



Signals from SARA



WØJH

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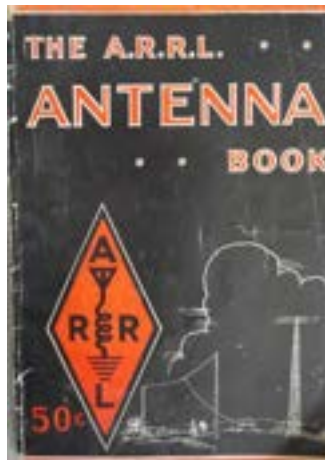
An ARRL Affiliate & Special Service Club

www.radioham.org

September
2022

September Meeting Program: Field-Expedient Antenna Show-N-Tell

For the September 10th monthly meeting we will host a “field-expedient” portable antenna show-n-tell. Members are encouraged to bring up to 3 different antenna types they have used for portable operations and give a brief explanation of your choices and how they have performed for you. For those joining the meeting virtually, you will be able to participate too. Take some pictures of your antennas to share on-screen your experiences with them.



Seen at HARA Arena in Dayton

Announcements

The regular monthly meeting returns on September 10, 2022 in person & via Webex. Start time: 9:20 AM, Boutwells Landing.

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://us06web.zoom.us/j/82990530919?pwd=bIUzcDdkYU1aZWRaVXNmT EpuU1NSQT09>

Meeting ID: 829 9053 0919

Passcode: 233337

SARA On the Air

Phone Round Robin Ragchews & Net

(All Times are Local - Central?)

SARA 2m Repeater* ... Weekdays

> SARA Top Band Ragchew Nightly

20:00 CT ~3.820 to 3.830 MHz

Temporary until 160m & 75m bands

change. Alternates: 21.316 MHz +/-

QRM(USB, 50.166 MHz +/- QRM USB

>SARA Monday Morning 75-meter

Ragchew 08:15 CT 3.856 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 or connect via WIRES-X to

the WØJH-Room 63969.

The Bicentennial Called – They Want Their Ham Shack Back!

By: Randy Olson KDØVKB

I'd recently acquired a "newer" addition to the Marina (that's what you get when you have multiple Boat Anchors). This find originally came from a ham's former favorite go-to if you needed connectors, cable or assorted electronic parts – Radio Shack. Well – this find was physically Ok, but the former owner could not get it to work. It was a quick fix and soon this rig was playing "oldies" in the background as I worked hanging sheetrock in the lower level of my house. Not my favorite task – and something I really could use a distraction from.

I sat down for a moment and surveyed the shelves – and this photo is what became my well-welcomed distraction.



As this all came together I realized there was a common theme here – most of the stuff was pretty much near the same age – and that age put it all around 1976; the Bicentennial! Well I'll be a Yankee Doodle Dandy – here we are back in the Ford Administration; President Gerald Ford, not the car brand.



First up on the lineup is a real odd-ball, A Hy-gain 623, otherwise known as the Utopia. Imagine, a phase locked lock loop tuner and a vacuum tube final; all in the same box. Yes- this is the Hy-gain that still manufactures antennas today. At the time of our county's 200th they were heavily into the CB market. Their line up for the most part looked like all the other imported boxes, except for this one. This red-haired-stepchild appears to originate much more from an amateur radio influenced ilk. And of course – it's fed a diet of "ten four good buddy" by a special Bicentennial edition Astatic D-104 Silver Eagle...complete with an embossed federal eagle on the back of the mic head.



Center stage is held down by the dynamic duo of a Realistic (a.k.a. Radio Shack) DX-150A communications receiver and a Bearcat IV scanner. Nostalgia waxes deep with the Bearcat. I never actually owned one in the day; but had the long-term use of a friend's unit since I had a decent antenna that would allow it to work in rural South Dakota. Talk about drama – it had crystals for the South Dakota, North Dakota and Minnesota sheriff departments all on the 150 / 174 MHz area and the local police departments who were still in the 30 to 50 MHz playground.



Underneath – the DX-150A is what started all this craziness. The Shack was great at rebranding, and I'm sure this is similar to something a name brand of the period. There were at least three variants of this radio over the product run. The 150 and 150A both used discrete transistors while the 160 used several IC chips. I'm partial, as are many collectors, to the 150A. It has a very sensitive MOSFET front end and a push-pull transistor amplifier. Not as good sounding as your Marantz tuner; but good enough for what it can bring in from the ether.



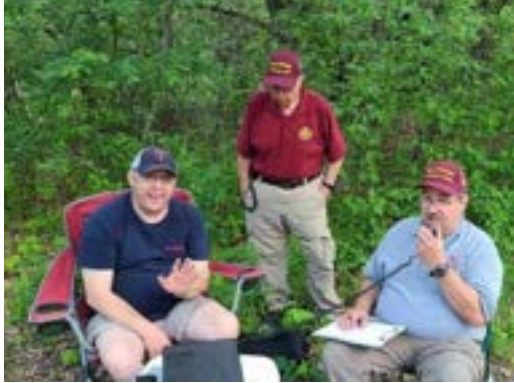
Finally, there's the Hallicrafters FPM300 – also known as the Safari. This hybrid circuit rig also uses a PLL tuner and a vacuum tube final. The circuitry squeezes 100 watts PEP from a single 6KD6 output tube. Made well after Bill Halligan, the company's founder, had exited the operation – the FPM300 came in two build sessions. The first being the FPM300 with no additional nomenclature. These were made in Chicago by apparently unskilled workers. These radios either worked – or they did not. The first run was plagued by poor soldering and shoddy workmanship. The second run, the FPM300 MkII were assembled in Texas. These rigs were much better quality. But alas, the name's once great reputation had been tarnished and no further attempts were made to recoup this moniker.

With all this – what could be missing. Oh well, one can always dream. Perhaps one of those really neat Heathkit Nixie tube clocks. No, wait, that Heathkit "Space Age" weather station with those state-of-the-art LED's.

73
Randy
KDØVKB

First SARA POTA Activity Day

Saturday morning June 11 marked SARA's first club POTA activity day. After meeting for breakfast at Perkins in Stillwater, we rallied at the Harbor Freight parking lot and formed into four teams. First to activate were WØGAF and VE3MXJ who started at the boom



site north of Stillwater and made 15 contacts at K-0673, followed soon after by WØOXB, KFØHZG and KFØCCL who made their way to Afton State Park and 20 contacts at K-2466. KB9TBB, KDØPKY and KEØOGI headed for William O'Brien state park K-where a two-fer with the St Croix River (K-2530 and K-0673.) I (KB9TBB) was pleased to be there to help Paul get his first POTA contact.

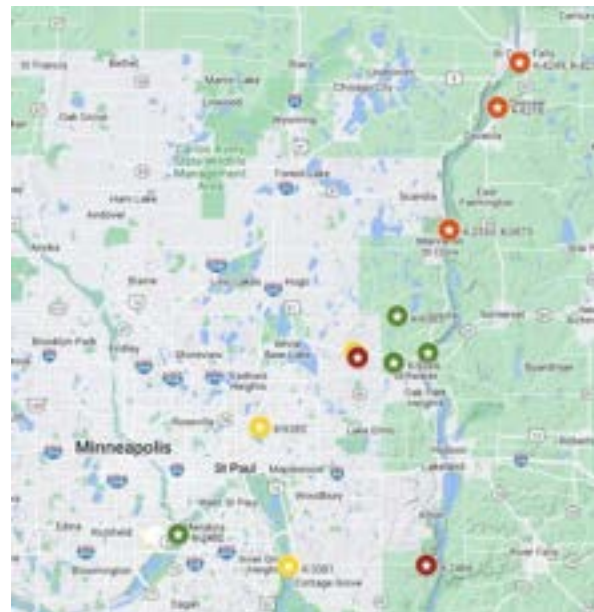
KCØOIO and NØBJE found a nice spot on the Mississippi K-3381 and made 23 contacts in short order, afterwards they made their way to the Gateway Overview State Trail, K-9385, before meeting up with WØOXB and KFØHZG for a great two-fer at Gateway Overview and Browns Creek State Trails (K-9385 and K-9386.)



WØGAF and VE3MXJ added two more activations at Browns Creek and Gateway Trails before making their way to Fort Snelling State Park for a two-fer with the Mississippi river. After a picnic lunch at Franconia sculpture mall, KB9TBB and KEØOGI hit Interstate State Park (K-4249) for a two-fer with the Ice Age National Scenic Trail (K-4238) and topped it off with a quick visit to the Osceola Bedrock Glades State Natural Area K-8216.

At the end of the day we met up back in Stillwater for Burritos and Bragging at the Acapulco.

In total as a club we activated 11 locations with hundreds of qsos ranging from Alaska to Puerto Rico, from San Diego to Spain, and all points in between. It was a great day spent having great fun.



Bandwidth from the President

Greetings from my shack, de Joe KCØOIO.

It's been a good and active summer. SARA has kept busy with a variety of activities over the past months. Summer in the Parks, SARA POTA Activity Days, Field Day, 2nd Saturday Breakfasts, New Ham Night, SARA POTA Challenge ...



The SARA "Summer in the Parks" outdoor Eyeball QSO Party has been a big success. We'll have visited 8 parks in the Stillwater area by the time we have the final Summer in the Parks 2022 session on September 15. We've to Valley View Park, Brekke Park, and Autumn Hills Park in Oak Park Heights; Browns Creek Park/State Trail, Pioneer Park and Lily Lake Park in Stillwater; and Otto Berg Park in Stillwater Township. There have been wires thrown up in trees, batteries lugged about, and radios operated in each of them at every session except one when storms drove the small turnout into the building at Autumn Hills in August. We did POTA activations for Brown's Creek State Trail twice and the St Croix National Wild and Scenic River from the St. Croix Boom Site Scenic Overlook. We've had two picnic nights at Valley View Park. And each evening, we've been demonstrating amateur radio portable operations to members, new hams, and the public. We've even picked new members along the way. Summer in the Parks will return next summer.

The SARA POTA Challenge has been a fun and successful way of getting you to get on the air and work the parks. Hunters and activators alike have been motivated to have fun and operate. It's been such a success that we've had some legendary hunters develop. See more on the "Legends and Leaders" in WØGAF's article elsewhere in this issue.

Speaking of the SARA POTA Challenge, I have found that I enjoy the challenge of getting out and activating parks. My first activation, also Brain NØBJE's 1st, came during the June SARA POTA Activity Day. Brian and I teamed up for the day's activations and we headed for our 1st stop at Lions Levee Park in St. Paul Park. Setting up on a small island in the Mississippi River, accessible via a footbridge, we successfully activated K-3381 Mississippi River National Recreation Area with 25 QSOs logged. We did two more activations that day including a two-fer from the Gateway Trail & Browns Creek Trail with Bob KFØHZG and Dave WØOXB. Since then, I have made 14 activations in 17 attempts with 284/289 QSOs and 50 Park-to-Park QSOs.

I have always enjoyed operating events where I get to manage the pile-ups. Field Day, Remembering the Edmund Fitzgerald, Ice Station WØJH, and White Rock to be

specific. Activating a POTA entity gives me the same enjoyment – pulling callsigns out of the jumble and making the contacts. It has reinvigorated my ham radio interest. I have activated K-9387 Luce Line State Trail over my lunch hour 3 out of 4 attempts. I find myself thinking of where to try next, I need 4 more entities for the Bronze Activator award. I keep adjusting my kit to get the best performance with the least effort. That goes back to a principle that good old Sr. Jeron impressed upon us freshmen back so many years: “Efficiency is intelligent laziness.” I strive to get on the air from a park efficiently as possible, especially when on a time constraint such as lunch break. My kit has evolved with each activation. I’ve settled on an IC-7200 with a mag-mount Hamstick for quick deployment. I was able to work Ireland, Belgium, Spain and Italy during our Summer in the Parks visit to the St. Croix Boomsite the other night using this setup, so I’d say it’s working well. I’m planning to head out and activate some entities after I finish writing this column today.

As President of SARA, I devote a lot of time and energy to the Association and its success. I can see that in the membership level, now nearing 130 members; the level of participation in our activities; and the enthusiasm of the members for what SARA is doing for the amateur radio community. I want to commend Brian NØBJE for his efforts as an ambassador for SARA through the New Ham Help Group and Equipment Loan Program, and his zeal in promoting and recruiting members for SARA. There are others making big contributions to SARA’s success – WØGAF, KB9TBB, WØOXB, KEØIYF, KEØIYN, KØGW to name a few, along with the rest of the Board members.

I do appreciate the comments and words of encouragement and thanks when shared by you. This past spring I was feeling that I was pouring a lot of time into SARA and our activities and not finding enough time to enjoy this hobby itself. POTA has helped recharge my operating enthusiasm, but I still need to make more of an effort for time for myself doing amateur radio. To that end, I need to enlist others to handle some of the SARA workload. I am still looking for someone to take the task of arranging for programs for our monthly meetings. The role of Programs Coordinator is not difficult nor time consuming, although you should be able to handle an occasional rejection. A creative and open mind for soliciting program ideas and presenters is the only requirement. If you are willing to take on the role, please contact me at kc0oio2002@gmail.com.

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

73 es CUL de KCØOIO

General Class Course Starts This Month

SARA will be conducting a General license class. The first session will be on September 22 at 6pm. The class will run for 8 weeks, and a VE testing session will be held on the 9th week. Classes run from 6pm - 8pm and will be held at the Stillwater public library. Class location may change based on room availability. Fall is the perfect time to upgrade your license to prepare for those long winter days and evenings next to the radio. We also welcome members who already have General class license to ride along with our class session to refresh their skills.

SARA would like to thank all of our members who make these classes possible by volunteering their time and expertise as instructors. We couldn't do it without you.

Become a volunteer instructor.

SARA has a long tradition of training new and upgrading hams. For those of you that may be interested in sharing your knowledge of ham radio, becoming a volunteer instructor is a great way to assist SARA in our education efforts. We are always looking for new instructors, and will provide you assistance and tools you need to be successful.

For more information on classes, or the volunteer instructor role, please contact Bob - W0GAF



Remember Tony Tretter, WØKVO? He was a long-time instructor. When you volunteer, you join people like Tony in sharing Amateur Radio with others.

Amateur Radio (Ham) Weekly Classes

Starting Soon ...

... **FREE!!**

General Class License

Kick-off & 1st Session

:: Thursday, Sept. 22

:: 6:00 - 8:00 pm

:: **Stillwater Public Library**

224 3rd Street North

Free Ramp & Street Parking



8 Study Sessions + Testing Exam (Nov. 17)

:: Thursday Evenings **Stillwater Library**

:: 6:00 - 8:00 pm



Sponsored by Stillwater Amateur Radio Association (SARA)

www.radioham.org

More info: Bob Jensen (WØGAF) 612.802.2269 or w0gaf@me.com

SARA POTA Challenge - Legends and Leaders

The Parks on the Air program has been extremely popular and the SARA POTA Challenge (our friendly club competition) has likewise seen enthusiastic participation from park hunters and park activators within our ranks.

Among our park hunters, a number of members have attained 'legendary' status. Their enthusiasm and operating skill have enabled them to rack up hunted parks and QSO counts that many of us will never be able to reach. The phenomenal stats racked up by these legendary hunters has prompted us to ask if other challenge participants (existing or new) are feeling they can't possibly compete with these legendary POTA operators, and thus choose not to participate.



The primary objective of the SARA POTA Challenge is to encourage participation by our members. To this end, the competition committee is establishing Legends and Leaders divisions for POTA Challenge Awards.

Legends - Any park hunter achieving 500 or more hunter QSOs will enter the Legends Division. All Legend participants will be awarded a prize for their legendary performance in the challenge.

Leaders - All participants with less than 500 park QSOs are in the Leaders Division. Leaders will only compete against Leaders for prizes. The top three scores in the Leaders Division will be awarded prizes at the end of the challenge.

Key points

- Legends and Leaders Divisions only apply to park hunters. There is no Legends and Leaders division for park activators (although we have certainly had some legendary activators emerge).

- It's not too late to join the fun. With four months left in the POTA Challenge, there is plenty of time for new and existing participants to make enough park QSOs to be

competitive in the Leaders Division.

- Current stats for Legends and Leaders divisions will be published on the SARA website in the coming days.

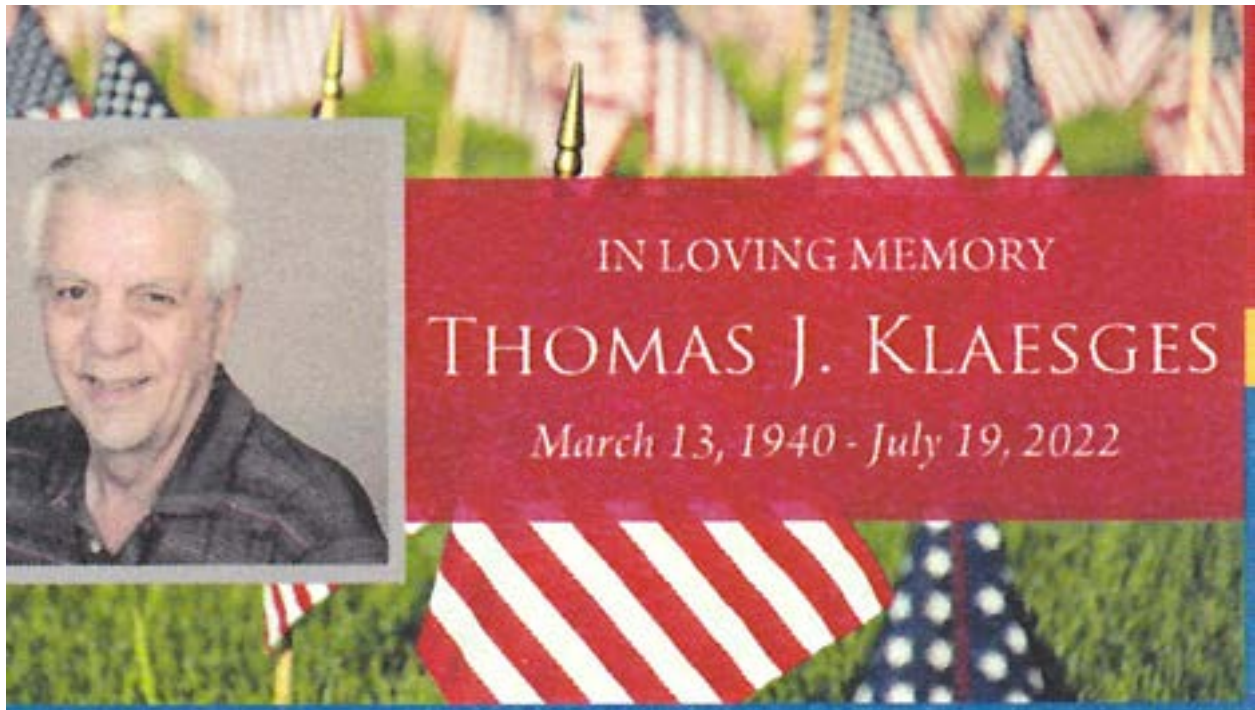
Thanks to all for your support and participation in the SARA POTA Challenge. Please contact our POTA Challenge coordinators if you have any questions.

Bob - W0GAF

Brian - KB9TBB

In Memoriam

Tom, AD6QT



Despite knowing Tom for virtually the whole time he was in SARA, I never knew him well. I remember putting up a DE Zepp for him when he lived somewhere over W of White Bear Ave, just a few blocks N of 94, and I remember how odd his basement setup was. But, other than that, I'm sorry to say that I only ever chatted to him briefly at a SARA meeting.

The only other thing I can say is that Tom was passionately devoted to ham radio, and especially getting new hams on the air. That's why he was always at VE sessions and why he made the donations to the club that he did. He inspired his niece Kathren to get her ticket. At his memorial, besides family pictures and some from his service days, the main items were all about ham radio and SARA in particular.

73, Greg, K0GW

Remote Base Station Update - September 2022

Patrick Tice, wa0tda@arrl.net



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

Thunderstorm season has been a challenge. I have been disconnecting and reconnecting antennas more this year than in any previous summer, thanks to a steady march of storms across the upper midwest. The lightning was bad enough, but the wind was plenty strong, too. Minnesotans were playing their new favorite game this past

few months: Pick up sticks! The backyard brush pile got higher and the antennas got lower - some of my wire antennas ended up on the ground when the branches broke.

Summer is generally a lower-use time for the HF remotes, but I still try to keep all of them up and running as much as possible. I'm looking forward to a (hopefully) less weather-active autumn.

Eliot, KEØN, and I have begun an experiment to run FT8 on one of the stations. If you are familiar with FT8, you know that it requires precise computer timing. This requirement makes FT8 a poor choice for remote HF operation because the delays associated with sending control signals over the internet add up and mess up the timing between the remote user's PC and the remote rig's control PC. That means if the remote user tries to run the WSJT software on their own PC while sending commands to one of the remote stations using the RCForb software, they will likely fail to complete many FT8 contacts.

One solution is to run the WSJT software on the remote station's host PC, which means bypassing the RCForb software and logging directly into the host PC with screen sharing software.

While we are in the early days of this experiment, Eliot has been able to work some DX on station WØZSW using FT8.

Meanwhile Remotehams users will see that the station is "in use" by KEØN, as reported on the RCForb software that is in use on all the stations. When the FT8 session is finished the station returns to normal remote service.

We will have more to report later.



As always, for those of you who prefer SSB or CW to FT8, all three stations are equipped for those modes. In that sense, we are ahead of the crowd, as many Remotehams stations lack the additional hardware interface at the host stations to run CW.

The 40 meter problems have been resolved at W0EQO, so the Scout Camp station is working well. A lightning strike took out the camp's internet in mid-season, so several pieces of the networking hardware had to be replaced, taking the station offline for a couple of weeks. None of our gear was damaged, YAY!

In the autumn we will be assessing the station antenna systems to make sure that we are heading into winter with good, solid installations that won't fail when it's least convenient to work outdoors.

As we move past summer, the activity on the HF bands will pick up as will the use of the three remotes. I am looking forward to hearing more signals on 160 and 80 meters as the days get shorter and the thunderstorms and D layer absorption fade away.

Oooo... I checked 160 m on a whim this morning and found a couple of QSOs going on before sunrise. I stepped out into the backyard to look at the sky, and what should be looking back down at me but the Constellation Orion! If you are familiar with the seasonal night sky, you'll know that Orion is a winter constellation. Winter! And there it was, overhead on Sunday, September 4. How much longer can it be until we're back on 160?

Have a great next couple weeks of summer! (Or is it pre-winter?)

Contact Pat at wa0tda@arrl.net for transmit access or for help. Information and videos, along with a quick start guide are available here:

<http://tice.us/wa0tda/>

Upcoming events

- **September Meeting: Saturday, September 10, 2022 - First meeting after our summer break, Boutwells Landing 9:00 AM (Don't arrive early) 13575 58th Street North, Oak Park Heights** *Early birds: 7:30 AM Breakfast/Coffee Pre-meeting: Perkins Restaurant (2050 Frontage Rd, Stillwater)*
- **SARA Lunchroom** - M - F Noon to ? SARA repeater 147.060 MHz; Positive Offset; DCS/DTCS 026 Normal) - just throw your hat in the ring if you don't hear anyone on.
- **"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.
- Summer in the Parks:
 - Thursday, Sept. 8 ~5:00 – 8:00 pm Lily Lake Park (1208 Greeley St S, Stillwater)
 - Thursday, Sept. 15 ~5:00 – 8:00 pm Valley View Park (immediately North of the Oak Park Heights Maximum Security Prison, Oak Park Heights)
- Other 2022 SARA Monthly Meetings
 - Saturdays, October 8, November 12, December 10 Fall General License Classes
 - Thursday, Sept. 22 – for 8 sessions (VE Exam = Nov. 13) Stillwater Public Library
- “Remembering the Edmund Fitzgerald” Special Event November 4 – 6 Split Rock Lighthouse State Park (Split Rock, MN) - Details to follow next month.
- **Discussion** continues anytime at <https://groups.io/g/StillwaterMNA AmateurRadioAssoc>

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

Trustee: Shel Mann, NØDRX

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

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. Email wa0tda@arrl.net - Note that the old Comcast.net address is no longer checked.

