

The Hamgram

May 2023



Young club members star in Ham video



LUKE, KEØMDW, LEFT, AND ILLIANA RICKERT, KEØZFU, MAKE PORTABLE CONTACTS FOR A VIDEO PROMOTING HAM RADIOS.

Most Hams recall when they became a Ham and why they took the test. For Illiana Rickert, KEØZFU, it was when her family decided on getting “walkie-talkies” for around town communication. Her dad, Kevin, KEØMDX, learned that Ham radios work best so he, sons Luke, KEØMDW, and Augustine, KEØMDV, and Illiana, became Techs and they got their hand-helds. Since then, family members have gone way past HT communications. Now Luke is an Extra, and Kevin and Illiana have General licenses. Ten year old Miriam is working on becoming a Tech.

Recently Kevin, Luke, Illiana, and Miriam Rickert helped the Winona Amateur Radio Club produce a short video promoting Ham Radio.

The family continues using HTs but now has an Icom IC-7300 for HF work. It seems like most family members are discovering the excitement using HF to contact other Hams across the world. Kevin is proud

that one of his first QSOs was with a Ham in Cape Town, South Africa.

HTs are useful on Rickert family camping trips, but they learned hand-helds could still communicate when a cellphone network failure in the Winona area left them phone-less. And Luke notes that an HT keeps him in touch as he bicycles around town.

Illiana, 13, familiar now to many Winona area Hams as a net control on Sunday’s WEP net, is still enthused about the hobby, and upgraded to General May 6.

The family is home schooled in part because Kevin had a poor experience with public education. Now, he says, “our kids read more in a week than most kids read in a year.” The educational curriculum in the Rickert home adapted to the study for Amateur Radio licenses as it does for other endeavors.

Winona County Skywarn net activation

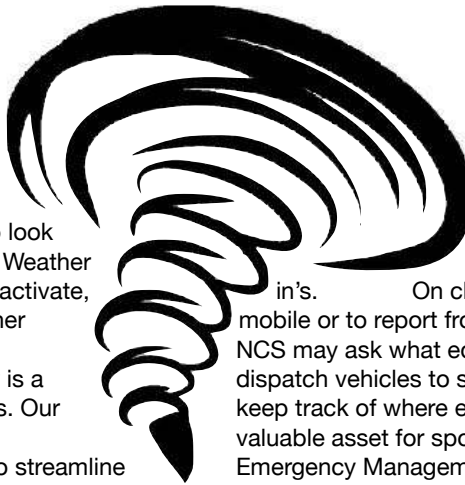
By Dan Goltz, WXØW

Skywarn season is fast approaching. May through August are statistically when we are most likely to be called for Skywarn activation. Late May through July sees the highest number of severe storms in this area. Those of us who've attended the Skywarn training have a good idea of what to look for, where to look for it, and what to report. The National Weather Service (NWS) does not tell us how to activate, operate, or how to report severe weather using our Skywarn network.

How we do things in Winona County is a little different from many other counties. Our good relationship with Winona County Emergency Management has helped to streamline our reporting. Think of the county Skywarn network as a wheel. The Emergency Management office is the hub of that wheel. All the spokes of the wheel go out to various reporting agencies and individuals, that in turn report back to Emergency Management using a variety of communications. Agencies include Amateur Radio, volunteer fire departments, law enforcement, park rangers, the general public, and others. Amateur radio is the largest of those reporting agencies, and our net control is the hub of our wheel.

Over the years we have found it is more efficient to send our reports to the hub, and allow the hub to send the reports to the weather service. This does a couple things. It reduces the number of reports that the La Crosse NWS office has to take from Winona County, and it allows us to filter reports to verify their accuracy. Many reports come from untrained spotters, and may not be as useful as needed. Winona County has a reputation of providing high quality information to the National Weather Service, and our Amateur Radio net has a high quality reputation.

How does this help us know when and how to activate? Our topography dictates that we start our activation sooner than most. We as Amateurs tend to be more proactive than some of the other reporting agencies. If we want our people deployed to a particular area for good visibility, the hills, crooked roads, rivers, streams and forests mandate that we may need up to 45 minutes before a storm arrives to deploy our people. For this reason, our amateur radio spotters keep aware of the situation and how it is changing. We monitor not only our immediate weather, but the weather around us. For example, if severe thunderstorms are predicted for us, we may begin our preparation for deployment when storms reach I-35, and actually begin to send people to strategic locations before the storms reach Rochester. This activity is usually well before the weather service recommends our county deploy spotters.



When severe weather threatens, monitor our primary Skywarn 146.04/640 repeater. The 835 machine is backup. An experienced area Ham will announce activation of a Skywarn net on the repeater. At that point, the repeater is closed for normal use, and net control will start taking check in's. On check in state your ability to go mobile or to report from a stationary location. The NCS may ask what equipment you have, and will dispatch vehicles to strategic spotting locations, then keep track of where everyone's location. APRS is a valuable asset for spotters, allowing NCS and Emergency Management to know where stations are in real time.

All communications are via a directed net, as practiced each Sunday evening. Only pertinent information should be sent. We don't need to know what rig or antenna you are using, or how many batteries you have etc. This frees up the repeater for emergency traffic.

The NWS has given guidelines for reporting. Wall clouds, heavy rain/flooding, wind damage, measured wind speeds, hail, down bursts, funnel clouds, tornadoes etc. If you see something that you are unsure of, and you feel it is significant, call it in. Another station with a better vantage point can identify it. If you're looking at a cloud structure that you feel is harmless but likely to fool the untrained observer, report that also. That helps to sort out the erroneous reports.

Your safety is of primary importance. If the NCS has assigned you to a particular place, and you feel it is unsafe, tell net control, or leave immediately if necessary, and let net control that you have moved.

As storms progress, areas furthest away clear first. Net control will ask for your report, and may direct you to either go to another location or return home. Check out of the net before going off-duty. Hams reporting from home must check-out with net control so they don't waste time calling you later. When all stations have been called in and have been safely accounted for, NCS will close the net and return the frequency to normal amateur activity.

Effective storm spotting requires a lot of experience. Don't feel insulted if net control asks for a verification of your report from another station. If possible, arrange to ride along with a more experienced person.

Our reports are important and can save lives.



W1AW/Ø fun op

WINONA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB MEMBERS REPRESENTED MINNESOTA OPERATING W1AW/Ø FOR ARRL'S VOLUNTEERS ON THE AIR EVENT. FROM LEFT: MARV RODVOLD, AC9TO, DAN GOLTZ, WKØW, MIKE CIZEK, WØVTT, AND MIKE FOERSTER, WØIH.

ARRL is honoring ARRL volunteers with a year-long operating event, Volunteers On the Air (VOTA). Members of the Winona Amateur Radio Club added to the tribute May 12 being on-the-air representing Minnesota as W1AW/Ø from Mike Cizek's, WØVTT, awesome station. W1AW is the ARRL's flagship station in Newington, CT and its call is being specially used for the VOTA event.

All 2023 there are week-long activations of portable W1AW/# stations in all 50 states, and in several US Possessions/Territories, that will generate on-air activity to earn points. Each contact with our station earned the chaser one point unless they contacted us while Bill Lippert, ACØW, operated on 20 meters. Because Bill is ARRL Dakota Division Director contacts with him were worth 225 points.

The WARC operation featured two



ARRL DAKOTA DIVISION DIRECTOR BILL LIPPERT, ACØW, MADE MANY CONTACTS AND GAVE OUT 225 POINTS EACH DURING THE WINONA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB'S PARTICIPATION ON THE NATIONWIDE VOLUNTEERS ON THE AIR EVENT MAY 12.

stations, phone on 20 meters and FT8 on 40 meters. Sadly, 40 was pretty quiet; 20, on the other hand, kept its operator very busy. Participants included: Mike Cizek, WØVTT; Marv Rodvold, AC9TO; Mike Foerster, WØIH, Dan Goltz, WKØW, Bill Lippert, ACØW; and Bob Seaquist, W9LSE.

BAND	MODE	QSOs
40 meters	FT8	53
20 meters	Phone	261

WARC Executive Board (unofficial minutes)

Wednesday, May 3, 2023, via Zoom

Present: Board Members: Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT; Paul Schumacher, KØZYV; Mike Foerster, WØIH; Marv Rodvold, AC9TO; Bob Seaquist, W9LSE. Guests: Dan Goltz, WKØW; Tom Wilmot, WØMK; Clare Jarvis, KØNY.

Called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT.

Minutes (Published in the April Hamgram): Bob Seaquist, W9LSE. *Approved.*

Treasurer's Report: Harro Hohenner, KG6RLM.

Approved

Balance on 4/1/2023 \$6,092.60

Income:

Dues \$30.00

Balance reported by bank \$6,092.60

Paid members 28

Public Service: Dan Goltz, WKØW. Twenty-two licensed amateurs attended the Skywarn training provided by the National Weather Service April 16. There have not been Skywarn call outs this year.

Several amateurs headed up by Russ Marsolek, NØQK, participated in the Storm the Park event. Organizers are appreciative.

Numerous amateurs were involved in the search for Madeline Kingsberry, a missing Winona woman. Amateur radio equipment was not utilized, but amateur radio communication skills were. There has been ARES discussion on a national level about this topic. Public service agencies communications needs are changing, and if amateur radio is to continue to be of benefit to these agencies it has to be flexible in what it can do. AUXCOMM has been mentioned in the past as a way to provide service to public service agencies.

Amateurs volunteered to patrol Mississippi River dikes along during spring flooding. They were not needed.

City of Winona Fire Chief Curt Bittle will retire in October. WARC has had a good relationship with with him and apparently as a good relationship with the proposed chief.

Progress on the new Winona County jail and dispatch center is on track. It has not been determined when we will be moving our equipment into the current dispatch center. Emergency Management Director Ben Klinger hopes the new command trailer will be available for the club's Field Day use. Klinger expressed gratitude to those who took part in the missing person search.

Upcoming events for Public Service include: Ridgeway Adventure Day May 30; Trinona June 11; Storm the Farm July 22; Ride the Ridges September

16; Waumandee Time Trials Sept. 23 and an emergency management multiagency full scale exercise in October.

Mike Foerster suggested the club have pictures, videos and a live demonstration for the Ridgeway event.

Trustee: Mike Foerster, WØIH

The Motorola CDR700 Portable repeater was configured and documented. Warnings are posted on top of the repeater in hopes careless operation will not damage it. Repeater programming hardware and software are stored at WØIH's shack.

There was APRS interference at the KAGE tower that was traced by club members to ADØUT's home. A power outage affected his packet equipment. Consequently, some maintenance was performed at the KAGE site, removing unused antennas, gear and cables as well as vacuuming and wiping the systems down. The collinear antenna has a high SWR that needs to be investigated. Two 15 amp hour batteries appear to be working well. There is a new generator on site. The 900MHz antenna dish and POE supplies were moved to NØQK's garage and the ICOM IC-2AT and TinyTracker APRS unit will be checked out by KUØHN.

AM mode was added back to the IC-7300 remote configuration at Witoka. The 160m antenna was down but resurrected.

WØIH is pursuing installing a 2-meter remote radio at Witoka. It would allow access to the VHF repeaters for club members that are out of town.

There have been no reported problems with the 146.835 Repeater.

Trinona: Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT. The event is on-track for June 11.

Field Day: Marv Rodvold, AC9TO. An outline of plans for Field Day was discussed. It appears there is enough interest to run three radios plus a GOTA station. Contacts and recruitment for GOTA eligible persons should begin immediately. KØZYV will ask Melanie Reap, KDØNTM for her contacts; KG6RLM also will pursue his contacts.

The location is hoped to be in Wincrest Park; ADØUT will get city permission to be there overnight. The back-up plan is NØOWT's farm. Publicity and recruitment of old and new Hams is essential and an opportunity to go outside of the club.

Sunday Night WEP Net: Mike Forster, WØIH: For emergency training the net should try to function on the club's other repeaters as well as simplex.

Adjourn: 7:57 p.m.

The club's importance

By Adam Brown, KC7NFF

One of the great things about Ham Radio is its ability to bring people together. Whether congregating at a Hamfest, attending an educational seminar, making a QSO with a station across the Atlantic, or teaming up with friends on an antenna project, Ham Radio is at its best when we're able to share the excitement of this great hobby.

Nowhere is this truer than at Amateur Radio club meetings that occur every day across the U.S. and around the world. Both new and experienced operators gather to organize Ham Radio events, discuss technical issues, listen to expert presentations, volunteer in the community, perform licensing exams, swap stories and gear, and generally promote the importance of Amateur Radio to anyone who will listen. Here are a couple of perks of being apart of a club.

1. Elmers everywhere: Jumping into the Amateur Radio hobby without a mentor can be like diving into deep water without a life preserver. For many new and experienced Hams, the difference between sinking to the bottom and blissfully floating along is the wise guidance of an Elmer. Joining a club gives you access to not just one, but a group of experienced operators who can help you get off on the right foot.

2. Enjoy yourself: For most Amateur Radio enthusiasts, the answer to "Why are you a Ham?" is simple. Because it's fun!

We have events like Winter Field Day, Field Day, and Fox hunts as well as fun public service events such as Trinona. Events like these help build camaraderie and fellowship among club members.

Keep in mind that the greatest benefit of joining an amateur radio club is a regular and ready mutual access to experienced technical information, references and learning experiences. The more you pursue and interact, the more you get out of your membership.



Computer primer

By Fred Regennitter K4IU

In the early 1980s computers made their entrance into the world of Amateur Radio. Today they are an essential component to most Ham stations and especially for those Hams who also contest.

"What should one consider when purchasing a ham station computer?"

Specs for a computer for Ham purposes depend on the needs and preferences of the user. As a rule of thumb, plan to spend anywhere between \$600 and \$1,200 or so for a dedicated Ham radio computer although refurbished or used computers can save hundreds of dollars.

The processor (CPU) should be as high-powered as possible, with anything between a 2 GHz and 3 GHz Quad core processor being more than adequate to handle most Ham radio needs. Check for faster CPU capabilities, RAM (more is better), and getting a solid-state hard drive if the budget permits.

A few Hams use Macs but most Ham-shack computers are Windows machines. Note that most of the software available for Ham applications runs on the Windows operating system. Additionally, a soundcard and at least one free USB2.0 (or higher) port are required for those planning to use with SDRs and/or give you ham computer more flexibility.

You could build a computer which allows for customization and can be a fun project but it is beyond this Ham's abilities! Buying a pre-built computer can save time and ensure that all components are compatible with each other.

These days it's hard to imagine Ham radio not having computers tightly integrated with a contemporary station.



The Riverland Amateur Radio Club swap fest will be 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday Aug. 5 at Bethany Free Church, 3936 Country Rd B, La Crosse.



IC-230
144 MHz FM 10 W
TRANCEIVER

IC-2 A
144 MHz FM 10 W
TRANCEIVER



Hiawatha
ELECTRONICS
P.O. Box 442
WINONA, MINN. 55987
507/457 8448

619 Huff Street

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 at the Winona County Office Building, 202 West Third St., Winona or Zoom video conferencing. (<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/6881820303?pwd=Z0JuRjZlUXJ2U1RMk1BFS3lvUEhsZz09> Meeting ID: 688 182 0303 Password: WarcBoard) The monthly program is open to the public.

President: Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT, lancetag@hbc.com
 Vice President: Elisamuel Resto, KFØACN, sam@samresto.dev
 Treasurer: Harro Hohenner, KG6RLM, Harro@hohenner.com
 Secretary: Bob Seaquist, W9LSE, seaquist.robe@eagle.uwlax.edu
 Custodian: Mike Foerster, WØIH, mchllfrstr@gmail.com
 At Large: Marv Rodvold, AC9TO; Paul Schumacher, KØZYV
 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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