



Official Publication of the
West Allis Radio Amateur Club

Hamtrix

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JUNE CLUB HAPPENINGS



NUT NET
3.985mhz
Monday-Saturday
8:15am CT

Milwaukee-Florida Net
Every Day on 14.290 Mhz
7:00AM - 9:15AM ET
6:00AM - 8:15AM CT



Club Meeting

St. Peter's Episcopal Church,
7929 W. Lincoln Avenue, West Allis
June 14, 2016 7:00 pm

Program

Field Day

presenter Chairman Chuck W9WLX

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

2016 ARRL Field Day is June 25-26

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

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 June 2016

Summer's here and that means Field Day approaches! The month's meeting will focus on Field Day, coming up June 25 and 26. Make sure you have this weekend reserved for Field Day activity. And everyone is welcome - bring a friend!

Chairman Chuck, W9WLX, will fill us in on this year's plans and will lead the discussion of the final details. In addition, we will review our infamous rope trick and do the annual screening of our Field Day tower fall video.

The basic Field Day timetable will be the same as recent years. Setup will begin at 8:00AM on Saturday and the Field Day "contest" starts at 1:00PM. It ends 24 hours later at 1:00PM Sunday and we are usually off the site by 3:00PM. Your participation will be appreciated anytime during the entire period, especially for setup, overnight operating and takedown. Again, Chuck will walk us through the details at the upcoming meeting. Meanwhile, check out the Field Day page on our website - <http://www.warac.org>, click Field Day on the top menu.

Program topics for upcoming meetings will include Skywarn and Flex SDR radios. Stay tuned for details.

The 2016 recipient of our David Knaus Memorial Scholarship will be announced shortly. Perhaps we will have this information at the upcoming meeting.

Our NPOTA activation last Saturday (June 4) went well although it was short. Nineteen Q's by four op's before it rained. Thanks to all eight members who were there and special thanks to Mike WO9B in particular for organizing and promoting this activity. When can we do it again?

As always, please bring your show-and-tell items, stories, on-air activities, travel experiences (Dayton? NPOTA?), etc. for the open discussion portion of our meeting.

Don't forget - we're back to our usual 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.

Summer is here I think. I'm busy as usual. My latest Ham radio experiment is to set up a forty meter loop antenna with twin lead coming down to end near the picnic table out on my deck. In theory this should allow me to take my FT-817, a small balanced line tuner, maybe a key and some paper and be set up in minutes.

I've been able to sit out and listen but haven't made any contacts at this time. Will keep you informed of any progress.

I also went out on the June 4 NPOTA activation. This was the third time I have done that and I've enjoyed it every time. Each was different. We could tell that even with a hundred watts propagation was not the best but we still did have some contacts. If anyone else wants to try, it is easy to set up. I'm willing to help anyone with any questions they have. We have been connecting with the trail at Lapham Peak state park. The trail is long so you could find other areas to operate from. I'm sure we will be doing another activation as a club activity so that is another chance to get out and operate!

Hope to see you at the meeting.
Frank KA9FZR

WARAC General Meeting Minutes

May 10, 2016

Introduction

The meeting was called to order at 18:36 by President, Tom Macon (K9BTQ). Overall meeting attendance was 26 members, plus 3 visitors.

Pizza feasting began at 18:40.

The auction was a lot of fun.

NPOTA – Mike Johnson - Be at Lapham Peak Park on June 4th.

Chuck – Field Day promo.

Tonight's Program:

- Pizza
- Auction – various donations were auctioned. A bargain bin, with items priced at \$0.25 each was available for perusal and item purchase.

Business

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

The meeting was adjourned at 20:44.

Respectfully submitted,
Erwin von der Ehe (WI9EV)
Secretary, W.A.R.A.C.
2016-05-10

W.A.R.A.C. Board Meeting

May 24, 2016

Howard Smith (WA9AXQ), called the meeting to order at 19:00.

Present: Tom Macon (K9BTQ), Steve Dryja (NO9B), Howard Smith (WA9AXQ), Erwin von der Ehe (WI9EV), Dave Garnier (WB9OWN), Frank Humpal (KA9FZR).

Howard (WA9AXQ) gave the monthly Treasurer's report. The general fund and scholarship fund are in good shape.

Tom (K9BTQ) gave an update to the Wisconsin QSO Party. 309 logs received.

Swapfest 2017: VE Testing at Crites Field (Waukesha County Airport). Karen is not able to be on the Swapfest Committee due to her being president of the South Milwaukee club. Volunteers are needed to assume the role of vice-chair and other help.

Pizza nite / Auction was discussed – no improvements for next year could be thought up.

Tom (K9BTQ) gave a review of the club manuals. Still need to review latest versions

Awards Dinner: Date is Sunday, October 23rd. Program is Lynn Kreyer (N9QIP) Wisconsin Interstate Network.

Programs

June, 2016: Field Day 2016

July, 2016: SkyWarn (?)

August, 2016: Flex R6500 Software defined radio

September, 2016:

October, 2016: Elections

Future Program Ideas

Kermit, ARRL

FM38 Repeater System

Badger Weather Net – Sullivan Weather (Spring – April?)

Logger 32 logging software

SO2R Contest operating

Focus on Energy ?

Other Items

Proposed dues changes necessitates a member vote to change the by-laws.

2-meter net continues and needs some more check-ins.

Replacement of the club video projector was discussed.

Comments from Dayton Hamvention – “good, as usual”.

Meeting was adjourned at 21:40.

Respectfully submitted,

Erwin von der Ehe (WI9EV)

Secretary, W.A.R.A.C.

2016-05-24

NPOTA 4June16

The West Allis radio club crew pulled off another Lapham Peak/Ice age trail activation. The weather gods and forecasters made it sound iffy all week. The final decision to go was not made until 8:00 am Saturday morning. It almost came down to looking out the window.

Surprisingly a large part of the group pulled into the parking lot at the park at the same time even though we came from different areas. The next part was to get all the gear up to the site. The rules state that you need to hike at least some part of the trail, even if it is only a small part and set up within sight of the trail.

At other activations we had relied on our QRP rigs to get out. With present propaganda conditions it didn't seem to be cutting it. So Bill N9KPH brought his 100 watt rig and buddy pole. This also meant a heavier battery was needed so a hand cart was added to the inventory.

Set up went well we tuned up the buddy pole on 20 meters. All the parts were hooked up. Table, computer and chairs set up and we were ready go.

The park was busy since it was a free day and it was a national trails celebration.

Here is the list of our fearless operators and their totals.

Operator	SSB contacts
Tom K9BTQ	9
Mike WO9B	3
Bill N9KPH	4
Jim WB9IXS	3
Total	19

Total of 19 divided between the four operators who gave it a try.

The following member were involved in this activation. Tom Macon K9BTQ, Bill Reed N9KPH, Frank Humpal KA9FZR, Mike Johnson WO9B, Dave Garnier WB9OWN, Bill Spellman W9ASA, Ron Crown KA9JCP, Jim Cassamassa WB9IXS,

I heard there was one more member who got to the parking lot in time to see us coming back to the cars loaded down with the equipment but I didn't get his name.

Like all of our activations this was fun and different from the others. This one was cut short by rain coming through the area. We had decided not to take a shelter along as just one more thing to carry and setup.

I'm sure this is not the last time we will see Lapham peak for an activation. We will let club members know when the next one is coming. You are all welcome to come and participate. It's a fun alternate to sitting in your shack.

73

Frank KA9FZR

The Internet of Kits

By Mike Johnson, WO9B

Who didn't enjoy Howard's articles on his Heathkit experience? If you have any recognition of the name "Heathkit", it can't help but conjure an emotional response. As a kid in Minneapolis, there were limited ham radio venues available. One was a store downtown in the dilapidated warehouse district that specialized in new and used ham gear. Just like AES used to be. In addition, we were lucky enough to have a Heathkit store in Hopkins, which was within range of my bicycle. I have to admit to being pretty myopic because all I ever saw in that store was ham gear. Heathkit sold other stuff? Couldn't prove it by me.

For me, I never bought and built anything really big from Heathkit. I did pick up a few accessories and managed to put them together. I still have an SWR meter. Works great and I'll never get rid of it. Never. But as they say, "The times they are a changing". Changing indeed. In fact, I have been thinking about building projects since the Arduino hit the club. Oh yeah, and with the internet, choices and ideas couldn't be better.

I've been putting together a portable QRP setup since last December. My motivation was NPOTA, but in reality I find I am enjoying the portable operating quite a bit. It's easy for CW ops and quite successful. But the kicker is you need to portabalize your setup. Well, I was short some key ingredients: Antenna, tuner, key(er) and all the needed cables and connectors. OK, so 6 months in I had most everything except the tuner. So that's where my kit story really begins.

A month or so ago, the NPOTA group at the club did a test activation out at Lapham Peak. I brought my QRP CW setup which needed an SWR meter and separate tuner to get the EF Half Wave antenna to work. Both of those units were twice the size of my radio and pretty much filled my backpack. Frank, KA9FZR, brought along his little BLT+ tuner which has a built in SWR indicator and is good on 40 thru 10. Hmmmm..... That would be perfect. The quest began.

Bring on Google: "QRP Tuner". It is a kit cornucopia!. Where to start?

www.qrpkits.com: BLT+ @ \$60

www.emtech.steadynet.com : ZM-2 @ \$65

www.4srp.com : Four State tuner @ \$50

www.qrpproject.de/UK/ZM4.html : ZM-4 @ \$125

www.elecraft.com/T1/T1.htm : Elecraft T-1 @ \$159

Ebay: 500 options ranging from \$10 to \$25

QRP Sites too many to list: OMG the choices range from \$10 to \$100.

Forget the kit, plans and parts a-plenty.

I think you get the idea. There is no shortage of kit companies out there. And naturally I am just highlighting tuners, but don't stop there. It is very much the same story for most anything ham related. Transceivers, amps, meters, keyers, antenna's, phased array controllers, digital modes, SDR's. It seems endless.

So how do you choose? Well, it is time to be a smart consumer. You are going to need to complete a transaction online to do business with these vendors. I have to say, doing an Ebay purchase with a Chinese listing is a bit un-nerving the first time. All those questions come to mind: Are they legit? Is it safe? What if I have a problem? Warranty? Returns? And it is not limited to Chinese vendors; these same issues apply to any and all of them. So here are a few does and don'ts.

Once you home in on a product, do an additional Google search listing the product name and add in "review". Someone has done an article on it or posted a YouTube or brought it up in a forum. Look for them. Check it out on eham.net. They have extensive review comments.

Try to find it on the Used market: Search for it on eham.net, qrz.com, qth.com. See if it has any value in the reseller market.

Send the vendor an email or call them on the phone. Ask them a question just to see if they respond and the quality of their response. This falls under the heading of knowing who you are dealing with.

Delivery: Make sure you understand if the shipping fees are included or extra. Read it carefully. Secondly, if you are ordering from China, delivery could be anywhere from 1 week to 1 month. It is almost impossible to predict. Just be aware of it. I have paid extra to buy from a US vendor with better delivery.

Use PayPal: Using PayPal, will provide some protection against fraudulent vendors. You will need to link a credit card or a bank account to your PayPal account. That may be a deal breaker, but you really should consider it. We link a separate credit card to PayPal. A card that is only used on PayPal. No bank accounts. The seller pays the fees for the transaction. If anything goes awry, PayPal is there to void the transaction. It really does work.

Use Ebay: Your Ebay transaction has very similar protections to PayPal. I have voided two transactions in the past couple of months. It worked out perfectly. I use PayPal on Ebay and have yet to experience a problem.

So what tuner did I go with? I chose the Emtech ZM-2 product. It is built and it has a problem. One of the variable capacitors is not working correctly. I sent them an email and they are sending out a replacement part. Super simple.

One other side story. Several months back I purchased an Arduino on Ebay for \$4 or so. It didn't work. My first reaction was, you get what you pay for. A day or so later, I changed my mind and contacted Ebay. I received an immediate refund and did not have to return the defective unit. That's pretty cool. Oh, and it was a Chinese vendor.

If kit building is an interest for you, the times have never been better. Sure you won't be doing business with an iconic company like Heathkit, but who's to say Faymo-Trading.service Amplifiers won't rise to legend status some day?

For Sale



Contact:

AI WA9BZW 414-529-1878 or WA9BZW@arrl.net (prefer to sell local no postage needed)

1. Icom7000, with LDG AT-7000 tuner, Small TV monitor, all manuals and original boxes \$1000
2. Kenwood TS830S with hand mic and manual \$400
3. Hustler mobile antenna with resonators for 80-10, bend over whip,, spring mount quick disconnect, spider etc. \$125
4. Shure 444 mic with Kenwood Connector on \$25
5. Heathkit HO-10 Monitor Scope \$40
6. Kenwood S_5 Headphones Original box \$50



May Auction and pizza dinner pictures





May Auction and pizza dinner pictures



Ham Radio on the Internet
(click on red web address)

Anyone can submit websites for this column. I'll check them out and include them. The editor

Interesting site for finding where lightning is striking.
<http://www.lightningmaps.org/realtime?lang=en#y=42.887718987092;x=-88.03295898437534;z=6;t=2;m=sat;r=0;s=0;d=2;a=2;dc=0;o=0;n=0;>

Another propagation site. Sort of fun to watch and to see how it matches to what you hear on the radio.

<http://www.bandconditions.com/>

Officers and Board
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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.