

# Hamgram

November, 2016

Winona Amateur Radio Club  
Winona, Minnesota

## Hangin Elmer



John Kowalik, K2OPT, helped new Ham Mike Schmelzer, KE0JLC, hang a wire antenna recently. Notice the slingshot in the lower right of the image.

A strong and clear signal starts with a good antenna, something lacking at the QTH of Mike Schmelzer, KE0JLC. In the best tradition of Ham radio, John Kowalik, K2OPT, responded. Under Kowalik's direction, the two spent the day, Saturday, Oct. 22, putting up a 100' end fed wire antenna for Schmelzer's Icom 756 Pro III. He's new to the hobby, so Kowalik's expertise with antennas was a tremendous help.

Using K2OPT's sling shot got the one end of the wire about 35' up a tree and the other end is attached to Schmelzer's deck. Within a short period of time, the SWR checked and they were talking to a Ham in Duluth. "It was a very exciting day with good food and a lot of talk about amateur radio," says Schmelzer.



Todd Shea, KB9YXS, left, explains La Crosse National Weather Service activities to Dan Goltz, WK0W, and Dale Cohenour, KD0EKD.

## SKYWARN Recognition Day December 3

The annual SKYWARN Recognition Day (SRD) will be held Saturday, Dec. 3, on the air and at the La Crosse National Weather Service Office, N2788 County Road FA, La Crosse. This is the day when Amateur Radio operators visit National Weather Service (NWS) offices and contact other operators around the world. The purpose of the event is to recognize the vital public service contributions that Amateur Radio operators make during National Weather Service severe weather warning operations. It also strengthens the bond between Amateur Radio operators and the local National Weather Service. The event is co-sponsored by ARRL and the National Weather Service. Remember that this is not a contest, however ambitious operators may earn certificates indicating the number of contacts they made with NWS offices.

A visit to the NWS office on Granddad Bluff, in La Crosse, is worthwhile. Many area Hams drop by to see the operation and visit with forecasters and

some help operate one of the several stations set-up in the facility meeting room.

On-the-air the object is for amateur stations to exchange QSO information with as many National Weather Service stations as possible on 80 through 10 meters, including 6 and 2 meters bands and the 70 centimeter band. Contacts via repeaters are permitted.

National Weather Service stations will operate Dec. 3, from 0000 - 2400 UTC.

Exchange call sign, signal report, QTH, and a one or two-word description of the weather occurring at your site.

National Weather Service stations will work various modes including SSB, FM, AM, RTTY, CW and PSK31.

New this year will be a new log submission process introduced this year, and W1AW at ARRL Headquarters is scheduled to be on the air for SKYWARN Recognition Day. More details will be released later. More information about this event may be found at [www.wrh.noaa.gov/mtr/hamradio/](http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/mtr/hamradio/).

## WARC Board Meeting

October 4, 2016, Watkins Hall, Winona State University

Present:

*Board Members: Harro Hohenner, KG6RLM, Syed Faruque, ACØVA, Paul Schumacher, KØZYV, Dan Goltz, WKØW, Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT.*

*Non Board Member: Mike Foerster, WØIH*

Called to order by Paul at around 7 PM.

### Treasurer Report

Paul entertained a motion to approve treasurer report. Harro had discrepancy of \$6 between bank statement and his record keeping. Harro could not figure out the reason of discrepancy. Harro still looking for it. Treasurer report was approved.

### Minutes

Minutes of last meeting approved.

### Committee Reports

**Public Service Committee.** Dan reiterated very successful club participation of "Ride the Ridges" bike race. Dan had eight operators supporting. "For the size, the support was adequate" per Dan.

The public service committee has not met since the last board meeting, however the committee remains active.

Most recently, our Ride The Ridges support allowed us to work with Winona Country SOAR. These activities help us maintain a good relationship with other country groups such as SOAR and Emergency Management.

As a result of the Ride The Ridges activity, some equipment anomalies have been identified. The county owned Kenwood D-710 failed on installation and could not be used. Owners of the D-710 state that this is a common problem. The connection to the control head becomes intermittent giving a false indication of low voltage to the radio. This will need to be addressed before we can try to use this radio again.

The county-owned Kenwood D-700 had a programming failure and would not bring up the 440 repeater, even though the radio indicated that it was set for the proper frequency and the proper tone being sent. This will need to be addressed before this radio can be used again.

There is some good news from the Ride The Ridges: We were able to supply three SAG wagons, two rest stops, a net control station and ride headquarters with operators and equipment on relatively short notice. Communications were reliable and useful. Operators were able to supply

batteries, antennas and radios to make the event successful.

Our primary Kenwood VHF radio at the LEC has a receiver problem and this will need to be checked out. We may want to investigate what type of radio we want there, possibly a Fusion digital, and decide if the club wants to purchase and donate its use, or if we should ask Emergency Management to purchase it. -WKØW  
**Repeater Committee.** The MN Repeater Council is working on our new frequency. At the moment they are looking at 442.150. Maybe some time next week we can try tuning the duplexer to that frequency. I haven't made any progress on getting a power control relay set up for the KAGE site yet. Hopefully things will come together soon and we can get the 444.225 repeater moved back to KAGE.

835: the weekend of Sept. 24-25 the 835 repeater didn't seem to be hearing well but it seems to have recovered. Not sure what the issue is/was but we should make a trip out there to take a look. Maybe there's something going on such as water intrusion. I'm not sure when I'll be able to do this myself but maybe a team could go out there and check on it.

The APRS node at Witoka seems to be stable as of right now the Raspberry Pi reports and uptime of 45 days.

The Rooster Ridge APRS node still needs to be checked out. It only shows up on the air once in a while. Its last report was Aug. 13. We think there's an antenna or feed line problem. Someone needs to take some equipment out there to check it out. This has been happening for well over a year now. -WBØNIU.

Paul stated on behalf of **Education Committee** that eight to nine persons are expected to participate in the upcoming licensing class. Classes will start 6:30 p.m. Paul has three copies of books for the classes. Paul would like to run a general class in January and would like to publicize more for the class. Paul would also like to see a larger pool of instructors.

Board approved to pay Paul for the Fusion Repeater club recently purchased.

Mike updated Board with some issues he faced with Witoka tower. Mike made few trips and things are working now. Issue seems to be re-setting the system. Mike is talking to Erik to setup a automatic reset

system. Mike would like Lance to look into event log of Witoka system to find out what was the issue. Dan had few questions on the issue, is it windows? Hardware? Software? Lance and Mike shared ideas to go forward. Mike would like members to utilize more of remote operation of Witoka tower. Mike had a draft for Hamgram on the utilization of Remote operation at Witoka tower. Mike stated the system is under utilized. Paul mentioned we could use the system in our license class. Paul and Mike talked about process of allowing students to experience remote operation.

### List serve.

Paul mentioned many board members are being bounced by internet provider like Yahoo, Hotmail. The issue seems to be list serve. Paul talked to Jim and he suggested club goes with a commercial output. Paul's preference is Qth.com. Qth.com lists many of the ham clubs. Paul contacted La Crosse club and working with La Crosse club to be part their Qth.com list serve. One issue remains domain name (w0ne.org). When we switch there might be issue. Lance and Paul talked about the issue more. Per Paul there seems to be no charge for the switch. Worst case would be cost of \$ 10 a month for unlimited use and access. Les had idea of using ARRL but Paul does not like changing e-mail address for lots of reasons. Mike shared his experience with ARRL e-mail. Paul mentioned Jim would like us to change provider. Mike and Paul talked about e-mail issues with Microsoft Outlook, Hotmail, Novell group wise etc. Board asked Paul to find out exactly how much it would cost club to transfer to Qth.com. Board will discuss the issue again during upcoming meeting. Board approved the transfer if there is no cost but Paul needs to come back to Board with details if there is cost involved.

Paul would like more members to get involved in club activities. Board discussed ways to get members to get more involved. Lance discussed programs for upcoming general meeting including a tour of Benchmark.

Meeting was then adjourned.



# Annual meeting is Nov 20

Just when you thought election season was over it's time for more campaigning. This time it is to elect new board members for the Winona Amateur Radio Club. Terms are completed for board members Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT, and Dan Goltz, WKØW. Both have expressed an interest in re-election.

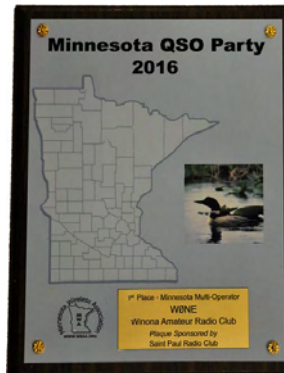
The meeting is set for 7 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 17, in the Winona County Office Building, 202 West Third St.

Current club board members include Paul Schumacher, KØZYV, Harro Hohenner, KG6RLM, Syed Faruque, ACØVA, Leslie Hittner KØBAD, Goltz and Tagliapietra. The club's custodian is Erik Brom, WBØNIU. The custodian is automatically a member of the board.

## Coax co-ax

November's unexpectedly pleasant weather offers an opportunity to check your coax before the winter. Faulty or degraded coax cable can be the root cause of a number of hard-to-find issues, and you may not even know that you have an issue. Besides checking for open or short circuits, check for degraded or intermittent shielding, or water intrusion if conditions warrant. Many of today's antenna analyzers have a setting to measure cable loss; if tracked over time, you will be able to note changes in your station.

# Tops in QSO Party



Members of the Winona Amateur Radio Club took first place in the 2016 Minnesota QSO Party and set a club record – 101,760 points – for the event. Shown with the award plaque are (L-R) Dale Cohenour, KDØEKD, Matt Burt, KFOQ, Claire Jarvis, KØNY, Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT, and John Kowalik, K2OPT.

Minnesota Hams planning to participate in the Minnesota QSO Party look to the Winona Amateur Radio Club as the group to beat. Members of the club took first place in the 2016 Minnesota QSO Party and set a club record – 101,760 points – for the event.

The group garnered 532 QSOs contacting stations in 43 states, four provinces and 50 Minnesota counties. "It was a new all time high," noted Matt Burt, KFØQ. This year's operation was based within the Wilson fire station. Participants included Dale Cohenour, KDØEKD, Claire Jarvis, KØNY, Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT, John Kowalik, K2OPT, Peter Ebertowski, KDØYOB, Dan Goltz, WKØW, Len Litvan, KCØRSX and Burt.

# Taking control

It is the ending of one week and the starting of another when members of the Winona Amateur Radio Club gather on-the-air for Sunday night's WEP Net. Participants have set their radios on 146.835 (PL 131.8) for the 8:30 p.m. start and the familiar script: "Calling all members of the Winona Area Amateur Radio Community."

There are times when no one does the 'calling.' Then what?

Most nights there are routine check-ins, some traffic in the form of meeting notices or mention of upcoming events and occasional descriptions of what has been done to club repeaters and other equipment. It is a fairly casual net with all club members and other licensed Hams invited to participate.

One line in the script is important: "*The purpose of this net is to practice net procedures and learn the principles of emergency communication and emergency preparedness.*" WEP is the abbreviation for "Winona Emergency Preparedness."

The Sunday net is practice for those times when there's storm spotting or the club is supporting a community event with communications such as Trinona. **The reason all club members should be familiar and comfortable with being a Net Control Station is because, when all else fails, they may be needed to step-up when others are not able.**

ALL club members are encouraged to not only participate, but to be Net Control. The script is on the club Web site (<http://www.w0ne.org/> – Activities – wep net) so new operators may simply key the mic and start reading. When stations check-in their calls are logged and, later, submitted to Lance Tagliapietra, ADØUT.

## WØNE Repeaters

146.640 PL 100.0 Hz \*

146.835 PL 131.8 Hz \*\*

444.225 PL 100.0Hz FM Voice C4FM Digital

\* SkyWarn Net when activated.

\*\* Sunday Night Net—8:30 p.m.

The Winona Amateur Radio Club, Inc. P.O. Box 1451, Winona, MN 55987

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At Large: Dan Goltz, WKØW; Leslie Hittner KØBAD

Dues: \$25 per calendar year per license holder. \$30 per calendar year for all licensed members of the same family within the same household.

Send dues to: Harro Hohenner, Treasurer, P.O. Box 1451, Winona, MN 55987

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Monthly club programs are held on the third Thursday. The submission deadline for the Hamgram is Wednesday of the week prior to that of the club programs

# Sweeps for fun

A great way for fun HF operating is the very popular ARRL November Sweepstakes (SS) which offers much for Hams of all levels. True, it is a contest, and true, there are some hard core contesters blistering the airwaves. For Hams in less rarified air it's a way to improve operating skills, add to the states in the log, plus have some good old fashioned radio fun!

Serious participants want you and your QSO even if you plan to make only a couple contacts because, for them, you are the extra contact they need!



Sweeps is Nov. 19-21 for SSB. The CW event was earlier in the month. The contest period begins at 2100 UTC on Saturday and continues through 0259 UTC on Monday. Go to the Web site ([www.arrl.org/sweepstakes](http://www.arrl.org/sweepstakes)) for the rules.

SS is a "domestic" contest that not only has broad appeal, but is within the reach of stations with modest equipment and antennas. Many stations enjoy operating

in the QRP category (5 W or less output).

The point is to try for a "clean sweep" by working all 83 ARRL/RAC Sections, which count as multipliers for Sweepstakes, and earning another) coffee mug for the shack shelf.

The challenge of Sweepstakes is the lengthy exchange, as compared with other operating events. In SS, stations exchange operators give a consecutive serial number; operating category -- Q for Single Op QRP; A for Single Op, Low Power (up to 150 W output); B for Single Op, High Power (greater than 150 W output); U for Single Op, Unlimited, regardless of power; M for Multi-Op, regardless of power, and S for School Club; your call sign; a 'check' -- the last two digits of the year of first license for either operator or station; and your ARRL/RAC Section.

The Winona Amateur Radio Club meets the Third Thursday, 7 p.m. in the Winona County Office Building, 202 West Third Street

