

The Outdoors radio Hamgram

July 2, 2020



CQ CQ CQ FIELD DAY: challenges at the farm

By Mike Cizek, WØVTT

Field Day was a little different this year. With this nasty virus causing cancellations of almost everything, there was some doubt as to whether or not we would participate and how we would manage. Most hams stayed home and 78 percent of QSOs were with stations operating from home.



RAISING THE COUNTY MOBILE TOWER BEFORE THE RAINS CAME.



MIKE CIZEK, WØVTT. FUSSES WITH THE COUNTY'S MOBILE TOWER.

Fortunately, our little radio club has an amazing wealth of talent in many areas, and we were able to hold an almost normal Field Day operation.

Preparation

Planning for this year's Field Day began in early April. Your FD committee, Marv Rodvold, AC9TO, Mike Foerster, WØIH, Bob Seaquist, W9LSE, and myself, all got a lot of practice with emails and Zoom meetings. We made a few site visits, fussed about antennas and radios, asked a lot of people for a lot of help, and eventually came up with a plan. We decided it made sense to designate our stations by band this year. With our "socially distanced" stations, this made setup much simpler. Many other club members worked very hard to mount a successful operation.

Dr. William Davis, WØMZM, MD and Dan Goltz, WKØW, PharmD came up with a set of procedures to keep us all safe and healthy during the weekend. At first it seemed like it would be a huge burden, but looking back, the extra steps we had to take were just mildly annoying and inconvenient. They didn't really slow us down and probably didn't cost us any QSOs. Thanks Bill and Dan!

Jim Jarvis, KBØTHN, of APRS World, loaned his 30 kW generator and delivered it to the site for us. It ran flawlessly all weekend; we turned it on Saturday morning, and turned it off Sunday afternoon. Thanks Jim!

Ben Klinger, KEØTNM, Winona County Emergency Management Coordinator, arranged for us to use the

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LANCE TAGLIAPIETRA, ADØUT, 'RUNNING' 20M.

portable 50' crank up tower. This *REALLY* helped our signal on the higher bands. Thanks Ben!

We were not able to use the city parks and needed to find an alternate site. Erik Brom, WBØNIU, offered the use of his grandparent's 170 year old farmstead in Rollingstone Township. A number of us had the pleasure of meeting

Erik's Aunt Jean Gardiner, the current owner of the property. She was pleased to see all of the activity at the farm and we received a nice local history



lesson from her. Thanks Aunt Jean and Erik!

Setup

Setup began around 11 a.m. Friday when KEØTNM delivered the tower trailer. Naturally, it started pouring rain before we finished, but we managed to get the tri-bander mounted and the tower ready to raise Saturday morning.

People started arriving around 9 a.m. Saturday. Keith Laken, KEØIJ, brought coffee and food to keep us properly nourished. First order of business was raising the tower and installing the 40m dipole. This was followed by putting up the G5RV,

laying out power cables, setting up shelters, setting up radios, computers, the WiFi network, hooking up everything, and trying to make it all work. Naturally, nothing worked at first, despite having been tested extensively beforehand. After a lot of fussing, and more than a little sea-faring language, we had two stations on the air. Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT, made the first QSO on 20m SSB at 1829z and W9LSE fired up on 40m SSB a short time later, but there was still a lot more work to do.

AC9TO and WBØNIU spent nearly three hours getting our GPS timing signal to synchronize computer clocks through the network, which is essential for FT8 operation. WBØNIU made our first FT8 contact on 20m at 0021z. (That's 7:21 p.m. for you locals). Our most recently licensed member, Sam Restel, KFØACN, provided the last piece of the puzzle when he figured out how to make the IC-7300 on the 80m station work on FT8. It took more than seven hours, but we now had all three stations working on all three modes.

Operating

FT8 was something new for us this year, and it was a real learning experience, especially for the setup crew! Even with all of the problems, we made 64 FT8 QSOs, most of them on 80 meters. John Kowalik, K2OPT, KFØACN, and WBØNIU contributed to our FT8 score, along with 50 anonymous

QSOs made by the mysterious WØNE. (Not everyone remembered to log on when they started operating and "WØNE" was the default.)

AC9TO and ADØUT led the charge on SSB with 197 and 179 QSOs respectively. Nearly everyone else, including WØNE, contributed to the total of 436 QSOs on SSB.

Clare Jarvis, KØNY, Dick Lindner, WØRIF, and WØVTT teamed up to make 368 QSOs on CW, all on 40 meters.

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MARV RODVOLD, AC9TO, RAISING AN ANTENNA.

As expected, 20 and 40 meters were the "money bands" with 432 and 390 QSOs respectively. We also made 48 QSOs on 80 meters, 3 on 15 meters, and 5 on 10 meters. WØVTT logged our last QSO at 1631z on 40m CW. We finished with a total of 878 QSOs in the log. That gave us 2620 QSO points, plus 450 bonus points for a total score of 3070 points.

Take down

Around 11:30 a.m. Sunday we felt a shift in the wind and a sudden drop in temperature. Remembering Friday's deluge during setup, we decided it was prudent to stop operating a little early and get packed up before the rains came. Everyone got straight to work, and we were packed up in record time, with the sun still shining.

Final thoughts

For me, the best part of any Winona ARC event is the amazing fellowship among club members. We are truly blessed with our membership. On a more technical note, there were some things that went very well, and there were some that definitely need improvement. Let's start with the things that need improvement:



FIELD DAY WAS FUELED, IN PART, BY MUGBY JUNCTION COFFEE.

We decided to add FT8 to the mix this year, a mode requiring a lot of knowledge to make it work properly. Our biggest issues were establishing accurate time and interfacing with the radios. We thought that having three identical radios would be a good idea. As it turns out, there are so many different settings and configurations on the ICOM 7300, that even though they

all look the same, they are far from identical. Our station for 80 and 15 meters did not work as well as we hoped. We need to come up with a better antenna, or pair of antennas, for these two bands.

Let's end with the good things! Our generator worked perfectly; it was just like having commercial power. Thanks again to Jim KBØTHN. The site worked out very well. We had plenty of room, tall trees for antenna supports, and very low RF noise. Despite

Operator	CW	FT8	LSB	USB	Tot
AC9TO				197	197
AD0UT				179	179
K0NY	29				29
K2OPT		2		3	5
KE0UJ				22	22
KF0ACN		9	2		11
W0IH				4	4
W0NE		51	16	3	70
W0RIF	28				28
W0VTT	311				311
W9LSE			12	2	14
WB0NIU		2		6	8
Total	368	64	30	416	878

being at the bottom of a river valley, the site turned out to be a good RF location. We had no trouble making strings of contacts on 20 and 40 meters. The antennas for these bands both worked very well. We worked 48 states, including Alaska and Hawaii. The need for "socially distant" stations meant that each station was set up closer to its antenna, resulting in lower feed line loss. Having the stations physically separated also meant less audio interference when two or three stations were operating SSB. Overall, the weekend went quite well.

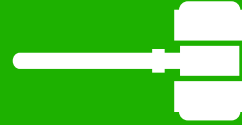
It's not too early to start thinking about Field Day 2021...

Band	CW	FT8	LSB	USB	Tot	Accum
3.5		40	8		48	48
7	368		22		390	438
14		24		408	432	870
21				3	3	873
28				5	5	878
Total	368	64	30	416	878	878



WARC Executive Board (unofficial minutes)

Wednesday, July 8, 2020, via Zoom



7:06 p.m. Attendees: Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT; Bob Seaquist, W9LSE; Paul Schumacher, KØZYV; Harro Hohenner, KG6RLM; Mike Foerster, WØIH; Dan Goltz, WKØW; Erik Brom, WBØNIU. Tom Wilmot, WØMK; Marv Rodvold, AC9TO; Les Hittner, KØBAD.

Minutes: Bob Seaquist, W9LSE. Approved

Treasurer: Harro Hohenner, KG6RLM. Approved
Balance on 6/1/2020 \$4,117.52

Payments:

Reimburse WØIH for connectors	\$24.00
Balance reported by bank	\$4,093.52
Paid members (2020)	40

Repeater Upgrade Project

Goal	\$1,100.00	Total	\$1,653.97	Bal.	\$753.97
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Donations For ARRL Field Day

Fuel for Field Day generator	\$60.00
Porta-potty rental	\$119.19

Wrote letter to Jim Jarvis, KBØTHN, re: generator donation

Public Service: Dan Goltz, WKØW: Most events that the committee would be reporting on have been cancelled for the year.

Our emergency management director requested that we document the setup and take down of the tower trailer that we use for field day, so he can use it for training purposes. Bob Seaquist, W9LSE, supplied photos, and Mike Cizek, WØVTT, provided the

narration for the project. It has been well received by the director.

We experienced one significant Skywarn call out June 28. We were very pleased with the response. Participation was excellent with 12-15 stations checking into the net. Reporting was accurate and precise, and the 64 repeater worked well for the nearly four hour event.

A Skywarn training session is proposed for the club via Zoom if there is enough interest 6:30 p.m. Mon July 13.

Tower: Mike Foerster, WØIH. The IC-7300 rig is back at Witoka with other gear. The beam will go to Mike Cizek, WØVTT for basic repairs. The tower climber hasn't responded.

Interconnect: Marv Rodvold, AC9TO. The equipment and yagis are available and it's a matter of scheduling when to mount it. He and Ben Kuhn, KUØHN, will start at Witoka and shoot at Rooster Ridge.

Repeater: Erik Brom, WBØNIU. There is some unfinished business such as lightning arrestors and the APRS node that need doing.

Program: Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT. For July there will be a summary of Field Day plus Les Hittner, KØBAD will do the Formula Shack.

Adjourn 7:36 p.m.

July 16
meeting

Aloha from Les, KØBAD, of Hilo, Hawaii. He is inviting us into his sunny shack for our July 16 meeting. Then we head to a Minnesota City area farm for the Winona Amateur Radio Club's Field Day, or, at least, a review of Field Day fun. The meeting will be on Zoom at 7 p.m. Thursday, July 16. (The address will be on the club's email reflector)

Peaks, parks, and prayers: islands in a digital sea

By Wayne Burdick, N6KR



WAYNE BURDICK, N6KR, WITH AN ELECRAFT KX3.

Every day, hams worldwide summit mountains and hills carrying the lightest possible load. They earn every calorie burned, and are rewarded with vistas most people never see. Like all adventurers, they proudly display nature's merit badges: scrapes, bruises, and stings.

And then they go back for more. The number of peaks "bagged" by some operators is staggering, as is their level of fitness and endurance.

In addition to those formally pursuing peaks (via SOTA, or Summits on the Air), there are many others who operate casually from hiking trails and parks. Some operate while they walk (pedestrian mobile, HT-style or HFpack). Some operate bicycle-mobile.

I'm writing this out of admiration for, and in solidarity with, all of those who commune equally with nature and the ionosphere.

There's one thing these hams have in common.

Upon arriving at their destination—tired, sweaty, hungry, elated, or some combination of these—they hope to make a few QSOs. To experience a synthesis of the outdoors and the radio art.

But it isn't always easy.

While many hams have transitioned to computer-based digital modes such as FT8, others have not. This includes ultralight travelers, as well as those who seek the satisfaction of home-building simple gear and putting it on the air.

For portable operators in particular, simplicity and pragmatics often dictate the use of CW and SSB. It may not be desirable or even possible to lug a laptop in your pack, find a place to set it up, and attach its myriad cables. You might struggle to see a washed-out LCD screen in direct sunlight. High winds might capture an open laptop and sweep your gear away.

Many, instead, choose traditional modes. These allow for small, integrated gear that can often be hand-held. And there's the bonus of immediacy such modes offer,

without mediation, without constraints on duration or content.

To put yourself in their shoes, imagine that you just trekked several miles, much of it uphill. To accommodate the need for food, water, clothing, and safety gear, you've brought a minimum amount of radio equipment. It might be a 3-ounce CW QRP radio; an HF-VHF-UHF portable, an all-band/all-mode HF HT (like a KX2), or your latest home-brew transceiver.

When you arrive at your peak, you survey the spot for a suitable operating position. It might be a large, flat rock; a patch of ground not infested with ants and spiders; or a shady spot with a downslope in a favored direction. You might climb a tree. Shelter beneath a ridge. Or dangle your legs and antenna from a cliff.

Speaking of which, deployment of antennas presents another challenge. You could spin-cast or toss a wire, hoping for a good landing, without snags. You might wedge the feet of a tripod into rocks, then attach a small magnetic loop. Or you might use a simple telescoping whip.

All that effort. Now it's time to turn on the radio. And pray.

Virtually every time I've gone on such an outing, I've made contacts. At times I've been lucky. Maybe it's operating experience: knowing who to call.

But sometimes there's no one around on CW or SSB. Is it propagation? Or is everyone swimming in the digital sea, not paying attention to you, on your remote island?

You can spot yourself on RBN (reverse beacon network), or prearrange skeds. But what many of us hope for is that burst of contacts. Feeling like a rare DX station. Feeling that slap-on-the-back-at-a-distance that says: "We hear you."

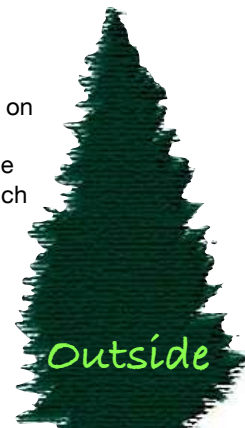
You can, of course, partake of this experience yourself.

Whether you do or not, though: Please consider listening for those who do. Formal activations are announced in advance. See for example: <https://www.sota.org.uk/>

The band segments used are very small, or even a single frequency, making it easy to monitor them while you engage in other activity around the shack or on the air. You can use SOTA spotting websites, or just keep a receiver on one of the watering holes. (The Elecraft K3/K3S/KX2/KX3 makes this easy, with built-in scanning. You can set the rig up for either muted or live audio scans, the latter making it easier to hear weak signals when they pop up.)

One final thought. In this pandemic era, some of us have had more time to get on the air, and some of us have had more chances to get outside.

Let's do both. At the same time.



Club members spot tornados June 28

The club's ailing '64 repeater, the primary machine for storm spotters, had just been nursed back to health when the National Weather Service called out spotters Sunday, June 28. Among them were Dan Goltz, WKØW, Nancy Goltz, NØNAN, and Brad Benke, KBØUDI, all of whom watched and reported from the same area.

They hit the jackpot!

"At one point there were four tornadoes on the ground at the same time, all very weak," said Dan Goltz. "They just all came down and were side by side on the horizon, for maybe a minute at most, then they ascended back into the clouds one by one." Dan Goltz noted that he's been a spotter for more than 40 years and these were the first he's reported.

The storms came together entering western Winona County and fell apart crossing into Wisconsin.



Dan Goltz, WKØW, image

The peanut station

By Jim Brown, NØWE



So what the heck is a peanut station? My definition of a peanut station is a very modest station with a modest antenna system. I consider my station a peanut station. I have two HF rigs in the shack. A Yaesu FT dx1200 and an Icom 7300. Both rigs are considered entry-level rigs by their manufacturers. I have no amplifiers, I run barefoot at 100 watts. For an antenna system I have a Hy-Gain tri-bander at 40' for 10, 15 and 20. I also have a Butternut HF2 vertical for 40 and 80. Like most of us in the area I operate out of a hole at the bottom of the river valley. To make matters worse I live right against the bluffs.

So why am I telling you this? It's because I am also a contester. How can I be a contester with the station I just described, you ask? Well you need to pick your battles. Will I ever finish in the top 50 of a DX contest,

no way! Will I be in the top 10 in Sweepstakes? Again a big negatory. So what are battles I can win? In ARRL Sweeps my goal is a clean sweep. Work all the sections in the contest. The first time I did it was as a WARC club station at my house. We used my Yaesu FT 900 and a Cushcraft multi-band vertical. I can't tell you how happy we were when we finally got Wyoming, the last section needed. Since then I have gotten six other clean sweeps, the majority of them from my station. QSO parties are another opportunity. The North American QSO Party is always fun. It has a simple exchange and the participants are friendly. Not a blood and guts contest. Now can I win that contest, probably not but I was able to get the high point in Minnesota twice. State QSO parties are also fun. I was able to take First Place in the Phone category and two Second places in the Phone category.

Believe me I am not bragging. I am just letting you know you don't need to be a big contest station on the hill running 1,500 watts to be competitive and have fun. You can practice your contesting skills and get every bit as much satisfaction as the Big Guns. You just have to pick your battles. As the famous quote says in the Dirty Harry movie Magnum Force "a man's got to know his limitations."

Happy contesting



Winona Amateur Radio Club, Inc. P.O. Box 1451, Winona, MN 55987

WØNE Repeaters

- 146.640 PL 100.0 Hz *
- 146.835 PL 131.8 Hz ** FM Voice C4FM Digital
- 444.225 PL 100.0Hz FM Voice C4FM Digital
- 442.150 PL 100.0 Hz. FM Voice C4FM Digital
- * SkyWarn Net when activated.
- ** Sundav Nisht Net—8:30 p.m.

Winona Amateur Radio club meetings are 7 p.m., third Thursday of the month on Zoom. The monthly program is open to the public. A link to the meeting is posted on the club's e-mail reflector (http://mail.w0ne.org/mailman/listinfo/warc_w0ne.org)

- President: Paul Schumacher, KØZYV, pschumacher@winona.edu
- Vice President: Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT, lancetag@hbc.com
- Treasurer: Harro Hohenner, KG6RLM, Harro@hohenner.com
- Secretary: Bob Seaquist, W9LSE, seaquist.robe@eagle.uwlax.edu
- Custodian: Erik Brom, WBØNIU, ewbrom@hbc.com
- At Large: Dan Goltz, WKØW; Mike Foerster, WØIH

Dues: \$30 per calendar year per license holder. \$35 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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