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## 2020 off to a running start...by Carl Thurston, KC9HDS

If the events of the last few days are any indication of what lies ahead in 2020, then it is going to be a very good year. On January 25<sup>th</sup>, we had our annual Winter Field Day event. Due to various factors, it was abbreviated to only a one day event for us, instead of the two days that was intended by the Winter Field Day organizing club.

Because of the 2200 closing time of Onalaska City Parks, we were unable to schedule a full up two day event, but we were able to pack a lot of good things into just one day. It started off with the opening of the shelter at 0900, followed by the setting up of equipment and antennas. By the 1300, the official start time of the event, we were ready. A lot of people showed up with lots of good things to eat and drink.

The main purpose for this event for our club, was to create an environment where anyone who wanted to get on the air, could. So, two of the club's HF rigs were set up,

along with antennas, a power supply, and generator. Since there were several members there who have Extra Class licenses, anyone, even non-licensed individuals, could come and get on the air. Several people who came were encouraged to do so. A young man, who is interested in becoming a Ham, came with his parents. He wanted to operate, so with the guiding hand of Dave KB9EWG, he was able to make several QSOs. He hopes to get his license at a future VE test session. Meanwhile, the room was buzzing with many face to face QSOs and lots of snacks and beverages were consumed.

By day's end there were over 20 people who came and enjoyed the event. We could stay and use the shelter until 2200 if we wanted to. But by 1700, the numbers had dwindled down to just a few, so we decided that we had accomplished what we had set out to do, so we packed up and left.

On February 1<sup>st</sup> at 0900, we had a VE test session that was attended by 12 seeking to get licensed or to upgrade their current licenses. Roger KA9BKK, had organized the session. It was held at the

Church of Christ on South 28<sup>th</sup> Street in La Crosse. The session went very smoothly and by 1015 it was over and all had passed their exams. The result were: 8 Techs, 4 Generals (one of the Techs also passed the General exam), and 1 Extra. This was one of the largest and most successful VE test session our club has ever held.

That would have been enough to call that day successful, but there was more to come. At 1330 the Repeater Committee, made up of: Dan AB9TS, Dave KB9EWG, Rick KD9GVS, Shawn KD9KGQ, and Carl KC9HDS, met at Dan's house to unpack the new Yaesu DR-2X repeater. At first glance, it didn't seem too remarkable, just another rack mountable metal box. But once it was powered up, it was a totally different story. With antennas mounted and everything ready to go, Dan turned it on and right away it was easy to see that this was no ordinary rack mounted metal box.

“There are a number of other things in the planning stage.”

## Presidents Upper Side Band...By Dan Apts, AB9TS

We have 22 program night ideas. I asked the board members to rank their top 10 and those who came to the February meeting did the same so we have topics for the program meeting nights on what is most interesting to you. David KB9EWG is in the process of contacting potential presenters for the top ideas and come up with a calendar. I'll be sharing that when it gets firmed up. The March program is on digital modes presented by Drew AB9NE. Rick KD9GVS will be doing a short “Shack Share” about what he has for equipment and what he likes to do with amateur radio in addition to the main program.

The board is in the process of looking into club shirts to wear for meetings and events where the deployment vests aren't appropriate. I hope to bring a sample to the March meeting.

The date and location for the swapfest has been determined. Mark your calendars for August 8<sup>th</sup> 8:00 am at the Onalaska American Legion. Watch for the flyer for more details. Special thanks to Carl KC9HDS for

finding this great location and securing the date for us. The parking lot should work great for tailgaters and the Legion will make the food this year.

There is a lot going on in March. The 7th and 8th is the ARRL International DX Contest. I try to get on the air at least for a few hours for this event every year. This is the best time I know to work foreign countries. They are listening specifically for stations from the US. March 10<sup>th</sup> is the next La Crosse county ARES/RACES meeting. We will be starting the first on-line training class. The Wisconsin QSO party is March 15. The St. Patrick's Day Parade is March 14<sup>th</sup>. This short parade is a great way to learn about what we do for this type of event. We have enough hams working it that you can have an experienced ham working with you. April 2 is the Storm Spotter Training. You are required to take this training at least once every two years if you want to join in storm spotter nets.

The new Yaesu DR-2X re-

peater has arrived. The repeater committee has it functioning with limit coverage on 146.76 with a 131.8 tone for the time being. It is running in automatic mode select mode. This means that if you transmit to it in analog, it responds in analog. If you transmit to it in C4FM digital, it responds in digital. A voice module has been added so we can record and play back messages. The next step is to try out the Wires-X capability. Stay tuned for more details on the new repeater.

There are a number of other things in the planning stage. Among these are a balloon launch, MS Walk, fox or hidden transmitter hunt, Onalaska Community Days, picnic and of course Field Day June 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. Please try to attend a number of these events and help out where you can. That will make it enjoyable for you and everyone else.

Feel free to contact me with comments and suggestions at [AB9TS@yahoo.com](mailto:AB9TS@yahoo.com). 73 de Dan AB9TS



## BILL'S CORNER

To fix or not to fix, that is the question. If you have a great junk box you probably have more speakers than you might ever use. But maybe a certain tape player or radio has a speaker that is not readily available from your parts bin so you choose to fix it if at all possible. I grabbed this royalty free picture off an internet site for an example. These, if the voice coil is not damaged, are easily put back to use. Carefully push the center of the cone in and release a few times listening for friction or other resistances. If the coil seems free to travel in it's limited space you should be ready to repair the thing. Some of these sound OK even if broken until you pump up the volume a bit then you hear the distortions.

A bottle of finger nail polish should be in the bottom of every Ham's tool box, dig out the fingernail polish and lightly coat along both sides of the rip and then when half dry lightly rub a

cotton ball 90 degrees across the break and leave strings of cotton to help mend the speaker. A light swiping of those q-tips works too. You don't want to weigh down the speaker too much, but if one coat seems too wimpy go ahead and re-coat. Just remember you might change the frequency responses if you weigh it down too much.



A fun alternative to the nail polish is to make your own coil dope. Save an old small paint can or buy one like I did from Ace Hardware and put a half a cup of

Toluene in it. Now start dissolving all those circus peanuts (not the candy) into the toluene. (If possible do this outside) You'll be surprised at how much air is in those packing peanuts. After the toluene really slows down in the dissolving of those peanuts you have a very basic coil dope you can use for many different purposes. Paint that coil to help hold those turns in place, or hold that paper to the model airplane wings. You can fix that speaker, or paint those little nuts and bolts to help keep them from coming loose at an untimely time and place.

If you don't want to buy a quart of toluene like I did find someone else to go in with for the purchase or get some from me. It's fun to use your own tools sometimes.

73 Bill KE9XQ

## UPCOMING EVENTS FOR MARCH 2020

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

March 1...David, KD9EPN  
 March 8...Shawn, KD9KGQ  
 March 15...Carl, KC9HDS  
 March 22...Mark, KD9OFK  
 March 29...Rick, KD9GVS

March 3...Program Night, digital modes presented by Drew Neve, AB9NE.

March 14...St. Patrick's Day Parade. Contact Rick Kolter, KD9GVS for details.

March 15...Wisconsin QSO Party.

March 16...Trustee Meeting at 5:30 PM at the Perkins Restaurant, 9428 Hwy 16, Onalaska, WI.

## Ham Radio Equipment Survival i.e. Carrington Event 1859...By KB9GIZ Scott Andersen

Please take some time to read what happened during solar cycle 10, Sept. 1-2 1859, the Carrington Event. Best report on Wikipedia.

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solar\\_storm\\_of\\_1859](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solar_storm_of_1859)

Is your Ham equipment protected from this or a nuclear accident or an on purpose event? Won't do any good to our original purpose in being Ham Operators if you wake up and equipment is fried!!

Protection for your Ham equipment at home and even car can be found at sites like:

<https://www.empshield.com/product/ham-radio-emp-protection/>

You can also buy car protection to. I know survivalist that have 1960's cars because if above happens, that's the only car that will work, no computers on it!!

And..... Your now safe equipment will do no good if you are unable to use it so I suggest having iodine tablets on hand for radiation protection, it saved a lot of lives when the Chernobyl reactor blew April of 1986. Also have 3 month's supply of food and water. Don't throw away empty milk gallons, refill with tap water add 6 drops of household bleach and good for one year. I have drank water after 2 years and still good. Every time you grocery shop get one can of Dinty More beef stew. Has water, meat potatoes and vegetables in it. Fill a closet with it. I just ate one "use by" 2009 and it was just fine! And with food supply make sure your prepared to protect it!

Remember that Twilight Zone episode where one guy out of all his friends "forever group" had a bomb shelter and food supply and when the warning came what his "friends" did to him!!

Just want all Hams to be up safe and ready if need be.

**VERY IMPORTANT!!!**

A similar solar flare with the same power just missed us in 2012 by 9 days!!!

The technical world would have been at 1905 level the next morning!!

Be ready!!

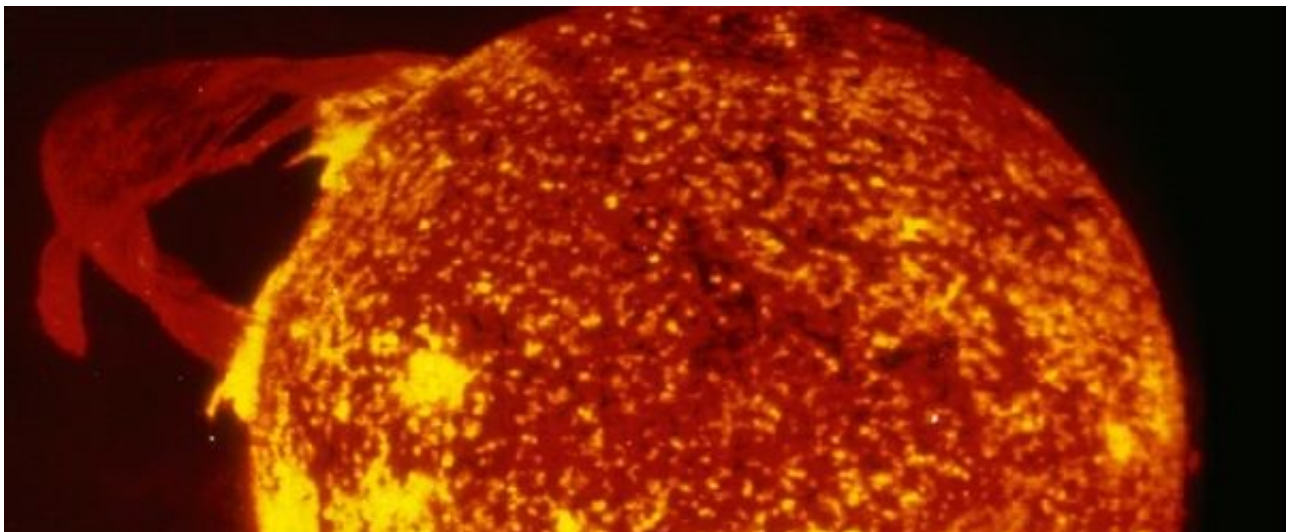
73'S

KB9GIZ Scott

30 YEARS a NOVICE!!

Legal Tech. As of 2/12/2020

You can contact Scott at [srcandersen@gmail.com](mailto:srcandersen@gmail.com) if you have any questions.



**2020 Off And Running**

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With us all gathered around it, and the 58 page manual open to the setup instructions, it was quickly setup. The programming was a breeze with the use of the touch screen. Once operational, it was a real wonder, and evident that it would be a real asset to our club. We tested it out in both digital and analog modes on both 2 meters and 70 centimeters. Its Auto Mode Select function made it easy to go from mode to mode and the 70 centimeter control function was also easy to set up and operate. It set up and programmed so easily that it is doubtful that we will ever have much of a problem dealing with it. The next step is to install it in the cabinet along with the current repeater and put it on line for full operation. If the initial set up is any indication, this should be a snap. Stay tuned for more later, as it is put on line.

**RIVERLAND AMATEUR RADIO CLUB****Monday, February 17th, 2020 Board Meeting****MINUTES****Call to order:** 5:39 PM, 2339 UTC**Members Present :** Dave KB9EWG, Dan AB9TS, Shawn KD9KGQ, Carl KC9HDS, Drew AB9NE, Roger KA9BKK, Rick KD9GVS**Approval of Minutes:** Dave motioned to accept last month's minutes to be approved as written**Treasurer's Report:** Available upon request from Drew, AB9NE**Officer's Report:****Old Business:**

ARES/RACES - Kevin, La Crosse County net Monday's 8:30pm 146.97 Next meeting 3/10 6:15PM County Admin Building. We will start on-line training on the FEMA ICS courses.

Club Call Sign change to W9UP – Roger applied to cancel W9UP call and is awaiting FCC response.

Newsletter articles – Dan will write a March summary. Carl may write up the Lake Elmo Special Event Station.

Back-up for Art to play Newsline – Kevin volunteered for this but needs to know what device to order for his ICOM 706 to accomplish this task.

Balloon Launch – Bill, no update.

Fox Hunt – antennas and attenuators, no update

Swapfest – Greg made up flyers, Rick will update ARRL website with swapfest info

ARRL affiliation – Rick updated

**Committee Reports:**

Repeater Committee – Voice guide unit installed by Dan, have recorded some test messages, next work on HRI-200 and WIRES-X connection.

**New Business :**

Schedule of 2020 programs – David KB9EWG will work on scheduling presenters; Rick KD9GVS will do a short "Shack Share" at the March meeting in addition to the main program.

Club Shirts – Dan presented catalog from Ad Concepts, David motioned Royal Blue w/gold lettering, Shawn seconded. Dan will order some samples with our logo.

Donation for Unitarian Universalist for our meeting site – We will "pass the hat" quarterly

Mitch's class on oscilloscopes is still pending.

**Motion to Adjourn: :** 7:15PM, 0115 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](http://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 2019 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