

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

What Can We Do?	1
President's Comments	2
Wisconsin QSO Party	3
20m Fire	4
Events & Buy, Sell, Trade,	5
Club Info	6

What Can We Do?

Well, well, well. As things keep getting more and more dire for a lot of organizations due to recent happenings. It seems that the RARC has weathered that storm. When other groups and clubs have seen a marked down turn in membership it is beginning to look like this is not going to be the case with our organization. Oh yes, it may be a bit too soon to be counting things before they hatch, but it does look like we have turned a corner with recruitment. I know that it hasn't been a great flood of new members, but when one organization that has been going for as long as I can remember, is going begging for one new member to fulfill its charter requirements, other clubs who have had to rethink their requirements for membership, and many churches that have dwindling congregations, it is nice to see that the RARC has been gaining a few new members in spite of what is happening with others.

I'm not sure why this is happening, I don't think that we have found the magic tonic to cure this malady, but it is rather refreshing to see progress in this regard. True, we have only gained a few new members this year, but we still have a lot of the year left to expand on that number. If all of our active members could bring a long a friend to one of our meetings, perhaps we will see more people joining our group.

Continued on page 5

UPCOMING Events for April 2023

- ♦ **Saturday** morning Rag chew, weekly on the 146.970 repeater, 8:00-9:00 AM.
 - ♦ **April 4...**Program Night: Antenna presentation by Bob Heil.
 - ♦ **April 18...**Trustee Meeting, Time: 5:30 PM, Fork and Fable. All members are welcome to attend. **Note the change in date.**
- RARC Sunday Night 2Meter Net is held on the 146.970 repeater at 8:00 PM. Net control operators for March are:
- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| April 2, 2023 | David kd9epn |
| April 9, 2023 | Rick kd9gvs |
| April 16, 2023 | Wayne k0wlo |
| April 23, 2023 | Shawn kd9kgq |
| April 30, 2023 | Mark kb9ofk |

PRESIDENTS COMMENTS

Hello, Everybody,

Welcome to Spring!

I am writing this about a week after the Wisconsin QSO Party, and the St. Patrick's Day parade. The club participated in both events. I did as well, and enjoyed both events.

The last meeting (March) was a good one for folks who attended, but not so good for those attending via Zoom. We had activities that consisted of soldering and cutting wire to build antennas for the club to use. May's meeting will be similar when we finish building the antennas and have them ready for Field Day. The April meeting will be very different, though. It will be one where those of us attending live will watch on Zoom, too. We have Bob Heil (K9EID) scheduled to speak to us about antennas. He gave a very entertaining presentation last year about ham radio and it's affect on his life. We are fortunate to have such a resource available, so I hope you are able to join us either in person or on Zoom.

There are more activities coming into place for the club. We have Field Day, of course, and the club picnic a couple of weeks before that. There are more events coming up later in the year, too. I hope those of you who may not get on the HF bands very often get out to take part in these activities. The DX is becoming more and more reachable as the sunspot cycle continues to grow. We were able to get

some good contacts into the log during the WI QSO Party. I think that was the first Greek station I've heard. Those experiences never get old, and you cannot have them unless you show up. As they say in baseball, "If you want to hit a dinger, you gotta be a swinger!"

There has been discussion about making a monthly routine of operating from a City park on a Saturday each month. There will be a conversation with the Parks Department about that and if they have preferences regarding which ones we might use. We don't want to show up hoping to operate when there is another event going on at a park when we might be in the way of their reservation. We should also consider how to present ourselves in such a way as to be approachable to people passing by who might be interested in finding out what we are doing.

This is a good time to be involved in the club. If you are on the fence wondering if you should get involved, jump off that fence and jump into an activity. You'll find a number of other interested hams to share the activity. That makes whatever you're doing that much more enjoyable.

Tnx es 73,

Drew Neve

AB9NE



P.S. The April Trustee meeting is moved to the 18th

Wisconsin QSO party

The Wisconsin QSO Party was held on March 12 from 1 to 8 PM local time. This year marked the first time in several years that the Riverland Amateur Radio Club entered a station. There is a 500 point bonus for every county that an entry operates from outside of its home county, so effort was made to operate from Vernon County. The site chosen was Stoddard Village Park.

There had been no snow on the ground just a few days before, but a couple of days with snow-fall left about four inches on the ground. We discovered, upon arriving, that the paved areas were mostly cleared of snow, but the grassy areas were blanketed. The temperature was in the lower thirties (Fahrenheit) with a modest breeze.

Drew Neve, AB9NE, Dan Abts, AB9TS, and Rick Kolter, KD9GVS, participated. All three were at the site to start the contest.

Drew brought a pop-up fishing shelter, a folding table and two chairs and the antenna system along with the club's FT-857D transceiver and Honda generator. The antenna system was a linked dipole with sections for 20, 40 and 75



meter bands. It was mounted atop a 33 foot telescoping fiberglass pole. Drew devised a system to hold the mast to the side of his car using a PVC collar.

The operation of the contest started on the 15 meter band (it resonates on the 40 meter section of the antenna as an odd-numbered harmonic). There were a few contacts made on 15, but things heated up a bit when we went to 20.

The three of us took turns operating and logging. We switched to 40 meters when 20 slowed up, and then to 75. We operated with the antenna at the bottom of the top section of the fully extended mast, so about 30' height until the switch to 75 meters. We lowered the mast to put the antenna at about 15' to take advantage of NVIS operations within Wisconsin. That tactic seemed to work well as we got good signal reports from around Wisconsin. We finished the contest with 307 contacts and 86 multipliers. That included 48 Wisconsin counties and 38 states, Canadian provinces and 2 DX entities (Greece and the Slovak Republic). The low power multiplier of 1.5, the addition of the Vernon County location, and the QSO with the W9FK bonus station gave us a total of 40203 points.



Wisconsin QSO Party

We entered the Multi-op Mobile category. I hope any of you who also worked will note affiliation with Riverland Amateur Radio Club when you submit your logs. We are awarded cumulative club points as well as your individual points.

It was a very enjoyable time for all three of us. That pop-up fishing shack is good for two people, but it gets crowded after that. We'll hopefully have more folks to join in future years, and we'll have to identify a way to hold more people when we are faced with that challenge.

Drew
AB9NE



20 Meter Fire

The Midwest Regional FCC Office in Chicago issued a press release on Monday, March 20, 2023 announcing the agency's response to the fire that erupted on the 14 MHz amateur band and threatened nearby commercial shortwave frequencies that escaped with only minor smoke damage.

The fire is thought to have started mid-afternoon by excessive simultaneous FT8 transmissions as the entire bandwidth was active in two successive 15-second transmission turns. Conditions were considered incendiary with manipulation by Russian hams participating in Saturday's Russian DX Contest and the proliferation of high-powered amplifiers that frequent that event. The Russians have been known to encourage the eddy currents that the rest of the world consider poor form. They seek to increase hysteresis and use it to their advantage.

Cool weather and the recent rain helped to keep the blaze under control while the phone portion of the band provided a buffer against the excessive spread that can occur through tropospheric ducting. It is par-

ticularly a concern during times of increasing sunspot activity. The only State QSO Party scheduled for the weekend was Virginia, so the cooler Atlantic currents help to calm the blaze.

The lingering flames were under control by the time the weekly Slow Speed Trials (SST) ran Sunday evening. The slower speeds act as a retardant. The recent switch to daylight time brought that contest an hour earlier, which help officials to shower excessive impedance on the last remnant smoulders.

An inquiry is thought to be already scheduled for later in the week, assuming no further events worsen conditions.

The band has been safely encircled with Henrys, Farads, and Ohms to act as buffers and keep conditions moderate.



What Can We Do? (Continued)

After all, we do have an Executive Board that is doing it's best to move forward in new directions to spread the word to the public at large. There are a number of new initiatives that are in the works that could be positive things for recruitment. There are a lot of new events that are in the planning and building stages that could result in more people finding out about what we do and what we can do for our community. It looks like our membership is working in the right direction to see these things come to pass.

With the new emphasis on more events that involve hands on features and projects, we have the potential to grow even more. We have the right blend of experienced members and new ones with new ideas that will create an environment where a lot of good things come to pass.

With the new ideas that are in the works progress will to happen. I know that this is not an easy thing to accomplish, but then easy things are seldom worth doing in the first place. As Hams, we are committed to the furtherance of our hobby and to help out our community where ever needed. It isn't always obvious what we can do to make that happen, but if we continue to move forward with what we know how to do, I believe that we will succeed.

Many of our members have grown tired of the continual demands that they see are needed to achieve such gains. There are many of our older members who have worked hard in the past that feel that the ball should be handed off to others who have more to give to this process. It is only right for this to happen, as many of those who have put a lot of effort into the betterment of our club and our hobby are at a point where their efforts, though great in the past, have changed in time to where their efforts are more useful in inspiring new members with their wit and wisdom than in their physical efforts.

Ours is a very good and noble hobby that does have its uses in support of our communities. We aren't always wanted or needed in times of need, but we still are there when the need does arise, and we can help. Communication is our main talent and asset, but it is not all that we can do. We can teach and inspire new members and see that they too can be successful in this endeavor. Bring a friend along to one of our meetings so that they can see what we do and why. In the meantime always remember: "We are Hams, and we can transmit, if we have to, I guess!"

73 Carl



- *Send your Amateur related classified ad(s) to Scott, NLT noon the 26th of each month to kb3mkd@arrl.net*
- *Please send some classifieds*
- *We need some classifieds*

BUY-SELL-TRADE-ISO

CLUB INFORMATION



Riverland Amateur Radio Club

PO Box 621

Onalaska, WI 54650

- * The Key is published monthly and e-mailed to members and friends of the Riverland Amateur Radio Club by the 28th of each month. The newsletter focuses on news, announcements and activities of the Riverland Amateur Radio Club. It may also consists of news and information of interest to the Amateur Radio community as a whole. Guest editorials and articles related to Amateur Radio are welcome. Contribution articles should be submitted NLT the 26th of the month. Address any correspondence or anything that should be included in the newsletter to: Scott Cross KB3MKD@arrl.net
- * The Riverland Amateur Radio Club maintains a website at rarc.qth.com. More information about the club can be found there as well as past copies of The Key.
- * RARC also maintains a Facebook page where members add information and share there Amateur Radio adventures. Please friend us at Riverland Amateur Radio Club—RARC.
- * RARC maintains a repeater that is located on the WXOW television tower above La Cresent, MN. 146.970 pl 131.8.
- * RARC holds a weekly 2meter net on Sundays at 8:00 PM on the 146.970 repeater.
- * Trustee Meeting is held the 3rd Monday of the month at Perkins Restaurant, 9428 State Road 16, Onalaska, WI 54650 at 5:30 PM, all club members are welcome.
- * Program evening is held the 1st Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM, elmer session at 6:30 PM at Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 401 West Avenue in La Crosse.
- * Weekly "Breakfast Club" Ragchew on the 146.970 repeater on Saturday's from 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM. Stop by to say "hi".

Below are listed your RARC 2022 Board of Trustees and contact information.

President.....Drew Neve, AB9NE Email...ab9ne@yahoo.com

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Trustee.....David Peters, KB9EWG Email...kb9ewg@gmail.com

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