

# Hamgram

December 2016

Winona Amateur Radio Club  
Winona, Minnesota

## Three elected to club Executive Board



Dan Goltz, WKØW  
Not pictured is Trustee Erik Brom, WBØNIU



Harro Hohenner, KG6RLM



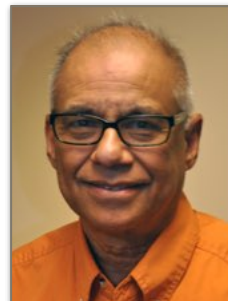
Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT



Mike Foerster, WØIH



Paul Schumacher, KØZYV



Syed Faruque, ACØVA

At the Annual Meeting of the Winona Amateur Radio Club, the following were elected to the Executive Board for a 2017-2018 term: Dan Goltz, WKØW, Mike Foerster, WØIH, and Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT. Les Hittner,

KØBAD, did not run for re-election. Others on the board are Paul Schumacher, KØZYV, Harro Hohenner, KG6RLM, and Syed Faruque, ACØVA. Erik Brom, WBØNIU, is Trustee.

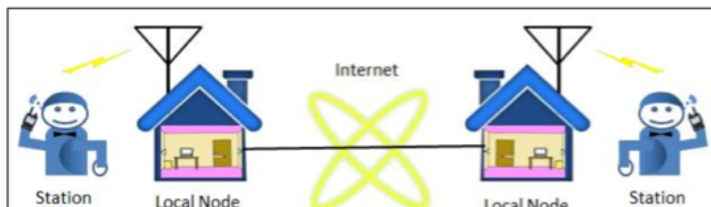
## WIRES at Dec. 15, meeting

There are wires and there *is* WIRES and club members can learn the difference 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 15, at the Winona Amateur Radio Club December meeting. Paul Degallier, ADØUU, will demonstrate the Yaesu WIRES X device which can accompany Yaesu Fusion for VOIP. Similar to IRLP, the WIRES X system adds the clarity of digital to the operation plus many unique addressing features.

The club's executive board has discussed possibly getting the inexpensive WIRES X hardware for one of the two Fusion repeaters.

Club meetings are at 7 p.m. In the Winona County Office Building, 202 West Third St.

WIRES (Wide-coverage Internet Repeater Enhancement System) is an Internet communication system which expands the range of amateur radio communication. For WIRES-X, an amateur node station connecting to the Internet is used as the access point and connects the wireless communication to the Internet. Users' stations can communicate with other amateur stations all over the world using a node within the radio wave range.



## Hamgram style changes

You may notice some differences in the Hamgram due to a change in publishing program. It is now produced with Apple Pages; formerly it was with Adobe Indesign.

-W9LSE, editor

# The reality of a new home and Sweeps

By Len Litvan, KCØRSX

In this episode of Len versus radio, we learn how an operating event finally freed him to dig his gear out of moving boxes and get it going.



Well, Sweeps got me off my backside and on the air on HF. I put the 40/20 fan dipole (450 Ohm window wire for the radiating elements) up in the attic of our ranch-style house. This is the same antenna WARC used for N2B in 2015 (and before) and used a couple of times at the Merit Badge Fair in Rochester. I couldn't get it all the way up to the roof ridge pole—just about seven feet above the ceiling joists in the attic. This put the antenna about 20 feet above ground in the crawl space of the house. Hmmm....

Most of a 100 watt HF station was found in various boxes and storage totes on Friday evening, so I was ready to go. For this trial event, the operating point was at a built-in workbench in the

attached garage. The feed line came through the doorway for the attic pull-down stairs. I sold the Shure desk mic before the move and couldn't find the Kenwood OEM hand mic so had to press the boom mic and foot pedal into service. The boom had to be stretched to its limit due to the remote mounting point. No station ground at all. Not pretty, but OK for a temporary setup.

The first trial transmission on Friday night netted a 5-4 QSO on 40 meters with an op in Fishers, IN—about 2.9 miles away. Whoopee! I had a few other pre-sweep QSOs on Friday night and Saturday afternoon to NH, NY, and a couple other spots. Nothing spectacular, but everything worked. The Kenwood SAT-480 internal tuner found a match on 40, 20, 15, 10, and 6 meters.

I got on the air for sweeps about 30 minutes after the contest began and started on 15 meters while the band was open. Wow! The California stations boomed in. Soon I had 13 sections in the log, Washington, Nevada, Montana, Oregon, British Columbia, Idaho, Arizona and California. Then I moved to 20 meters before supper and was disappointed with a lot of noise and not too many stations. This antenna has a history of being touchy on adjusting length for 20 meters, so I wasn't too surprised. The low height probably was the culprit. After supper went to 40 meters for about an hour and had better results.

Sunday late afternoon I was on again and had good results on 40, okay results on 15, and mediocre results on

20. This time there were lots of contacts into the East Coast. Noise was high again, and I can't tell if it's suburban hash or atmospheric though it sounds more like atmospheric.

Side note: Every now and then I noticed that the garage door opener light had come on by itself.

Altogether the net result was 61 QSOs, 39 sections in 24 states and 3 provinces. Forty meters was the money band and 20 was a disappointment. The pattern of states and provinces seems to demonstrate the azimuth pattern for a plain dipole very nicely. I need to map it yet to see the pattern visually. No contacts into Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, or Michigan. Bummer—especially on the Minnesota results. I did hear two MN stations and one WI station during the contest, but we were doing search and pounce, so the opportunity for a QSO was not good.

My objective in participating in sweeps was to get a trial antenna up in the attic and see what the potential was for that arrangement. I found out, so the contest was successful in that regard.

Lessons learned: Get a better antenna, either better fan dipole or Carolina Windom perhaps. Get the antenna all the way up to the ridge pole of the roof—25 feet above ground. I also need to make a final decision on an operating point location, either continue in the heated garage with its good system grounding point or move into the guest bedroom (not a "popular" choice here).

## Operating tip

### Winning QSOs and Influencing the Casual Operator

Always be enthusiastic when calling CQ. Make people want to work you. The most important time to be your most solicitous is just about the time you just want to be done, the slow times, or on the second day of the contest. When the rate is low or decreasing, you want to get non-serious or non-contesters to answer your CQ. Those Qs can really make a difference in your score. If you sound bored, your CQ will be less appealing. Try this: Smile while calling CQ, and when making the contact. People will hear it in your voice.

## MnQP activity planned

Keep Saturday, Feb. 4, open for the club's annual entry in the Minnesota QSO Party. The perennially successful effort is again planned for the Wilson Fire Station.

MnQP is a fun and casual on-air operation in which members attempt to make at least one contact in each of Minnesota's 87 counties. The Winona Club has won the event or scored very high when it participates.

# WARC Board Meeting

Nov. 7, Watkins Hall, Winona State University.

*Present: Paul Schumacher, KOZYV, Dan Goltz, WK0W, Erik Brom, WB0NIU, Syed Farque, AC0VA, Lance Tagliapietra, AD0UT, Harro Hohenner, KG6RLM. Non-Board Member: John Kowalik, K2OPT, Tom Wilmot, W0MK, Mike Foerster, W0IH.*

Call to order by Paul 7 p.m.

October minutes approved.

Treasurer report as sent by email approved. Harro still has not figured out \$6.00 discrepancy between bank statement and his record.

## Committee Reports

### Public Service Committee

The committee has not met since the last report, but there has still been activity. Dan has been in touch with Michael Peterson, Winona County Emergency Management Director. The quarterly County Emergency Preparedness meeting is scheduled for Dec. 6. Dan has attended those meetings, but this one is for paperwork and registration for users of the 800 MHz radio system. Included are fire departments, law enforcement, ambulance services and first responder groups. Michael has been updated on our digital repeater features, and was asked if there is money in the EM budget to purchase a Fusion 400 radio for installation in the LEC. He has not responded to that yet. Paul AD0UU, Mike W0IH, and Dan WK0W, went to the LEC and checked out the amateur radios that were not functioning properly. Issues found were loose connections, and programming problems. Those have been fixed. Antenna work still needs to be done, and improvements still need to be made at the station before SKYWARN activities begin next spring. Mike W0IH and Dan WK0W removed the old county paging repeater boxes from Witoka site. They are being stripped and usable components removed. The rest will be sold for scrap.

The Fusion repeater at Witoka has an unknown issue, and that is being looked into. This may be forwarded to Repeater Committee. Access to

the Witoka site will likely be difficult during the winter. Paul AD0UU, Bob W9LSE, Tom, KC9ECI, and Dan WK0W attended the SKYWARN recognition event at the La Crosse National Weather Service office. Dan is concerned City of Winona considering opening their own Emergency Management Office that would be operated by Winona Fire Department. Board discussed the concern and Board agreed with Dan's concern. Dan also not certain how it affects the club. This is going to be very big issue But Dan will share more details as becomes available. Board discussed some issue with the Radios at LEC and Paul asked if we could remove them to work. Dan replied there are four radios there. Dan mentioned some needs programming and some have issues with control head. Paul suggested we look for volunteers to work on these issues and someone with programming skill.

## Repeater

Erik shared Firmware versions of Fusion Repeater. Mike talked about necessary cable requirement for firmware upgrade.

Paul mentioned our Skywarn list is not available as we changed our email server. Paul will take care of the list with new server. Paul suggested we wait until Spring and then subscribe to full service to Server which will include Skywarn list.

On behalf of Repeater Committee, Erik shared a Letter of Approval from Minnesota Repeater Council regarding Frequency Co-ordination of Witoka Repeater. Board thanked him for his work. Erik shared details of coordination. Erik still wants emergency power at Witoka site. 835 repeater has one issue but now working fine. New Fusion Repeater is at 640 site. There were visits to 640 site to address issues and that site also has been working well. Erik and Lance discussed the 640 Site issues and potential permanent solution. Erik noticed Ethernet connection at 640 site and Erik will

talk to radio engineer about having internet connection at the site.

John shared his experience of HF cables with vibration and other issues. Cables need to be carefully inspected to find out problem.

Lance reported nothing new on APRS.

Mike reported on remote control operation at Witoka. Mike plans to go there this week to do upgrades. He asked for Red/Black wire he can use (14/16 gauge). Erik will provide to Mike. Mike used remote system to talk to Atlanta, Missouri, South Dakota. Mike also building a 160m and 75m dipole. He plans to work on them through Winter to be used in Witoka. Mike asked about acquiring 590 HF Rig. He doesn't think there is need for it now. Harro raised the question of paying farmer of 835 APRS site. Lance will email Harro with details.

Lance detailed open positions for next term of Board Positions. Terms of Lance, AD0UT, Les, K0BAD and Dan, WK0W expire end of 2016. Lance and Dan are willing to continue for another term. Information on open positions will be communicated via listserv; elections will be held at November general meeting.

Paul said listserv has been changed but members do not need to re-sign up. If the file is large, Paul needs to approve the mail. Lance suggested to up the limit so even small images will be posted without needing approval. Dan had issues sending email. Lance suggested not to send mail to list and bunch of other people. That can cause bounce. Lance would like to see the Listserve configuration.

Paul stated our licensing session is set for 7 p.m. Nov. 16. Eight to nine participants are expected. Some of them might go for both Technician and General Class. Paul has VE roster ready. Erik will take the lead. Harro will have application ready for club member.



## Skywarn event Dec. 3

SKYWARN Amateur Radio Recognition, Dec.3, at the La Crosse National Weather Service office was another success according to NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologist Todd Shea, KB9YXS.

SKYWARN Amateur Radio Recognition is to celebrate and recognize the contributions amateur radio operators provide to the National Weather Service (NWS). It began in 1999 as a 'Y2K' exercise and has continued since.

A total of 26 people visited the La Crosse office on a cool, cloudy day with snow flurries around. Several operators made contacts with people around the U.S. and World, sharing contact and current weather information. There were three radios and antennas operating for much of the day.

Of the 200 contacts made by WX9ARX, there were 39 states, 33 other NWS offices and three DX entities.

Winona Amateur Radio Club members Paul Degallier, ADØUU, Dan Goltz, WKØW, Tom Peterson, KC9ECI, and Bob Seaquist, W9LSE, participated.

### WØNE Repeaters

146.640 PL 100.0 Hz \*

146.835 PL 131.8 Hz \*\*

444.225 PL 100.0Hz FM Voice C4FM Digital \*

SkyWarn Net when activated.

\*\* Sunday Night Net—8:30 p.m.



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Secretary: Syed Faruque, ACØVA, [sfaruque@yahoo.com](mailto:sfaruque@yahoo.com)

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At Large: Dan Goltz, WKØW; Mike Foerster, WØIH

Dues: \$25 per calendar year per license holder. \$30 per calendar year for all licensed members of the same family within the same household.

Send dues to: Treasurer, P.O. Box 1451, Winona, MN 55987

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Monthly club programs are held on the third Thursday. The submission deadline for the Hamgram is Wednesday of the week prior to that of the club programs.

