

# *Hamgram*

*Newsletter of the Winona Amateur Radio Club, Inc. – June 2003*  
[http://www.jarviscomputer.com/warc/hamgram/active\\_issues.php3](http://www.jarviscomputer.com/warc/hamgram/active_issues.php3)

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## **Meeting Notice**

The June Meeting of the Winona Amateur Radio Club, Inc. will be held at the Winona County Courthouse Annex on Thursday, June 19, 2003. Our meeting this month will begin at 7:00 p.m. with a short program. The business meeting and coffee-social follow the program.

Interested persons are invited to attend. The meeting is free.

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## **Field Day June 28 – 29**

Walt Kelly, KEØXI

The attraction of ham radio is based on talking to people by playing with cool electronic stuff. Part of this is satisfied by turning on a factory built handheld radio and tuning to a repeater and making a call that results in a conversation or even a phone patch in the community.

But there is something more exciting and satisfying about making contacts in far away places using radios, antennas, cables, and power supplies that you have to pull together yourself. It's more like "Tool Time" than buying something at the furniture store.

When you do it outdoors, and overnight, with buddies, it becomes really great fun!

That's Field Day!

Another aspect of Field Day is a difference between styles.

For example, "newbies" who have never put up an HF antenna, may want to learn the basics of getting some wire up that will get them a contact. Dyed-in-the-wool contesters may want to add touches to the system that will ensure the most possible contacts. Newbies want to be able to take time making contacts and be able to lose a few without upsetting someone concerned about scores. Newbies may want to experiment with an HF radio and have someone explain what all the knobs are for, and take some extra time between contacts to explain what is happening.

Keeping track of contacts is another whole process. We use a computer system to track contacts, so learning that is another way to stimulate the ol' brain. Not to worry, instruction will be given.

The Club also provides a number of refreshments including soft drinks, pizza on Saturday night, and perhaps doughnuts and other "fat pills" on Sunday morning. There's even a porta-potty.

The site will be the Winona Sportsman's Club. We will have Russ Marsolek's little camping trailer and the Winona County communications trailer for operating sites. If someone can bring a sun-shade, that would be useful. Bring your own camp chairs.

Interested people can sign up at the club meeting or during the Sunday night nets. Times are not hard and fast. Field Day is pretty informal. Help is also needed to pick up gear at various locations and return it, to set up and tear down antennas, pick up pizza, etc. Set up starts Saturday morning. Operating runs from 1 p.m. Saturday to 1 p.m. Sunday. Take down will be finished by 3 p.m. Sunday.

For further information, contact FD Chairs Jim Jarvis KBØTHN (H454-6947 B454-2575) or Walt Kelly KEØXI (HB454-5147).

Directions to site: From the intersection of 14/61, go SW about .9 miles, then left on CR 21 (Gilmore Valley Rd) for 3.4 miles to the top of the hill, then right on Twp 14 for 1.0 mile, then right on Twp 3 for .7 mile to the site.

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## Voice repeater Committee report

Erik Brom, WBØNIU

The voice repeater committee met in January, and determined several action items. Here is an update from that meeting:

The biggest news is that the club has changed callsigns, from WBØBDI to WØNE (WØNE was Bob Kauphusman's call before he passed away.) All three of the club's voice repeaters have now been updated to the new call. The effort required was interesting: the 440 repeater was changed via tone commands over its input. The 64 was done via its serial port. Its modem was down at the time, so we actually had to visit the site with a laptop computer. 835 has a very simple, homebrew, controller. We had to go get the controller and bring it to my place to reprogram an EPROM.

Late last year, we had noticed hum starting to appear on the 440 repeater, and a little on 64. The 440 repeater runs directly off of the backup battery supply, while 64 will switch if AC power fails. The batteries are kept charged by a standard fully automatic charger. We determined that the batteries were worn out. These were sealed batteries that Matt had obtained when they were cycled out of computer UPS (un-interruptible power supply) service. They served us well, running the site for about 40 hours after the severe storm of June 1998. Lance and I obtained some batteries from the same situation, and Ken prepared them for service. The batteries were swapped out and the hum has now completely gone away on both machines. The new batteries are approximately half the capacity of the old ones, but I feel that our needs are not as great right now. Since the storm, a new generator has been installed at the site (by the owners, to keep KAGE on the air). The likelihood of a long outage is minimal at this point. All we would need to get through would be a short time in case the generator did not auto-start. Running off the generator has the added benefit that the 64 repeater will be on full power (about 65-70W), while on battery it's much lower (around 25W, I think).

Users have noticed that sometimes they are unable to get into the 835 repeater. Some investigation has been made, which seems to indicate that the receiver's bandwidth is wide enough that it picks up signals on adjacent channels, which cause *de*-sense (The sensitivity of the receiver is reduced.) The most likely offending channel is 146.820, the Rochester repeater.

When stations in Winona access that system, high power is needed. We have not yet determined a solution for this issue.

Programming of the 64's controller is normally done via modem. Last summer, the modem failed, apparently due to lightening. Replacement is difficult because only specific models of modem will work (9600 baud or faster, must have a way of completely disabling control functions). I purchased two off eBay in May (one for use, one for backup). One was installed recently (with a surge absorber this time!). As soon as we knew this was working, I "reflashed" the controller with new "firmware" (Translation: I installed a new version of the main program that runs the repeater, from my home, without taking the repeater out of service.) Hopefully this will solve some of the minor problems we've seen.

The biggest remaining task is the programming of the 64 repeater's controller. About 3 years ago the club decided to spend \$1000 to purchase a new controller with lots of tone signaling capability, but we have to program in the features we want. This takes a PC and modem, and some time to figure it out. The "programming language" is kind of a cross between traditional programming, and setting the features on a typical radio. The new controller has been in service now since November of 2001, running "temporary" software because there has not been enough interest shown from anyone to actually program it to take advantage of its capabilities! It would be great if someone would step forward and take on this task.

Although there are still a couple of minor projects pending, our voice repeaters are in good shape and continue to perform well. The committee consists of:

Clare Jarvis, KØNY	Matt Burt, KFØQ	Dick Kolter, NØVV
Les Hittner, KØBAD	Walt Kelly, KEØXI	Dan Goltz, WKØW
Ken Spittler, NØJP	Lance Tag., KBØYJU	Paul Schumacher, WØZYV
Ryan Angst, KCØMBU	Dick Angst, KCØMBT	

Nearly everyone has helped with at least one project. Thanks!

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## The Radio Club Financial Report: 05-31-2003

Dick Kolter, NØVV

Bank balance	1790.94
Petty Cash	28.66
Undeposited funds	135.21
<u>Check outstanding</u>	<u>-63.00</u>
	1891.81

Note: We recently received our first check from the long distance telephone company that some of our members do business with. The check was for \$30.21.

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## Winona Amateur Radio Club

May 15th, 2003

Minutes of the monthly meeting as recorded by Thomas E. Mauszycki

### 7:00 P.M. - Program

#### HF Operating and Procedures and Techniques

Lance Tagliapietra

The program related to the operating conditions and the operating techniques associated with the actual practices envisioned in our club participation in the Field Day Operation of June 28 - 29th, 2003.

Mr. Tagliapietra discussed the propagation associated with HF and VHF as it pertains to the various frequencies and modes of operation.

Selective operating controls were reviewed on the two transceivers that were being demonstrated; one being a Kenwood 520S (all transistorized) owned by Claire Jarvis and the second being a Kenwood 680 (vacuum tubes in the final amplification stage) owned by Lance Tagliapietra.

Conclusion: It was emphasized that participation by all members was of greater importance than emphasizing contacts between the participating amateur radio stations on the North American continent. This is not a contest in which the greatest number of contacts being made is the ultimate goal. Instead, it is the participation of the individual members in operating practices that is so important. In fact, the greater the number of different individual operators, the greater is the potential scoring for the Winona Amateur Radio Club.

Finally, you do not even have to be a licensed amateur radio operator to participate as the amateur radio stations participating in Field Day at the site of our club will be under the control of the control operator who will be a licensed radio operator with the highest level of license. Thus, all operators will be able to operate on any duly authorized frequency.

So everyone is encouraged to participate without any feeling of intimidation.

### 8:00 P.M. - Monthly Meeting

**Secretary:** Minutes of the April meeting of the Winona Amateur Radio Club unread as the secretary was absent.

**Treasurer:** Balance of \$1,861.60

Motion made for approval of the report by Paul Schumacher seconded by Lance Tagliapietra

### Old Business

**Field Day:** Thomas E. Mauszycki will arrange with the Winona Post & Shopper for an article pertaining to the communications vehicle, the Sheriff of Winona County, and one or two participating amateur radio operators for inclusion into the media with an article on the Wednesday prior the Field Day weekend of June.

**Repeater Committee:** Lance Tagliapietra spoke of the work performed and pertaining to the 146.640 transmitter in matters related to:

- A) Batteries
- B) Cable Improvements
- C) Call Sign Change
- D) Speed and Tone Changed

**Packet Committee:** No report

### New Business

**Minnesota City Fair:** Kenneth Spittler was informed by Walt Kelley of the invitation to participate with an actual operating station at the Minnesota City Fair on May 17th and May 18th, 2003. KB9OBF (Dan) and NØOWU (Phil) volunteered to man and operate this special event station.

**Summer Picnic:** Paul Schumacher will secure the use of the pavilion in the Lake Winona Park for the July 17th, 2003 summer picnic.

**Great River Energy Bicycle Event:** Seventh largest bicycle race in the United States The Rochester Amateur Radio Club (NØHZN) will assist the Winona Amateur Radio Club in this event.

10:00 A.M. to approximately 8:00 to 9:00 P.M.

Begin in Lake Winona, descend up [sic] Garvin Heights Road, circuitous route on the ridge tops, descend down Highway 17 and terminate at the terminus in Lake Winona Park.

Requesting ATV and Packet Radio participation.

The lead and the rear automobile will have APRS aboard.

**March of Dimes Walk:** Richard and Ryan Angst will participate in this event to be held this Saturday, May 17, 2003 at Lake Winona.

8:30 P.M. - Adjournment

Motion made by Paul Schumacher and seconded by Bruce Barkeim

Members Present:	KAØMLO	KCØMBN	KCØMBU	KCØJLE
	KCØMGT	KCØJYZ	KCØJZA	NØPDD
	KCØJYZ	KCØJZA	NØPDD	KC9CRM
	W9HWQ	KØDHI	KØZTV	NØJP
				NØVV
Guests Present:	KAØMBC	WØUD		

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***Hamgram***

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