



Hamgram

Newsletter of the Winona Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

-- When All Else Fails...AMATEUR RADIO --

August 2014

www.w0ne.org

August Program - August 21

WHAT: August Club Program: Here is a line-up of topics for Thursday's program: (1. KF0Q will lead discussion regarding operating activities—particularly the upcoming VHF contest, (2. K0ZYV will poll attendees regarding what the club may wish to do in memory of Steve Boller, N0NO, silent key and son of George Boller, (3. show / tell demonstrations—bring anything interesting for the group, and (4. demonstration of the Raspberry Pi Model B+ credit card sized computer which is now available for \$35. The Model B+ features 40 pins of general purpose I/O making it deal for hobby projects, along with 4 USB ports, a HDMI video connector, Ethernet port, and a micro-SD card for the operating system/application software.



There will be a social period after the program. We hope to see everyone there.

DATE & Time: Thursday, August 21, 2014 -- 7:00 PM

WHO: All amateur radio operators and other interested persons are encouraged to attend.

WHERE: Conference Room B, Winona County Office Building, 202 West 3rd Street, Winona, MN. Doors will be unlocked from 6:45 to 7:15 PM. If you are late, please try the 146.835 repeater to have someone let you in.

Upcoming WARC Activities

Sep 14-15 - ARRL September VHF Contest

Oct 18 - JOTA 2014

***Oct ?? - Trempealeau Special Event with RARC
(date to be confirmed)***



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Riverland ARC Swap Fest a Success

Greg Miller, KA9FOZ and President of the Riverland ARC, reported that the August 9 swap fest was a success. The new location at the Onalaska Omni Center worked well. Attendance was very good. The Riverland club is looking forward to another good fest in 2015!

Earl, WA0ELW, offering connectors and treasures.



Rum Punch and 5 Watts

Radio in paradise is QRP 'holiday style'

By Bob, KC9IWE

When the big boys have a DXpedition they fundraise for months, hire a ship, load shipping containers with tons of gear and then brave storm seas to get to some battered south seas atoll. Me? I let my wife save and budget, make airline reservations, find a villa and then I tuck a little gear into my carry-on and off I go.

In my case the "DXpedition" was a family vacation to St. John in the U.S. Virgin Islands. We had gone there before and loved its picture-postcard looks, pure white beaches, crystal clear water, shady palm trees and rum punch. Thanks to millionaire Laurence Rockefeller, he bought the island and then gave it to the U.S. Park Service. Visitors enjoy a relatively uncrowded and undeveloped piece of paradise.

There were few plans except, of course, for some snorkeling, sipping rum punch and a little radio operation. The rest of the family did not do the latter.

This was a very light weight venture with the radio and gear weighing in, at most, at about four pounds. Small as it was, the TSA did pull my bag aside and swabbed the radio for explosives. On the return home they again pulled the bag aside, swabbed the radio but found my (expensive and valuable) Leatherman tool, left mistakenly in the bag. I no longer have that tool. Look for it on the TSA auction site.



Operations were, as they say, "holiday style" meaning the radio went on about the time the family went to bed and all other activities ceased. I hooked a 20m Endfed wire over a tree branch and sat on the deck outside my bedroom. Though I

could have used the radio's batteries I selected my tiny power supply and happily sat in the dark hunting for stations. It was not easy, not because of my low power out (five watts) but because of the high noise "in." Our villa's illumination was compact fluorescent bulbs (CFL) which seemed to be very, very noisy. In fact when I turned off the bulb lighting the deck the radio when from wall-to-wall static to jam-packed stations!

When you operate QRP it usually is pretty useless to call "CQ" especially when you operate phone so I listened for strong stations and tried to snag them. My call sign is, well, pretty dumb sounding; when it's tagged with the somewhat exotic "portable kilo papa two" (Virgin Islands) it's a magnet. I rarely uttered that twice when the other guy would come back sounding really interested. I would hear them doing a string of calls and signal reports but when they'd get to me and my Caribbean call they would chat. It was great! Working very casually I talked with Hams in Finland, Russia, Germany, Canary Islands and several US States working 5w SSB. Most of the time I got good, solid, honest signal reports too. The radio was apparently



good enough that some operators expressed surprise when I said I was QRP.

One afternoon of operating at a hotel in Charlotte-Amalie, St Thomas, had much less noise. The hotel was next to a bay so maybe there was the "saltwater amplifier" effect which was not found 750' above the water at the villa.

The principal disappointment was a new 10-20-40m endfed that would not tune. Not even close despite the radio's exceptional tuner.

Once at home, even with prompting from the owner of the antenna maker, LNR Precision, it would not tune. They are sending me a new one, an example of their really great customer service.

Equipment

Elecraft KX3, mic, power cord, Sony headphones, 20' coax, appropriate connectors, Gamma HPS-1a Hybrid power supply, LNR Precision 20m endfed, LNR Precision 10-20-40m Trail Friendly endfed, pencil, paper and HamLog on the iPhone. Oh....a length of parachute cord to pull the antenna over a branch.

GOOD JOB ON COLLEGE FOR KIDS



Thanks to Melanie, KD0NTM, and Les, K0BAD, for making the two College for Kids sessions in July go well. The hands-on project for the kids this year was a soldering station kit, and feedback received indicates that the young people liked them very much.

Operating from the WSU gazebo required some creative work on 20-meter vertical antenna design (see photo at right, detail below).

Good job, both of you, and thanks for introducing young people to the excitement of ham radio.



Minutes of the August 11 WARC Executive Board Meeting wee not available at the time of the release of the August Hamgram and will be published next month. Below are the minutes of the July board meeting.

**Minutes of WARC Board Meeting held on Monday July 7, 2014 at Darrel Kruger Library, WSU Winona.
Present: Bob (KC9IWE), John (K2OPT), Syed (AC0VA), Paul (K0ZYV), Matt (KF0Q), Les (K0BAD), Dan (WK0W), Lance (WB0YZU), Erik (WB0NIU)
Call to order by Paul at around 7 PM.**

Agenda
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Call to order2. Treasurer Report3. Minutes of Last Meeting4. Matt's request for funds for filters5. Committee Reports6. Other <p>Paul called the Meeting around 7 PM.</p>
Minutes of Last meeting
Minutes of Last Meeting were approved with one change. Matt had a correction on a GOTA statement. Change was recorded and Syed will correct the minutes.
Treasurer Reports
Treasurer Report was next. Matt mentioned the report he submitted did not include field day expenses. Paul asked if Matt had an estimate of the expenses of field day. Matt answered approximately \$108.00. Board members thanked Matt for the successful Field Day Operations. Paul mentioned he really missed field day actions as he was travelling.
Matt's request for Funds for filter
Matt's request for funds for filters was next. Matt explained what type and frequency band filters are needed. Erik asked if

any item other than filter is needed. Matt answered yes there are also few more items. Matt asked for foot switch and other items. Erik asked if anything is needed on microphones, so visitors can also hear the interactions. Matt mentioned we should experiment little more on microphones. Les mentioned part of the donated equipment included station speakers with two inputs and was not sure if they had parallel input. Matt mentioned we should experiment during the upcoming GRSF festival to find out what works and what is needed. Les mentioned he has some equipment ready for college for kids program. Board approved purchase of filters. Les mentioned he will donate foot switch to the club.

Committee Reports:

Next were committee reports. Dan elaborated on the report he submitted. Tower Usage Agreement is still in county attorney office. Tower is waiting for electrician and power company. Nine area hams participated in Wabasha Nuclear drill. SKYWARN activation is working well. Paul even got the warning in California.

Erik and Dan working on County D710 radio. Board approved interface cable purchase for the radio. Erik explained issue with APRS at the county computer and work on HP Tough Book computer to interface with D710 APRS, fldigi, and possibly mesh node applications. Purchase of Reflective Vest is on-hold for now.

Erik will investigate cable requirement for interface cable. Dan mentioned Board did previously approved D710, so buying some accessories for the D710 should be not be a problem.

Erik also explained the working of APRS IS and how APRS maps works there. Erik will work with USB signaling and first try his own cables. Dan mentioned some issue with microphones at EOC. Les mentioned deviations could be an issue. Les will help with determining deviations and work on the issue. Matt mentioned microphone gaskets are sometimes an issue.

Les mentioned he is still waiting for Manuals of the repeater. He will contact the appropriate person again.

Erik and John went to Repeater site and found Antenna working fine. Erik swapped out the radio and everything started working. Erik has the radio and will troubleshoot the radio. Les will help Erik on this.

Erik mentioned he would like to work on the computers at EOC during SKYWARN and Dan mentioned it might as well happen tonight.

Les updated Board on Mesh Network and his (and also of Erik's) communication with Mesh Network founder. They have been chatting and Les inquired about more possibilities with Mesh network. There is new software out for Mesh and it has interesting features. Les mentioned everybody has to move to new version as there is incompatibility with old version and

new version. Les has been working on Mesh and shared how he found out a way to connect to GRSF site (through Google) and his home. Les will orient his Antenna so he can connect to GRSF event. Dan has no use of Mesh network and he is willing to part with this hardware for anyone willing.

Board liked the current meeting room at the WSU library. Paul mentioned he is not sure how busy the rooms are during regular class hours. Matt mentioned room can be available at Willowbrooks near his home.

Erik mentioned he will explore Goodview Water Tower once mesh network issues has been worked out. Erik has good connections in Goodview.

Les mentioned Club should organize a fundraiser with part of the raised money be donated to club.

At this time a SKYWARN alert was issued for the county and meeting was adjourned for members to attend to the alert and co-ordinate spotters.

The Winona Amateur Radio Club, Inc.
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Executive Board

President: Paul Schumacher, KØZYV Vice President: Lance Tagliapietra, KBØYJU
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Dues: \$25.00 per calendar year per license holder.
\$30.00 per calendar year for all licensed members of the same family within the same household.
Dues should be sent to: Matt Burt, Treasurer, P.O. Box 1264, Winona, MN 55987

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Board meetings are announced in advance (WEPNet).

Monthly club programs are held on the third Thursday. The submission deadline for the **Hamgram** is Wednesday of the week *prior* to that of the club programs.

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