

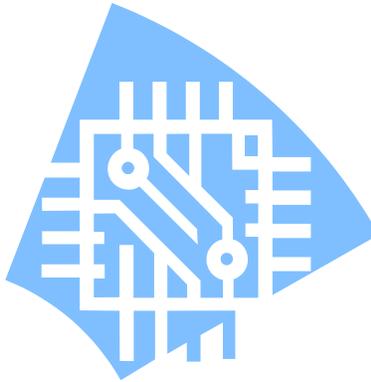


Signals from SARA

WØJH	©2020 The Stillwater Amateur Radio Association An ARRL Affiliate & Special Service Club www.radioham.org	April 2020
-------------	--	-----------------------

SARA Virtual Club Meeting April 11th

The Stillwater Amateur Radio Association will be holding a virtual club meeting via WebEx on Saturday morning April 11th, starting at 9:00 AM. All current SARA members of record as of April 4th should have received a WebEx meeting invitation via email from Doug Farrell. Check your junk or spam folder if you can't find it at first.



If you haven't received an invite or are not a SARA member and would like to attend the meeting, drop an email to president @ radioham.org and we'll add you to the list.

WebEx has native applications for Windows, MacOS, IOS, and Android and will also work through a web browser.

When joining a WebEx meeting for the first time using Windows, WebEx will download and install the WebEx Meetings app for Windows. I do not know what it does for MacOS, but suspect it's similar. For smart devices (phones or tablets) you can download the WebEx app from Apple's App store or Google Play.

Continued on next page

Announcements

Monthly Meeting:
April 11, 2020; 09:00

Virtual Meeting

Matt Holden (KØBBC)
ARRL Dakota Div. Director:
League News, Matt's Travels,
Contesting & Experiences

Current Members will receive a meeting invitation via email from Doug (N9TOW)

This meeting is only open to SARA Members as of April 4

If you DO NOT receive your invite, send an email to: President@radioham.org

SARA On the Air

All Times are Local (Central)

Phone Round-Robin Ragchews

Daily Top Band Crew: 20:00
1.966 MHz LSB +/- QRM
(alternates: 21.316 MHz or 50.166 MHz)

Monday 75m Crew: 08:15 (NEW TIME)
3.856 MHz LSB +/- QRM

Tuesday (TMT) & Thursday (TMT²):
19:00 SARA 2m Repeater*

Until Further Notice:
TMT² is in lieu of Eye Ball QSO Party

Wednesday: 21:00
SARA 2m Repeater*

Digital Net

Sunday: 19:00
3.584.15 MHz USB
(500-1000 Hz) on waterfall
Mode announced via email

Can't Find Us On the Air?
... Monitor SARA Repeater!

***SARA 2m Repeater: 147.060 MHz**
Positive offset; DCS/DTCS 026Normal)



You do not need a web camera or a microphone to attend a SARA on-line meeting. You will need to be able to hear the audio portion via speakers or headphones. The meeting hosts will manage the audio/mic and video connections during the meeting. This will help control the bandwidth demand and maintain a quality feed to all participants. You can always indicate you have a question or comment by the "raise a hand" button. The hosts will acknowledge you and unmute your mic for your contribution. There is also a live Chat you can use to type comments or questions. I recommend that you "Join Meeting" 15-20 minutes ahead of time if it is the first time you use WebEx. That will give you time to install the app and select and test your mic and speakers before the meeting starts.

Our special guest will be Matt Holden KØBBC, ARRL Dakota Division Director. Matt will be sharing an update on the activities of the ARRL Board of Directors and ARRL HQ. He'll also share stories and pictures from his March 4-11 trip to St. Kitts as V4/KØBBC and V47P during the March ARRL Phone contest. Matt is an avid DXer and contester, VHF/UHF contest rover, and an active member of numerous Twin Cities area radio clubs.



Radio safety PSA from
Dave, KØAIF.



Take
Note

March On-Air Monthly Meeting Notes

Due to the then-quickly changing COVID-19 conditions, the monthly March membership meeting was canceled to avoid infecting the membership with things other than good will and amateur radio excitement, as well as in an attempt to protect the health of the residents of Boutwells Landing Senior Center, our usual meeting space. In place of the face-to-face meeting, the club dusted off the "SARA Get on the Air Meeting" as a substitute gathering. The club had successfully run an on-the-air membership meeting in April 2018 when our usual meeting was snowed out.

The March 2020 meeting was run "cross-band," utilizing the WØJH club 147.060 MHz 2-meter repeater and HF frequency of 3.856 MHz. Collin KEØIYN handled the 2-meter side of things, while Jim WØELC kept things under control on the 75-meter side. Joe KCØOIO took the role of Net Director and bravely handled the cross-band communications. Between the two bands, a total of 45 check-ins were recorded, with 40 unique callsigns. Collin handled 20 of the check-ins on the SARA repeater and Jim handled 25 check-ins on 75-meters. There were five technically savvy people who amazed the other participants by checking in to both the 2-meter and 75-meter portions of the meeting. Due to the passing of the word regarding the on-air meeting on various nets, there were visitor check-ins on 75-meters from as far away as Sauk Center and Isanti, Minnesota.

Kicking things off, Collin KEØIYN noted that the day of the meeting, March 14, was international Pi Day ($\pi = 3.14$, get it?), a celebration of mathematics! Consequently, getting on the air seemed appropriate, using "mathematics in a wire" ($V=IR$) to beat the mathematical odds that the COVID-19 has given us.

Joe KCØOIO then asked the check-ins to weigh in on the topic "Keeping Ham Radio Relevant." An appropriate topic under the circumstances, as many participants in the discussion thought that by holding an on-air meeting during situations such as this is beneficial to keeping ham radio relevant. That is, we can still gather as a large group, transact club business, and have an enjoyable gathering without worrying about social distancing or other restrictions, such as dangerous travel during blizzards or other severe weather situations, that may hinder other organizations and groups. Other comments included noting that remaining willing and available for events such as parades and other public events demonstrates ham radio's beneficial public uses as well as introduces the hobby to the uninitiated. It was also noted that amateurs active in STEM programs within schools is a good way to introduce youth to ham radio's technical side and to demonstrate that the hobby can be used as a stepping stone for further pursuit of a science education. And for those who are interested in weather, ham radio provides many opportunities to provide relevant benefits to the community through programs such as SKYWARN. In the end, one comment summed it all up – get out there and talk to each other and, in doing so, we are showing adults and kids alike that ham radio is fun. And everyone likes to have fun, even ham operators!

One last shout-out to Collin, Jim, and Joe for a fine job! SARA has certainly demonstrated that, during a crisis, as the COVID-19 situation has been described, ham radio remains viable and relevant.



Bandwidth from the President

Greetings from my shack, de Joe KCØOIO.

What a difference one month can make! These are unprecedented times. I do hope everyone is doing their best to stay healthy.



Following the cancellation of our March meeting at Boutwells Landing, we held a Get On The Air Meeting on Saturday March 14. Utilizing both the SARA repeater and 75 meters, we had a total of 45 check-ins with 41 unique calls. Dave N9JNQ kept notes during the session and has prepared a recap of the session that can be found elsewhere in this issue.

In response to the suspension of our in-person activities, we quickly expanded our on-air lineup. Two Meter Tuesday (TMT) had just begun meeting on the SARA repeater late February. We added Two Meter Thursday (TMT2) on the repeater in place of our Eyeball QSO Party. Both 2-meter sessions are followed by an HF Afterglow on 160 meters. Going forward, both TMT and TMT2 will begin at 7:00 PM and the HF Afterglow around 8:00 PM. Also added to the lineup is the “Lunch Room.” The Lunch Room is a noontime ragchew on the SARA repeater Monday through Friday. We’ve been seeing numbers in the teens during this on-air gathering. Join us when you can!

We’re seeing more use of the repeater these days. Most of that is due to the two meter ragchews we’ve established recently. But we’re also seeing more participation in the Wednesday evening 2-meter Ragchew at 9:00 PM.

The SARA HF Digital Net usually goes into “outdoors” hiatus in mid-April. I’m going to keep that running longer this year, probably into or through May.

Doug Farrell, N9TOW, has established a WebEx meeting room for SARA. The SARA Board met via WebEx Thursday April 2. And we will be using WebEx for our monthly club meeting for April and most likely May meetings. WebEx invites have been sent to all SARA members of record as of April 5th for the Saturday April 11th meeting. The WebEx platform gives us an opportunity to continue to meet as a club and share our hobby of ham radio. Future offerings may include livestreams of Tech Topics and Skills Nights at the Eyeball QSO Party plus livestreams of regular club meetings when the resume. The livestreams would be offered for those who are unable to attend the event in person but would still like to attend virtually. Namely, those who winter down south, those who don’t like to drive at night, or other situations that preclude them from attending in person.

What have you been up to in ham radio during this Stay Home period?

With the expanded on-air offerings, I find myself getting on the air more often, particularly on the repeater. I've also been trying to get my Openspot1 to hear my Yaesu FT-70DR so I can get into and test the YSFReflector for SARA. The YSFReflector is a tandem offering to the WIRES-X link that is coming to the SARA repeater once we are able to get out and set it up. Doug N9TOW has been working on both tracks. The WIRES-X link station is ready to deploy save for a detail or two regarding static IP at the host site. Adding WIRES-X capability to our repeater will allow linking of the repeater to other WIRES-X repeaters and rooms, thereby expanding our footprint and your enjoyment. The YSFReflector will allow SARA members with digital voice hotspots to link into our repeater from other locations. Working with C4FM (System Fusion) or DMR digital radios, one can then join the SARA YSFReflector Room and talk to System Fusion digital voice users here in the Twin Cities via our repeater.

The WIRES-X link and SARA YSFReflector room will be great additions to our 2-meter repeater.

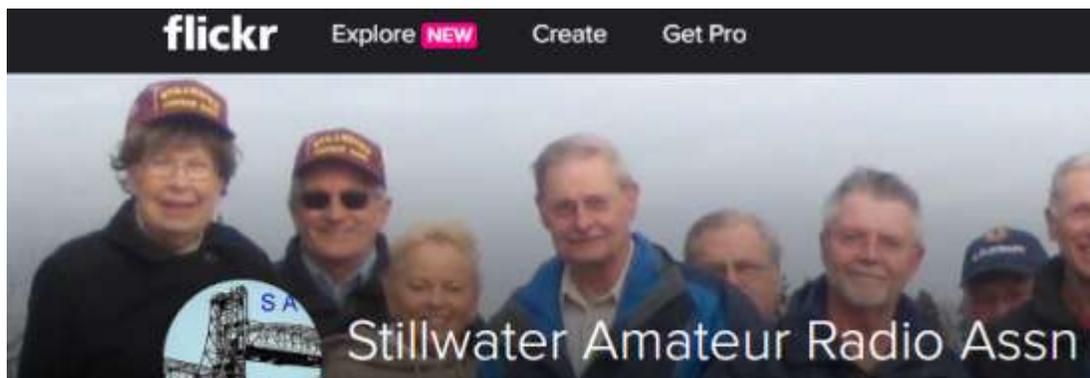
I wish you all well. Stay Safe – Stay Healthy!

73 es CUL de KCØOIO

... now, where's that hand lotion, my hands are so dry from all this washing ...



BROADCAST TO ALL MEMBERS



The SARA Board recently had a virtual meeting to conduct its business. The webinar worked well, and our thanks go to Doug N9TOW for facilitating the operation.

One of our members brought up the fact that he was asked how to go to the Flickr site and find our group photos. A little background is in order:

The SARA group on Flickr is **NOT** a public site and cannot be found by using the search function for our Club on www.flickr.com. The Club has a private membership on the site which cost us a little less than \$50. for the year. That gives us an **unlimited** amount of storage space for our photos, which span Special Event photos from 2012 to the present. During that time we have amassed 2,040 photos and several movies which present quite an historical archive of our activities. A member, if desired, can download any of the photos on the site to his/her computer.

So, the question remains: If I can't log in directly to the Flickr site with my own password, then how do I connect to see the photos/albums?

There are two ways:

1. When I upload a group of photos of a Special Event, I will notify all of the SARA members with a 'Broadcast To All Members' email. That email will contain a link that you can click on that will immediately connect you to our Flickr group site with the album containing the photos. It's interesting to note that once you click on the link, you will be connected to a specific (newest) album on our site. If you want to see the previous albums, just click on the 'Back to albums list' located on the top left of page. That will take you to the complete list of albums that are on our site.

2. I would suggest that you copy and paste the link to a blank document in your word processor and save it with the title of Flickr Link. That way, you don't have to hunt for an email that contains a previous link if you want to peruse the photos on the site. All you have to do is open the file, highlight/copy the link, open your browser and paste the link into the URL (address) bar and push the enter key.

If you're a member and don't receive email from our Club, send me an email at ag0h at radioham.org and I'll promptly send you a link.

If you have any photos that you would like to put on our Flickr site, please email them to me or to Shel, NØDRX and we'll make sure they get posted. Please call me if you have any questions.

The price of yearly membership for the Flickr site will be going up to \$60/year in November. This was brought up at the last Board meeting. I have asked that we poll our members to see if there is still an interest to maintain the Flickr site as the rates will increase later this year. Since we might not be having meetings at that time, it was suggested that we send out a survey to our members to have them vote on the issue. If that happens, please return the survey.

One other item came up and that has to do with the Flickr posting of a Special Event prior to our newsletter covering that event. To prevent any complaints that the Flickr site is in competition with the newsletter in 'breaking news' hi hi, photos taken of a Special Event will be uploaded to the Flickr site a week AFTER the newsletter is published.

My apologies for the length of this notice but I hope that it will ease some of the questions that you may have in accessing your Flickr site. Thanks for your patience.

73,

Keith Miller - AGØH



Don't miss out on special event photos like this one from the last Split Rock event! Be sure you are on the list to receive links to the SARA Flickr photo albums.

Notice in this one that Joe, KCØOIO, is already gloved up, even before anyone knew about - well, you know.

(L to R: Dave, WØOXB, Joe, KCØOIO, and Keith, AGØH)

April Remote Base Report:

WØEQO and WØZSW are both operational. Bill Jones, NØCIC, who lives close by WØEQO, has been instrumental in keeping WØEQO on the air. WAØTDA is also available for the asking. (General Class or higher.)



Thunderstorm season has arrived, and with it comes the possibility of stations outages as we disconnect the antennas to prevent lightning damage. Mother Nature may also decide on her own to disconnect the power, so it pays to keep an eye on the weather. A good choice for your phone is the WeatherBug app, recommended to me by Keith, AGØH, because it has a real time lightning tracker and maps out strike locations.

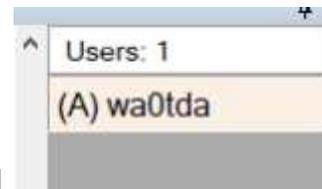
It is important to be aware that thunderstorms can pop up with little notice. When we had that happen a couple of weeks ago, I went to check station WØZSW prior to disconnecting the coax, and found a user on it. I texted him in the RCForb app and told him that the station was shutting down for a thunderstorm.

He replied, *“But I’m a registered user!”*

After a bit more texting, I think he understood, but it does go to show that just because the sun might be shining where the control op lives, doesn’t mean it isn’t a fireworks show at the actual station location. If you hear lots of static, check the WX map.

Here are some operating tips:

- When you log onto a station, check to see if there is anyone else also logged on. In the Windows app, the list will appear in the lower right corner. In the parentheses, the letter indicates either A - Admin, X = Registered user approved for transmit privileges, or No letter = Remotehams registered user NOT approved for transmit, or possibly even a shortwave listener.
- Always do a quick check of the radio settings. Since some users may be newbies, settings can be left in unexpected configurations, such as radio left in split mode, RF gain way down, RF output not at 100%, Attenuator on, AGC on Fast, and so on.
- Report problems or ask questions - email me!



73, Pat, wa0tda@arrl.net



New to Ham Radio? Check this out!

The Stillwater Amateur Radio Association (SARA) is always here to assist its members - from antenna installation to rig recommendations to All Things Ham. Our members each have a unique skill set from which to draw to help each other in amateur radio activities. For example, each spring, SARA holds a Technician education class and we see many attendees pass through to become licensed amateur radio operators!

Getting the license, however, is only the first step. Much like passing the written driver's test to get a learner's permit, it's just the first step. Now it's time to get out on the road. To drive. To operate. And SARA wants to do more to help our newly licensed operators get "behind the wheel" safely, effectively, and with enthusiasm and enjoyment. In the coming months, SARA will prepare resources and reach out to current members to find support for our new hams to ensure they find the value and joy they were looking for when they initially set out to get their license.

So look for more details in upcoming newsletters from the newly established SARA committee for helping new hams. Of course, if you are interested in helping, including, but not limited to, being a resource for tech-specific portions of amateur radio, the SARA committee can be reached via email at:

NewHamHelp@radioham.org



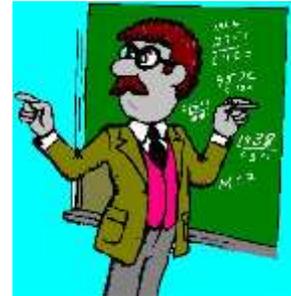
KDØVKB presents on ageing characteristics of electronic components

Randy KDØVKB was one of four presenters at this year's Northland Antique Radio Club annual workshop. The workshop was held February 23 at the Pavek Museum of Broadcasting in St Louis Park. This year marks the 33rd consecutive gathering for this one-day event that draws participants from a five-state radius. From a membership of just over 200, this event drew nearly 80 radio restoration enthusiasts who got the chance to hear information on topics such as regenerative receivers, necessary modifications to make antique radios function in today's RF crowded atmosphere, a history of the jet-set KLH turntable; and of course, Randy's presentation on the ageing characteristics of electronic components.



A note to instructors

I expect many of you saw Joe's notice to the membership, but wanted to follow up with you directly.



As Joe said, we have decided to suspend the remaining Technician licensing classes. We do expect to resume them, but not sure what the timeline will be. Certainly events that are out of our control will dictate.

I will keep you posted on rescheduling discussions and updates. I've suggested to the students that they should keep studying and taking practice tests, and that we are still available to answer their questions via email.

I will also be looking into options for us to deliver our classes using virtual tools. While I personally believe in-person learning is most effective, our current situation suggests it may be valuable to be capable of delivering our materials via e-learning. I'll share what I learn, and would welcome any suggestions.

73,

Bob - WØGAF

Upcoming SARA Meetings & Events

See Details in Newsletter

April 11: Saturday Monthly Virtual Meeting

May 9: Saturday Monthly Meeting (details undetermined)

June 27 & 28: ARRL Field Day (details undetermined)

Board Meetings are held Thursdays the week following Monthly Saturday Meetings - due to restrictions, meetings may be held online

Thursday Eye Ball QSO Parties are deferred due to meeting restrictions.

2020

April							May							June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4						1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30				
							31													

SARA Needs YOU!

Get involved ...

Make a difference ...

Have fun!

www.radioham.org

Facebook: SARA - Stillwater Amateur Radio Association

