

# Hamgram

October 2019

Winona Amateur Radio Club  
Winona, Minnesota

## Rail exercise assisted by club operators



Placement of radio operators for the emergency exercise is discussed by Dan Goltz, WKØW, left, Paul Degallier, ADØUU, and Walt Kelly, KEØXI.

There was a disaster Sat. Oct. 12, but luckily, 10 members of the Winona Amateur Radio Club stepped up to help remedy the situation. It wasn't a real disaster but a training exercise led by Winona County Emergency Management to bring many jurisdictions and agencies together as they would if a real accident would happen.

The scenario had a Canadian Pacific locomotive derail in Dakota causing four cars to leak approximately 20,000-40,000 gallons of crude oil into the Mississippi River. In addition, two of the train's crew members suffered injuries.

About 160 first responders, led by the Dakota Fire and Rescue Department, conducted a table-top exercise at the

beginning of the day-long event then really launched boats as they would if they would be putting oil containment booms. Nasty, windy, snowy weather limited work on the river.

Amateur Radio operators were specifically invited to participate by Winona County Emergency Management Director Ben Klinger, KEØTNM. He recognized that Dakota—and much of Winona Country—has poor conditions for radio and that, when added to multiple participants with varied communication gear, requires the communication skills of the Hams to assure communication is clear and seamless.

Participants from the club included: Paul Degallier, ADØUU; Dan Goltz, WKØW; Keith Laken, KEØIJI; Clare Jarvis, KØNY; Walt Kelly, KEØXI; Rick Kolter, KD9GVS; John Roche, KBØELR; Bob Seaquist, W9LSE; Cathie Steinhoff, KC9ZEZ; Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT.



Cathie Steinhoff, KC9ZEZ, left, Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT, and Keith Laken, KEØIJI, take a break from the county's rail exercise Oct. 12.

## Notice

The club meeting, Thursday, Oct. 17, features Yaesu National Sales Manager John Kruk, N9UPC.  
**Note the location: 7 p.m., in 105 Watkins Hall, Winona State University.**

Park in the Central Lutheran Church parking lot at West 8th and Huff Sts.

A gray day that promised storms and high winds turned into a good day for bicycling and Amateur Radio communication Sept. 21 for the Ride The Ridges bicycle tour. This was the fourth year the Winona Amateur Radio Club has provided communications for the event. "We couldn't do the ride as well as we do without the help you provide," noted Ride Coordinator Mike Bernatz.

The bicycle tour's four routes, ranging from 18–106 miles in length, are set in a triangle from Winona to Rushford to La Crescent and back to Winona. It is an area with challenging RF conditions requiring the use of the 146.835 repeater in Winona as well as the 146.970 repeater in La Crescent; additionally, APRS communication had to be supplemented with temporary digipeaters in Houston and Rushford. A feature was APRS as a tactical weapon enabling the net control station as well as the ride director (in his truck) to view assets at a glance. The public could watch positions as well on a large screen at the ride headquarters in the Winona Middle School.

Club help was more than a public service event, said radio liaison Dan Goltz, "We all learn something, and these challenges force us to push our comfort level a little with the technology."

Hams participating in the operation included: Brad Benke, KBØUDI; Erik Brom, WBØNIU; Bill Chavez, KEØIJG; Mike Cizek, WØVTT; Dale Cohenour, KEØEKD; Bill Davis, WØMZM; Paul Degallier, ADØUU; Syed Faruque, ACØVA; Dan Goltz, WKØW; Nancy Goltz, NØNAN; Harro Hohenner, KG6RLM; Clare Jarvis, KØNY; John Kowalik, K2OPT; Keith Laken, KEØIJI; Ben Kuhn, KUØHN; Marv Rodvold, AC9TO; Bob Seaquist, W9LSE; Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT; Steve Wiebke, WØSTV; Steve White, KDØBOD.

# Ride The Ridges event success



Steve White, KDØBOD, left, with Ride Coordinator Mike Bernatz



APRSISCE used for tactical purposes.



Nancy Goltz, NØNAN, enjoys a moment at the Witt rest



Erik Brom, WBØNIU, left, and Keith Laken, KEØIJI, install a digipeater.

# WARC Executive Board (unofficial minutes)

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2019, Watkins, Winona State University

Paul Schumacher, KØZYV; Mike Foerster, WØIH; Dan Goltz, WKØW; Marv Rodvold, AC9TO; Harro Hohenner, KG6RLM; Erik Brom, WBØNIU; Clare Jarvis, KØNY. Guests: Tom Wilmot, WØMK; Bob Seaquist, W9LSE; John Kowalik, K2OPT

**Treasurer's Report** (Harro Hohenner, KG6RLM)

Balance on 8/31/2019	\$3,240.27
Balance reported by bank	\$3,240.27
Paid members (2019)	41

**Thank-you** (Dan Goltz, WKØW) The board thanked Erik Brom, WBØNIU, for hosting the Ride The Ridges training meeting at Goodview Haven.

**Yaesu program** Oct. 17: Marv will host and will field questions from the reflector for John Kruk. The meeting will be in Watkins Hall, Winona State University. Parking is available in the Central Lutheran Church parking lot.

**Public Service** (Dan Goltz, WKØW) Ride The Ridges was very successful. All of our positions were manned. We had enough equipment for all positions and all of our equipment worked well. I was not aware of any messages we were unable to pass. All equipment borrowed from the EOC has been returned, except for one vest, and I have that accounted for, and, we found that a dual band radio from the EOC has a bad UHF receiver and Mike, WØIH, is looking at that. Most importantly, 18 hams actively participated, more than that if you include donations of equipment.

The Winona County Emergency Management/Railroad exercise is scheduled for Oct. 12, from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. We have 10 persons signed up to participate. The scenario,

location, or what equipment we may need is unknown. This may be by design. The exercise is planned by a commercial training agency hired by the railroad, and will include first response agencies from Minnesota and Wisconsin. Several of our participants are first timers.

Bob Seaquist, W9LSE, Mike, WØIH, and myself are working on the presentation to the Winona County Emergency Service quarterly meeting Dec. 18. So far, we have determined that a short power point and video highlighting some of the things we do and can do, along with a couple live demonstrations from the radio room at the LEC could be effective. We need to work on the details. We want to focus on things we do well that other agencies may not know we can do, with the ultimate goal of augmenting and streamlining emergency response communications.

**Witoka:** (Mike Foerster, WØIH) No changes have been made to the system at Witoka, though I do want to re-install the ZS6BKW antenna soon for the HF station. I received an email regarding a tower climber to straighten out the UHF/VHF antennas. Mike, WØVTT, will recommend the kind of work. The climber should be authorized if the work estimate is \$1,000 or less.

**Repeaters:** (Erik Brom, WBØNIU) Installation of Fusion repeater at KAGE site successful.

**Web site:** (Paul Schumacher, KØZYV) QTH.com costs \$60 for Website and reflector annually.

**Facebook:** the club's inactive Facebook site should be updated. Erik will check how to resume control of the site.

## Yaesu presentation Oct 17

Yaesu's product line, digital radio and member questions will highlight the Thursday, Oct. 17, meeting of the Winona Amateur Radio Club. Yaesu National Sales Manager John Kruk, N9UPC, will speak.

Kruk has a strong interest in digital voice on the VHF and UHF bands with some experimentation on the HF bands. This is in addition to the usage of gateways or hotspots utilizing digital voice to connect to systems anywhere in the world. Having this interest has caused him to start the WI-LINK which combines different digital voice and analog voice modes together for interoperability.

He uses a number of modes to communicate including Yaesu System Fusion, DMR, P25, Allstar, and regular RF.



Club members using the Witoka remote complained that the antenna wasn't working well, not surprisingly because it was broken. "The antenna tuner was tuning up about a 50' chunk of the window line!" explained Mike Foerster, WØIH. He promises to re-install the ZS6BKW dipole antenna (similar to a G5RV antenna, but much better matching on the ham bands) and restore good operation at the station.

The club is engaging a climber to do other needed repairs on the Witoka tower before winter fully sets-in. Work ranges from fixing coax and connectors to replacing lights.



Clare Jarvis, KØNY, left, provides advice at the Ride The Ridges bicycle tour.

## Get an independent evaluation

It's important to understand your station's strengths and weaknesses. But sometimes pride of ownership can cloud an accurate assessment of what most needs to be improved. Invite a fellow operator (even better, more than one) to use your station during a contest to really understand how it performs. You'll need to convince them to be brutally honest. You might want to observe them during band changes, when conditions are difficult, etc. to see if they can take full advantage of what makes your station special. Then, you'll have to convince yourself to listen to their critique without arguing with them. You might want that new amplifier, but it might be a better use of resources to have a better antenna.

### WØNE Repeaters

146.640 PL 100.0 Hz \*

146.835 PL 131.8 Hz \*\*

444.225 PL 100.0Hz FM Voice C4FM Digital

442.150, 100 Hz. FM Voice C4FM Digital

\* SkyWarn Net when activated.

\*\* Sunday Night Net—8:30 p.m.

Winona Amateur Radio club meetings are 7 p.m., third Thursday of the month TEMPORARILY in 105 Watkins Hall, Winona State University.

Parking is challenging on campus so use the Central Lutheran Church parking lot at West 8th and Huff Sts. 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 1451, Winona, MN 55987

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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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Distribution to individual members by USPS is available upon request. Editor: Bob Seaquist, W9LSE. Address comments and Hamgram correspondence to: Bob Seaquist, 202 Zephyr Circle, La Crosse, Wis. 54601 or [seaquist.robe@eagle.uwlax.edu](mailto:seaquist.robe@eagle.uwlax.edu) 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

