

Hamgram

Newsletter of the Winona Amateur Radio Club, Inc.
January 2004

W.A.R.C. 2004 HOLIDAY PARTY

Please join us on Thursday, January 15, 2004 at
The Winona Steakhouse
6:00 p.m. for the social hour and 6:30 p.m. for dinner

The meal choices will be:

All Dinner Buffet

\$ 7.49 per person for adults (including seniors)
\$ 2.99 per person for children (ages 4-12)
15% gratuity

Banquet Menu

\$ 8.49 per adult
\$ 3.49 per child

Options include Petite Sirloin, Cod Dinner, and Grilled Chicken Breast.

Meals include potato choice and a trip to the salad bar.
15% gratuity

All dinner beverages excluding alcohol will be complimentary.

Walt Kelly, KEØXI, will present a short program – “Video Clips of Amateur Activities 2003”

New this year will be an **optional** gift exchange. If you want to participate, bring a gift of approximately \$5.00 value marked for a man or a woman.

As in the past we will accept donations for prizes. We will also purchase additional prizes with money provided by the club.

This year we will not collect money for the party in advance.
The restaurant will pass out individual bills.

All club members are encouraged to attend.

Students receive their licenses

Information provided by Russ, NØQK

The following people who enrolled in a Fall licensing class held in Winona received their licenses in December:

KCØRFU	Judd Stanislawski
KCØRFV	Lori Stanislawski
KCØRFW	Charmaine Gorak
KCØRFX	Danica Bossert
KCØRFY	Jenny Emmons
KCØRFZ	Josephine Dobson
KCØRGA	Mark Ellefson
KCØRGB	Sharon Jarvis
KC9FDJ	Mark Degallier

FOR SALE FOR SALE FOR SALE

I have one Kenwood TH-79A Dual-Band handheld radio for sale. It is in excellent working condition. The ONLY working flaw is that the display is slightly lighter than if it was brand new. It is STILL VERY READABLE!

The unit comes with belt clip, antenna, spare Comet “tri-band” antenna (only 2" long!), PG-3F 12-volt adapter, manual, two NiMH batteries, and the rapid charger.

Call Russ / NØQK for details.

1176 West 5th Street
Winona, MN 55987
507-452-6888

EDITORIAL EDITORIAL

The following statement represents the thoughts of Leslie Hittner, KØBAD.

Recently, I decided to look up the status of the Winona Amateur Radio Club as far as ARRL affiliation was concerned. I discovered that as far as the ARRL was concerned, our club was not affiliated. I guess I always assumed that our affiliation was a “given.” Fortunately we are now in the process of again becoming an ARRL affiliated club.

In December, just before Christmas, as I was completing a form for Bluffview Montessori School’s annual filing with the State of Minnesota, I decided to look up the radio club’s status with the state. The result was – *inactive!* We had apparently not filed our required annual registration with the state and were at risk of losing our non-profit corporation status! I informed the president of this condition and the situation has been resolved.

After a peak of nearly 90 members in the mid 1990s our club membership has steadily declined while the number of licensed Amateur Radio Operators has been on a steady increase. What’s more, the Amateur Radio licensing classes that have resulted in a literal explosion of licensed operators in the Winona area have not been sponsored and organized by the club in quite some time. The club has had no role in the scheduling, staffing, advance publicity and recruiting of class attendees. The club has not been involved in the VE sessions that were scheduled at the end of the classes.

While for years we have joked about the “railroad train” that runs through our December meetings I came to the conclusion this December that such jokes now are representative of a serious dilemma for the club; we have outgrown a means of governance that we created for the club long ago. The

constitution and By Laws were not substantively changed when we incorporated. Similarly, when we sought the 501c3 status with the IRS, we went with our existing model of governance. I believe that model is outdated. I believe we have outgrown that model.

I would like to suggest that the Winona Amateur Radio Club look at a different model of governance. We need a model of governance that enables the club to conduct *more business* and to do it *more efficiently*. We need a model of governance that provides for some level of *organizational memory*. We need a model of governance that allows the club to deliver *meaningful services* to prospective, new and existing members. We need a model of governance that enables the club to *manage* its ever-increasing array of communications facilities. We need a model of governance that enables the club to enter into a whole array of activities necessary because of our tax-exempt status.

I would suggest that we make necessary changes in the clubs Constitution and By Laws to accomplish the following changes in our model of governance:

1. **Replace the *officers* with a *Board of Directors*.** Terms on the Board of Directors should be staggered to ensure that it is impossible to have a complete change in board membership at one time. Staggered terms improve organizational memory so that things like annual registration with the state, ARRL accreditation, and questions like, “Where is the latest copy of the Constitution?” are more likely to have favorable outcomes. Membership on the WARC board should probably be determined by an election of the membership at an annual meeting (There are other ways as well). Typically, board membership is for a period of 3 years with 1/3 of the board members’ terms expiring each year. Officers are then drawn from the Board

of Directors and the members of the Board of Directors determine for themselves who those people will be.

2. **Replace monthly club meetings with activities.** There appears to be a clear message from club members (and possibly ex-members) that they don't want to be "*meetinged*" to death (Meetings never bother me, but then I'm strange.) The issue is how does an organization get meaningful work done without meetings? Well – *empower the Board of Directors to conduct the business of the club*. If the club is to become larger, continuing to conduct business at member meetings will become increasingly inefficient. As the club grew in the 1990s, the meetings seemed to get longer and longer as more and more members expressed their individual concerns or droned on about this and that – much of which contributed not one iota to governance. We didn't fix the problem then. We just allowed membership to drop off until the meetings again became *comfortably short*. Scheduling the program before the meeting has not helped – membership has not risen.
3. **Empower the Board of Directors to govern the club.** The Board of Directors – not the membership – should be conducting monthly meetings. A smallish board with a clear mandate and the support of active committees can govern more efficiently. Monthly board meetings should be open to attendance by the club membership. Members might (should) also be given opportunities to contribute to meetings, but the business of the meeting and the meeting agenda are the board's alone. Because members most likely will not be in attendance, it is very important that board meeting minutes be published in the *Hamgram*.
4. **Establish board committees with clear mandates.** Require these committees to *meet monthly* and to report to the board prior to the scheduled board meeting. A board

member should chair each committee (In fact, the number of such committees might be one of the determinants of board size.) I would suggest the following committees: Executive (consisting of the board *officers*), Finance, Education and Membership, Public Service, Analog Systems, Digital Systems, and Operating Activities.

Such a significant change in the governance structure of the club should not take place without further study. For instance, what should the club be doing to fulfill its mandate as a 501c3? Should the club be conducting license classes? Should the club be conducting other types of classes and courses (both for members and the public at large)? Should the club be doing outreach in the schools? Should the club be seeking grants (We did it once, thanks to Gary Kohner)? Should the club be sponsoring interesting and challenging operating activities other than Field Day? And finally, what are the mandates for each committee?

I believe there is much work ahead of us if we are to breath life into the Winona Amateur Radio Club, Inc. Failing that, we may see a second amateur radio club in the Winona area.

Do we want that?

END OF EDITORIAL

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