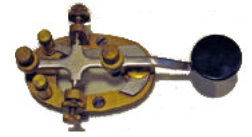


T H E K E Y



Repeaters

146.970 PL 100
444.475 PL 131.8



RARC Net

The club's weekly net is 8 p.m. Sundays on the 146.970 repeater.



Programs

Feb. 2: Ham Radio

Contesting. Scott Neader, KA9FOX, will offer tips about Ham Radio Contesting. Is contesting something you wish to try but don't know how to begin? Might you enjoy a bit of contesting without spending the hours needed to accumulate a big score, just to spend a bit of time with your hobby and sharpening your skills?

March 2. Antenna traps.

Ron Martinmaki, W9EOA, is a black belt antenna maker and trap winder. He will share his experience and teach antenna construction.

New An Hour with Elmer.

Elmers will be on hand at 6 p.m. before meetings, beginning in February, to try to answer questions about equipment, operating practices, or whatever. Join either category for talking ham and socializing.

Contact club officers with more program suggestions.

Holiday Party Jan 13

Imagine Charles Schulz's depiction of Snoopy dancing in anticipation of a party. Now, imagine a pleasant evening in the company of other people, hams, their significant others, members, and non-members of RARC, enjoying conversation and participating in a bit of repast.

The club's annual holiday party will be Wednesday, Jan. 13, at Nel's City Grill in La Crosse. Cocktails are at 5:30 p.m., dinner at 6:30 p.m. Nel's was chosen for its privacy and ambience. The food is good, but the price is for more than just the food. Make your reservation with Mike Mohler at w9mbm@arrl.net or 406 360 3565 by noon, Monday Jan. 11.

Order off the menu which includes Shoulder tenderloin - \$18; Chicken breast - \$16; Herb crusted salmon with cayenne fish sauce - \$19. All are served with house salad, Yukon Gold mashed potatoes, seasonal fresh vegetable, rolls and butter.

This is always well attended. Come and join us.

We will be presenting our annual awards at the party. Refer your nominations for Ham Of The Year, New Ham Of The Year or Elmer, to Mark Cassellius, KB9OFK.

Holiday party

When: Wednesday, Jan. 13, social hour 5:30 p.m., dinner at 6:30 p.m.

Where: Nel's City Grill, 1111 3rd St. S., La Crosse, in the City Brewery complex.

Reservations: Mike Mohler, w9mbm@arrl.net or 406 360 3565 by noon, Monday Jan. 11.

Skywarn Recognition a 'success'

By Todd Shea, KB9YXS

Local amateur radio operators, led by Riverland club members, and members of the National Weather Service NWS participated in the 10th annual Skywarn Recognition Day on Saturday, Dec. 5. Skywarn Recognition Day was developed in 1999 by the National Weather Service and the American Radio Relay League. It celebrates the contributions that volunteer Skywarn radio operators make to the NWS. During the day Skywarn operators visited NWS offices and contacted other radio operators across the world.

A majority of the equipment was setup on Friday, Dec. 4, with the typical one inch of snow on the ground and cold conditions. Luckily one of the dipole antennas had been strung earlier so it went quick. Two high frequency radios were used during the event to make contacts around the U.S., North America, and parts of Europe.

While many of the visitors were from the La Crosse area, amateur radio operators and Skywarn group leaders from Dunn, Chippewa, Eau Claire, Clark, and Juneau Counties also visited and assisted. More than 30 people participated, enjoyed conversation and snacks.

Contacts were made in nearly every state and six foreign countries.

Most operating was done on 2, 20, 40, and 80 meters, in addition to IRLP.



Skywarn Recognition participant Tom O'Brien making one of the 200 contacts.

A special thanks goes out to the local operators who helped with set up or radio operation, including: Tom O'Brien, WB9BJQ; Ron Martinmaki, W9EOA; Larry Worthington, KC9HDP; Bob Seaquist, KC9IWE; Roger Reader.

See 'Skywarn,' next page



Skywarn Recognition Day participants Carl Thurston, KC9HDS, Ron Martinmaki, W9EOA, and Mark Cassellius, KB9OFK, discuss strategy.

Skywarn, continued from page 1

KA9BKK; Keith Butler, KC9IWL; Ron Larson, W9RLL; Van Elston, WA9FIO; Jim Netwal, W9UUM; John Wagner, KB9ULF; Carl Thurston, KC9HDS; Mark Smick, N9UNW; Todd Shea, KB9YXS; Mike Mohler, W9MBM; Tom Peterson, KC9ECI; Ron Anderson, W9RMA; Ron Krueger, W9JRW; Paul Kohlmeier, KC9GBO; and Gerry Leff, N9LRV.

The National page for SKYWARN Recognition Day may be found at: <http://hamradio.noaa.gov>

By the numbers:

Hours operated: 9
Total contacts made: 200
Total U.S. States contacted: 43
Total NWS offices contacted: 26
Total foreign countries contacted: 6 Austria, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Portugal, Sweden

VE testing for licensing

The RARC will continue providing VE testing for licensing. The fee remains \$15.

Tests will be administered Saturdays, on Feb. 13, May 8, Sept. 11, and Nov. 13.

Each session will begin at 9 a.m. at the American Red Cross office, 2927 Losey Blvd. S., La Crosse.

General class upgrade planned

Techs interested in upgrading to General class should indicate that on the membership form. The club plans a class for upgrading to General if there is enough interest.

New club leadership

New club officers for 2010, elected at the December meeting, are Mark Cassellius, WBoOFK, president, Mike Mohler, W9MBM, vice president, Red Haines, WO0W, treasurer and Carl Thurston, KC9HDS, secretary.

Committee chairs will be named after the member survey and membership forms reporting current interests of the members are received.

Membership renewal time

Club members should have received, or soon will receive, in the mail, a renewal notice. It's that time! Riverland dues are still only \$20 for an individual and \$25 for a family.

Return your membership form and payment ASAP to **Riverland Amateur Radio Club, PO Box 621, Onalaska, WI 54650**

If you have already paid the dues, complete and send the membership form, marked paid.

Each active member will assist with at least two activities. Member participation is essential if RARC is to flourish.

Contributions are welcomed. You may contribute to general operations repeater, etc. or dedicate a contribution to a special project. See Article V, Section 3 of the standing rules on the Web page for details regarding dedicated contributions.

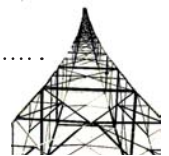
Renewal notices

Renewal notices have been e mailed to all for whom the club has an e mail address. Printed copies will be mailed to others early next week.

Members who do not receive newsletters by e mail are asked to advise Red Haines of a current email address that can accept attachments not an arl.net address. Using e mail substantially reduces the costs of printing and postage.

Repeater Note

By Van Elston, WA9FIO



All is working well. I am looking for volunteers to be trained as control operators to probe the deep recesses of the repeater and structuring its operation. This requires a familiarity with DOS. Also, in the works is a site visit for testing and tuning in February. A 220 antenna placement should be scheduled in March as weather permits.

Riverland Amateur Radio Club

P.O. Box 621
Onalaska, Wis. 54650



Address correspondence regarding the club and the newsletter to Red Haines, WO0W, wo0w@arrl.net

This newsletter is sent by e mail to current and past RARC members and others. If you wish not to receive it, send a note to wo0w@arrl.net and ask that your address be deleted from the list.

Elmers and Elmering

By Carl Thurston, KC9HDS

I'm not sure where the term "Elmer" began. To my knowledge there hasn't been a definitive explanation of its origin. "Elmer," a term defined as a Ham with knowledge and experience that helps Hams less knowledgeable than himself; a mentor, teacher, or helpful friend to those Hams in need. Seems to cover, but it still lacks the definitive essence of what an "Elmer" is.

Keeping this in mind, at our last board meeting we were asked to nominate someone for "Elmer of the Year." Our collective minds went blank and as a result no one was nominated for that award. I can't speak for the rest of the board, but for me the reason that I couldn't nominate someone is because there are so many "Elmers" in the RARC. On top of that, my time with the RARC has been so short that I have no idea who in recent memory has already received this award.

I personally have been "Elmered" by many of the current members and some non-members of RARC. In fact there are so many Hams in the RARC who are either official or unofficial "Elmers" that it is very difficult to choose just one.

There is such a wealth of knowledge and experience within our ranks that the "Elmering" function seems to be a continuous process that occurs with little forethought on any one's part. To name one is nearly impossible.

I can only go by my personal experience, having been "Elmered" on a regular basis for the last five years.

My first "Elmer" is the Ham who got me started in Amateur Radio; Roger Reader, KA9BKK. He would be a good choice for "Elmer of the Year," but then so would several others including:

Arthur Osborn, W0JDC, who is always the first to show up and help at, and the last to leave any RARC function.

Tom O'Brien, WB9BJQ, who is the anchor for all of the run walks, marathons and "Iron Man" events.

Van Elston, WA9FIO, who is always ready to explain every facet of anything electronic to anyone at any time.

Red Haines, WO0W, who has devoted so much time in planning and staging many programs on antenna theory and construction.

Ron Martinmaki, W9EOA, who continually brings in projects to our meetings, that he has found interesting and is for ever able to share his experience with all.

Those are a few of the stand outs that are members of RARC. There are even more that are not members but are active "Elmers" for all Hams regardless of affiliation.

I guess that what I'm trying to say here is that there are so many good "Elmers" out there that it is impossible for me to select just one. Thank you "Elmers," you are appreciated, even if it is nearly impossible to pick just one for "Elmer of the Year."

'Splat' creates propagation maps

Those interested in propagation have a new Web site available to them. Go to <http://splat.ecok.edu/> and register your station (different registrations for differing antenna heights) and you can download informative propagation maps associated with your station and other registered stations. The site is moderately easy to navigate; write or call Red Haines, WO0W, for assistance and advice.

There are four local stations shown at present, WO0W, WA9FIO, WR9ARC, and WR9ARC uhf.

Red Haines, WO0W

Tech note

Feed line tips

By Red Haines, WO0W

QST's article, "Choosing a Transmission Line" on page 42 is good information. "It is possible to use any type of transmission line with any antenna, as long as the proper methods are used to couple the two together." That's a true statement.

Dipole and TEE for 80 and 160 meters

The dual band TEE is a fine antenna for 80 and 160. The ideal dimensions depend upon the height of the center. It will be a good NVIS antenna on 80 and a good DX antenna on 160.

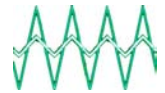
For example, put an 80 meter dipole 133 feet long up so that its center is 35 feet above ground. Feed it with a vertical open wire transmission line, through a matching network tuner at the bottom of the open wire line, for 80 meters. The dipole at that height is near resonance. At this low height, it is a good, though less than ideal, NVIS antenna. My dipole at that height works MSN and TEN very well, with skip only when the critical frequency of the ionosphere drops below about 3 Mc. The SWR at the bottom of that open wire will be high, though, so it needs a matching network to feed it with coax. That isn't a problem. If you can get it higher, that is better for both the 80 and 160 M, up to about 50 feet, which is as high as an NVIS for 80 should be. I used 35 feet as an example that is easy to put up.

To operate that combination on 160, short circuit the two wires of the open wire line and feed it with a matching network against a set of ground radials as though it is a vertical. It is a top hat vertical for 160 and will radiate well at low angles for DX, but not at high angles for NVIS. Use as many radials as possible, at least 20. The length of the radials is not as critical as the number of radials. Its input impedance at the example dimensions will be about 7 Ohms at 1.900Mc, but it is nearly resonant on 1.900 Mc. Match it with a broadband transformer or an 'L' network there at the bottom of the vertical portion to feed it with little loss from coax. Switching the feed line short and matching networks can be accomplished with relays so that you needn't go out in the dark.

If you don't need the 80 meter capability forget the open wire part and just put up the tallest 160 TOP HAT that you can. Adjust the top hat dimensions to maintain resonance. You may use more elements for the top hat.

In any case, a top hat vertical or any other vertical needs the radials to reduce ground losses.

For more information about short, top hat antennas, read Jerry Sevick's W2FMI articles in QST from the 1970s. CQ Communications published them in a small book.



Best of two hobbies

Biking 500 miles, transmitting 5 watts

By Bob Seaquist, KC9IWE

Playing with an HT, a dozen or so repeaters and a score of fellow Hams sounds like fun, then add to it the joy of riding a bicycle 500 miles across Wisconsin. That's my idea of a vacation.

In the process I helped prove that "when all else fails, amateur radio is there."

Last June I participated in GRABAAWR Great Annual Bicycle Adventure Along the Wisconsin River as a biker and a Ham.

GRABAAWR starts at the head waters of the magnificent Wisconsin River near the border of Upper Michigan. It follows the 427 mile length of the river as it winds through the north woods, the central sands area and Wisconsin's Dairyland.

The ride covers seven days of cycling an average of 70 miles per day. Daily distances range from 55 miles to 85 miles. Riders enjoy a combination of rolling hills, flats and a few challenging hills along the way. The tour is limited to 1000 cyclists.

My bike is a Volae Expedition, a Wisconsin made recumbent, a lightening fast reclining lawn chair; my radio for the trip was a Yaesu FT 60R HT.

I've had a recumbent for 12-13 years, choosing comfort and speed over pain and agony. The Volae, manufactured in Stevens Point, puts the rider in a very comfortable position, not on a seat, but something of a chaise longue. The rider is in an extremely aerodynamic position as well as a efficient position for pedaling.

The Yaesu is a durable two band hand held. Van Elston, WA9FIO, helped produce an adaptor to connect the radio with a half wave antenna that was mounted on the bike's rack. That set up let me hit every repeater on the route nearly as well as the 50 watt mobile units used by Hams helping the ride.

More than a dozen Hams helped with communications for the week, some staying all week and some coming for a day or two. Most were ARES/RACES operators from throughout the state. Most were assigned to rest stops along the way; one operator drove a "sweep" vehicle and there was a "SAG" as well, looking for lost, wounded and

tired riders. Communications was coordinated by a control operator set up in an old, small school bus.

I was the only riding Ham. My duty was to report on road hazards and rider conditions, but the reality for the riding Ham is the opportunity to work with a group of fine Ham communicators. Our "work" and occasional semi work kept me company on the long boring stretches that occur on all bike rides.

One rider's misfortune once again proved the vulnerability of cell phones and the ability of amateur radio. The rider was three or four miles south of the Nekoosa casino right in central Wisconsin when he lost control of his bike on wet pavement, falling and breaking his pelvis. Some other bikers alerted the nearby rest stop which contacted me on the Wisconsin Rapids repeater. I was riding in the sweep truck that day and had a mag mount antenna for the Yaesu. We quickly found the guy, but when others in the area



Seaquist on his radio bike. Look for the antenna on the rear rack and the headset mic.

tried to get first responders, no cell phone (representing three different carriers) could get out. My 5w Yaesu could, and did and help was rapidly on the way!

There are some logistics to participate in the ride. I had to drive to Muscoda the END of the ride camp over night in the school gym, then pack my bike on a semi and get myself on one of nine or 10 buses for the day long trip to Hurley, the start of the ride. Then, from Sunday through Saturday, you ride your bike to get back to your car.

WA9FIO was the second person to greet me in Muscoda. His summer home is a short distance from the school so he dropped by to make sure me, my bike and my radio made it that far with no hitch.

Riders may sleep in gyms, camp out on school grounds, or make their own arrangements for motels. Most camp. You may purchase a meal plan that provides good breakfasts and dinners at the schools. Lunch, on the road, is on your own. If you find pie, cookies or ice cream along the way, so much the better.

Generally, riding goes from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., riders often going in small groups of those with similar paces and interests. If there is something to stop and see, then they stop and look. It is not a race, but a tour designed as a vacation and not an endurance event.

Riverland Amateur Radio Club Membership, 2010

Name _____ Call _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Telephone _____ e-mail _____

___ I am unable to help with club activities.

___ I will help organize or work at least two activities:

Select two or more activities with which you will assist

___ Program committee

___ Swap meet

___ Rotary lights committee

___ Field day committee

___ Trailer improvement

___ Sunday night net control operator

___ SKYWARN recognition day

___ SKYWARN operations

___ Awards committee

___ Web page maintenance

___ Repeater committee

___ Run or walk events

___ Run or walk events committee

___ Ares committee

___ Picnic committee

___ Holiday party committee

___ Newsletter committee

___ Provide Newline and ARRL Audio News

___ Membership committee

___ Other _____

___ Other _____

___ Other _____ ___ I am willing to serve as an elected officer

DUES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Member dues \$20

Family member dues \$25 (covers all members of immediate family in the household)

Names and call signs (if any) of family members _____

Contributions to RARC are tax deductible in accordance with 501(c)(3) rules. Receipts will be provided. Contributions will help fund general operations or special projects

Contribution to general operations \$ _____

Dedicated contribution for special project (see Standing Rules, Article V, Section 3 on web page)

Dedicated purpose _____ Amount \$ _____

Total dues and contributions enclosed \$ _____ Check number _____

Return this form and a check to the treasurer at the next club meeting or mail it to:

RARC

Box 621

Onalaska, Wisconsin 54650

Questions:

Most members enjoy the programs that are presented at club meetings. What program topics would interest you, what would you enjoy presenting, or who you nominate?

Would you be interested in attending a class to help you obtain a General Class license?

Yes _____ No _____

Other comments: