

The Hamgram

November 2020



Club loses two longtime members

Ken Spittler, NØJP, and Bill Davis, WØMZN, SK

A cheery voice on the repeater, an Elmer and a Ham dedicated to the National Traffic System has died. **Ken Spittler, NØJP**, 89, of Winona, died Oct. 25.

NØJP was an important and active part of the Winona Amateur Radio Club, but he became a Ham so that he could fly radio-controlled airplanes. He loved building and flying them and let that love progress to more of amateur radio. The ARRL, in 2017, presented a Special Service Award to Ken recognizing his 47 years as a net control station for the Minnesota Section. He tapped away at his key for years chasing special events, contests and other Ham radio activities. It is unlikely he ever used a microphone on HF.

"When I moved to Winona and bought a house just a block from Ken, he was most supportive and helpful of my ham radio endeavors. He was part of WARC from the beginning and always had stories to tell of early days," recalls Syed Faruque, ACØVA.

NØJP did use a microphone on VHF and was a friendly voice that quickly came back on the



NØJP WAS HONORED FOR HIS 47 YEARS AS A NET CONTROL STATION FOR THE MINNESOTA SECTION.

repeater. "Ken was always there on my way to work every day for a nice chat - really miss those times," says Matt Burt, KFØQ.

He was born in Winona and was a graduate of Winona High School. He served with the United States Army in Korea as a heavy truck mechanic.

Ken was a lifetime mechanic and "car whisperer" and was employed with C.P. Venables, Nystrom Motors and Winona Motor Parts.

Ken was proud of his O-negative blood type, and that he was able to give blood often, achieving a total of 26 gallons of blood donated during his lifetime.

Dr. William E. Davis, WØMZN, 80, died Nov. 2, 2020. He was a long-time ham whose primary interest was RTTY, and was a long-time member of the WARC.

Bill was a family medicine doctor who had practiced more than 30 years before retiring five years ago.

He helped in the development of Winona Health's computer system and presented at national medical conferences on the topic of electronic medical needs.

WØMZN was instrumental in developing an advanced electronic medical record system to improve patient care, quality and safety. And he was one of the pioneers in exploring how electronic records could make access to crucial patient health information easily and immediately accessible at the point of care.

Dr. Davis was Winona Health's first chief medical information officer. In addition to caring for patients, he devoted countless hours to working with staff to develop the electronic infrastructure required for more efficient care.

He was active with the WARC as recently as Field Day when he came to the site and operated.



BILL DAVIS, WØMZN, RETIRED FROM WINONA HEALTH IN 2015.

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Skywarn Recognition changes

The National Weather Service annual SKYWARN™ Recognition Day celebrates the relationship between the amateur community and the National Weather Service program. The event recognizes amateurs for the public service they perform during times of severe weather. This year's event will be different. In our area many Hams have gone to the La Crosse NWS office to operate. This year, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the focus will shift to contacting as many SKYWARN trained spotters on the air as possible during the event.

Radio amateurs who wish to participate may sign up for a SKYWARN Recognition Day number by completing the form found on the SRD 2020 website. See the event website for the full operating guidelines.

[SKYWARN Recognition Day 2020](#) will be held from 0000 UTC to 2400 UTC Dec. 5.



Board elections Annual meeting Nov. 19



Winona Amateur Radio Club members will elect board members and conduct other club business at the club's annual meeting 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 19, via Zoom. Members will elect three board members to fill spots now held by Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT, Dan Goltz, WKØW, and Mike Foerster, WØIH. Foerster declined to run. The slate includes Clare Jarvis, KØNY, Goltz and Tagliapietra.

Nominations will also be taken from the floor.

Current club board members include: Harro Hohenner, KG6RLM, Paul Schumacher, KØZYV, Bob Seaquist, W9LSE, Foerster, Tagliapietra, and Goltz. The club's custodian is Erik Brom, WBØNIU. The custodian automatically is a member of the board.

Club Fusion repeaters are more magical



The magic of the Winona Amateur Radio Club Fusion repeaters is that they are able to connect with other repeaters so that, if you're on the Winona Repeater (444.225) by tapping in the DG-ID "05" you connect with the Witoka machine plus the sunny Hilo, Hawaii repeater that belongs to Les Hittner, KØBAD.

A principal benefit of the digital repeaters linking with each other is if there is an emergency communications event. Linking the additional repeaters gives a much bigger footprint for the operation.

In the future the Winona repeaters could link to machines simply to the La Crosse '97 repeater for a broad, regional radio footprint or across the state. There are also plans for extended internet access and various applications to support club activities.

The WARC repeaters are located in three places so a team is busy linking them with MESH microwave radios.

Club members Ben Kuhn, KUØHN, Erik Brom, WBØNIU, Marv Rodvold, AC9TO, and Mike Cizek, WØVTT, have been mounting antennas and setting up the system.

DG-IDs:

Winona Repeater. 444.225

DG-ID 03 Connects Winona to Witoka
 DG-ID 09 Connects only on the Winona Repeater
 DG-ID 05 Connects Winona, Witoka, and Hilo Repeater

Witoka Repeater 442.150

DG-ID 03 Connects Winona to Witoka
 DG-ID 09 Connects only on the Witoka Repeater
 DG-ID 05 Connects Winona, Witoka, and Hilo Repeater

Bluff Siding Repeater 146.835

DG-ID 00 Connects only on the Bluff Siding Repeater

WARC Executive Board (unofficial minutes)

Wednesday, November 4, 2020, via Zoom

Attendees: Paul Schumacher, KØZYV; Bob Seaquist, W9LSE; Harro Hohenner, KG6RLM; Dan Goltz, WKØW; Mike Foerster, WØIH; Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT; Clare Jarvis, KØNY; Marv Rodvold, AC9TO; Keith Laken, KEØIJ; Sam Resto, KFØACN; Ben Kuhn, KUØHN; Tom Wilmot, WØMK.

Called to order at 7:02 p.m. on Zoom.

Minutes: Bob Seaquist, W9LSE (approved)

Treasurer: Harro Hohenner, KG6RLM (approved)

Balance on 10/1/2020 \$3,447.48

(correction of \$43.13 previously reported in September \$3,404.35)

Deposits: \$194.28

Dues (for 2021) \$20.15

Dues (for 2021) \$30.00

Ken Spittler Memorial \$125.00

Unknown \$13.13

Unknown \$6.00

Payments:

KØZYV for QTH.COM \$59.40

Balance reported by bank \$3,598.63

Paid members (2020) 41

Board slate: Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT. The terms of Mike Foerster, WØIH, Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT, and Dan Goltz, WKØW expire. Foerster indicated he would not like to run for another term. Clare Jarvis, KØNY, indicated he would like to serve. The slate will be offered to the membership at the Thursday, Nov. 18, club meeting. Nominations will be entertained from the floor. If none are received the slate may be approved by acclamation; otherwise members will vote via Zoom voting.

Witoka: Mike Foerster, WØIH: He will set up the club remote for Earl Quinnell, WAØELW, who is in a nursing home.

Harro will install a fan in the TM707 supplied by Ben Kuhn.

Mike plans to donate \$25 to Remote Hams. **The club also will donate \$25 to Remote Hams (moved by Mike, second by Dan).**

The beam stored at Witoka has had its protective plastic removed at the suggestion of WØVTT.

Link: Marv Rodvold, AC9TO: The three Fusion repeaters should be linked by Nov 6. The next thing is to determine which Apps should be on the net.

Public Service: Dan Goltz, WKØW. Walt Kelly, KEØXI, and Dan Goltz, WKØW, met with Winona County Emergency Manager Ben Klinger to plan the anticipated installation of amateur equipment in the Sheriff's mobile command post trailer.

An unused commercial VHF radio will be removed and replaced with a Yaesu FTM 400. We will use the existing power supply, but the existing VHF antenna and feed line has to be replaced. Rather than try to fish the coax through the existing cabinetry, we will use an existing steel mounting plate on the aluminum roof, and drill a new hole to run the coax, and seal it with silicone.

Our choice of antenna will be submitted to Emergency Management and it will be added to the budget for purchase before the first of the year. Installation is planned for next spring.

The county plans to replace this trailer in the future, and a better installation configuration can be done at that time, as well as consideration for an HF antenna feed line.

A second FTM-400 and antenna is also in the budget for installation in the SOAR van. That installation will be considered when the equipment has been purchased.

Winona County Agencies and Organizations WARC has a relationship with include: Winona County Sheriff's Department; Winona County Emergency Management; City of Winona Fire Department; Winona County Public Health; Winona County Sheriff's SOAR Team; Winona County Dive Rescue; City of Goodview; Goodview Fire Department; Goodview City Police; Wilson Fire/Rescue; Pickwick Fire/Rescue; National Weather Service; Winona Rotary Club; Winona Lions Clubs; City of Winona Police Department; Winona State University

Silent Keys: Paul Schumacher, KØZYV. The club secretary will let the ARRL know of the deaths of Ken Spittler, NØJP, and Bill Davis, WØMZN, and will also send club sympathy cards to their families.

(MOTION): Money donated to the club in memory of NØJP will be invested in Amateur Radio books that will be placed in Winona Public School libraries.

Adjourn: 8:14 p.m.

Tips for the sweeps

By John Bee N1GNV
www.qsradio.com

The ARRL Sweepstakes–Phone is Nov. 21–23. Here are some ideas on how to make the most of a contest.

I'm a casual contester and my modest station is a 100W HF rig and a wire antenna up about 30 feet, squarely in "Peanut Whistle" territory. With such a station you can get on the air and work stations all over the US and the world.

1. Read the rules. Understand what bands you can use, what your entry category will be, and what the "exchange" is.

2. Get with the program. Specifically, a logging program. My personal choice is the [N1MM Logger](#). It's free and has an amazing array of features. Don't wait until the last minute to install it and familiarize yourself with it. Get it and spend a little time with it.

3. More Butt-in-Chair-Operating-Time = more contacts. But don't forget to take breaks.

4. Set an achievable goal. You're not going to win against the "Big Guns," but you can certainly try to beat your last year's score.

5. Study propagation forecasts, to get a sense of what bands are likely to be open, and at what times. Have a basic plan.

6. Don't waste time in pileups early in the contest. Go back to them later in the contest, after they've worked everyone else. They'll be begging for contacts and you'll work them easily.

7. Work those mults! Most contests include "multipliers" in their scoring system. Each mult makes a much bigger difference in your score than another contact in the same country or state.

8. Know Knobs! Familiarize yourself with the controls on your radio. QRP operators turn OFF the pre-amp, and turn ON some attenuation. That may seem counter-intuitive. But now if a station is loud to you, the chances are much better that you're also loud to him. Let his big antennas and high power do the "heavy lifting".

9. Use standard phonetics.

10. Listen before you call. Make sure you've got the other station's call and exchange. Listen to his pattern. Does he say "QRZ?" after each contact? You want to make sure you're transmitting when he's listening. Work him (making sure he's got YOUR call correct!), hit enter, and he's in your log.

11. Bonus Tip: Many Hams travel to rare locations and assemble stations just for the major contests. In the days leading up to the event, they'll be testing their equipment on the air. That's a great opportunity to test your own setup and snag a few more sections at the same time.

Finally -- this is a hobby. It's supposed to be FUN!!



Running with the keyboard

*"I run 20 like there's no tomorrow
Frequency I'm on, they crowd in on me
Least I don't need to touch my paddle
I send QRL with just one key!"*

With today's logging programs, nearly any interaction you would want to have with a rig can be done by pressing a key on the keyboard. If you're looking for speed, learn how to keep your hands on the keyboard to turn RIT on/off, to switch receive filters, to send fills and say hi to a club member with a keyboard typed message. You'll save time, and you'll be less prone to make mistakes.

DXorcism

Traffic along the street came to a halt yesterday as curious drivers stopped to see Father Henry McGuire suspended high above the neighborhood in a scissor lift.

Local ham radio operator Malcolm O'Hara arranged the spectacle, after experiencing phenomena that led him to determine his equipment was possessed. O'Hara asked Father McGuire to "drive out the demons" that have prevented him from talking to distant amateur radio stations. The pair dubbed the activity a "DXorcism," which involved throwing holy water on a Rohn tower and a Cushcraft beam antenna. "Trust me, this was a last resort," said O'Hara. "Finding pea soup in my cantenna was the last straw."

He says strange occurrences have been happening in his shack for more than a year. "My beam turns all by itself! My buddies say it's an electrical wiring problem, but I know it's paranormal." "And, last week I was trying to work some RTTY, expecting a 599 signal report, but the screen printed 666. My wife says I need glasses, but it really freaked me out," said O'Hara. He says he's not ready yet to call the procedure a success. His first contact following the DXorcism was a special event station in Death Valley.

Joe recommends FT4 over FT8



Note: The inventor of amateur radio's most popular digital mode says contesters are using FT8 when they should use FT4.

By Joe Taylor, K1JT

In my 80th year I can no longer call on my past stamina for contesting. But it's always fun. I got on this time for about six hours, 6 meters only: 122 QSOs in 32 grids. All but about a dozen QSOs were with FT8; the remainder were FT4. I'd like to make two Reports

1. I fail to understand why anyone who uses FT8 in a contest would fail to use FT4 for much of the time. FT4 is about 3 dB less sensitive than FT8, but it's twice as fast. A large fraction of stations you work with FT8 are much more than 3 dB above the FT4 decoding threshold. With FT4 you can still work anyone that can be worked with CW, and near the CW threshold you'll do it faster using FT4. And with FT4 you can work stations that are far weaker (by ~20 dB!) than what's necessary for SSB. When I did work other stations with FT4, I did it by transmitting the FT8 message "K1JT FT4 318". I then QSYed to 50.318 FT4, and generally found several people

followed me there. Many more would have made it much more fruitful!

2. When I'm operating with FT8 I often check the PSK Reporter map to see where I'm being copied. During a contest, on 6 meters, my KW and 7 elements are typically copied in most locations within 1000 miles or so. This is with the band *NOT* open. It's the background ionospheric scatter signal that's being copied. Stations in these locations can definitely be worked, though it takes some dedication to do it. Often it's QSO times of 15 minutes or so, copying on the scatter QSB peaks. FT8 is not optimized for the sort of QSB that ionosscatter creates. We may come up with a digi-mode better suited to such propagation, and it could be very useful for working new grids during otherwise slow times in a VHF contest.

Summary: for speed, flexibility, and ease of running the bands, yes, you should use SSB and CW when there are stations to work. When you run out of those, use FT8 and (especially) FT4. And when the going is slow with standard uses of those modes, consider working ionosscatter for new multipliers.



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 Nihht Net—8:30 p.m.

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

The Hamgram is published monthly by The Winona Amateur Radio Club, Inc. Distribution is via e-mail and the WØNE.org Web site. 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 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.

Winona Amateur Radio club meetings are 7 p.m., third Thursday of the month on Zoom video conferencing. The monthly program is open to the public.

