

Honor NØJP April 1 (see page 2)

Hamgram

March 2017

Winona Amateur Radio Club
Winona, Minnesota



Hams, by stereotype, are old, fat, bald fellows lurking in basements amid sparking radios. Or they can be lean, adventurous, athletic folks like Peter Ebertowski, KDØYOB, perched on a precipice with a tiny radio connecting world-wide. Peter is one of a huge group of Hams participating in Summits On The Air (SOTA) by going to mountain tops ("activator") and connecting with Hams at home in their shacks ("chasers") for fun and challenging amateur radio.

Ebertowski will detail his SOTA experiences at the Winona Amateur Radio Club meeting 7 p.m., Thursday, March 16, at the Winona County Office Building, 202 West Third St., Winona.

SOTA began in the UK in 2002 as the brain child of John Linford, G3WGV. Early on, activity was on VHF and UHF FM using lightweight handheld radios. As the popularity of SOTA grew and technology got smaller, activators and chasers now use HF to make contacts around the world. SOTA is designed to make participation possible for all Radio Amateurs, not just for mountaineers. There are awards for activators (those who ascend to the summits) and chasers (who either operate from home, a local hilltop or are even Activators on other summits).

Well-known Youtube Ham Steve Galchutt, WGØAT, and his goats helped popularize SOTA activities with his exploits high atop snowy Colorado peaks but it's been Hams such as Ebertowski that keep the program alive across the world, even the relatively flat world of Minnesota. (KDØYOB has also activated some

spectacular Colorado mountains)

A "summit" must be distinct and at least 100-meters above surrounding terrain, a description for places like Perrot Park's Eagle Bluff. Ebertowski is listed as the official "activator" of Eagle Bluff and he was back there just a few weeks ago. To qualify as an activation there must be at least four QSOs. He got half way with the assistance of Ken Spittler, NØJP, and Mike Cizek, WØVTT. He used his Yaesu FT-817 for 20 and 40 meters, and had 17 HF QSOs (SSB) in 14 different states. "I used the 146.64 repeater to arrange contacts on 146.52 with NØJP and WØVTT using a Kenwood dual band HT," notes Ebertowski. WØVTT was one of his 17 HF QSOs on 40 meters with the highlight a QSO with Puerto Rico on 20 meters, 5 watts!

Gear must be light as activators must travel by foot to the summit so Ebertowski uses the tiny Yaesu FT-817 QRP rig and sometimes the larger Yaesu FT-857 powering them with a gel-cell battery. He uses wire antennas.

SOTA www.sota.org.uk

Sotawatch www.sotawatch.org/

The Yaesu FT-817

- First sold in 2000.
- Yaesu originally hoped to sell about 5,000 units in the first 3 to 5 years.
- Built in lots of about 800.
- Nearly a quarter-million radios sold.



NØJP to be honored for NCS work April 1

There will be a special recognition For Ken Spittler, NØJP, 8 a.m. Sat. April 1, at the Winona Family Restaurant.

The event was postponed from February because of inclement weather.

Winona Amateur Radio Club members are encouraged to attend and see Spittler receive a commendation for 47 years of being a Net Control for the Minnesota Section Net. Section Manager Skip Jackson, KSØJ, and Robert Meyer, WØLAW, Section Traffic Manager for Minnesota, and other dignitaries will make the presentation for NØJP's years of

Midwinter Madness March 25

The 35th Annual Midwinter Madness Hobby Electronics Show in Buffalo, Minn. will be 8 a.m.-noon, Sat. March 25, at the Buffalo Civic Center. Admission is \$8. There will be QSL card checking, VE testing (Advance registration to mwmve@k0ltc.org) and door prizes.



Wis QP this Sunday

The Wisconsin QSO Party will be this Sunday, March 12. It runs from 1 p.m. – 8

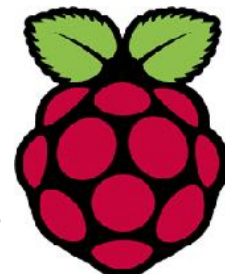
p.m. and is a great opportunity to get on the air, hone skills and have a great time. The casual style makes for a non-threatening introduction for new comers and a time to renew on-air acquaintances for old-timers.

Fresh pie!

The Raspberry Pi is five years old this month and, to celebrate, there's a new product, Raspberry Pi Zero W, a new variant of Raspberry Pi Zero with **wireless LAN and Bluetooth**. It's priced at **\$10**. For more information go to www.raspberrypi.org

Full feature list for Zero W:

- 1GHz, single-core CPU
- 512MB RAM
- Mini-HDMI port
- Micro-USB On-The-Go port
- Micro-USB power
- HAT-compatible 40-pin header
- Composite video and reset headers
- CSI camera connector
- 802.11n wireless LAN
- Bluetooth 4.0



Spring Skywarn training

- Wed. March 15 10 a.m. Webinar For login info: todd.shea@noaa.gov
- Thurs. March 16 6:30 p.m. Mazeppa Community Center 278 1st Street
- Thurs. April 6 6:30 p.m. Marycrest Auditorium, Mayo Clinic Health System Franciscan Skemp
- 700 West Ave S. La Crosse
- Thurs. April 13 6:30 p.m., Fillmore, location TBA
- Tues. April 18 1 p.m. Webinar For login info: todd.shea@noaa.gov
- Mon. April 24 6:30 p.m. Rochester International Event Center (near RST airport)



WARC Board meeting Feb. 7, 2017

Winona State University, Watkins Hall

Present: Board Members Harro Hohenner, KG6RLM, Syed Faruque, ACØVA, Paul Schumacher, KØZYV, Dan Goltz, WKØW, Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT, Erik Brom, WBØNIU, Mike Foerster WØIH. Non board members:

John Kowalik, K2OPT, Tom Wilmot, WØMK.

Called to order by Paul at around 7 PM.

Treasurer report approved.

Minutes of last meeting approved. Erik questioned some items in the minutes. He asked if the Witoka Tower internet interface converted to run by 12 volt DC as stated in the minutes. Dan said job is completed.

Committee Reports

Education Committee. Paul reported licensing class has seven participants, most from technical backgrounds.

Paul thanked the instructors for nice job. Mike asked if we will have extra session requested by participants. Paul said we arranged for extra classes. Lance suggested scheduling nine sessions for General Class so there's time enough for all subjects. Lance discussed "show and tell" Erik's J-Pole antenna which Erik bought on E-Bay for \$20. Paul also has things he can "show and tell."

Members discussed Erik's J-pole antenna. Paul mentioned APRS and cell phone goes nicely in Android applications. Lance mentioned APRS on cell phones will be club program. Paul discussed more on the APRSdroid application that runs on Android phones. Erik raised the legality issue as packet may be posted on internet.

Discussion continued on legality issue of cell phone APRS. Erik suggested we consider APRSdroid for bike ride. Paul stated cell phones might not work over the whole route. Dan said it would be helpful if done right. Erik talked about new APRS and Raspberry Pi application. Paul said he has APRS units if needed for the ride. Erik said APRS at Rooster Ridge working intermittently. He thinks there is an antenna problem. Erik suggested someone needs run antenna tests there.

Regarding bike ride, Paul and Dan attended meeting about the ride and Paul knows the leaders. Paul intends to ask for donations from Rotary Club for helping the bike ride and Rotary has funds designated for local projects.

Our club fits the criteria per Paul. Board supports efforts to solicit funds from Rotary Club. Lance stated repeaters working fine. Russ, NØQK, checked Witoka with drone and saw one radial of one antenna is bent. Dan asked if it changes radiation pattern or SWR though measured SWR is not bad. Lance said two radials on 835 are also missing. Ken, NØJP, has replacement radials for 835 tower but Erik asked if it is worthwhile to climb up just to replace the radials. Mike updated on power designation and power utilization at Witoka tower. Dan wants to add an old VHF mobile he has on the Witoka tower. Dan asked how much can be added to Witoka before its overloaded. Board discussed more on the power distribution of Witoka tower. Paul asked how difficult it is to walk to Witoka tower now. Mike answered it is a bit difficult and must wear snow shoes. Mike mentioned next for Witoka tower is to remove 80m dipole, remove the center insulator and replace with a different insulator. Mike is working with Mike, WØVTT, on the plan of execution on this 80m dipole. John, K2OPT, provided suggestions on this project. John has some feed line if

needed.

Erik updated status of internet on KAGE tower. There is fiber internet there that belongs to a tenant. Erik will find who that is. Radio station also considering bringing internet there. Paul would like to expedite the process as there is of interest in WIRES-X communication.

The La Crosse National Weather Service won't do Skywarn training in Winona County this year citing cost saving policy to offer training every two years. If there is interest I will hold a class and Michael Peterson of Winona County Emergency Management will coordinate. I can do one for WARC or we can piggyback on the Winona County session

WIRES-X followup. The Fusion WIRES-X system offers us a multitude of opportunities for communication with other individuals and groups. Development of an emergency communications "room" is simple and allows a common site for amateur radio public service responders for given emergencies.

Since KAGE site VHF and UHF repeaters share the same antenna and basically same coverage, I propose we add the WIRES-X box to the Fusion UHF repeater. It would give capability of linking the UHF repeater to other Fusion groups for long distance communication or to switch to another "room" for our own local needs. The down side of this is that users will have to have radios capable of using the digital modes. This disadvantage is offset by the digital modes capability of sending interference free voice, text and pictures. The WIRES-X box costs about \$100; the need for internet capability at the KAGE site is problematic. Discussion of bringing in Internet via MESH-net technology is ongoing but our initial plan to use ADØUU's house may not be possible due his house site. Using KØBAD's location or sending internet from the Witoka site needs investigation, but there's limited access to the sites due to snow and ice. -Dan, WKØW

Dan added his positive experience with WIRES-X. He mentioned Winona club can generate own "room" in WIRES-X which would be helpful for emergency situations. Board discussed what happens to WIRES-X if internet goes out. A radio is required for WIRES-X connection. A PC-only won't work for WIRES-X.

Mike raised issue of donation for radio for Witoka. It was discussed during club gathering. We have \$600 so far. Mike requested issue be raised at upcoming club meeting and ask for donations or loan. Mike prefers to put Icom 7300 on the tower despite drawbacks. Positives outweigh negatives on Icom 7300 he said. Paul has used 7300 for a while and he likes it. Paul wonders if we need software copies for each user or one copy for all users?

More discussion about Erik's J-pole antenna.

Harro had March Madness swap meet leaflet which Paul will forward to Bob for newsletter.

Board also discussed special breakfast gathering for award presentation. Board approved change of breakfast

location on Feb 25 from McDonalds to Winona Family Restaurant for presentation.

Meeting was then adjourned.

Things for better operating

Consider starting a station notebook, paper or computer-based, if you've not done so already. Your notebook is the place to record information such as your station configuration, equipment settings, SWR readings, logging program settings, general observations -- anything related to your station. When you find a problem or solve a station problem, put it in the notebook. Specific things to remember from the last contest? Put it in the notebook. By consistently collecting and recording this information, you're creating a reference that can help you to save time when troubleshooting or getting set up for that once-a-year contest.

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.**



Treat yourself

Improve your station and your contest scores over time by inviting someone else over to operate your station. You'll probably tidy up the shack to make your operating position less distracting and more efficient for a guest. By having to explain your station layout, band change procedures, rotator and rig controls, chances are you'll think of a way to streamline things. Invite constructive feedback from your guest(s) on what they think can be improved. Improvements that benefit your guests will also help you attain higher scores.

Winona Amateur Radio club meetings are 7 p.m., third Thursday of the month at the Winona County Office Building, 202 West Third St., Winona. The monthly program is open to the public.

Winona Amateur Radio Club, Inc. P.O. Box
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Custodian: Erik Brom, WBØNIU, ewbrom@hbc.com

At Large: Dan Goltz, WKØW; Leslie Hittner KØBAD

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

