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Getting more charge out of batteries...

In the past, I have written about the use of lithium batteries to power my HF radio. With the set up that I described before, I used 40v Lithium batteries from Ryobi lawn equipment to power my rig. The draw back to this was the limited run time of this set up and its use of several added components. It worked fairly well but was limited in its duration of continuous use. Also, the Ryobi 40v Lithium battery system was rather complex and ungainly in its design. It worked OK but it seemed to me that there had to be a better way to do this. Since then I have continued to experiment with alternative forms of battery power. I'm still committed to the idea of using Lithium batteries as a power source. Pound for pound they deliver more power with less weight and fewer problems of depletion than any other currently available battery system.

I have also written about my use of a battery powered riding lawn mower. The advantages of this for mowing lawns is hard to beat. After all, there is no need for gas, oil, belts, hoses, tune ups or the noise and fumes that result from conventional gas powered equipment, all that you need to do is plug it into line voltage when not in use and it is ready for the next time that it is needed. The one major problem with this mower was it used 4 10Ahr 12 volt batteries that were very heavy and were subject to deterioration when they were discharged to a level under 50% of their capacity. At first, this wasn't much of a concern since I was able to mow up to 2.5 acres on a charge and my lawn is less than an acre, so I never used more than a small percentage of the charge at a time.

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UPCOMING Events for July 2023

- ♦ **Saturday** morning Rag chew, weekly on the 146.970 repeater, 8:00-9:00 AM.
- ♦ **September 5...**Program night: Steppin Out, APRS, Club VHF/UHF radio
- ♦ **September 19...**Trustee Meeting, Time: 5:30 PM, Fork and Fable. All members are welcome to attend. Note Tuesday instead of Monday.
- ♦ **September 16...** Parks on the Air activation,

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

September 3, 2023	Rick kd9gvs
September 10, 2023	Mark kb9ofk
September 17, 2023	David kd9epn
September 24, 2023	Rick kd9gvs

PRESIDENTS COMMENTS

Hello, RARC Members and Friends!

Ours is a unique vocation which allows us to spend our time doing things that we enjoy doing, and things we know how to do. It also offers us the opportunity to grow, develop our skills, and explore new interests. So many other activities do not offer both. They are either things that we just do for the sake of enjoyment, like watching TV.

Camping and fishing are another thing like that. There is nuance you lose without frequently doing them, but you can go out every once in a while and still catch a fish or enjoy the outdoors from a tent.

Other things require doing frequently to develop and maintain skills. Playing a musical instrument is like that.

Participation in sports are like that, too. If you do bicycling, skiing or golfing, you can tell when you've gone for a period of time away from that activity.

I'll begin an intermediate level morse code class in early September. I've wanted to develop those skills for some time. I heard an interview on the Dit Dit podcast. It is a podcast that I don't think is in current production, but archived episodes are still available. The interview discussed the courses offered by the group CW OPS and spoke highly of them, so I went to their website and registered. I've been starting some of the exercises to get myself prepared, and I've been seeing improvements already. With propagation picking up in Cycle 25. I hope this will help to set me up to take advantage of the DX prospects that CW has to offer.

Part of the reason people enjoy Amateur Radio so much is that there are so many aspects that can be pursued. I'd encourage you to look into learning about a "new for you" mode, or developing skills in an area that is of interest to you.

If you are an aspiring ham reading this, Riverland Amateur Radio Club has identified a committee to assemble a licensing class. It will probably begin somewhere around January 2024. Stay tuned...

We're heading into the home stretch of our 2023 Summer operating activities. I hope all of you have had a great summer so far and have some good plans to take

advantage of opportunities to get out and "get your radio on".

There are some exciting events coming up in September that will allow you to do that.

In the public service realm, we have Steppin' Out in Pink coming up on September 9. It is an event where we will support Gundersen Health System in their efforts for breast cancer awareness and fundraising. Their event will begin at Riverside Park and proceed over a route on the trails through the La Crosse Marsh. Plans are to use our 146.97 repeater for that event as well as APRS. We plan to set up the net as a rehearsal at the September Program meeting on September 5. There is also a primer on APRS scheduled for that meeting. Your participation at Steppin' Out in Pink will go a long way towards ensuring it's success. We still have capacity for more helpers.

In the HF, contesting and portable operations realm, the Wisconsin Parks on the Air will happen the following week (September 16). The club has two campsites reserved at Perrot State Park for the night before. We operated this event probably five years ago, and we had a good time. Make plans to join us.

Another point of interest is the new radio that the club has purchased. We ordered Yaesu's FTM-200DR for club use. It has arrived, and an introduction by Scott, KB3MKD, to it is scheduled for the club's September program meeting.

As a point to stir conversation, there has been discussion of trying to update the club's HF gear for use at Field Day and other events as well. We sold one radio at last month's Swapfest, and are discussing trading one of the remaining radios toward purchase of a new radio. The Board is not authorized to make such a purchase without action by the membership to support it.

Tnx es 73,

Drew Neve

AB9NE



Swapfest Review

We had a really nice time at the swapfest early in August. It was a new location this year, and turned out to be a very nice one. There were a few kinks, (disco anyone?) but overall it went pretty well.

We are going to be looking for ways to make next years even better. One thought involves a change in date. There were a few conflicts this year. I would like to hear from members and attendees on that.

Tnx es 73,

Scott

KB3MKD



Getting More Charge out of Batteries (continued)

However, over time the Sealed Lead Acid Batteries that were in it did degrade after about 5 years, so they needed to be replaced. The original SLABs cost \$250.00 each where as Lithium batteries of the same physical size and power cost only slightly more, it was an obvious move to replace those SLABs with lithium units. With the Lithium batteries, there was also a weight saving that was substantial. The old SLABs weighed 60 Lbs each where as the Lithiums were only 15 Lbs each. Added to that the Lithiums would be good for thousands of recharges and they could be discharged to nearly zero capacity without damage.

Having done that I again turned to the power needs for my HF rig. I opted for an Ecco River Pro Lithium Power Station that delivers 720 Watts of power. Since it has receptacles for all sorts of power uses including numerous USB ports, several 120 AC ports and a 12 Volt DC port. With this device, I was not only able to power my rig but also the entire rest of my shack's electrical equipment. Weighing in at 20 Lbs and equipped with

a convenient carrying handle, it is nearly perfect for what I use it for. I still need to use a switching power supply with it as the 12 Volt DC port has only a 2 Amp output. Why the DC port is limited to that low of an out put for DC operation is a mystery to me as if it were more like 10 Amps or so, I could eliminate the need for a switching power supply, thus simplifying the set up even further. Perhaps this will change in future models.

One can only wonder how things will continue to progress with battery technology. I think that the size, weight, and input/output of these batteries will continue to improve, making them even more desirable for more uses in the future.

Meanwhile, I will continue to experiment with these new and improved technologies as they come on line. Keep charging on!

73 Carl

KC9HDS



- *Send your Amateur related classified ad(s) to Scott, NLT noon the 26th of each month to kb3mkd@arrl.net*
- *Include "The Key" in the subject line*
- *Please send some classifieds*
- *We need some classifieds*
- *We also accept article submissions.*

BUY-SELL-TRADE-ISO

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 consists 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
- * 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 there 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 Crescent, 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 Fork and Fable Restaurant, Jackson and 16th streets, La Crosse 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 Saturday's 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.

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

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