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Ohio ARES VHF Simplex Contest Helps Operators Plot Coverage Areas

Ever wonder how far you can reach on VHF/UHF frequencies? On January 8, from 10 AM to 4 PM, Ohio ARES members answered that question. It was the *ARES Ohio VHF plus Simplex Contest*, with all amateurs having been invited. Bands used were 6 meters, 2 meters, and 70 cm. Entry categories were Fixed, EOC, and Rover. Bonus points were given out by ARES officers (AEC, OES, EC and above). Complete [rules, submission forms, and other pieces of information](#) were promulgated. Participants entered their operating plans on the website. W8SGT was in operation from the Ohio state EOC this year. It's a contest with a purpose: ARES and other operators plot their simplex coverage area to know where they could dependably communicate on simplex during an emergency.

Results: Stan Broadway, N8BHL, Ohio Section Emergency Coordinator, reported on the results: Forty-eight logs were submitted, including five from the Rover stations. On average, eight counties were contacted by each station, with two reporting 18 counties worked, one Rover reporting 22 counties worked, and one fixed station reporting a whopping 34 counties contacted. Thirteen stations reported contacting double-digit counts of counties.

Joe Wigal, W8JTW, was heard across the state - he operated from the N8OJ tower site in Washington County with a 2 meter antenna height of 190 feet, and 280 watts of RF output. He also worked the 6 meter antenna with a height of 150 feet and 100 watts. Wigal worked 27 Ohio counties and seven in West Virginia for a total of 34 counties. He worked eight of the 10 Ohio ARES Districts, and five of the 10 West Virginia ARES Districts. His furthest contact was 163 air miles on 2 meter FM. He said, "Was fun, looking forward to next year."

Soapbox: "I was operating fixed and it was fun to follow the Rovers to various counties. I made contacts with Rovers in six counties." "First time participant. Nice way to spend a Saturday afternoon monitoring 2m, 6m, and giving points to the Rovers and fixed stations I could hear and get back to." "Great participation in northwest Ohio. Worked five Rovers! Furthest contact was 107 miles on 6 meter FM. Had a great time, lots of really good operators in our area!" "It was lots of fun, taught me a lot about my equipment, working through pileups and propagation challenges, making new friends and connecting with old ones and more." "I operated as a Rover in Mahoning, Trumbull, Portage, and Summit counties. Another excellent event this year, thanks to all who helped organize and participate!"



PRESIDENTS COMMENTS

Greetings to all Club Members,

A few years back when the board members were planning for an event on the June calendar, it was noticed that this event would occur on the same day as our club picnic in Onalaska. The question arose to board as to whether we do one event or the other. After some back and forth correspondence via email amongst the board members, it was decided this question didn't require a binary answer. Since the events didn't completely overlap each other and both events occurred in Onalaska, the real question became why can't we do both. By addressing a few logistics issues and being flexible to adapt to the situation we were able to do both events successfully that day.

It was in the aforementioned board member email correspondence that the term "Semper Gumby" was introduced into the conversation by Drew AB9NE. While I had heard the Marine Corps motto "Semper Fidelis" meaning "Always Faithful" and a few other Latin mottos used by government organizations before, "Semper Gumby" was a new one for me. From my childhood, I did remember the flexible Claymation character Gumby and was able to deduce that the expression meant to always be flexible. "Semper Gumby" while not truly Latin but rather dog Latin, has been used as the unofficial moto of several US military units and government agencies.

While I'm not proposing as RARC President that we adopt this as our official motto, I'm strongly suggesting we adopt the mindset of "Always Flexible". COVID-19 has disrupted our lives on a global scale and in order to bring some sort of normality to our lives as RARC members it will require some flexibility and adaptation.

As of the writing of this column, we have access to UUF for our club meeting on Tuesday February 1, 2022. Some of the stipulations of having the meeting there is that members present are required to wear a mask and that food and beverages can't be served. While speaking at the podium the speaker / presenter is allowed to remove his/her mask. While, we all long for the day this facial accessory goes away I ask that we all be flexible and adhere to UUF's guidelines.

Additionally, there may be club meeting nights that we may have to use Zoom or may be required to move the meeting site to another physical location at short notice. In these scenarios, the announcement would be sent out via the club membership email list and announced (if timing permits) on the Sunday night net.

To date we have Scott Cross KB3MKD scheduled to present a side by side comparison of Linux and Windows operating systems at our February meeting. For March, Dan Goltz from the Winona Amateur Radio Club will provide a presentation on how his club coordinates communication for the "Ride the Ridges" bicycle event held each September in the Winona area. In April, Kevin Rindy will give us insight on his role as the manager for La Crosse Emergency Management. For May, the board has asked Bill O'Driscoll a former patent lawyer for Trane to give a presentation on radio related patents. The board plans on using the June club meeting to plan and coordinate Field Day activities toward the end of that month. We have other activities planned for the rest of the year as well as a few gaps to fill. To reiterate the general theme of this column, our planned events and activities may change or be altered in reaction to unforeseen road blocks and we ask that you remain flexible as the board and I try to navigate our path though this year.

Semper Gumby

73, Shawn KD9KGQ, RARC President



RIVERLAND AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Monday, January 15, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting was called to order at 1836 at Onalaska Perkins.

Officers Present: Shawn Hicks KD9KGQ, David Peters KB9EWG, Drew Neve AB9NE, Scott Cross KB3MKD, Carl Thurston KC9HDS, and Roger Reader KA9BKK.

Other members Present: Rick Kolter KD9GVS.



Approval last meetings minutes: Motion to approve the minutes as read David Peters KB9EWG, seconded Scott Cross KB3MKD, motion approved.

Treasurer's Report: Drew AB9NE made the report as of the end of December. Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report David Peters KB9EWG seconded Scott Cross KB3MKD.

Officer's Reports:

Committee Reports: Trailer committee – Trailer Committee Nothing to report.

Old Business:

- Determination of roles for each board members- established need board member.
- Reserve a room at Perkins for monthly Board Meeting- Done.
- Brainstorm club meeting programs-see calendar.
- Reserve Onalaska park shelter for Winter Field Day on January 22nd – canceled.
- Review Dan Abts proposal to get club's Yaesu 857's LCD screen repaired – sent to Yaesu.

New Business:

- Board vacancy needing to be filled- David Peters nominated Rick Kolter KD9GVS seconded Scott Cross KB3MKD motion approved.
- Plan club's calendar events for this year- see calendar.
- Update on meeting access to UUF (Drew AB9NE)- Club use Ok, but no food or drinks, must use masks, and observe social distancing.
- Update on club's ARRL registration requirement (Carl KC9HDS)- will do.
- Status of membership renewals- on going.
- Paid Zoom meeting subscription as a back-up for in person meetings- motion to a lot \$200 for subscription by David Peters KB9EWG seconded by Scott Cross Approved.
- Update on possible new vendor for RARC polo shirts- Scott Cross KB3MKD will do.
- Review of club's Constitution, Standing Rules, and By Laws by Tim Jacobson N9CD.
- President's signature transition at BMO Harris Bank.

Monthly Program List and Calendar:

- January-Holiday Party
- February-Scott Cross KB3MKD, Linux vs Windows a Side by Side Comparison
- March-Dan Goltz, Coordination of Ride the Ridges Bike Event
- St Patty's Day Parade- Rick Kolter KD9GVS

- Geet Monica Lane Shelter for Wis QSO Party-Drew Neve AB9NE
- April-Kevin Rindy, La Crosse County Emergency Management
- May-Bill O'Driscoll (retired patent lawyer for Trane), radio related patents
- June-Prep for Field Day
- July-Pontoon Ride? Or possibly La Crosse Queen ride on July 9th
- August-Possibly Red Cross Disaster Relief or Salvation Army SATERN
- September-David Peters Parks on the Air
- October-Possibly Holmen Fire Dept Fire Safety
- November-Nomination of Board Members.
- December-Annual Meeting and election of Board Members

Motion to Adjourn @ ? PM: David Peters KB9EWG seconded Scott Cross KB3MK.

* *Anyone who is a member of the Club are welcome to attend the RARC Board meetings.*

Please contact a Board member is you would like to get a copy of the December Annual membership meeting minutes.

WINTER FIELD DAY

For those who operate HF, note that Winter Field Day is coming up on the weekend of January 29-30, 2022. This is a great opportunity for hams around the country to exercise their skills and equipment under conditions that are "less ideal" than late June. You are encouraged to set up a simple field station, or to make contacts with stations from home.

Remember to send us pictures of Winter Field Day and make sure that you stay warm - and most of all, have fun.

Details: <https://www.winterfieldday.com>

The RARC has historically planned a Club event to participate as a group, however because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Club Leadership had decided not to plan the event for this year. May the propagation and weather Gods grace us with good conditions! Good luck!



Afterwards...

Remember when the thought of the Holiday Season was looked forward to? It was a time when the mirth, merriment, and laughter of everyone on the street was a welcoming break to an otherwise dismal winter. How things have changed! With all that has happened these last few years it is getting harder and harder to be merry, even during the Holiday Season. Sad as it has been of late, it is still better than no Holiday Season. People are drawn to the festivities of the season. It matters not whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or any other winter time Holiday, the result is usually the same; much good will and happiness is around us in abundance. But what happens afterwards? It can't help but to be a let down after so much exuberance, after all we need to get back to the daily hustle and bustle of life in our times. It is hard to deal with the let down at times. It can be a lonely time for some and a depressing time for many.

Hams are not immune to these feelings either. When a Ham gets up in the morning, he/she often times turns to their shack where their rig resides to seek solace after a long night of fitful sleep, only to find that there isn't much of anything or one on the air. First they tend to reach out to their local 2 meter or 70 centimeter repeater, but it appears to be either silent or full of static. Next they look to their favorite HF bands, but again, upon scanning the Bands, there is not much happening there either. Oh well, let's try our email, but our ISP seems to be having troubles as well. Our cell phone has 15 voice mails on it, mostly robo calls, but a desire to hear a human voice is so strong that the Ham listens to them anyway even if there are repeats of several of the messages. How desperate can one get! Since there is no traffic on the media, they next turn to commercial radio broadcasts, only to find a litany of either commercial messages or the repeat of the news that was listened to last night. In desperation they then turn to the TV and they get more of the same, but in living color.

Looking outside, it looks like it is really cold, but the newspaper is in the box so let's go get it! There must be something in it to take the edge off of this dark time. Upon opening the paper, again it is the same news as we found else where. Checking the obits, we see that we are not listed there so we must still be alive. The comics furnish a bit of a respite followed by the crossword puzzle, jumble, and sudoku. The coffee is now ready a cup is poured. It is hot, strong and enjoyable. Maybe things aren't so bad after all.

Thinking that things might have changed with the rig in the shack, we go back there and again check things out, but our rig can't tune up. Where ever we look it is the same. Better than 6 to 1 SWR and a lot of static. Obviously the Gremlins are back from vacation. Checking the co-ax, connections and antenna ground, we find that there are problems to be solved, so we troubleshoot things until the fault is found and fixed. The repeaters are silent yet, and the HF Bands still seem to be dead, or everyone is still sleeping. Getting another cup of coffee, we then turn to a good book. The ARRL Handbook is a good choice, but today it seems to make one nod off. That won't do. The latest QST is next, it has very few articles of interest so it only lasts a few minutes before it too is abandoned.

Looking out side again there has to be someone out there who would like to chat face to face. The next door neighbor is usually up for an exchange of views. Going to his door, we find a note saying that he has been called out of town on an emergency. There is a post script there too. "Would you take care of my cat until I'm back?" is all it says.

73 de KC9HDS, Carl

(member, & contributor)



Club Trailer update

There has been some interest as to the current status of the trailer improvements that are under consideration by the "Trailer Committee." Some of the other factors that have come into play with it are: the demands of pressing club business, preparations for our annual Holiday Party, and other projects. As a result trailer improvements have been relegated to the back burner for now. Still there are some members who have been curious as to what is happening with this project.

To put things in perspective, here are some of the relevant projects that predate the actual work on the Trailer Project, these had to be dealt with first. Because of the pressing need to take care of the many things that need attention, some careful planning and preparation was needed. A fully functioning repeater system for normal communications as well as emergency communications is of primary importance, so it must be monitored and maintained before any other project can be considered.

Some years ago, it was noted that our basic repeater system had deteriorated to the point where some thing needed to be done to improve it's flagging performance. It was determined that first of all we needed new feed line installed on the WXOW tower so that we could assure continued efficient operation on our repeater. In 2004 a study was conducted by a committee and they found that what we could afford to put into place was Andrews Heliac coax feed line. The feed line along with all of the other hardware elements needed to complete the project were located and procured. The new feed line was installed on the tower in 2007 and has been in service ever since.

Recently, the WXOW station was going to need an upgrade of its transmitter, tower, and connecting lines, so we worked it out with their tower climber to also check over our feed line, connections and do basic maintenance on our antenna system as well. This was achieved at no extra cost to the club. Next we invested in a new Yaesu DR-2X digital/analog repeater and installed it in the cabinet at WXOW's station. That all brought our system up to date and with some adjustments it has been working fairly well.

This brings us to our communication trailer itself. It was originally supposed to be a self contained emergency communication unit. As time wore on, the things needed to achieve such a goal were determined, it had become obvious that even if we were able to make it self contained and able to get on the air anywhere, no one seemed to be interested in the sort of communication help that this could be provided by it. Other groups have a much more usable units for that purpose. Whether or not their units would be used for that purpose is not clear. Our best option with our trailer is to use it for special events, like Field Day or Parks on the Air, and as a training/educational unit.

73 de KC9HDS, Carl
(member, & contributor)



To Clarify Things.....

Recently there has arisen a misunderstanding of some of the things in the RARC Constitution, Standing Rules, and By Laws regarding the elections that annually take place. First, it must be pointed out that several years ago, due to a lack of progress in the governance of our club, it was decided to change the nature of our monthly meetings. We used to include in our monthly meetings all of the business aspects of running our club.

This worked fine for a time, until it became obvious that due to a strict adherence to the rules of order, little was actually being done in our meetings. So to facilitate a more progressive atmosphere it was agreed that we would eliminate the business portion of our monthly membership meeting, by moving all of the regular business items of those meetings to the Executive Board for them to deal with. This is not to say that the general membership would have no say in the running of the club. Far from it, it merely freed up the time that was designated for the monthly meetings so that more interesting and meaningful topics could be presented to those attending our meetings.

Through the re-crafting of our Constitution, Standing Rules, and By Laws, a more workable arrangement was achieved. We currently are using the approved 2017 Constitution, Standing Rules, and By Laws which enabled changes to take place that made this possible. It all worked well for several years that the Executive Board would deal with the normal business of running the club. The idea was to enable the Executive Board to make decisions needed to make things happen on a level that didn't require the approval of the general membership.

The Board was granted the authority to make purchases and other minor decisions on its own. This included the ability to spend up to \$500 on a given project or purchase without the formal approval of the membership. Anything that came up that would cost more than that would have to be approved by a majority vote of the entire membership. It also restructured the election process by the nomination and election of the Executive Board itself, rather than the officers on it. This really streamlined the whole process, but it did create some confusion as to what was actually being voted upon in our elections.

Those who assume the various offices on the Executive Board are decided by the Board itself, not by the general membership. So you see that only the Executive Board itself is elected, not the officers, the officers are agreed upon by the Executive Board members themselves. Thus a more team like approach to who actually runs the club is achieved.

The Executive Board meets monthly and all of the members of the club are welcome to attend those meetings and add their input to what the Executive Board is discussing. Unless the items under consideration require a vote of the general membership, the Executive Board has authority to make them happen.

Recently, our Constitution, Standing Rules and By Laws have come into question. It has been pointed out that there are several things in them that are vague or conflicting. As a result a total review of those documents is underway by a legal expert to help resolve any issues in those documents.

73 de KC9HDS, Carl
(member, & contributor)



UPCOMING Events for February 2022

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

February 6, 2022	Shawn kd9kgq
February 13, 2022	Mark kb9ofk
February 20, 2022	Rick kd9gvs
February 27, 2022	Wayne k0wlo

- ◆ **Saturday** morning Rag chew, weekly on the 146.970 repeater, 8:00-9:00 AM.
- ◆ **February 1...**Program Night:
- ◆ **February 12...**Amateur Radio Examinations-Contact Roger Reader, KA9BKK (608) 783-0723 or readers@centurytel.net at least 5 days in advance. Tests are held at the Church Of Christ, 3506 28th St. South in La Crosse at 9:00 AM. (Across from Hintgen Elementary School). Bring two forms of ID, a copy of your current license, Social Security number, \$15.00, and any CSCE's you may already have. FCC now requires applicants to have a FRN number and an e-mail address.
- ◆ **February 21...**Trustee Meeting, Time: 6:30 PM, Onalaska Perkins. All members are welcome to attend.



BUY-SELL-TRADE-ISO

There are no entries for this month's Buy—Sell—Trade—ISO. Everyone is happy with what they have.

** Send your Amateur related classified ad(s) to Kelley, NLT the 26th of each month to kelleyLL23@hotmail.com.*

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. Contribution articles should be submitted NLT the 26th of the month. Address any correspondence or anything that should be included in the newsletter to: Kelley Becker at KelleyLL23@hotmail.com.
- * 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 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 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 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.....Shawn Hicks, KD9KGQ Email...eistim68@gmail.com

Vice-President.....David Peters, KB9EWG Email...kb9ewg@gmail.com

Secretary.....Carl Thurston, KC9HDS Email...kc9hds@gmail.com

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

Trustee.....Scott Cross, KB3MKD Email...kb3mkd@arrl.net

Trustee.....Current vacant

Repeater Trustee.....Roger Reader, KA9BKK Email...readers@centurytel.net

Newsletter Editor.....Kelley Becker, KD9LQW Email...kelleyLL23@hotmail.com