

THE KEY

Official Journal of The Riverland Amateur Radio Club



The Riverland Amateur Radio Club is a Special Service Club affiliated with the American Radio Relay League. The club is active in community service as well as actively promoting Amateur Radio in the Coulee Region. The Club is open to all who are interested in Amateur Radio and will help unlicensed persons become licenses thru the FCC.

SUBJECT

**Riverland
Amateur Radio
Club**
P.O. Box 621
Onalaska, WI.
54636

Repeater
146.970 PL 131.8

RARC Net
8:00 PM Sunday
night on the
146.970 Repeater

Club Meetings
Trustee Meeting
3rd Monday of the
month at King
Street Kitchen at
5:00 PM, all club
members are
welcome.

Program evening is
1st Tuesday of the
month at 7:00 PM,
Gunderson Clinic
conference room 1
in the lower level.

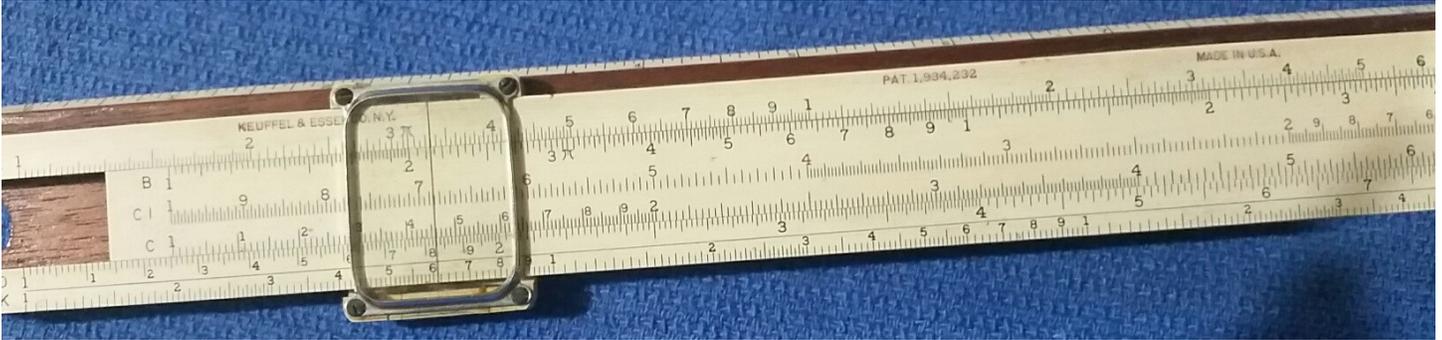


Have you ever been in a train wreck? Carl, kc9hds has and he gave us a very interesting presentation on it at our program night in May. He started out by educating us on the engines and there specs so we learned a lot about how they worked. The year was 1978 when the train Carl was in hit a car from another oncoming train. That set off a chain of events that could have been very negative for Carl and the crew. Luckily they were all spared but definitely shaken up.



We were all very impressed to see the pictures of the wreck that Carl shared with us. The pictures revealed just how much wreckage there was along those tracks and how fast (only 3 days) that it took to get it all cleaned up and trains running on the tracks again. Besides learning about the wreck, we also learned about the trains and Carl's years on the railroad. It was a very interesting presentation and we say Thank You to Carl for doing this for us.





Because of my pending retirement I have been slowly cleaning out my desk drawers and storage areas at work. As I was doing so I ran across the item you see here, a slide rule. Some of you know what this is and I am sure some of you don't, it was the early calculator. Even though I learned how to use one I really never put it into practice. My math calculations, geometry and trigonometry were done manually using reference books as aids. Then along came the battery operated calculators. I remember my first one, a pocket sized (which would never fit anyone's shirt pocket) squared off box of amazement. It was a blue light special from K-mart costing me only \$100.00. It could add, subtract and multiply. How did I ever get along without it. Imagine what the users of the abacus would say about our modern electronics today.

And now we have such things as Arduino and Raspberry Pi. I will not even begin to try and explain to you what each is, but I will tell you if you are interested in finding out make it to our next Program Night at the Gundersen Clinic on June 5. Bill Wood, ke9xq is going to give us an introductory presentation on each and there application to Amateur Radio. Should be very interesting and educational.



**Riverland Amateur Radio Club
PO Box 621
Onalaska, WI 54650**

President.....Kevin Holcomb, KC9ZGD
 Vice-President.....Dan Abts, AB9TS
 Secretary.....Rick Kolter, KD9GVS
 Treasurer.....Greg Miller, K9LEC
 Trustee.....Carl Thurston, KC9HDS
 Trustee.....Roger Reader, KA9BKK
 Trustee.....Bill Wood, KE9XQ
 Newsletter Editor.....Greg Miller, K9LEC

The Key is published monthly and e-mailed to members and friends of the Riverland Amateur Radio Club. Address any correspondence to: Greg Miller at k9lec@arrl.net.

Visit our website at rarc.qth.com

Testing for new Ham's or upgrades for 2017 will be on the following dates:

- June 2
- August 4 (RARC Swapfest)
- November 10



Register 5 days in advance with Roger Reader, KA9BKK, 608-783-0723 or readers@centurtytel.net.

Field Day ■■■ by Carl Thurston, kc9hds

Once again we are on the verge of Field Day. For those of you who haven't participated in Field Day, I would like to invite you to our Field Day event this year as it will be an unveiling for those not familiar with what Field Day is, or what it could mean to you. I'm calling especially to those new Hams who are still trying to get a hold on their microphones or have yet to pull the trigger on that mic and call out CQ CQ CQ. If you are afraid that you might do something wrong while trying your newly gained license, fear not. Field Day is a great way to get started as you will be using the RARC call sign so no one will know its you!

Oh yes, we have all been there. It is so frightening to make your first QSO. If you haven't already done so, Field Day is the place to do it. There will be lots of "Elmers" available to help you along and there is lots of equipment that the club has that you can use to get on the air. You have nothing to lose, so just come on to the event and get your feet wet.

Even if you are too shy to operate right away, you can learn about logging contacts and how this whole thing works from seasoned operators who will show you the way. There is so much to see and learn at our Field Day event. How to set up antennas, radios, power supplies and operating stations. Beyond all of the radio stuff there is the camaraderie that is always present at this event. There is no wrong way to approach Field Day. Just show up, log in, and make new friends. Everyone is always welcome, even those without a license. We can still get you on the air. If you don't currently hold an Amateur Radio Operator's License, we can get you started down that path as well.

You say that you are sort of curious but you aren't sure if this is for you? Come anyway. You can't know until you try. Besides, there will be lots of refreshments, food, and munchies available there for free. So, you see, there is nothing to lose, your curiosity will be satisfied as well as your appetite. Bring a friend as well. Like I said before, all are welcome to our event, even if you aren't really interested in becoming a Ham, come along for the fun of it.

Believe me, there is nothing like your first QSO. Most of the time that alone will get you hooked on Amateur Radio. When you log that first DX contact with another Ham from Argentina, or Germany, or where ever. The intrigue will capture your imagination and you will be off and running to people and places that you have never known before. Everyone is happy to talk to anyone else on the air. Its so enjoyable and so simple that you will wonder why you hadn't done this before.

Besides the fun of Field Day there is the practical side of it as well. The original intent of Field Day was for Hams to take their equipment out into the country side, set up, use power other than line voltage and make as many contacts as possible in 24 hours. This is good practice for the operators and for the observers as well as even those not actually operating will get an idea of how important it is to be able to communicate with the world via radio. These skills learned this way are the key to being able to create a communication link in times of trouble, such as tornados, thunder storms, floods or any other natural or man made disaster. When all other forms of communication fails because of damaged infrastructures, Amateur Radio is there ready to go.

So you see there is an important reason for Field Day as well. The more complicated our world becomes, the more there is a need for Amateur Radio. Come on out and join the fun, meet new people, on the air and in person. You will soon find that there isn't much difference between people from all over the world. They are all part of the brotherhood of Hams.

Is the internet, millennials or FT-8 killing ham radio?

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

Amateur radio bloggers love to write about the demise of amateur radio. To wit, we have:

K0NR's Is the Internet destroying amateur radio? (<http://www.k0nr.com/wordpress/2017/11/internet-destroying-amateur-radio/>)

N0SSC's Millennials are killing ham radio (<http://n0ssc.com/posts/583-millennials-are-killing-ham-radio>)

PE4BAS' Is FT-8 damaging amateur radio? (<https://pe4bas.blogspot.com/2018/04/is-ft8-damaging-hamradio.html>)

NZ0T's Did Joe Taylor K1JT Destroy Amateur Radio? (<http://www.ei5di.com/jt.html>)

Of course, none of these posts are really saying that the internet, millennials, or FT-8 has killed amateur radio. What they are saying is that all of these are changing amateur radio as we know it. Well, duh, the way we live our lives changes every day. Why should amateur radio be any different?

For example, Bob, K0NR, discusses how the operation of remote stations is changing the game of DX. Can you really claim that you worked a DX station if you rented time on a super station? I've written about that topic, too (<https://www.kb6nu.com/dx-advisory-committee-wants-to-put-the-screws-to-remote-operation/>).

There has also been much written about how FT8 is changing the amateur radio game. One blog post (<https://ve7sl.blogspot.com/2017/10/160m-ft8-end-of-era.html>), talking about the effect of FT8 on 160m operation, even goes so far to say that this is the "end of an era." On DX World, the results of the poll, "FT8 – Damaging to Amateur Radio?" (<https://dx-world.net/yes-or-no-a-poll-on-ft8/>) show more than half of the respondents think that FT8 is damaging amateur radio.

I specifically used the word "game" in the previous two paragraphs because that's exactly what's changing. The physics of amateur radio certainly isn't changing. Our transmitters are still generating electromagnetic waves like they have been for decades, and on the HF bands, anyway, those radio waves are bouncing off the ionosphere just as they have been for more than the past 100 years.

What's changing is the human component. By that I mean what's changing is how we think people should participate in the hobby. The hams that are complaining that the internet or millennials or FT8 is killing amateur radio are really just complaining that people aren't participating in amateur radio the way they want them to participate.

Here's where we talk about millennials. In his blog post, Sterling, N0SSC, suggests that setting up remote stations is one way to engage young people. He writes, "I believe that remote operating, and other internet-assisted means of ham radio operation, are critical to youth engagement."

He's also big on an idea he calls "ham radio hackathons." He writes,

"A hackathon isn't a coding competition. It's explained well in this Medium article (<https://medium.com/hackathons-anonymous/wtf-is-a-hackathon-92668579601>). It goes even further than that, not limited to coders and engineers, but open to thinkers, doers, philosophers, system engineers, math people, teachers, students, artists, stakeholders...anyone with an interest in **solving a problem with technology.**"

I support both of these ideas, but I think that millennials (and, to be fair, it isn't just millennials we're talking about here, but any newcomers to the hobby) need to step up and get these things going. I don't think it's my job to try to get kids interested in amateur radio. I don't even know if that's really possible. What I can do, however, is be there to encourage and support kids (and anyone else that expresses a sincere interest in amateur radio).

For example, I'm not sure how fruitful it would be to set up my station to be remotely operable and then saying to some kids, "Hey, come and operate my station." What I think would be more fruitful is to say to a kid, "Hey, come help me set up my remote control station, so that we both can use it." Then, it turns into a learning situation, and we both gain from the exercise.

The same kind of thing has to happen with ham radio hackathons. The motivation has to come from the ground up, not the top down. I do hope that this idea gets off the ground, though, and I'm standing by, ready to support this effort however I can.

I think that millennials (I'm really getting tired of that term, by the way) need to grab the bull by the horns and take amateur radio in the direction they want it to go. Feel free to kill amateur radio as we know it. Make it better!

When he's not trying to figure out how to save amateur radio, Dan builds stuff, blogs about amateur radio at KB6NU.Com, teaches amateur radio classes, and operates CW on the HF bands. Look for him on 30m, 40m, and 80m. You can email him about what you think is killing amateur radio at cwgeek@kb6nu.com.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

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June 3...Sunday Night net on 146.970 repeater at 8 PM. Net control is Mark, kb9ofk.

June 5...Program Night, Bill, ke9xq on Raspberry Pi and Arduino.

June 9...RARC Picnic, Rowe Park shelter#2. See meeting minutes for more detail.

June 10...Sunday Night net on the 146.970 repeater at 8 PM. Net control is Carl, kc9hds.

June 17...Sunday Night net on the 146.970 repeater at 8 PM. Net control is Rick, kd9gvs.

June 18...Trustee Meeting at King Street Kitchen at 5 PM. Club members are welcome.

June 23-24...ARRL Field Day. RARC will hold it at the Jostad location.

June 24...Sunday Night net on the 146.970 repeater at 8 PM. Net control is Kevin, kc9zgd.

Note: There will not be a Program Night at the Gunderson Clinic in July because Dan Apts, ab9ts will be giving pontoon rides to club members that night.

HOG Heaven... by Carl Thurston, kc9hds

In the past I've heard people refer to "Hog Heaven" without knowing what it really was. It was assumed that it was a metaphor for a very nice place to be, but was often of undetermined origin. At least that is what I thought until recently when I visited "HOG Heaven," also known more correctly as the "Harley Davidson Museum."

I know. I know, this isn't about Amateur Radio, but it is about ham or rather HOG, so I feel that it might be somewhat appropriate. I must confess that I haven't thought much about motorcycles in many many years, but my visit to HOG Heaven was part of a bus trip that my XYL and I went on recently to Milwaukee that included a visit to the Milwaukee Art Museum where in addition to seeing a lot of art on the walls and in the various alcoves, we watched as the wings of Calatrava were opened on top of the museum. That was quite a spectacle by itself. Then we toured the famous 3rd Ward area with its many landmarks featuring a myriad of shops, stores and restaurants. Had lunch at the famous Mader's German Restaurant, and went on to the Milwaukee City Market that is home to many small individual stalls where you can buy all sorts of foods, candies, and other assorted items. Our last stop was at the Harley Davidson Factory and Museum. We didn't have enough time to tour the factory itself, but the 45 minutes that we had to tour the museum was time well spent indeed. Even if you have little or no interest in motor cycles, once you are there you can't help but marvel at the place.

I must confess that I do have a soft spot for museums of any kind, having once been the Director of a small one locally some years ago. It gave me an appreciation for what it takes to procure, archive and create displays that are both interesting to the eye and informative to the mind. The Harley Davidson Museum filled both of those goals and then some. The founders of Harley Davidson, in addition to being mechanical geniuses were far sighted, as they kept one of every model that they ever built in a collection where they have been preserved in pristine condition there and are on display today. Including the various models made for military use during World War I and II as well as the Korean War and even Viet Nam War and beyond. There where many different delivery type 3 wheeled motorcycles that were used for everything from delivering groceries to the US Mail, as well as models made for the Police force.

A complete array of their products other than motorcycles are also on exhibit there. They made and marketed a lot of other things relating to motorcycles and other sporting interests that they procured to gain knowledge in technologies that were needed to further development of their motorcycles. One example of this was a fiber glass boat company that they bought to better understand fabricating fiber glass components for their bikes. They also paid tribute to the employees who saved the company from bankruptcy in the 1980s when AMF nearly ran the company into the ground. Those 13 individuals who, each came up with a million dollars to buy and rebuild Harley Davidson into the vibrant company that it is today.

It all started in a little 10 X 15 foot shed, that is still on the premise. That shed has been designated as a National Treasure and is retained in its original condition, and can not be changed in any way, thus preserving its historical significance for all to see.

When you see the Harley Davidson Museum, you will marvel at its design, size, and completeness. It would be hard to imagine a more perfect place for such a collection. Even if you don't care much for motorcycles, if you appreciate fine machines, well displayed in a friendly environment, by knowledgeable guides, you will love HOG Heaven. By the way HOG stands for Harley Owners Group and it is their stock exchange ID as well.

RIVERLAND AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Monday May 21st , 2018 Executive Meeting

MINUTES

Call to order: 1709 hrs.

Members Present : Kevin Holcomb KC9ZGD, Dan Abts AB9TS, Carl Thurston KC9HDS, Rick Kolter KD9GVS, Bill Wood KE9XQ

Approval of Minutes: April meeting minutes approved without comment.

Treasurer's Report: Not available at this time.

Committee Reports:

Picnic update: June 9th Rowe Park Shelter #2, we have the shelter from 0900-2100. Plan to show up for 5:00 dinner time, but everyone is welcome to come earlier. Steaks and beverages will be provided, bring a dish to pass. Will set up a couple Club operating positions to have available during the day for anyone that wants to utilize them.

Carl has acquired a raffle license for the Club. We will be able to sell raffle tickets at future events.

Carl has mailed out the cards with donations to the Jostad's and to Bob S.

Field Day update: Several have signed up to help with tasks throughout the weekend. May still need a few more as time gets closer. Will finalize plans by next regular monthly meeting in June.

Old Business:

New Business:

Carl presented a couple ideas for new equipment purchase for the Club. One is a triplexer set up to use at Field Day for using three radios connected to one antenna. The other is a multi-band "mystery" antenna for 6-160M. It was decided to go ahead and purchase the antenna now, and hold off on the triplexer.

Kevin also suggested the Club purchase a 2M/70CM base station style antenna for future events, that is portable enough to be set up where needed.

Carl also reports that Mitch Schultz offered to give a presentation for the November regular meeting, a Christmas related "mystery" presentation. We will shuffle the schedule as needed and Carl will confirm with him.

Kevin summarized a letter from Van, WA9FIO re. the status of the WXOW tower work. They will move the 146.970 repeater antenna from the east side of tower more to the west side. The thought is this will be OK as it will give better coverage to the west. The existing feedline appears in good shape. Cost for this work will be negligible, if any at all.

Dan, AB9TS has retrieved the Club photo album, that is chock full of historical photos. It was decided to scan all photo album pages and send to a flash drive or CD. Kevin will work on that and see how it goes.

Access to our current meeting place at Gundersen has new security measures in place, namely a new set of locked doors. Kevin will call the Clinic to discuss the issue.

Carl will look into using the Onalaska American Legion for future Club meetings and possibly a new venue for the Swap Fest.

Motion to Adjourn : 1838 hrs