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THE KEY

ISSUE 6 FOR 2020

JUNE 2020

What's Really Important...By Carl Thurston, KC9HDS

There are many things that the Amateur Radio Community regards as important. The list is fairly long, but it varies from group to group. There is one thing that is paramount in most people's minds, and that is Field Day. Historically, Field Day has been a wide open event. Oh yes, there are the rules from the ARRL to be met, but in general, Field Day has been a time when each club could tailor its activities to the specific needs of the participants. We have been able to customize it to fit our needs, wants, and abilities. In the past there were very few if any issues that weren't able to be modified to suit us.

All of that has changed! With the specter of COVID-19 hanging over our lives today, it is much more difficult to justify the kind of intimate, friendly and communal event that we have become used to. We now need to consider the safety and health of all those involved. A balance needs to be struck between what we would like to accomplish with this, our most social event, and what can be safely done.

Perhaps we need to rethink what is really important for the good of all. Several people have made suggestions as to how we could make this year's Field Day safe, productive and fun. With careful consideration for the required means of maintaining everyone's safety we can make this work. With the proper use of PPEs, social distancing, and deep cleaning procedures everyone should be able to have a good time at Field Day. Alas, it won't be as free and easy as it has been in the past, but then it is doubtful that we will ever

be as free and open as what we have been used to in the past.

We need to ask ourselves, is it more important to continue on with the way that things were done in the past or should we modify our methods to ensure everyone's health, safety, and comfort. It is obvious that we are in a transitional period now. The one thing that you can always depend on is that things will change. Those who can accept change and move on will prosper, those who are in denial of those changes will not. These are the harsh realities of the here and now.

So, what can we do? The need to move forward cautiously is rather obvious. Some will point out that there has been very little negative effect on the local population so far due to this hidden threat, but don't be deceived, in spite of the low impact that this virus has had locally it is still real and can rise up and bite us. We must take this very seriously and be prepared to confront it head on with diligence and patience. Many feel that this is all a hoax of some sort. A lot of people disregard the scientific evidence. Some feel that this will pass just like all of the other viruses in the past. Remember the Spanish Flu of 1918! It did pass but it killed 22 million people before it left. So let's be safe not sorry at this year's Field Day and stick to the rules of healthy distancing and keeping clean. Field Day can still be fun, but it needs to be safe too. 73



Presidents Upper Side Band...By Dan Abts, AB9TS

“Once again, I encourage you to use this time to improve your antennas and get on the air.”

The May monthly RARC meeting was held on the air on the 146.97 repeater. Bill KE9XQ gave a nice program on the wealth of information you can find in the ARRL Handbook. While a number of people say they enjoy the net meetings, it is sometimes hard to do some topics without visual aids. For the June meeting, we will hold it over the air or on WebEx depending on the topic and the presenter. I'm not sure what the program topic will be yet.

The club board meeting for May was held using WebEx. This allowed the seven of us to see and hear each other. It is hard to plan not knowing how bad this virus will get or how long it will last. The MS Walk May 30th has been cancelled. I have been notified that Onalaska Community Days in June has been cancelled. We WILL hold the club picnic on June 13th at the Ball Park Shelter on Quincy Street in Onalaska with a few changes. You need to bring your own food

and beverages. Bring your own lawn chair and mask. Social distancing needs to be practiced and we will try not to use the shelter. If the weather is bad, it will be cancelled. There may be some other rules I didn't think of right now. Look for another article on those in this newsletter. This will be kind of a trial run for Field Day. If people can follow the rules, we will give Field Day a try, otherwise we encourage you to operate from home, mobile or portable and post pictures to the club's Facebook page and tell us how you did. If we can hold Field Day it will be at the Jostad farm north of West Salem same as the last several years. Navigate to N6376 Jostad Road, West Salem, Wisconsin. We will try to share things as little as possible and disinfect in between. We will have a hand washing station. Again, you will need to bring your own food, beverages and lawn chair and practice social distancing. You can bring your own station and antenna to

avoid sharing the club's if you want. This all seems backwards to me. I always enjoyed Field Day for the social aspects and helping new hams learn about radios and antennas and getting involved. Making a lot of contacts was less important. This year those things are being minimized but hopefully we can still hold the event. At this point, we are still planning the Swapfest August 8th at the Onalaska American Legion. There may be special rules for that as well. Stay tuned for more information down the road.

Once again, I encourage you to use this time to improve your antennas and get on the air. Build a directional antenna and an offset attenuator for direction finding. Try to stay home and stay healthy.

Feel free to contact me with comments and suggestions at AB9TS@yahoo.com. 73 de Dan Abts AB9TS



UPCOMING EVENTS FOR JUNE 2020

RARC Sunday Night 2Meter Net is held on the 146.970 repeater at 8:00 PM. Net control operators for June are:

May 31...Shawn, KD9KGQ
 June 7...Carl, KC9HDS
 June 14...Mark, KB9OFK
 June 21...Rick, KD9GVS
 June 28...Kevin, KC9ZGD

June 2...Program Night, we will meet at 7:00 PM on the 146.970 repeater.

June 13...Club Picnic at the Ball Park Shelter, Quincy St. Onalaska, WI.

June 15...Trustee Meeting, details to be worked out.

A NOTE FROM DAVID PETERS, KB9EWG (Club Vice President)

I just signed the club up to Amazon Smile so every time someone who is supporting us makes an eligible purchase the club will receive a 0.5% donation. I have included the Smile info below.

73 DE David KB9EWG

About AmazonSmile

What is AmazonSmile?

AmazonSmile is a simple way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added benefit that Amazon will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. You can choose from over one million organizations to support.

How do I shop at AmazonSmile?

To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You may also want to add a bookmark to smile.amazon.com to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile.

PROJECTS...

Probably over the last 2 months a lot of Ham Radio projects have gotten done due to the stay at home order. Being retired staying at home is not that big of a deal to me. The only change I guess would be the inability to frequent a restaurant occasionally, and not being a person who hibernates in bars, that was not an issue either.

So I thought I would show you a fun little project I tackled over a week-end.

Picture my radios, as shown in picture #1, all backs against the wall with only 2 holes of 3" diameter to run all cables and electrical thru. Tough to get at anything, right?

Solution: Lose the wall.

It started with removing all radios from the shack, then sawing thru the wall the size opening that I wanted. The result is what you see in picture number 2. Easy access to all radios. In picture number 3 you can see where the cables come in from outside and the throw switch witch disconnects all power from the radios. Antennas are disconnected just outside this wall. That's my solution to fowl weather not getting into my radios.

If you have a project that you would like to share, send pictures and a description to K9LEC@outlook.com.

73

Greg, K9LEC



Picture #1



Picture #2



Picture #3

RIVERLAND AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Monday, May 18th, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes

Call to order: 5:41 PM, 2241 UTC

Members Present : via WebX online, Dan AB9TS, Drew AB9NE, David KB9EWG, Shawn KD9KGQ, Rick KD9GVS, Carl KC9HDS, Bill KE9XQ

Approval of Minutes: n/a, April meeting not held

Treasurer's Report: Available upon request from Drew, AB9NE

Officer's Report:

Old Business:

Raffle license renewal - \$25 due by end of June, David motioned to renew, Carl will take care of this.

American Legion room is paid for Swapfest in August, as well as Shelter #1 for picnic June 13th. It was suggested that the Swapfest flyer be modified to detail social distancing practices. David motioned to go ahead with picnic, observing social distancing practices. The ARRL has our Swapfest info on their website. Kermit Carlson, Central Div. Director and Pat Moretti, SM, Wi were e-mailed our Swapfest info. Carl will confirm with Am. Legion regarding the Swapfest on May 28th when they open. He has confirmed the park shelter for the picnic, although we will likely be outside. Picnic attendees will have to bring their own food & beverages, no dishes to pass this year.

Newsletter article ideas ? Carl sent one in already, Bill will put together a draft of virus safety rules for the Field Day event. Dan will write an article on what was decided at this meeting, as well as upcoming events.

Balloon Launch – Bill has been in contact with QRP labs, they have a new payload in the works that is lighter, will have 20M and WSPR capability, and uses hydrogen as the floatation medium. When development is to the point they are satisfied, we will pursue further.

Things to possibly purchase for Club trailer for future use include an antenna duplexer. Drew will look into purchasing PVC pipe supports for an NVIS dipole to use for regional communications from the trailer.

It was suggested a list be put together of what is still needed to connect the DR-2X repeater to Wires-X. Dan has connected to Wires-X with an analogue radio through the 444.475 repeater, which works well. Rick offered to lend the Club his spare FTM-100 digital capable mobile radio to try the digital side of Wires-X through the repeater.

Committee Reports:

Repeater Committee – receive antenna on the 440 side needs replacing. Dan and Shawn will meet to install the new stub J-pole antenna that Steve, W9DXE built and donated to the Club. W9UP voice or CW announcements were discussed, it was agreed to leave the voice announcement as is, and add the CW id as well.

Field Day plans – much discussion ensued on ways to hold a Field Day event of some fashion up at the Jostad Site. It was decided to go ahead with Field Day observing all social distancing guidelines. Likely have 2 radios in operation, one in trailer and one in the building. Wipe everything down between operators. Possibly sign-up for working “shifts” at the trailer radio. Hand washing station to be provided. No food will be provided by the Club, members will be on their own for that. Field Day committee will come up with a list of social distancing rules to be followed on site, and submit to the board for further discussion. Some of these practices can be “tested out” at the picnic.

New Business :

Program suggestion for June Club meeting – David will contact Ken, W9GM to see if he is able to prepare a WebX presentation on Win-Link. John, N9ARL may also be able to do a presentation on his Red Cross activities.

Motion to Adjourn: 7:30 pm, 0030 UTC

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 consist of news and information of interest to the Amateur Radio community as a whole. Guest editorials and articles related to Amateur Radio are welcome.

Address any correspondence or anything that should be included in the newsletter to: Greg Miller at KA9FOZ@gmail.com.

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 their 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 LaCrescent, 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 401 West Avenue in LaCrosse.

Below are listed your RARC 2020 Board of Trustees and contact information.

President.....Dan Abts, AB9TS Email...ab9ts@yahoo.com

Vice-President.....David Peters, KB9EWG Email...kb9ewg@gmail.com

Secretary.....Rick Kolter, KD9GVS Email...rckolter@gmail.com

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

Trustee.....Carl Thurston, KC9HDS Email...kc9hds@gmail.com

Trustee.....Bill Wood, KE9XQ Email...ke9xq@charter.net

Repeater Trustee...Shawn Hicks, KD9KGQ Email...eistim68@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor.....Greg Miller, K9LEC Email...ka9foz@gmail.com