



Signals from SARA



WØJH

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An ARRL Affiliate & Special Service Club

**March
2021**

www.radioham.org

March Meeting and Member Forum: 2021 and beyond...

The March 13 meeting of the Stillwater Amateur Radio Association will be the SARA Member Forum: 2021 and beyond... This is your chance to provide feedback on what SARA has been doing and give input on what we will be doing in the future.

The SARA Member Forum: 2021 and beyond... will look at every aspect of SARA: club leadership, finances, our repeater, monthly meeting & format, on-air activities (Ragchews, Lunch Room, HF Digital Net), education and training, website radioham.org, Member Assistance Program, NewHamHelp, special events, Radios in the Park, Field Day, Eyeball QSO Party, Tech Topic Thursday, Webex Virtual meetings, social activities, and much more.

I want to hear what you as members of SARA think of the health and future of SARA. Please join us Saturday March 13th for our monthly meeting in the SARA virtual meeting room at 9:00 AM for this important Member Forum.

For this meeting, forget about driving and instead fire up your computer. Due to the ongoing pandemic and related health & safety guidelines and protocols for senior care facilities, Boutwells Landing remains unavailable for public use. Boutwells Landing staff foresees that will be the case into 2021. We will therefore continue to hold the monthly Saturday meeting virtually using the SARA WEBEX conference room. Meetings will begin at 9:00 AM., but Joe, KCØOIO, will open the WEBEX room around 8:15 AM for "Morning Coffee" each month.

Announcements

The regular monthly meeting returns on March 13, 2021 via Webex.

Meeting: Forum "2021 & Beyond". Current Members will receive a meeting invitation via email from Joe, KCØOIO.

SARA's virtual monthly meetings are open to all.

Go to <https://tinyurl.com/y2wgpl6z> to join the meeting.

SARA On the Air

Phone Round Robin Ragchews & Net

(All Times are Local - Central)

> Daily "Lunch Room" Crew: 12:00 - ?

SARA 2m Repeater* ... Weekdays

> Daily Top Band Crew: 20:00; 1.966

MHz LSB or USB +/- QRM (alternates:

21.316 +/- MHz, 50.166 MHz)

> Monday 75m Crew: 09:00; 3.856

MHz LSB +/- QRM

> Tuesday (TMT): 19:00; SARA 2m

Repeater*

> Wednesday Informal Net: 21:00;

SARA 2m Repeater*

> Sunday Digital Net: 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 026

Normal)

Bandwidth from the President

Greetings from my shack, de Joe KCØOIO.

The Bandwidth column is on hiatus this month. See you at the regular Saturday meeting as we discuss the future of SARA.



The meeting is via WebEX and begins at 9:00 AM Saturday, March 13.

73 es CUL de KCØOIO

In Appreciation: Washington County ARES EC John Regan KAØHYR



John KAØHYR stepped down as Emergency Coordinator for ARES in Washington County January 31 after 12 years of service. He has led the development of a strong relationship with the Washington County Emergency Management staff. The position of EC is often a challenging job. John's tireless work, his passion for public service, and his background in education and administration have laid a solid foundation for ARES in Washington County.

SARA and SEMARC honored John's service with this plaque. Thanks to Brian, NØBM for having it made and delivering it.

WØJH “Ice-olation Station” Special Event

Twin Cities, Minnesota / Thunder Bay, Ontario
February 13 - 15, 2021

Another SARA event wraps up and quite a special event it was!

Our 8th consecutive year for this event was indeed different ... special. Unlike the past, when we've operated from an ice-fishing tent on Lake Elmo or other frozen lake near The Cities, this time we observed social distancing and remained home. Each operator, 15 all told, participated from their own QTH using our club call WØJH; and one in Thunder Bay, Ontario using WØJH/VE3. (Thank God we weren't on a lake where temps were constantly below 0°F ... GAF Bob recorded -32°F one morning!!)



Maybe our idea of generating enough RF to chase away winter worked! Have you been outside this past week?! And we sure generated lots of RF over the long weekend.



We operated ~30 hours, 3 days and logged over 1,500 contacts from all over the world.

:: ~1,000 SSB contacts (20m: 70% ... 40 + 80m: 30%)

:: ~500 Digital/CW contacts (FT8: 15, 20, 40 & 80m ... CW: 20 + 40m)



Two ops get a special recognition. Lionel (N5LB) operated without his furnace. Mark (KEØQQN) was in his 3-season porch!!

“WØJH Ice-olation Station” Special Event

Here is a sample of the QSL certificate we sent to those requesting one. All of the certificates were sent via email this week. Special TNX to Bob (WØGAF) for doing all the digital distribution magic to make this happen. TNX also to Shel (NØDRX) for confirming the requests, combining all the operators’ digital logging files and for sorting the “dogs and cats” that had issues. (Note: SARA members may have automatically received theirs without asking.)

If you didn’t make contact with one of our stations but would like to receive one, please let Shel or Dave (WØOXB) know and we’ll create one for you.

“WØJH Ice-olation Station” Special Event

**Twin Cities, Minnesota / Thunder Bay, Ontario
February 13 - 15, 2021**

TNX for being part of the “WØJH Ice-olation Station” Special Event! It’s the 8th consecutive year, the Stillwater, Minnesota Amateur Radio Association (SARA) has organized and operated this event. In past years, we’ve operated from an ice-fishing tent on a frozen lake near St. Paul, MN. But this year, in keeping with COVID-19 social distancing requirements, we did not operate from the frozen lake. Instead, each operator participated from their own QTH using our club call WØJH; and one in Thunder Bay, Ontario using WØJH/VE3. (Thank God we weren’t on a lake where temps were constantly below 0°F!!)

We’re kinda crazy hams here in frozen Minnesotal (Hams crazy; how could that be? hi hi) We’ve been hoping for winter and COVID-19 to end soon! By generating RF, we figured it would warm up the atmosphere and bring an early spring! :-)

We operated ~30 hours, 3 days and logged over 1,500 contacts from all over the world.

:: ~1,000 SSB contacts (20m: 70% ... 40 + 80m: 30%)

:: ~500 Digital/CW contacts (FT8: 15, 20, 40 & 80m ... CW: 20 + 40m)



Confirming contact with:	AAØU
Date:	<u>2/13/2021</u> UTC <u>19:44</u>
Band:	<u>40m</u> SSB
RST:	<u>59</u>

Tnx Zack for the contact and particularly for your efforts while operating for this event.

We hope you can join us again at this or our other special events!

SARA is an ARRL Special Service Club: www.radioham.org

Ice-olation Confirmations, continued

By the time this newsletter is published, many of you who worked our most recent special event will have received your confirmation certificate. Normally it is not necessary for SARA members who worked either WØJH or WØJH/VE3 during the event to submit a request for a confirmation, as I try to pull them from the logs to receive certificates as I am processing other requests. If you worked one of the stations during the event and have not received a certificate by March 15th, drop me an email as I may have missed your call in the process. Confirmations for stations with a single contact will be sent first, as they make up the largest segment of outgoing certificates.

If you did not work the event and would like a reference copy of the certificate, that will be made available. Just contact Dave WØOXB, or myself via the Trustee@radioham.org email address. I am not going into the metrics here for the event as those numbers were discussed at the February Board Meeting and can be found in those meeting minutes, which are posted on the radioham.org website.

While most of us who operated enjoyed the conditions operating from our warm QTH, a couple of our operators worked under less than ideal conditions with heating issues. However as the event landed on what was likely the coldest stretch of the winter, we all were grateful to not be sitting out on a frozen lake. While we could have used a few more operators and would like to see additional members become involved, all who were involved enjoyed participating. Our efforts to generate some extra rf to help drive away winter seem to have been successful, as we are now enjoying substantially warmer weather.

Shel Mann, NØDRX

From an aeronautical mobile station:

“On 2/16/2021 at approximately 2021 hours UTC - I had a QSO with Brad (VE3MXJ) via the Special Event Station Callsign WØJH. This was accomplished via voice contact on 14.260 MHz USB. My station was a Falcon 50 Jet at 37,000 feet approximately 200 nm SW of Florida. We were mobile at Mach .78 :-). We don't use the HF radios much in our operations (mostly VHF), so Brad enabled me to verify it's operation. This is a big help (just in case we need it). And it's just fun talking from a really tall antenna. :-)”

Upcoming Special Event

As we are putting the ribbon on our most recent SARA special event with confirmation certificates being sent, I want to let our members know about a unique event that was brought to my attention by Lou NØ2C and his xyl Salli K2RYD. Lou & Salli are regular followers of our SARA events and we always enjoy seeing repeat customers in our logs.

If you are familiar with the TV show Last Man Standing, you may already know it is currently in its 9th season and scheduled to go QRT (except for reruns) after this season. The production set for the show has an actual ham station that makes an appearance in some of the shows, and there is a Last Man Standing ARC, which you can find on qrz.com under the KA6LMS call.

To commemorate the end of the show, there is a large multi mode, multi band, multi station, special event scheduled from 3/24 through 3/30, that might be of interest as well as a challenge for members of SARA to work. While some info can be found on qrz.com, the following link: <https://www.gsbarc.org/lms/> provided by Lou & Salli has more complete info. Good luck, have fun & happy hunting!

Shel, NØDRX

ICOM IC-7300 Firmware Update Available



I've just learned that Icom has released a firmware update today on the 7300. There are quite a few upgrades they made to the software. You can view the release by clicking on the following link: https://www.icomjapan.com/support/firmware_driver/3248/

73 and stay safe!
Keith Miller - AG0H

For All New and Prospective Hams



Photo: SARA Field Day 2007.

SARA has always been a ‘helpful’ club comprised of many members who truly enjoy mentoring or answering questions for new Hams or ‘prospective’ (‘might wannabee”) operators.

We encourage those of you who have questions regarding any aspect of our hobby to contact us and we’ll do our best in helping you get your answers. Two of our members form up our ‘New Ham Resource Group’. They are:

- Brian Edgell NØBJE
- Mark Lindberg KEØQQN

You can reach them by email: newhamhelp@radioham.org . Please include your phone number and they’ll get back to you as soon as possible.

Stay safe and 73,

Keith Miller – AGØH

ag0h@radioham.org

Remote Base Station Update - March 2021

by Patrick Tice, wa0tda@arrl.net



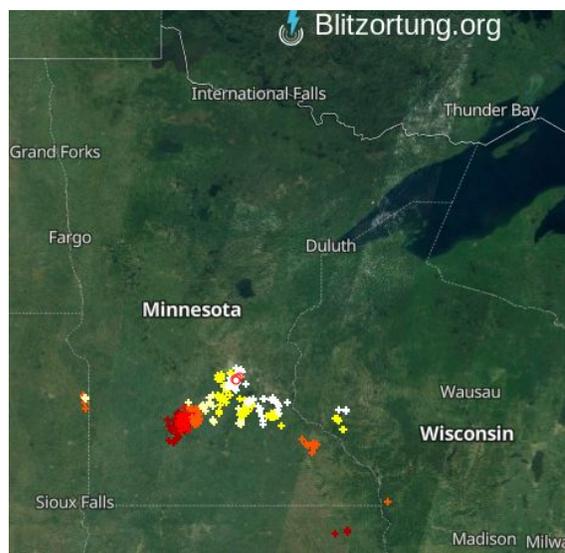
Stations WØEQO, WØZSW, and WAØTDA are all up and running.

March is a month of change as we leave the worst cold and darkness of the winter months behind and move the clocks forward an hour for DST on Sunday the 14th.

Winter is traditionally good for operating on the longer wavelength HF bands like 160 and 80 meters because the longer nights allow for much less D layer absorption and contacts at great distances. The thunderstorms that

create electrical noise all summer long are generally tamped down by the lack of solar heating in the winter - definitely a plus for fans of 160 and 80 meters!

But during the month of March we gain more minutes of daylight rapidly, and the thunderstorm static follows right along. Below is a screen capture from the Blitzortung.org website, showing a cluster of lightning discharges approaching the Twin Cities on Wednesday, March 10 - earlier this week! I certainly hadn't expected lightning quite this early in the season, but when it happens I have to assess the possible danger of lightning damage to the HF remote base stations. If there are significant cloud to ground strikes, it is going to be necessary to shut down the stations and disconnect the antennas until the danger passes. If you are looking to use one of the stations and find that it is offline, consider the possibility that the shutdown may be temporary as thunderstorms pass through the station location.



Good luck & good DX in 2021 and have fun with the radios!

73 - Pat wa0tda@arrl.net

A Note from the Editors: New headache - just like the old headache

This edition of the 2021 Signals from SARA news is produced on Google Docs. As we have gotten more submissions of Word documents, we have learned that there are some incompatibilities between Microsoft Word docs and Google docs. It's complicated, but when a Word doc (usually .docx) contains a lot of images mixed with text, the conversion during upload from Word to Google Docs results in a mess that looks nothing like the carefully-constructed original Word document. Pictures are all over the place, mixed seemingly at random with scraps of text. While the original Word doc might, for example, have an image that has been put together with several elements that all work together, the Google Docs conversion separates these elements and confusingly places them around the document. As you might imagine, this can create quite a lot of extra work in the final edit - hours and hours, and lots of huffing and puffing and hair being pulled out.

Of course we have researched this problem with (what else?) Google, and have discovered that it is a known issue. What we recommend is that when Word docs contain multiple graphics with text and other elements layered on top, that part of your Word doc should be "flattened" to remove the extra layers. This can be done as it was for the article "WØJH Ice-olation Station" Special Event on page 4, where the text precedes the sample certificate image in the original Word doc and translates easily into Google docs because the certificate is one single graphic, even though it contains multiple photos.

The article that preceded it, WØJH "Ice-olation Station" Special Event, on page 3, was a different story since it contained many images and layers. Google's conversion process was more like a meat grinder, and the entire thing had to be reconstructed, with the image grid at the bottom needing conversion to a single graphic and the top section with text needing separate reformatting. Fortunately we were able to make it look pretty much the way it was intended, but this conversion issue remains for future submissions in Word format, and at present the best we can advise is to go easy on the graphics and if you have a story with a lot of them, perhaps group them into a separate section of the document if you can.

If you are placing graphical elements or text on top of or mixed in with photos, try to flatten that section of your document into a single large image instead of multiple small ones. If you don't know how to do this, don't worry - submit it anyway and we'll work it out.

Formats for submission of articles

- Google Docs format: Produce your article in Google Docs and when you want to submit it, just share it with waOtda@gmail.com and it will be easy to add it to the newsletter template for the upcoming issue.

- Microsoft Word or compatible formats, with file extensions .doc, .docx, etc. Embedded pictures and graphics are okay (and preferred) in this format, but see the above caution.
- Text files, either plain text or rich text; .txt, .rtf, etc. **It's easy to just create your document and send it to wa0tda@gmail.com as an attachment if you like.**
- **If you have been using Dropbox to submit in the past, you may continue to do so.**

More about Google Docs

Google Docs also employs advanced AI to recognize errors, going beyond simply finding spelling errors. Editing the newsletter happens in real time, with everything being keyboarded also being saved on a cloud server. Documents can be set with permissions for multiple editors, and it is easy to create copies on the cloud server to experiment with layout or to just work on a copy while preserving the original. Since everything is web-based, any computer or device capable of use as a writing tool can edit as long as the internet is available. It is as easy to edit with Linux or Apple as it is with Windows. No specialized publishing software is needed. The final copy can be converted to the universal format PDF, also completely accomplished by Google Docs in the cloud.

SARA Membership

A membership form can be found on the radioham.org website and can be mailed along with your check made out to SARA, to the preferred address of: SARA, 1618 Pine St W, Stillwater, MN 55082. Dues for regular membership is \$20 and associate membership is \$10. Having an amateur radio license is a requirement to be a regular member. You can also join, re-up, or change your membership information on Radioham.org:

<https://radioham.org/sara-membership-application-renewal-page/>

Please send any questions as well as updates to your membership or license status to:
Trustee@radioham.org

Upcoming events

- SARA Lunchroom - M - F Noon to ?
- March Meeting: Saturday, March 13, 2021 - Virtual meeting via Webex
- Daylight Time begins: Sunday, March 14, 2021
- Spring Equinox - Saturday, March 20 - WooHoo!
- Saturday, March 20 VE Session - SEMARC - Check http://www.semarc.org/P7_VE.htm for complete list.
- Submissions deadline for April newsletter: Sunday, April 4
- April Meeting: Saturday, April 10, 2021 - Virtual meeting via Webex
- Submissions deadline for May newsletter: Friday, April 30
- May Meeting: Saturday, May 8, 2021 - Virtual meeting via Webex
- June, July, August - No regular meetings or newsletters, but lots of great summer activities like Radios in the Park and ARRL Field Day.

SARA 2021 Officers

Joe Heitzinger, KCØOIO - President

Bob Jensen, WØGAF - Vice President

Dave Iverson, N9JNQ - Secretary

Rich Smith, ADØSN - Treasurer

Zack Zaccagnini, AAØU - 2021 & 2022 Director

Doug Farrell, N9TOW - 2020 & 2021 Director

Note: The SARA Trustee officer is an appointed position; chosen by the elected officers

Trustee: Shel Mann, NØDRX

READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE
Radioham.org