



Lake County  
Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service ®  
Amateur Radio Emergency Service ®  
1303 North Milwaukee Avenue  
Libertyville, IL 60048



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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## Ham Radio Operators Support Severe Weather Seminar

Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011, Batavia, IL - Tom Skilling, a well known Chicago TV personality and a weather forecaster with a huge following hosted his 31st annual Tornado and Severe Weather Seminar at Fermi Lab, a U.S. Department of Energy facility in a western suburb of Chicago.

Amateur radio and the SKYWARN reporting network again participated with an informational booth to educate the general public, and recruit potential members.

The SKYWARN booth was staffed by Kane and Lake County ARES® members.

These experienced spotters discussed the importance of having trained observers reporting actual weather conditions and describing resulting storm damage not available from the National Weather Service Doppler radar. NOAA weather radios donated by Midland Electronics were raffled off by the amateur radio SKYWARN booth staff at each session.



Amateur radio operators from Kane and Lake County staff the Amateur Radio SKYWARN information booth outside the Ramsey Auditorium at Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory.

We have seen many areas affected by severe weather in the news lately from the earthquake / tsunami in Japan, to the thunderstorms / tornados in the south east U.S. which has stimulated lots of interest in all aspects of severe weather. The attendance at this seminar is again standing room only in the main lecture hall, but also with the closed circuit video presentation in the secondary overflow theatre as well a third location in the cafeteria.



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The first featured speaker was Dr. Louis Uccellini, Director of NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Prediction in Camp Spring, Maryland, discussed the forecasting models which are



the result of super computers making 70 million calculations per second, and now are actually an “ensemble” of forecast models from all over the world. These forecasts come from France, England, U.S. Japan, our military and government agencies as well as from many others. By watching the trends of several which agree, then a forecast can be generated with a higher degree of confidence. A forecast can only reach out to 14 days. Most are 8 or 9 days with some degree of certainty.

Ham Radio Operators from Kane and Lake Counties collect names to raffle off 20 NOAA weather radios donated through the cooperation of Tom Skilling, Walgreens, and Midland Electronics.

With any forecast from the present day there are errors introduced with each day you reach out.

“Some storms are just not as predictable as others” Uccellini mentioned.

Other featured speakers throughout the seminar included;

- Dr. Jim Angel, State Climatologist, Midwestern Regional Climate Center: "February 2011 Blizzard's impact astounding";
- Jim Reed: "Storm Chaser: A Photographer's Journey";
- Jim Allsopp, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, National Weather Service, Chicago: "Tornadoes in the Chicago area";
- Brian Smith, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, National Weather Service, Omaha, Nebraska: "Killer Wind: Do not ignore Severe Thunderstorm Warnings"
- Dr. Mary Ann Cooper, MD, University of Illinois-Chicago: "The lightning injury rate in the U.S."
- Ed Fenelon, Meteorologist in Charge of the National Weather Service Forecast Office-Chicago: "Rip Currents: Killers on the Great Lakes

Information on the Tom Skilling Tornado and Severe Weather Seminar is found at:

<http://www.asktom.org/>

To learn more about Lake County SKYWARN, go to: <http://www.lakecountyskywarn.org/>

To learn more about Amateur Radio in general and how to become a ham radio operator, go to

[www.emergency-radio.org](http://www.emergency-radio.org).

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