



# Signals from SARA



## WØJH

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An ARRL Affiliate & Special Service Club

[www.radioham.org](http://www.radioham.org)

February  
2022

## February Meeting - Virtual Shack Tour

Virtual Tour of Members' Shacks  
(Show Us Yours ... We'll Show You Ours!)



This month we're asking SARA members to send photos of your shack to show as part of our February program. Send a few, maybe 3 or 4, that show your operating station (Command Center!) to our members. We'll load them into Zoom and let you describe your operating conditions. If you like, include photos of your antenna(s) too. There will be time for members to ask questions.

Send all photos to Dave, WØOXB ([w0oxb@arrl.net](mailto:w0oxb@arrl.net)) by Thursday, Feb. 10 so we can load them into the program. Heck, there may even be prizes for various categories!! :-)

## Announcements

The regular monthly meeting returns on February 12, 2022 via Webex.

Meeting: Current Members will receive a meeting invitation via email from Joe, KCØOIO.

SARA's virtual monthly meetings are open to all. Go to

<https://stillwateramateurradioassociation.my.webex.com/meet/w0jh>

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\*

> 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)

## SARA POTA Challenge

The SARA Parks on the Air (POTA) Challenge is on. Parks on the Air<sup>®</sup> has been growing in popularity, and the SARA POTA Challenge is a great way to get in on the fun. The POTA Challenge will run from January 1 through December 31, 2022 and all SARA members are eligible to participate. We will have awards for Hunters and Activators, and awards will be presented in January 2023.

To participate in the POTA Challenge, there are three simple steps required

- Register for an account at [parksontheair.com](http://parksontheair.com)
- Notify Bob - W0GAF, or Brian - KB9TBB that you want to participate
- Go out and work some parks

POTA contacts fall into two categories; Hunters and Activators. Hunters are the folks that make contact with people who are operating from parks. Activators are the folks who go out to parks and operate. The SARA POTA Challenge will be tracking stats for both Hunters and Activators. We anticipate a number of parks will be activated by SARA members this year, and we're also discussing some potential park activations as a club activity. Stay tuned for further updates.

POTA relies on submission of logs by Activators for QSO data. So if you are just working some parks from your QTH, there's no other work for you to do. The Activator you contacted will submit the log and your QSO will be in the POTA database. Each month, your POTA QSO count will be pulled from the POTA site and tallied for the SARA challenge. To participate as a Hunter you do not need to submit any logs, but you do need to have a POTA account set up so your park QSOs will be counted. For Activators participating in the SARA POTA Challenge, we simply ask that you copy us when you send your ADIF log to your POTA Coordinator.

You can find much more information about Parks on the Air at their website: [parksontheair.com](http://parksontheair.com). This is also the place to create your POTA account. When you set up your account, any parks you have worked in the past will magically appear in your log book. You may even find you've already qualified for one of the many POTA awards available.

Watch this space, as well as the SARA website for additional information on the SARA POTA Challenge. We are also planning some Tech Topic discussions on park activation, and park logging. Bob - W0GAF and Brian - KB9TBB are the SARA POTA Challenge coordinators. Please contact them with any questions you may have about the SARA POTA Challenge.

Bob - [w0gaf@radioham.org](mailto:w0gaf@radioham.org)

Brian - [kb9tbb@arrl.net](mailto:kb9tbb@arrl.net)

*Parks on the Air<sup>®</sup> is a registered service mark by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.*

## NØDRX Quiz

Can you see anything that might be wrong in the picture?

73,  
Shel



## L.S.A.G. - LAKE SUPERIOR AUXCOMM GROUP

**Hi, my name is Brad Harris VE3MXJ. I am the ARES/ACS E.C. for the City of Thunder Bay, ON in the Amethyst District in Northwestern Ontario.**

Our group came together following participation in a Coast Guard exercise, the premise of which was a disabled (the original scenario was sabotaged) oil tanker in the middle of Lake Superior that was hit by another vessel causing a massive oil spill. As originally planned, the exercise was scheduled for 2 weeks and involved not only the US Coast Guard, but the Canadian CG, Ontario Provincial government, Canadian Governmental offices in Ottawa, the Michigan State Police and the Minnesota equivalent thereof.

Essential to the exercise was the Coast Guard's needs to communicate not only across Lake Superior North to South, but also to the extreme east end of the Lake and then

with Ottawa, as well as with appropriate authorities in Thunder Bay, ON and in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, as well as in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Through its own radio systems, the USCG could not accomplish this. It sought the participation and involvement of multiple ARES groups.

The focus of ARES performance was the ability to send text messages via radio waves, in addition to voice communication. During lulls in the exercise, dozens of our ARES personnel from the States and Ontario discussed organizational problems we all experience preparing for the exercise. The end result of those hours of discussion was the decision to form a group that we now have named LSAG. As an aside, Canadians no longer use the term ARES; rather, they use the terms Auxiliary Communications. For that reason and the fact that it is a more descriptive term, we adopted AuxComm as part of our name.

Our group, Lake Superior AuxComm Group, LSAG, did not adopt or propose a mutual aid agreement, presuming that you are intending to reference an agreement wherein one ARES group agrees to assist another.

One important thing I will mention is that since all of the AuxComm services will be provided by the individual AuxComm or ARES groups, legal liabilities are on the individual ARES/AuxComm groups and LSAG does not need to acquire a separate liability insurance policy.

In addition to the above, LSAG does hold regular meetings, via ZOOM, once per month. The meetings are scheduled for 1 hour. The first 1/2 hour is devoted to business matters. The second 1/2 hour involves the members at the meeting communicating via means designated at the start of the second 1/2 hour; sometimes it is voice over HF (differing frequencies each time) and sometimes via WinLink; sometimes both. The purpose is to provide practice and to ascertain which frequencies work best or better than others to communicate with geographically spread out locations.

We are still a new and developing organization. Our next steps are to sign up more radio personnel from all involved jurisdictions and to collect the identity information for all Emergency Management governmental personnel in the affected geographical areas. As all of this data is collected, it is stored in the Google Drive cloud which is accessible to all.

Brad Harris VE3MXJ CEC

E.C. for the City of Thunder Bay, ON

LSAG President

807-474-6246

## 2022 MN ARES Conference

Feb 26th 1pm-5pm on Zoom

Want to improve your skills as an emergency communicator? MN ARES is hosting the first annual MN ARES Conference on Zoom.

Preliminary schedule:

- Introduction by MN SEC Benton Jackson, K0BHJ
- Keynote talk by a representative from ARRL HQ
- New Skills: Winlink, Go Kits, MNVOAD, Tower Trailers
- Practicing your skills through public service
- Think Local!

More information at <https://minnesotaares.org> as it becomes available. To register, fill out the Google Form at <https://forms.gle/r3Enm4fGVUJUprbh6>

## They're Out There Listening!

As some know, there are folks that like to listen to on-air sessions. They hear what's going on but never or seldom join in the conversations and rag chews. We sometimes refer to this as lurking, laying in the weeds, etc. (Of course, we've noticed that oftentimes others more than make up for this! Maybe this is the Conservation of Transmission Time!) Anyway, here is a contribution we received from a ham who's been eavesdropping for quite some time and is finally coming forth. If/when this continues, our editorial staff will choose when and what to share. We may have to give things like this a place in our newsletter.

### Heard On the Air

"It's interesting to learn that one SARA member is going through a "50 Year Itch" or something. Some of us ole timers can somewhat identify with him. He's been busy buying up those new-fangled transceivers, mostly SDRs, and running them through the gears to see what they can do. Then, he turns around and sells them. He EVEN did a 360 and bought one he previously sold so he could try it again! I guess these radios are so good it's tough to know what to keep nowadays. Methinks some don't have enough to do with all their spare ham radio time."

73 de Morrie Zeppernick, W7CFZ/Ø

## Bandwidth from the President

Greetings from my shack, de Joe KCØOIO.



In-person meetings of SARA are suspended through the end of February due to the current COVID surge. This includes the weekly Eyeball QSO Party at the Stillwater Public Library, 2nd Saturday Breakfast, and the February 12 Monthly Meeting.

The February monthly meeting will be a virtual session via our WEBEX video conference room. Meanwhile, SARA's on-air and virtual activities are a great way to stay connected with others. These activities provide healthy social contact while maintaining personal distancing.

On Sundays there is "Sunday Fusion" Digital Voice Hangout at 19:00 Central (01:00 UTC) on the SARA Repeater 147.060+ MHz (DCS/DTCS 026 Normal), or connect via WIRES-X to the W0JH-Room 63969. The hangout is the place to expand use and familiarity with the digital voice capabilities available on the WØJH repeater.

Every Night at 20:00 Central (02:00 UTC) you can join the SARA Top Band Ragchew on 1.966 MHz LSB +/- QRM. If that frequency doesn't work, we have alternates: 21.316 MHz +/- QRM (USB) 50.166 MHz +/- QRM (USB).

Turn Monday mornings into a positive experience with the SARA Monday Morning Ragchew at 09:00 Central (15:00 UTC) on 3.856 MHz LSB +/- QRM.

Monday thru Friday at 12:00 noon Central you can join The Lunch Room Informal Ragchew on the SARA Repeater 147.060+ MHz (DCS/DTCS 026 Normal). There is no formal net control station - anyone can open the Lunch Room.

On Tuesday evenings at 7:00 PM Central you can join the SARA Two Meter Tuesday (TMT) Round Robin Ragchew on the SARA Repeater 147.060+ MHz (DCS/DTCS 026 Normal). EMERGENCY POWER NIGHT - extra credit for emergency power/off-grid operation on the first Tuesday evening of the month.

73 es CUL de KCØOIO

## Ice Station WØJH - Some Callsign History

February 19, 20 & 21  
Lake Elmo, MN

Put yourself in the picture at our next Special Event!



The event station call sign will be WØJH, the callsign once held by Father George Metcalf, who served as chaplain to General Patton and who was an enthusiastic, long-time supporter of the Handiham program. SARA, a Handiham-affiliated club, now holds his callsign.

# WØJH

**REV. GEORGE R. METCALF, T.S.S.F.**  
"Father George"

9BTI in 1922      795 Indian Trail South      (612) 436-7774  
Confirming QSO with: AFTON, MINNESOTA 55001 USA     Pse QSL Tnx   

STATION	MO	DAY	YR	UTC	FREQ	REPORT	MODE
WAØSGJ			1970-1990		1000 KZ	599	TWO ALWAYS

**MEMBER: COURAGE HANDI-HAM SYSTEM**

This vintage QSL card is from Father George himself, and it documents a contact with

WAØSGJ labeled "1970 to 1990 at 1000 Hz with a 599 report and mode of always". Fr. George had a sense of humor! He knew he could always talk to the Handiham office if he called Sister Alverna, WAØSGJ, The Handiham Education Coordinator at the time.

One time Sister Alverna and I paid a visit to Fr. George at his home in Afton because he wanted to show us his collection of electronic gear. I had been to his QTH before, but had never been to the basement of his spacious modern home. It was chock full of rows of shelves - maybe a few feet tall for easy reaching - with all kinds of old electronic gear. I think he was hoping we could use it, but alas, that was not the case.

See the address on that old QSL card? Visit it (Metcalf Field) for good night sky viewing of the stars! Check out this page on the Minnesota Astronomical Society website:

<http://www.mnastro.org/facilities/metcalf/>

Metcalf Field is part of the Belwin Conservancy:

“The partnership between the [Minnesota Astronomical Society](#) (MAS) and Belwin Conservancy dates to the **1970s**! That’s when Father George Metcalf’s property—now Belwin’s Creative Center—was used as a spiritual retreat center. He and his wife, Mary, wanted to downsize and contacted the Science Museum of Minnesota with the intention of donating the bulk of their property to the museum.” - <https://belwin.org/about/history/>

I recommend a visit to the Belwin Conservancy to view the Bison in the summer, take a prairie hike, or view the heavens! Bring your HT - you are practically in the shadow of the SARA repeater, and I’m sure Fr. George would approve of his callsign still echoing through the Afton hills and up and down the St. Croix Valley!

73 - Pat

[wa0tda@arrl.net](mailto:wa0tda@arrl.net)

## 2022 Ice-olation Station WØJH Feb 19 - 21

It won't be long before our winter special event takes place ... and you can participate from the convenience of your own QTH. In the interest of the health and safety of our members, we are bringing back the "Ice-olation Station WØJH" for a return. Each operator will be scheduled to participate from their own QTH. Each Op will have selected agreed upon time(s) when and where they can operate. Each Op must operate in accordance with their license class and use the club’s call sign, WØJH. We will have multiple stations simultaneously using the same call sign,



operating on different bands and different modes.

## **When, Where & What**

- Days: Feb. 19, 20, 21 (Saturday – Monday)
- Times: 0800 – 1759 local; 1400 – 2359 UTC (some variations depending on mode & band)
- Bands/Frequencies: Anywhere (Published: 80m (3.860), 40m (7.260), 20m (14.260), 15m (21.360))
- Modes: SSB, CW & Digital

## **Scheduling**

- > Sign-up will be done online
- > Signup Genius link  
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0d4ca4ac2ba0ffc43-iceolation1>
- > Signing up is simple
  - Review the available time/band-mode slots and determine when you can operate. All time slots listed are 1 hour.
  - Additional band/mode slots have been for 17 and 10 Meters.
  - Select the open time/band/mode slot or slots you wish to operate (1 hour shifts/increments are commonly recommended)
  - Click on the "SUBMIT AND SIGN UP" button at the bottom of the SignUpGenius screen
  - Provide your callsign in the box or boxes
  - Click "SIGN ME UP"
  - Confirmations and reminders are automatically sent from [SignUpGenius.com](https://www.signupgenius.com)

## **Logging**

- We strongly encourage Ops to use computer-generated logging programs (especially N3FJP ACLog and others) with ADIF export capabilities.  
For those without computer logging, talk with one of us about recommendations, details.  
(There are free logging programs available.)
- Zoom each Day
    - > We will use ZOOM for a SARA conference room that will be open each day during operating hours. This helps facilitate easy operator handoffs.
    - > An "Afterglow" networking/decompression session will be open via ZOOM each evening.

## Remote Base Station Update - February 2022

Patrick Tice, [wa0tda@arrl.net](mailto:wa0tda@arrl.net)



Stations WØZSW and WAØTDA are up and running. WØEQO is running in limited mode (receive only on 40 meters, other bands are okay for transmit/receive).

The WØEQO station has persistent RF in the shack problems that we have so far been unable to clear up.

When the weather gets better, Bill, NØCIC, will help us tackle this

problem again. Meanwhile, remember that the station works - other than being receive-only on 40 meters.

**Make contacts in the morning before sunrise!** Every morning I check the stations to make sure that they are up and running. Early mornings offer long propagation on the lower frequency HF bands. Even though the days get longer in February, there are still fairly long nights, so nighttime propagation presents an opportunity to add states for WAS on bands like 160 and 80 meters that will be noisy and much less useful in the summer months.

**Don't forget about the higher frequency bands, either.** Lately there are contacts to be made throughout the daylight hours on 15 meters, which has always been one of the go-to bands as the solar cycle gets better and better.

We have gotten so used to lousy band conditions over the past seemingly endless solar

minimum that we often assume the 15 meter is dead, when in fact it is open!



The hands-down easiest way to check whether a band is open these days is to tune to the FT8 frequency. In the screenshot above, taken in late January, it is clear that there is plenty going on at 21.074 MHz even though if you were tuning around the SSB part of the band you might assume the band was closed!

If you prefer CW, remember that stations WØZSW, WØEQO, and WAØTDA are all CW enabled. This is not the case for most Remotehams stations. You can use the CW mode, sending code via your PC or Android smartphone. Morse enthusiasts might upgrade to an external USB interface that has a jack to plug in a key or keyer. This gives using the stations a more familiar feel, since physically handling the key of your choice is something you are used to. The Remotehams website lists a premade device for this that also includes a mic jack, but alas, the “ORB Control Device” is shown to be out of stock due to Covid. Here’s the link with a complete description and photos:

<https://www.remotehams.com/orb-control-device.html>

Or... Maybe it’s time to homebrew your own interface!

Remoting with an Elecraft rig is another option. I don’t have any experience with this but the Remotehams support forums have lots of discussion. My understanding is that the K3, K3/0, and the K0-Mini will work as a remote head Client side. Go to the Elecraft website and put Remotehams in the search box. Use the “Articles” tab when the page comes up.

Good luck & good DX in 2022 and have fun with the radios!

73 - Pat [wa0tda@arrl.net](mailto:wa0tda@arrl.net)

## Upcoming events

- **February Meeting: Saturday, February 12, 2022 - Virtual meeting via Webex. 9 AM start time.**
- **SARA Lunchroom - M - F Noon to ?**
- **"Sunday Fusion"** SARA's digital voice hangout is every Sunday evening at 7:00 PM. "Sunday Fusion" makes use of the System Fusion C4FM digital voice capabilities of the SARA repeater along with WIRES-X and YSF connectivity, It is an informal "hangout" for those who want to explore the System Fusion capabilities of their radios.
- **March Meeting: Saturday, March 12, 2022.**
- **April Meeting: Saturday, April 9, 2022.**
- **May Meeting: Saturday, May 14, 2022 - Last meeting before summer break.**
- **June, July, August - Summer break**
- **2022 ARRL Field Day - June 25-26 - <http://www.arrl.org/field-day>**
- **Discussion** continues anytime at <https://groups.io/g/StillwaterMNAmateurRadioAssoc>

## SARA 2022 Officers

Joe Heitzinger, KCØOIO - President

Bob Jensen, WØGAF - Vice President

Dave Iverson, N9JNQ - Secretary

Rich Smith, ADØSN - Treasurer

Zack Zaccagnini, AAØU - 2021 & 2022 Director

Brad Harris, VE3MXJ - 2022 & 2023 Director

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

Trustee: Shel Mann, NØDRX

## A Note from the Editors

This edition of the 2022 Signals from SARA news is produced on Google Docs using 100% recyclable electrons.

We welcome your article submissions. Don't worry about getting the spelling & grammar perfect - submit it anyway and we'll work it out. Please keep text and pictures separate, as this helps us with layout.

We can take most any format, but plain text is easiest to manage. Word docs are also fine, but we'd prefer to avoid formats like MS Publisher and PDF as submissions.

