

THE KEY

The Riverland Amateur Radio Club is a Special Service Club affiliated with the American Radio Relay League

SwapFest

8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Sat. Aug. 8

Omni Center,

255 Rider's Club Rd., Onalaska.

Talk in 146.97 PL 131.8



Time to shift some of that stuff

By Carl Thurston, KC9HDS

We are rapidly approaching the day of the annual Swap Fest, so thought must be given to what to contribute to the event. Any Ham that has been in this hobby for a significant amount of time has accumulated a fair amount of stuff, and as time goes by, much of that stuff is no longer of any use, so it is time to sort out the nuggets from the dust and convey those dusty old items of little further use to the Swap Fest where some

one else will find that these treasures are exactly what is needed for their shack.

You might say that you don't have anything that you can part with. You might say that indeed, but realistically, everyone, must have at least box full of items that are not being used and that one could easily part with.

As many of you know, this Ham has so much stuff that an entire Swap Fest could be held with the talus cone of items piled haphazardly in various places in and around the QTH. It has been several years that this Ham has been endeavoring to rid most of these fine examples of modern technological wonders. Since there is so much it would only be fair to disseminate a quantity of these valued devices to other

Hams. Anyway, it looks like there will be a good crop of stuff from the QTH that will find its way to the Swap Fest. Don't let this stand in your way of digging into your pile of goodies and also contributing.

This year's SwapFest will again be held from 8 a.m. - 1 p.m., Sat. Aug. 8, at the Omni Center, 255 Rider's Club Rd., Onalaska. There will be talk in on 146.97 PL 131.8. Lots of tables are available at 10 a table with 5 per person entry fee, lots of door prizes, VE testing, ARRL card checking for you DXers out there, and of course refreshments will be available. The event is handicap accessible and there will be ample room for tailgaters. A BYO brown bag lunch is planned following the event for those interested.

So come and bring lots of stuff to sell, buy lots of stuff to take home, and meet with friends old and new for a very enjoyable day. Remember, the more you bring, the more there is to sell, the more there is to sell, the bigger the Swap Fest, the bigger the Swap Fest, the more likely it will grow and be even more interesting and fun in the years to come.

Our Swap Fest is designed with growth in mind. Come and be a part of that growth.

Riverland Amateur Radio Club

P.O. Box 621

Onalaska, Wis. 54650

Repeater

146.970 PL 131.8

RARC Net

8 p.m. Sundays on the 146.970 repeater.

Club meetings

7 p.m., Tuesday, meeting room I, lower level, Gundersen/Lutheran La Crosse. **Elmer session** 6 p.m.

RARC Web page

<http://rarc.qth.com/>

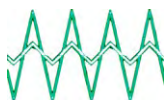




Art Osborn, W0JDC photo

Club President Greg Miller, KA9FOZ, is always cooking up something.

President's Frequency Modulation



By Greg Miller, KA9FOZ

It's Swap Fest time again. It's hard to believe it has been a year since we moved the Swap Fest to the Omni Center to accommodate the growth we had been seeing in attendance at the Community Center.

Last year proved that it was the right move to make. The hall filled up fast with sellers and buyers. It was considered a success and I see no reason to not expect the same this year. Improvements have been put into place and I look forward to seeing how the things develop this year.

Maybe this year I won't spend so much money, although I am sure I will.

Look forward to a card checker for all you awards chasers. I started Worked All States years ago but let it go by the wayside. Maybe I should dust off those cards. Also look forward to more vendors as we are receiving commitments from last year's as well as some new ones.

If you need more supplies in your shack now would be the time to get them. As always there are door prizes and this year we opted to give away an Icom dual band HT along with other goodies.

One of the things I remember most from last year's swap fest was the camaraderie among the hams. I noticed some hams meeting people they had not seen in years and that struck up renewed friendships. What a great side result of the swap fest! In my eyes if this type of thing happens again the swap fest is a success. I look forward to this type of fun and more.

Remember the August meeting Tuesday, Aug. 4.

See you at the swap fest.

Calendar



Sat. Aug 1

♦ North American QSO Party, CW

Tue. Aug 4

♦ Riverland Amateur Radio Club meeting, 7 p.m., meeting room 1, lower level, Gundersen/Lutheran La Crosse. Elmer session 6 p.m.

Sun. Aug 8

♦ Riverland Amateur Radio Club Swapfest, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m., Omni Center, 255 Riders Club Rd., Onalaska.
♦ Racine Megacycle FreeFest 2015, Sturtevant, www.w9gudu.org

Sat. Aug 15

♦ North American QSO Party, SSB
♦ International Lighthouse Lightship Weekend, <http://www.illw.net/>

Sat. Aug 29

♦ Circus City Swapfest, Badger Steam and Gas Engine Club Property, Baraboo, <http://yellowwithunder.org>
♦ United States Islands Program QSO Party, www.usislands.org/

There will be license testing at the club's Swap Fest, 9 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 8. Register at least five days in advance with Roger Reader, KA9BKK, 608 783-0723 or readers@centurytel.net.

Riverland Amateur Radio Club

P.O. Box 621
Onalaska, Wis. 54650



President Greg Miller, KA9FOZ
Vice president..... Van Elston, WA9FIO
Treasurer..... Tom O'Brien, WB9BJQ
Secretary..... Carl Thurston, KC9HDS
Newsletter editor.. Bob Seaquist, W9LSE

Address correspondence regarding the club to Tom O'Brien, WB9BJQ, w9bjq@charter.net

This newsletter is sent by e mail to current and past RARC members and others. If you wish to change your address or subscription, e mail W9LSE@arrl.net



The Good Old Days

By Brian Moran, N9ADG

As is inevitable when hams gather and chat about all the important things that we need to chat about, there's nostalgia for the 'good old days.' That period for many seems to be the "honeymoon period" of about the time they received their license, to some other time between then and now. It's rare that I hear 'today' being included in the good old days. It's great to have the wonderful memories of our Elmers, the thrill of working our first contacts, our first rigs, but it's not taking away from any of those recollections to also appreciate and take advantage of the Amateur Radio landscape of today.

From my Amateur Radio Contesting viewpoint, today we have transceivers that have never been better at taking the smallest perturbations in the ether, and turning it into audio. The materials that we are able to employ for our stations can literally be products of the space age. We can get almost any part or material to our doorstep in a few short days if necessary. We can have the experience of 1927 on 160 meters using CW, and then also recover signals we can't even hear reflected from the surface of the moon. With the same gear. When we submit our scores to the 'crowdsourced' score reporting sites (e.g. 3830scores.com), we can likely know the 'unofficial results' of a contest in just a few days.

Through the continuing efforts of organizations like the ARRL, Contest University, WWROF, regional radio and contest clubs, and many others, today's Elmers are being immortalized on the Internet through webinars, videos, and presentations in various formats. We'll have their wisdom to enjoy for a long, long time.

Contest sponsors are evolving to strongly preserve and protect the integrity of the varied entry classes, so that the 'boy and his radio' and 'girl and her radio' and the SOnR A entrants are scored only against their peers. The interval between contest end and contest results is growing ever shorter. The variety and frequency of radio contests continue to increase.

There are challenges, to be sure, including some that we've been facing for a while, such as an aging population, issues of continued recruitment into the hobby, and the public perception of relevance in the face of other communications technologies.

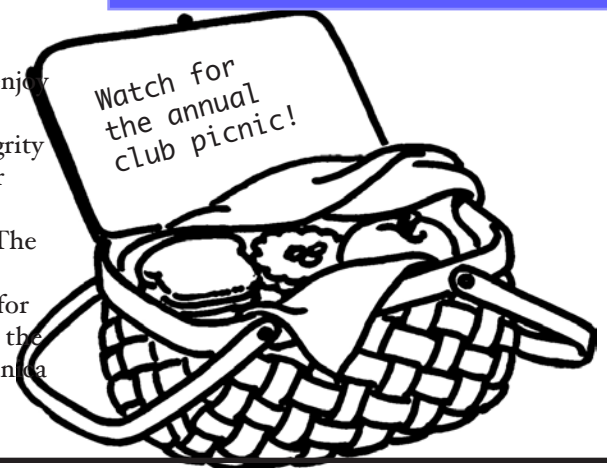
But on balance, it's great to be a ham in 2015!

Earthshaking operation

Cascadia Rising 2016 is a year long earth quake preparedness exercise culminating in a four day simulation of a subduction zone earthquake's effect on the Pacific Northwest in June 2016. The exercise puts the potential of a quake like this in context, relating it to recent and historical seismic events in Asia and other locations. Certainly there would be an Amateur Radio component of the disaster response, with impacts far beyond the immediately devastated area. VHF repeaters in the affected areas would likely be either inoperative or unable to communicate with distant regional coordination centers, and communications traffic would likely be passed via HF voice and digital modes. If you're interested in participating in the four days in June you should contact your local ARRL ARES EC or Mike Chaplin, *mbchaplin43@hotmail.com*

Operating tip

Don't let mobile ham gear become projectiles – make sure your equipment is secure. If you need a removable but robust solution, you might try a hook and loop fastener. According to Rich Stempien, W6RS, who extensively tested a number of brands for a large municipality, Gator Grip was recommended: "Once the two materials were mated you literally had to use a flat blade screw driver to separate them. Needless to say hard mounting is the first choice, but if that's impossible then this is a viable alternative."





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## Island of despair

By Bob Seaquist, W9LSE

There's SOTA, IOTA, POTA and more, the acronyms for outdoor adventure in Amateur Radio. SOTA, probably the best known, is "Summits On The Air," and it has Hams operating portable in mountainous areas. There are awards for activators those who ascend to the summits and chasers who either operate from home, a local hilltop or are even Activators on other summits .

The latest such organization is US Islands On The Air which promotes a system of island collecting for activators and chasers. ARRL's media and public relations manager, Sean Kutzko, KX9X, has participated in it recently documenting his activation in the Florida Keys on YouTube. He made many contacts using his 5w Yaesu FT 817 so, to me, the May 9 US Island One-Day Getaway looked like a great idea.

A little research showed previous activations in the La Crosse area but none in Pettibone Park which is formally Bar on Island so that was my choice. It was close and it has toilets.

I tried to keep the operation simple but stuff kind of added up to a fair bit of gear

in the truck. My rig was an Elecraft KX3 along with the assorted support such as a microphone, headphones, connectors, a couple small lengths of coax and a couple wire antennas that fits in a small camera bag. Though the radio has batteries I brought a 7 Ah gel cell for power.

The easiest antenna to erect was the LNR Precision 10 20 40m Endfedz which hangs from a 33' fiberglass kite pole so it went up first. Lots of static and few signals.

Dang!

After trying to contact the few stations I heard I decided to switch to my old, reliable LNR Precision 20m End fedz. It is similar to the 10 20 40 but it works well most of the time . Lots of static and just a few more signals.

Dang!

Out came the Buddipole. Again the result was to hear lots of static and about the same number of signals I heard on the 20m Endfedz.

Double Dang!

Pettibone Park has a fine Frisbee golf course that came right by my location. Several frisbeers ? stopped to ask what

I was doing and if it was Ham radio. I told them I was operating Ham radio despite the fact I really was not getting any contacts. They seemed pleased to confirm it was, indeed, Ham Radio and I was very pleased to have visitors.

Finally after a lot of dialing around and an awful lot of calling CQ I landed a special event station operating from an airport in South Carolina. The operator was very generous with a good signal report and even chatted some.

That was it.

The United States Islands Awards Program requires 20 contacts in order to "qualify" an island so I'll have to go back and pick up another 19 on another pretty day.

