...with your help. And the "your" doesn't mean just you.

We're planning to restructure the way annual Section meetings operate, both for ourselves and our counterparts around the nation in wresting with basic issues of ARRL club operations in areas ranging from recruitment to programming to member retention, legal issues, finances, funding, and so much more. The Section Meeting --probably next fall-- will not include a hamfest so that the focus can be on helping our clubs operate more effectively.

That's where you come in.

We'd like you to join us now in helping provide issues, input, and ideas that will help form the programs, workshops and panels we envision as we develop the 2023 Section Meeting program.

We also need to gauge your personal interest in playing an active role in the planning process and that of your fellow officers and individual club members.

- Given a choice of topics dealing with club operations, what panel or presentation topics would be most beneficial you and your club (such as, but certainly not limited to developing dynamite programs that keep members coming back, snaring good speakers, effective ways to reach out to the community, using media to promote what you do to a wider audience, club legal, financial and insurance issues, applying for grants, etc.).

- What other areas would be fodder for panel discussions and presentations?

- What would be a reasonable fee if a light breakfast, lunch and dinner is included? Do we need a luncheon and/or dinner speaker?

- If the meeting was in Central Illinois, how many board members, committee chairs or others from your club might be expected to attend?

- Would you, your board or committee members be willing to serve as moderators, guides, registrars or play other official roles on the day or days of the event?"

- What other activities would be appropriate (such as a radio project workshop, club awards, manufacturer displays, tours?)

Please respond with your thoughts by September 26th, 2022.

To date we have received 3 responses.

Remember I said I was frustrated? Then, someone much smarter than me said, "Maybe it's because nobody has asked for their opinion before." And, the light bulb went off. We were asking you to do something that hasn't been done before.

As a leader it's my responsibility to make mid-stream corrections to insure the section's success. I am, effective immediately, making that correction.

The Illinois ARRL Section is not my Section, it is yours. We, your Section cabinet, need your inputs that will bring success to all of us. I know, some of you are probably reading this and saying, "Yeah, right, he can't really mean it." If I were in your shoes I'd probably think the same thing.

Rest assured, I do mean it. Your input is critical. Please tell us what you need and want. If for some reason your club didn't receive the email bring it up at your October club meeting and ask your members what they want. Let us know what the members say.

Once we have your responses we will compile them and send them out to you so you can tell us which are the most important for the Illinois Section clubs and members. We want to make sure that our Illinois Section Convention is what you need and want.

I'm asking you to poll your club members and send us their needs by November 1st. Send your member requests to our Affiliated Clubs Coordinator (ACC), Jim Hull, at: [illinois.arrl.acc@gmail.com](mailto:illinois.arrl.acc@gmail.com)

I also learned a long time ago about everyone listening to their favorite radio station WIIFM or What's In It For Me.

For each club that responds, we will assign them a number. Then we will ask our Central Division Director K9LA, Carl Luetzelschwab, to pick several numbers. The winners will receive a \$50.00 ARRL gift certificate to use as they see fit.

Now on to other things...

There is a new QST section for clubs to submit their activities. If your club is doing an event, submit it to [clubs@arrl.org](mailto:clubs@arrl.org) and please also send it to our Public Information Coordinator (PIC) Vicky Whitaker, [kd9bau@arrl.net](mailto:kd9bau@arrl.net) and if you need help writing about your activity, Vicky can help you. Speaking about our PIC, We now have 32 club Public Information Officers (PIO) working with Vicky to help get the word out about club activities. If you are an ARRL affiliated club one of your club positions is supposed to be a PIO. If you currently do not have a PIO, please appoint one and have them start working with Vicky to get information to the media about your club and activities. It is not a difficult task and Vicky will be very helpful.

I'm thinking about having several six foot vertical banners made that we can pre-position throughout the state for your use at events such as the one I recently had the privilege to attend last month at the Coles County Air Show in Mattoon. The banners would contain pictures from your events and activities. Please send your pictures to [w9ry@w9ry.com](mailto:w9ry@w9ry.com) so we can collect them. Please make sure to ask club members if it's okay to show them in the pictures. I'd like to get several hundred pictures we can use. Again, this is your section. Help us provide what you need.

Amateur radio volunteers are always needed for public events. We provide outstanding communications for events such as the Chicago Marathon and other numerous races. Coordinators are always in need of that one more volunteer. Here in my area we have the Tunnel Hill 100 in Johnson County the weekend of November 12-13. It is a pre-qualifier for the Boston Marathon and draws between 1,000 and 1,200 runners from 42 states and around the world. Right before that we have the Chicago Marathon on October 9. Both races are in need of volunteers. Your local clubs have the contact information.

We recently completed our Simulated Emergency Test (SET) with over 70 members checking in. If you didn't participate we hope you will join us one the next SET exercise. There are participation activities for all classes of licensees.

I have just returned from an exceptional trip to ARRL Headquarters.(space)If you have never been to Newington, Connecticut, definitely put it on your bucket list. It's well worth the trip and you'll have the opportunity to operate the W1AW station. Be ready though. The minute you say W1AW the pileup will start.

They say there is no rest for the weary. They're right! I'm off to the Central Division Convention at HRO Milwaukee and then on my way home via the Radio Expo at Belvidere. I hope to see you there.

Until next time, send us your club needs and suggestions for an Illinois Section Convention and your club activity pictures. We want your input.

Thom W9RY