

RIVERLAND  
AMATEUR  
RADIO CLUB  
(RARC)



# THE KEY

ISSUE 4 FOR 2026

APRIL 2026

INSIDE THIS  
ISSUE:

What did you do this Month	1
President's comments	2
Riverland Volunteer Examiner Program	3
Operating Events	4
Editor's Notes	6
BUY-SELL-TRADE	6
Club Information	7

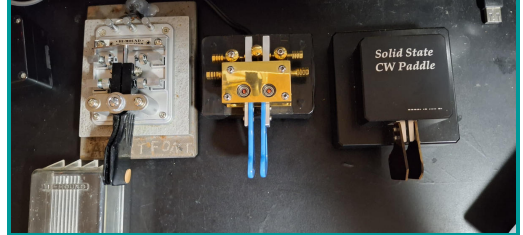
## What did you do this month?

I worked Barcelona Spain on 17 meter CW. Nice guy and he has some interesting CW keys. Also managed to renew my Ham license on the FCC website. What a pain! Think I'll use the ARRL or W5YI next time!

Dan W9FCC

I've been reading about and tinkering with APRS which stands for Automatic Packet Reporting System for the last 2 months. This week I got all of the settings correct and I can now send packets automatically every time I change direction, turn the feature on or off at will, or change it to only send when I push a button.

Vic WT9Q



I've been working on setting up a Wires-X PDN, participated in supporting the St. Patrick's Day parade and assembled a 6/10 meter Momobeam antenna kit.

Dave KE9BVE

I participated in the Wisconsin QSO party for the first time.

John KD9TOR

continued page 5

### UPCOMING Events for April 2026

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

Saturday morning Rag chew, weekly on the 146.970 repeater, 8:00-9:00 AM.

April 7 ... Monthly Members meeting, UU La Crosse, 7:00pm.

April 11 ... Hams in the Park

April 21 ... Trustee Meeting, Time: 5:30 PM, Las Margaritas. All members are welcome to attend.

April 5	KD9GVS	Rick
April 12	W9LUP	Rob
April 19	KD9WPD	Jon
April 26	KB9OFK	Mark

# PRESIDENTS COMMENTS

RARC Members and Friends:

Hello everyone and welcome to the President's Corner. I want to start off by saying it was great seeing everyone at the St. Patrick's Day parade and thank you to all that volunteered. Of course we also had our traditional post parade lunch at the Freight House and as far as the Freight House all I can say is WOW! Did they up their game! It was one of the best corned beef sandwiches I have had in a long time and what I believe was homemade potato chips all I can say it was a great lunch.

Unfortunately Mother Nature released her fury and caused the cancellation of the Wisconsin QSO Party in Stoddard. Some members did check in from home, Thank you to those members that did check into the QSO Party.

As far as the next Program night I am unsure of the topic but I look forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting.

For those that haven't heard yet our Swap fest for this year will be  
JUNE 6, 2026.

Location La Crosse American Legion  
711 6th Street South  
La Crosse WI 54601  
Hours: 8am-1pm

And Field Day will be June 27-28, 2026, at the park as the last 2 years at E2852  
County Road OK in Chaseburg, WI.

Hams in the park starts April 11th and repeats every second Saturday of each month  
the April Park will be Veterans Memorial Park in West Salem, WI

I would like to recognize one member who has been stepping up and putting out in helping with Net Control and also organizing a Google Calendar among other efforts. A big Presidential Thank You to Jon Melbo KD9WPD for all that you do for the club.

Well I look forward to seeing everyone at the upcoming April Meeting and upcoming events.

73 from Your 2026 Club President  
David KB9EWG

# Riverland Volunteer Examiner Program

## The Volunteer Examiner Program

When you became an amateur radio operator, you took a test. If you took that test a long time ago, it was administered by an FCC employee, but if you took the exam more recently, it was done by a group of hams that were volunteer examiners.

Volunteer Examiners (VEs) are US licensed Radio Amateurs holding a General Class license or higher, who offer their time to administer the FCC licensing exams through a FCC authorized Volunteer Examiner Coordinator (VEC) organization. The ARRL VEC is the largest VEC organization in the US. A team of three or more VEs are able to test candidates applying for a new license or upgrading an existing license. Riverland ARC is affiliated with the ARRL VEC.

Currently, Riverland has a few VEs that are retiring out of doing exams. We need some new blood. If you would like to help, please contact me at [crossconnects@gmail.com](mailto:crossconnects@gmail.com). You need at least a general class license to administer exams to new hams.

In order to be a VE to test candidates applying for a General

class license, you must have at least an Advanced class license and in order to test candidates applying for an Amateur Extra class license, you must have an Amateur Extra class license.

## License Classes

We are putting together classes for people who want to become amateur radio operators or to upgrade their license to a higher class. There are a couple of guys already to join a study group I will be facilitating for people looking to upgrade from general to extra. If you would like to upgrade your license, please contact me at [crossconnects@gmail.com](mailto:crossconnects@gmail.com). Please put Ham Radio Testing or Ham Radio Classes in the subject line. We can schedule a class and /or a test.

Scott Cross  
KB3MKD

update: I am trying to get location and setup for mid April, starting with Hams in the Park. This would be for the technician license.

I am also putting together a study group for people who would like to upgrade to extra. Email me for further updates, even if I have talked to you previously.

# Operating Events

Riverland Amateur Radio Club Members and Friends,

We are seeing sure signs of the Spring that just turned this week. That means that our operating events for the year will be getting underway. Planning has already started!

Winter did not want to let go and hit us with a snowy blanket last week. It is gone now, but the anticipation of it was enough to throw a wrench into our plans for Multi-Station Multi-Op participation in the Wisconsin QSO Party. I'm glad that it has become a regular part of what we do as a club. It is an event that I hear quite a bit of buzz about within the club. It is a fun event to work as well. I hope many of you got the chance to work at least part of it.

Field Day is our premier event. It is one of the summer highlights. Please make plans to attend with us on June 27 - 28. We will be at the Chaseburg American Legion Ballfield. It is the same location we've used the past couple of years. It features shelter, electricity, running water, a kitchen and a bathroom and more room to spread out on a hilltop than any site the club has used since I've been a member. We operated with a 6A classification last year. We'd like to do that again. There is an opportunity to be more involved this year, too. We'd like to be a bit more deliberate about delegating set-up and maintaining the stations than in years past. We'd like to introduce the position of Tent Captain. The Tent Captain will be able to plan the station, then implement it. You'll be able to oversee setting the station up. It doesn't mean that you'll have to provide the equipment (that's your option). It doesn't mean you're expected to be the primary operator, either (that's your option, too). The club has equipment available: radio, antennas, and supports. It doesn't mean that you'll have to do all of the set-up yourself, either. We need the Tent Captain to be sure it gets done. This will be a great opportunity for somebody who wants to get hands-on with how to do things like setting a station up, and working with HF equipment. You'll have plenty of Elmers around to help with any questions you might have, too.

We are in need of one Tent Captain to set up a SSB station. Plans for the other five stations are already in place.

Please let me know if you'd be interested in helping as a SSB Tent Captain.

I'm also happy to accept anyone interested in participating as a member of the planning committee, too. Please let me know if you'd like to move into club leadership in a hands-on, enjoyable way.

Another word about our Field Day efforts. They are entirely democratic in terms of operating. Don't think that any station is assigned to any operator. Anybody is encouraged to operate any of the stations at Field Day. If you'd like to take a turn operating, you need only let whoever is operating at the time know. If it is new to you, we plan to have a GOTA (Get on the Air) station. It is specifically for new hams and non-hams. An experienced operator is assigned to GOTA for the specific purpose of helping new operators. If you'd like to operate any other station, please observe for a while, then take a turn. There are experienced operators around who will be happy to show you the ropes. Most will stay there and log for you while they offer pointers, too. If you have heard about digital modes, but would like to get more familiarity, there will be two digital stations set up. Either operator will be eager to introduce you to what is happening, let you get comfortable with it, and let you operate.

Tnx es 73,

Drew Neve, AB9NE

Operating Events Chairperson

# What Did You Do This Month?

I worked a bit in the ARRL International DX contest March 7th. I was just looking for new countries. I got Morocco on 80, 40, 15 and 10. On 40 I also got European Russia and the Galapagos Islands. In all I got 22 new countries in a few hours.

Dan AB9TS

In March, I began using WinLink with Vara HF and practiced sending messages with Ken (W9GM) and others. I have also been researching setting up a VHF/UHF packet station. On Sunday the 15th, I worked a few stations during the Wisconsin QSO Party—a great indoor activity for that snowstorm. Additionally, Vic (WT9Q) and I are continuing to collaborate on our antenna farm; we made significant progress in 2025 and are currently discussing further additions for 2026.

I would also like to encourage members to check out the Fusion Net on Thursday evenings. Early bird check-ins begin at 7:30 P.M. Central Time in Room 40821 for those with a Wires-X Node. More information is available at [thefusionnet.org](http://thefusionnet.org).

73,

KD9OHQ Ronald Severson

Earlier in March, I participated somewhat in the ARRL DX SSB contest. Highlights of my DX contacts included a couple new DX entities for me, Guinea-Bissau and East Kiribati, as well as Japan and Morocco.

For a big chunk of last year, my ZS6BKW wire antenna was in shambles. I repaired it in November, got it rehung in the trees, and made quite a few contacts in the CQ-WW CW contest that month, with Easter Island, Norfolk Island, Samoa, Chatham Islands, Fiji, and Malawi being highlights of my contacts in that one.

In total since I got licensed in 2019, I've made contacts with 174 DX entities with 161 confirmed. I always find it thrilling to pick up new countries, and I am amazed at how far 100 watts and a wire can get you.

73,

Tim Jacobson N9CD

This time around I've been poking around with my SDR dongles. SDR (software defined radio) is kind of a neat area of radio where it can be super cheap (for receive only anyway) and super fun to play around with. I've been looking at scanner software which can use SDR.

Jon KD9WPD

## Editor's notes

When I took over the newsletter several years ago it was being done on Microsoft Publisher. I taught myself how to use the software and have been using it for a while. But I always wanted to move it over to a Linux / open source publishing software. I tried a few and did not like them.

Right now I am trying Scribus. It looks like a good one, but it is a learning curve. Bear with me as I navigate this.

Scott  
KB3MKD

## BUY-SELL-TRADE-ISO

Send your Amateur related classified ad(s) to Scott, NLT noon the 26th of each month to kb3mkd@arrl.net. Please Include "The Key" in the subject line.

Wanted: Articles for The Key

## 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 contain 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 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 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 2026 Board of Trustees and contact information.

President	David Peters	KB9EWG	kb9ewg@gmail.com
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