

THE KEY

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



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 1, lower level, Gundersen/Lutheran La Crosse. **Elmer session** 6 p.m.

RARC Web page

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

Find refuge at the Refuge Oct. 17

It may be cold, it may be unusually warm, it may rain or it probably will be sunny for the Riverland Amateur Radio Club's Sixth Annual National Wildlife Refuge Week special event station K9P.

No matter what the weather conditions we know from each year's experience it will be fun!

Operations will run from 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 17, at the Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge, W28488 Refuge Rd, Trempealeau.

Plans include at least two stations, one from the RARC and one from our friends in the Winona Amateur Radio Club.

Most importantly, there will be food! Bring a dish to pass as well as a comfortable lawn chair. Electricity is available for crock pots.

The Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge is one of more than 500 throughout the

United States managed by the Fish and Wildlife Service. The 6,200 acre refuge lies within the Mississippi River flyway. Its rolling prairies, rich wetlands and bottomland forests support a variety of wildlife species. Established in 1936 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the refuge is a breeding ground for migratory birds and other wild life. It is an isolated backwater, cut off from the Mississippi and Trempealeau Rivers by dikes, providing needed resting and feeding areas for waterfowl and other birds.

The joint special event station was stimulated by an article in CQ Magazine.

National Wildlife Refuge Week, celebrated the second week of October since 1996 and sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service FWS, focuses on lands and waters where wildlife and habitats are under federal protection.



For more on the refuge special operation, see "Preserving the refuge event," page 4



Operators for the 2010 National Wildlife Refuge Week Special Event Station included (L-R) Roger Reader, KA9BKK, Gary Webb, NI9V, and Len Litvan, KC0RSX.

President's Frequency Modulation

By Greg Miller, KA9FOZ

The campaign season is in full swing as you probably have noticed. The candidates are doing their best to get their message across to the voters in hopes that they become the choice of the people. No matter what side of the fence you stand it is important to be an informed voter so the candidate of your choice is chosen. I realize it is hard to wade thru all the back stabbing and bickering to get to the meat of the candidate's true self but that is all part of it. The debates get ruthless and back stabbing so much so that it is hard to know what the truth is or what is false. Then the commentators throw in what they saw, which is nothing you saw. Who is telling the truth and who is telling a distortion? The stakes are high and the money flows like water as each candidate rings up a tab that none of us can imagine. The sleepless nights going from town to town meeting and greeting all who can influence the outcome of the race takes its toll on all including the family members.

Then comes election night where we all sit breathlessly by the TV, radio or whatever media we cling to for the final results. After all, this election may mean two, three or four years of changes that we all have to live with, good or bad.

Yes, this what the election of new officers is like for the Riverland Amateur Radio Club. You thought I was talking about something else? Nope, just talking about the election of new officers coming up in December. We have a strong list of candidates to announce at the November meeting so we can follow up with the elections in December. Don't be shy if you have an interest in serving in one of the positions. None of them require a lot of work and you give some valuable time to the improvement of the club. If you have any interest and/or questions come to the Oct. 6 meeting about 6 p.m. and we can discuss them with you. Another good opportunity to talk about this would be at the Trempealeau Wildlife Refuge Oct. 17. It will be a very relaxing day to do a little hamming and talk about any issues you may have. I look forward to seeing you there.

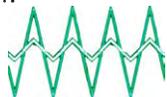
Tech class offered

The Winona ARC is hosting a Technician Class licensing course this fall. If you know of anyone interested in getting into Ham radio get the word to them and encourage them to register.

Classes will be held 6 9 p.m. Monday evenings from Oct. 12 through Nov. 16. License testing for all classes of license will be Monday, Nov. 23.

The cost is 29.95 for the ARRL Ham Radio License Manual. There is a 15 fee for the exam.

Register by Monday, Oct. 5, by contacting Len Litvan at KCORSX@arrl.net or at 507 643 7526.



Calendar

Tue. Oct. 6

♦ Riverland Amateur Radio Club meeting, 7 p.m., Gundersen La Crosse.

Wed. Oct. 7

♦ South Milwaukee Amateur Radio Club Auction, 7 p.m., American Legion, 9327 S. Shepard Ave, Oak Creek.

Sat. Oct. 10

♦ 10th Annual Central Wisconsin Swapfest, Colby Lions Pavilion, Colby, www.facebook.com/blackriverara/timeline

Sun. Oct. 11

♦ SEWFARS Swapfest, Sterling Chalet, Hubertus. www.sewfars.com

Sat. Oct. 17

♦ National Wildlife Refuge Week Special Event Station K9P, Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge, 8:30 a.m. 4 p.m., W28488 Refuge Rd, Trempealeau.

♦ Wisconsin ARES/RACES Conference, McMillan Memorial Library, Wisconsin Rapids. www.wi.aresraces.org

Sun. Oct 18

♦ 10 10 Int. Fall Contest, CW, www.ten ten.org/



Testing

If it is time for your license upgrade check out the club's next license testing at 9 a.m. Sat. Nov. 14, at the Church of Christ, 3506 28th St. South, La Crosse.

Register at least five days in advance with Roger Reader, KA9BKK, 608 783 0723 or readers@centurytel.net.

Riverland Amateur Radio Club

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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, wb9bjq@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

Sunday as a Salted Peanut



W9LSE ran the Peanut Power Sprint from his front yard.

Low power guys may be “nuts,” and QRP operating is challenging to say the least, but that doesn’t mean it is not fun. To prove that it *is* fun, Hams all over the country ran a sprint Sunday, Sept. 27.

Sponsored by the energetic North Georgia QRP Club NOGA, the Peanut Power Sprint ran just two hours and gave bonuses for those making contacts while running the least amount of power. The Prestige Peanut Power Class, “Goober,” was for stations running one watt or less. All contacts were on 15, 20 or 40 meters and could be CW or SSB.

At the world headquarters of W9LSE, operations were in the “Salted” class 5 watts or less and portable using a portable Buddipole antenna driven by a little Elecraft KX3 transceiver. Being portable with a temporary antenna allowed for more points per contact as well as taking advantage of a textbook perfect September afternoon. The fact that W9LSE’s station is completely disassembled and that it has no tower or antenna may have contributed to being portable too.

Sprints are great Ham events: operators can tell the wife that it is a brief commitment, it is a great way to improve on one’s operating techniques and it is a wonderful opportunity to burn up the airwaves or, to be more accurate regarding QRP, a wonderful way to *maybe warm the airwaves*.

Note a standard Ham radio explanation whether for contests or just operating: “conditions were bad.”

I made three contacts. I had fun. Enough said.

Investments

By Brian Moran, N9ADG

How do we get more people involved in contesting? Being welcoming on the air during a contest, talking non contest folks through an exchange, and encouraging them to work additional stations is one way. Field day, the not a contest contest, is a good way to see who is pre disposed to the “contesting disease.”

How about also making an investment in contesting’s future by running your own ‘Contest College’ over a week end or two. The goal for a Contest College weekend is to win by elmering those who haven’t seriously contested before. Invite a soon to be contester over, and tutor them in all aspect of contest operation from your QTH. One event that could be ideal for this treatment is the 10 10 Int. 10 10 Day Sprint, coming up on what else? Oct 10! . Don’t go it alone get some other ham friends involved, and form a team. Compete with them, or against them! As an aside perhaps in the future there should be the ‘elmer’ entry category, scoring for which is heavily based on the number of past rookies you elmered entering on their own, this year.

October brings the School Club Roundup, a multi day contest spanning elementary schools through colleges and universities, clubs and multi operator groups. While there is an “individual” category, the emphasis is on groups. Some have used this event to set up a station at their elementary or high school to spark interest in ham radio. There’s even a support group to help. It’s always nice to see your alma mater’s radio club beat their rivals in the results.

The ‘work’ you do to encourage others to get into contesting can pay off in a number of ways - more contesters to work in future contests, keeping newly licensed operators engaged in the hobby, and encouraging students to develop new talents and achieve goals. But you may also find that the ‘work’ is more akin to fun, and your satisfaction deep in sharing your radio interest with others.

Operating tip

If a ‘dupe’ calls you while you’re running, work them and continue. There are very few, perhaps zero, contests which will penalize you for logging duplicate contacts. Do not explain to your caller that you’ve worked before. It generally takes more time than just working them again. However, if they’ve called you three times before in the same contest, you don’t have to answer their fourth call. Respond to someone else. The only exception to consider may be contests with long exchanges, like Sweepstakes.

Preserving the refuge event

By Carl Thurston, KC9HDS



If you haven't participated in the Trempealeau Wildlife Refuge Special Event Station in the past, you are among many who haven't. In fact, since the start of this national event, fewer and fewer stations have been active in it. Last year there were only three stations in the entire country that had registered as Wildlife Refuge Special Event Stations, one in Michigan, another in Missouri and ours. In an era where going green seems to be the big buzz, one would think that a wildlife refuge would be of interest to many, but that appears not to be the case, at least not among those in the amateur radio clubs around the country.

Why this is the case is a mystery. Could it be the timing of the event? Are there other more pressing things going on at that time of year? Is the weather a factor in a lack of participation? Is the location of wildlife refuges too remote for some? Are many clubs tired of being involved with such an event after a long season of competitions? Could it be that the incentives for being involved are not great enough to attract more involvement? Is it that there is a nationwide event that conflicts with National Wildlife Refuge Week? Who can say?

In the past, locally, there has been

a split between those willing to operate at the refuge event and those who were more interested in aiding the Boy Scout JOTA event which runs the same weekend. Both events have their merits, and are of roughly equal importance. There certainly is a strong possibility of JOTA having an affect on the turn out at the refuge. This has been the case in the Trempealeau Refuge in previous years. Several years ago, there was an attempt to combine the two events, and to some extent this did happen, but there were still many who either continued to help out with JOTA elsewhere or resisted the idea of having Boy Scouts participate in the Refuge event. In fact there were several Hams who stayed away saying that the two events were not compatible and therefore should not be combined. That could explain the lack of numbers locally, but it is doubtful that this alone would have such a devastating affect on this event nationally.

Perhaps when the government shut down nearly canceled the event some time ago, this had a chilling affect on it. Up until then, there were many stations across the country that were involved, but with only three stations registered last year, it was decided to cancel the event nationally this year. What a

government shut down couldn't achieve, apathy has done. Be that as it may, locally, the Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge Week Special Event Station will continue for at least this year. Because of a small surge in interest it will be held again this year, same place, same time on Oct. 17, and the same call sign, K9P. It promises to be a bigger and better event than ever, thanks to the renewed interest and participation of the Winona Amateur Radio Club, whose members are eager to join in the fun.

So, if you haven't been to this event in the past, or even if you have, come on out to the Refuge, bring a dish to pass or other goodies, your radio, and a willingness to make a lot of contacts, eat good food, and enjoy the camaraderie of your fellow Hams. If you don't care to operate, come on out anyway. The fall color is usually good and the refuge is a beautiful place to spend some time. If there were more Hams that showed an appreciation for the beauty of nature by coming to the refuge, there probably would be more clubs nationally willing to get involved, and who knows, this event might just return to the calendar next year.

Public service-oriented Hams should do contests

By Marty Woll, N6VI, ARRL Vice Director, Southwestern Division

You may have heard of the Fireman Olympics or lumberjack competitions. Most of you have seen a rodeo at least on television where cowboys and cowgirls do their thing in a stadium rather than on the range. What do all these have in common? They test skills used on the job in an enjoyable yet challenging environment. Guess what? Amateur Radio operators compete, too, in a variety of contests held throughout the country and the world. Internationally, this is called "Radiosport." Domestically, we just call it "Contesting." Many competitive radio amateurs consider their regular operating time to be part of their training for competitions. In a larger sense, though, radio contests are training that improves our ability to do whatever else we do in Amateur Radio more effectively.

Contesting helps prepare us for demanding communication tasks such as might be encountered during a major disaster. Why do I call contests training events? Simply put, all the skills built through contesting experience are valuable in emergency communications situations:

- Hearing and recording information quickly and accurately.
- Getting information from weak signals or through noise.
- Establishing and completing contacts with rapid efficiency.
- Finding work arounds when the unexpected happens.
- Getting the most out of your equipment and antennas.
- Understanding propagation and making long haul contacts.

Contests are not limited to the HF bands that are primarily the domain of many General class and higher licensees. There are VHF, UHF and even microwave contests, all available to holders of every class of license.

Communication over hundreds of miles and more is possible with suitable antennas and equipment. By participating in these competitions, you will learn what works best and how your station's effectiveness can be improved.

You don't have to be in it to win it; just take part, and have fun while you're learning to enhance your and your station's performance. When former FCC Enforcement Bureau Chief Riley Hollingsworth addressed hams at a major radio convention, he advised them to watch and learn from contesters. "They're the best operators in the world," he said.

Of course, most of us aren't world class contesters. Yet we, too, can sharpen our operating skills by exercising them in organized competitions.

We can identify and correct weaknesses in our stations, evaluate the impact of equipment and antenna changes, and push ourselves to solve real-time communication problems as efficiently as possible.

All this builds and hones transferable skills. It makes us better at what we do, which is getting the message through. Remember, when all else fails, Amateur Radio works, and properly trained, dedicated hams make it happen.

JOTA set for Oct. 17

Gateway Area Council Boy Scouts plan to take part in their Jamboree this month. They are not heading to Camp A.P. Hill, or other locations, though. According to Nate Balk, KC9ZXX, local Scouts will take to the airwaves during the Sat. Oct. 17, Jamboree On The Air JOTA.

This year's operating will be from the La Crosse County Landfill, starting at 9 a.m. and going to noon using the call K9B.

There will be an HF station and a 2 meter and 70 cm station.

K9B plans to run on the following frequencies:

40m	7.190 & 7.090
20m	14.290
17m	18.140
15m	21.360
12m	24.960
10m	28.390
6m	50.160
2m	147.450
70cm	446.000

JOTA is aimed at fostering Scout to Scout communication across borders and is the largest

Scouting event in the world, with upward of 750,000 Scouts participating from some 6000 stations in 150 countries. In the US 13,326 Scouts and visitors took part in JOTA 2014.

The Boy Scouts encourage participating stations to submit JOTA reports and photos following this fall's event. "We need your report to demonstrate the success of JOTA to those in Scouting and Amateur Radio," said Jim Wilson, K5ND, the national JOTA organizer. He has asked stations to note down the number of Scouts participating, Amateur Radio licensees, and radios on the air, as well as the total number of contacts and states and countries contacted.

This is the 58th JOTA, held each year on the third weekend in October. For more information go to www.arrl.org/jamboree_on_the_air_jota

