



Official Publication of the  
West Allis Radio Amateur Club

# Hamtrix

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Volume 61, Issue 1 January, 2014

## JANUARY CLUB HAPPENINGS Club Meeting

St. Peter's Episcopal Church,  
7929 W. Lincoln Avenue, West Allis  
January 14, 2014

### Program

multi topics including  
swapfest, 10meter contest, QSO party,  
homebrew trap dipoles

**Join us for a pre-meeting dinner  
at Johnny V's Classic Cafe  
1650 S 84th St at 5:00pm**



## Wisconsin QSO Party

March 9, 2014 - 1800Z to 0100Z March 10  
(1:00PM CDT to 8:00PM CDT on Sunday, March 9)

[Click here for latest info on web page](#)

WARAC 2-meter net  
Every Wednesday at 8pm  
MATC repeater 147.045 standard offset  
127.3 Hz CTCSS



**NEW** club jackets and hats!  
Go to club Web site and click on  
The GOLD MEDAL IDEAS block  
[For more info or click here](#)



## *The President's Shack January 2014*

The Holidays are over and another Swapfest has come and gone. And it's cold out, so it must be January and a new year!

A big thanks to everyone who helped make our **42nd Swapfest** effort another success! Whoever is in charge of the weather did us a favor by giving us a 30° day sandwiched between bitter cold spells. Real numbers on attendance aren't in yet, but we seemed to be well attended, although down a little maybe.

By next week's meeting Chairman Phil should have more results information. Phil will take us through a wrap-up discussion. Bring your suggestions and comments to the meeting and thanks again to everyone that helped.



It's less than two months until the **2014 Wisconsin QSO Party!** Make sure **Sunday, March 9** is on your calendar and start thinking about possibly operating mobile or setting up a portable station in another county. Or, how about a group of members getting together to do a multi-op station? Anyone interested in spearheading this? Along with this, it would be great to activate our club call, W9FK.

Since the March meeting falls after the QSO Party, we will have discussion and information at the January and February meetings. We will cover basic operating techniques and strategy as well as the new N3FJP programs.

In addition to the Swapfest and 10M contest discussions, the program for this meeting will be a home brew trap dipole discussion plus another topic to be determined. Next month we'll concentrate on WIQP!

Were you on the 10 Meter contest in December? The band was wide open for most of the contest but I didn't hear many club members. I think one reason was that activity on phone was spread out over 500kHz or more, so I was less likely to run into members who were there. What was your experience? We'll talk about it at the meeting. Meanwhile, send in your logs, both to the ARRL and to Chuck, W9WLX, for our club contest. For the club contest, you can bring 'em to the meeting.

And, as always, don't forget our before-meeting dinner at Johnny V's Classic Café, 1650 S. 84th St. at 5:00PM.

See you at the meeting! Bring a friend!  
Tom, K9BTQ

### **From the Editor**

I hope everyone is staying warm and finding ways to enjoy the winter! It seems Phil W9NAW had an in with the weather gods for the Swapfest, one of our few warm days lately. By all accounts the Swapfest went well. Lots of people (customers and helpers) had a good time.

The clubs' next big event will be the Wisconsin QSO Party. Since we are the sponsor of it we like to encourage our club members to think about attending it.

I admit I am not a big contest person but I do find the QSO party fun. Even working QRP SSB I make contacts and find everyone interested in getting you in their log. It's nice to be wanted. I also find it interesting to hear how the good operators efficiently operate and still take time to make even a new person feel important.

Being a relatively short contest there is not a big commitment of time. You get an idea of how your antenna is putting out and (for us people that don't do much contesting) it give us a chance to experience another facet of Ham Radio.

73

Frank KA9FZR

# **WARAC General Meeting Minutes**

## **December 10, 2013**

### **Introduction**

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm by President, Tom Macon, K9BTQ. Overall meeting attendance was 26 with 2 visitors.

### **Program**

The evening's program was Contest Radio Performance, a video from the Contest University presented by Sherwood Engineering. Additionally, Gary Sorenson, W9ULK, ARRL WI Section Manager, introduced himself and discussed his role. Phil Gural, W9NAW, presented the final plans for the WARAC 2014 Swapfest.

### **Business**

Motion was made and accepted to approve the November meeting minutes as published in Hamtrix.

The ARRL 10 meter contest will take place on December 14 & 15. The friendly club competition will be held again this year. ARRL rules apply with extra points for working club members. See December Hamtrix for details.

### **Announcements**

2 meter net every Wednesday at 8:00 pm on 147.045, + offset, PL 127.3. Join in!

CQ Tuesday, 1:00 pm 3rd Tuesday at Country Buffet

The Nut Net breakfast is at Genesis Restaurant, 8:30 am, 4th Tuesday of the month.

Johnny V's is the place for the WARAC pre-meeting dinner. The dinner starts at 5:00 and everyone is encouraged to participate.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Chuck Dellis, W9WLX  
Secretary WARAC

# Swapfest photos



Customers lining up to enter



Where is the Ticket Drum location may be the #1 question asked at the gate.



One of the many vendors at the swapfest. This one does our club hats and jackets

## 2014 SWAPFEST NOTES:

Time constraints and other activities prevent me from writing an article at this time. So here are some interesting notes:

--We couldn't have picked a better day because of the weather. Earlier in the week it was cold and snowy. After the event, it became bitterly cold.

--At the start of the event, the hall entrance wasn't full. The usual big crowd didn't seem to arrive until about 9:00 am. Maybe weather related?

--We had a new caterer. We welcome Mary and Extra Touch Catering and say thank you to Keith from Sweet Dreams for their services.

--Attendance appears to have been average, about 775-800 total paid. The final number should be available by the club general meeting.

--VE testing was lighter than in past years. Of the 12 candidates, eight earned their Technician Class, two upgraded to General Class and one earned his Extra Class.

--Scholarship Fund income from both selling areas was just slightly under \$850.

--We had 32 club members and others helping to make this event a success. Thank you for your assistance and time.

--Our Security Guards, Bear and Nate, help to keep security problems to a minimum.



--Had a lot more than usual good comments from both sellers and buyers about how well we organized and ran the Swapfest.

--We had some loyal sellers leave/not able to make it and the return of previous participants: DC Ace (Don Zeman) passed away and business closed, Dan Osmon (laptops) recovering from heart attack, Paul Washa (books & literature) out of the country and Dave Hinsey vehicle issues.

Back joining us Larry Zalar (audio equipment) and Batteries America (Ev Yost).

--Got more than expected sellers who want their present tables reserved for the Jan 3, 2015 event. A good sign.

--Finally, the 43rd Annual Midwinter Swapfest will be held on January 3, 2015.

THANKS and 73,

Phil, W9NAW  
Swapfest Chairperson

## **CB amplifier**

A few days before the Swapfest I had the opportunity to do a quick check of a CB amplifier. You hear about these a lot on QRP forums because they appear to give a lot of gain in your signal for a few bucks. Almost always someone on the forum will say that they are not type certified and put out a less than ideal signal.

Anyway having the time and access to a spectrum analyzer I agreed to check it out. At home I hooked up to my Yaesu FT-817, a QRP transceiver putting out 5 watts . On the morning nut net I tried it out. Reports came back that it did increase my power and was readable. Turned down the power on th FT-817 to 1 watt there was less distortion and still increased my power. I was still worried about it since I was seeing signs of RF in the shack. My space heater was turning on by itself and getting stuck on.

I was able to take it to my former workplace and put it on a spectrum analyzer. I didn't have a lot of time to experiment and knew it was leaking some RF so I was very careful (since I was in an operating control tower and they don't like interference). I did discover that it transmitted about 35 db down on all the harmonics and seemed to double the width the RF signal on sideband.

I'm sure with added filtering it could be made usable. The workmanship looked good and the parts looked like good quality.

I had fun looking at it. It was sold at the swapfest with the buyer being informed of what we had found.

73

Frank KA9FZR

## CROW KILLS

Researchers for the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority found over 200 dead crows near greater Boston recently, and there was concern that they may have died from Avian Flu. A Bird Pathologist examined the remains of all the crows, and, to everyone's relief, confirmed the problem was definitely NOT Avian Flu. The cause of death appeared to be vehicular impacts.

However, during the detailed analysis it was noted that varying colors of paints appeared on the bird's beaks and claws. By analyzing these paint residues it was determined that 98% of the crows had been killed by impact with trucks, while only 2% were killed by an impact with a car.

MTA then hired an Ornithological Behaviorist to determine if there was a cause for the disproportionate percentages of truck kills versus car kills.

The Ornithological Behaviorist very quickly concluded the cause: when crows eat road kill, they always have a look-out crow in a nearby tree to warn of impending danger. They discovered that while all the lookout crows could shout "Cah", not a single one could shout "Truck."

Absolutely amazing!



Ensuring people have tickets and the cold stays out.

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***See our Web Page or contact us  
for more information on***

- WARAC Memorial Scholarships
- Wisconsin QSO Party
- Midwinter Swapfest
- Worked all Wisconsin Counties Award
- Amateur Radio Classes

WARAC holds meetings on the second Tuesday of each month and board meetings on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Meetings are held at 7:00 PM at:

**St Peter's Episcopal Church  
7929 W. Lincoln Avenue  
West Allis, WI**

Entry is off the alley at the rear of the church.  
A wheel chair ramp and chair-lift are available.