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## Snapping, Crackling and Buzzing Noises...

There has been a bit of back and forth about noise on the 97 Repeater. An old article that I had found on line a long time ago that dealt with potential causes of noise on a repeater that I had forgotten about has resurfaced and has created a bit of a stir on the subject.

Now it must be said that I have extremely limited knowledge in these matters, my expertise, if you could call it that, is more in the line of computer systems, especially old obsolete types. So I am more than willing to bow out to those other Hams with much more knowledge than me on this subject. I do have some experience with problems that I have dealt with in my own shack, but that seems hardly viable to this subject. It must be admitted that most of the troubles that I have encountered is due to what some have called "The Carl Factor." I'm not sure what that means but those who know me and my sorry excuse for dealing with mishaps seem to know more about my situation than I do. Ignorance

is not bliss. But this is besides the issue of noise on the 97 Repeater. The root cause of the intermittent noise that it is present at times baffling and not solved by a seemingly simple remedy. It must be pointed out that much of the noise that is experienced there is due to the location of our repeater and the antennas that are a large part of it. Also it must be noted that there are numerous other transmitting towers and antennas located in close proximity to our repeater's equipment.

At times everything is just fine, and everything works as intended, but every once in a while all seems to go wrong and there is a lot of stray static on the air there. There are seemingly as many different theories as to the cause of this as there are members of our club. Nearly everyone has some idea as to the cause and solution to this nagging problem

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## UPCOMING Events for November 2024

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

November 3, 2024	Jon KD9WPD
November 10, 2024	Greg KA9FOZ
November 17, 2024	Rick KD9GVS
November 24, 2024	Wayne K0WLO
- ◆ **Saturday** morning Rag chew, weekly on the 146.970 repeater, 8:00-9:00 AM.
- ◆ **November 5 ...** Program Night: UU Fellowship Hall 7:00pm. Elmer time 6:30 pm
- ◆ **November 19..**Trustee Meeting, Time: 5:30 PM, Las Margaritas. All members are welcome to attend.

## Snapping, Crackling and Buzzing Noises... (continued)

Some are convinced that our feed line is the culprit, and that it should be replaced. Others think that there is a loose connection some where between the repeater and the antennas. There is also a theory that these problems only exist when there is rain or high humidity present at the site. Another theory is that "None of this happened before we replaced our repeater with a new Yaesu repeater." It has been noted by some that this only happens when someone is using low power when they try to send and receive messages. There could be valid reasons for all of those ideas but it doesn't solve the problem, at least not yet.

Perhaps someone with greater intelligence, knowledge or experience can ferret out the answer to this problem. What also makes it mystifying is that not everyone is experiencing the same noise at the same time. Some people seem to be immune to this issue, others seem to have an endless amount of difficulty while trying to communicate via our repeater. It never seems to be because of the equipment that an individual is using, it must be because of some screw up with the repeater itself.

But like I said in the beginning, I have extremely limited technical knowledge in these matters, so I really hope that some one with much more ability can take up the ball here and resolve this problem. I'm sure that everyone involved would be most grateful for the help that the right person can give to the solution of this perplexing problem.

In the mean time, I will continue to struggle with my own equipment and perhaps my personal problems with radio will work themselves out in spite of my lack of expertise. I guess that I will just have to wait patiently and hope that the gremlins that haunt my shack go off and haunt some one else this Halloween. That trick would be a real treat. I hope that they leave you alone as well.

73

Carl KC9HDS



## PRESIDENTS COMMENTS

Hello

2024 is winding down. I am writing this on October 26. The Technician Licensing Class is going on around me. We've got four prospective new Hams finishing up the instruction. They'll take their exam in a couple of hours. This is the second class that we've conducted this year. The club has not held a licensing class in several years before this year. I've come to the awareness that this is a very important and exciting time for the club as this is where we have the opportunity to generate new members. We have concrete examples of our efforts paying off this year. The licensing class we held last Spring has already produced a couple of very active Hams, and prospective members of our 2025 Board. The efforts put forth by our volunteer instructors and VEs to proctor the exams is what keeps our club alive. The importance cannot be overstated.

The Board has been looking ahead into 2025 on a few things. The 2024 Swapfest was a bit of a disappointment. A significant cause of that was the difficulty we had with promoting it. We had a very good location for the 2023 Swapfest, but our hosts were not able to offer confirmation. It also turned out that they had a conflict with the date we sought. Without a confirmation, we could not effectively promote the event. The flyers went out late, and the posting on the ARRL website was relatively late. This was all because we had to scramble at the last minute to put the Swapfest together. Our response for this year was to get a site confirmed.

On an individual level, this is the time of year to start looking at what areas of focus to put your efforts. What would you like to improve before 2025 activities heat up? Do you have changes you want to

make on your station? Do you have improvements you want to make on your operating skills? Those of us who enjoy operating events like State QSO Parties and Field Day look at how we might prepare ourselves to be better contributors to the club's effort.

You might have an interest in emergency communications and want to put effort into things like Winlink, operating within a net, or skills to make yourself more valuable to emergency recovery efforts.

You might have an interest in exploring a new (to you) aspect of radio. You might want to try communications via satellite, or RTTY, or some other thing that you may not have done before. You might want to try building a kit, or designing a homebrew accessory for yourself.

Trying new things and improving skills keeps the interest level high, expands your abilities, and gives you something to brag about in conversation.

Those preparations can begin now, and the effort you put in really do pay off. Even if you don't enjoy the competitive events, people on the other end of your transmissions will appreciate your improved operating skills.

Drew AB9NE



# How I solve the Challenge of Modern Password Management (Part 1)

by Jon Melbo KD9WPD

## Why This Topic?

First off I want to say that I am writing this article for inclusion in The Key; Riverland Amateur Radio Club's monthly newsletter. So one might wonder why I am submitting an article about password management. The reasoning is fairly straight forward. To start with I'm a relatively new Ham of less than two years, so I don't necessarily have a lot to offer more experienced members of the club as it pertains directly to a lot of radio specific topics. However, I can speak very well to the topic of managing passwords and many other areas related to I.T. And finally, there is in fact a somewhat more than mere casual relation between amateur radio and computers. That relationship comes into play because there is so many options to interface computers and ham equipment, and those computers, software, and services often involve a password requirement. So, even if us hams didn't need to deal with passwords for anything else, they are a part of life if you have a *qrz.com* account, working with the FCC's web portal, and probably a fair amount more than that for a lot of us. But the truth is, outside of amateur radio there is a ton of services and such that we need to manage passwords for. So this article hopefully is useful even if your use of ham equipment has minimal computer involvement.

## What Do I Mean By Password Management?

The short answer is simply keeping good track of all the passwords you use for various different services etc., and hopefully also being able to refer that information when needed. The longer answer, involving general and specific recommendations on how to accomplish this, will come later; likely in another installment of the article. Before that though, let's talk about some of the common problems and challenges with keeping track of passwords.

## Challenges Of Selecting Good Passwords For Your Needs

## The Case For More Lengthy And Complex Passwords

Since the point of a password is to only allow access to something based on a secret that only you know, it stands to reason that such a password would need to be hard to guess. Also, it should be **hard for a computer to guess as well!** Yes, it's just a fact of life that software tools that aid in defeating passwords are plentiful. Such software has reached a point where much of it is pretty effective on all but what I shall refer hence forth as "good" passwords. So far this means that a good password has to be hard to guess by people, and by computer software. Password cracking software works with it's user to identify some key information about the password(s) to be cracked. Things like the password owner's name, names of family members & pets, street names, hobbies, birthdays, anniversaries, how long a password is, a dictionary of words of the language, etc. etc. can be leveraged so that a *brute force* attack isn't necessary at all, or at least can be mitigated. The brute force method is where a computer tries all possible combinations of characters in rapid succession to come up with the correct answer. Though computers are very fast, a lengthier password composed of random gibberish can take even a fast computer a very long time; too long in fact. Although we don't know fast computers will continue to advance, we can be somewhat assured that a good and proper password would take more than a human lifetime for a computer to brute force. To sum up this bit then, the concept then is that a good password should be on the longer and more complicated side.

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## Password Management (Continued)

### The Case For Unique Passwords For Each Individual Account

As you may be thinking right now, how in the heck can you possibly remember several (dozens even) long & complicated passwords? The answer is that you can't. It doesn't matter how intelligent, what age, etc. you are: you *will* forget at some point. So don't think you can somehow pull it off; you can't. Sure, you can likely remember one good password so long as you craft it right, employ a good memorization technique, **and use it often enough**. But it is just not feasible to remember several such good passwords. Oh yeah, now is a good time to mention that simply using one good password for all your various needs is a lousy idea. Here are a few reasons why you should not employ multiple use passwords:

If your password is compromised for one system, then anything else you use that same password for is open to potential exploitation as well.

Many situations that require a password also have composition requirements or rules about what characters are legal, minimum and maximum lengths etc. Trying to come up with one password that conforms to all requirements of all uses would likely be tedious, and in some cases impossible anyway.

There are sometimes expirations imposed on passwords by many systems. Which is to say that one is forced to change their password on a periodic basis. Imagine if you relied on using just one or perhaps very few passwords for all

your needs, and you were forced to change it for a particular system. There are a couple of ways to deal with that then. One way is to change it on the system that requires the change, and then go on a mission to change your password on all other systems so they all match. Yuck. Bear in mind this would need to happen each time ANY of the various systems impose a change requirement; talk about tedious. The second way is to just change the password that requires it and leave the rest for later. Yeah, you'll get around to it; right! At least often as not, though well intended, by the time you get to that you'll have forgotten the new one you made for that one system, lost the napkin you wrote it on etc. Now YOU are effectively locked out that system you were forced to change; requiring you go through a reset procedure. Rinse and repeat. Uber yuck, ja?

Number 1 above should be more than ample reason not to engage in the practice of multiple use passwords. If not, then 2 & 3 should hopefully close the deal. Now that you know about the importance of not only using good passwords, but also of avoiding multiple use passwords, next in part 2 of this article we'll explore some ways to effectively use, and some ways probably to not use, such a password scheme. Be watching for part 2 of this article in a near future issue of The Key; perhaps even they very next issue.

Until then, 73!

Jon





Welcome to new Hams

Tim Stockman

David A Gaunky

Dave Gaunky

All three passed their Technician exams this morning.

Scott

## BUY-SELL-TRADE-ISO



*Include "The Key" in the subject line.*

*Wanted: Articles for The Key*

*Please submit your Article by the 26th of the month and include "The Key" in the subject line.*

For Sale

Wen Inverter Generator \$300 obo

2000 Watt Gasoline powered generator. You have seen me use this at Field day and other ham radio activities. I have also used it camping. It is quiet, weighs 39 Pounds.

Sells for \$429 on Amazon. I am selling it because I bought an Eco-Flow battery powered system.

Scott

Wanted: Ham shack, antenna and other ham radio related pictures that can be used in the Key.

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

Looking for items for this space

## CLUB INFORMATION



### Riverland Amateur Radio Club

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- \* 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. 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. Please include the word "Key" in the subject line of your submission.
- \* 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 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 Tuesday of the month at Las Margaritas 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 Saturdays 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.**

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