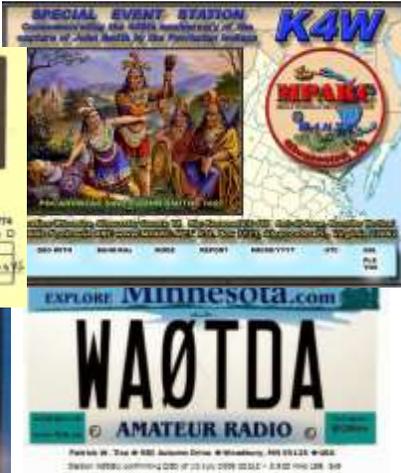




Signals from SARA

WØJH	©2020 The Stillwater Amateur Radio Association An ARRL Affiliate & Special Service Club www.radioham.org	March 2020
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Program: The Art of the QSL Card Randy KDØVKB



Announcements

Monthly Meeting:
March 14, 2020; 09:00
[Boutwells Landing](#)
Gables Wing
Auditorium C (Lower Level)

Program: QSL Cards -
Randy, KDØVKB

Pre-meeting:
~07:15 - 08:45
Breakfast & Coffee

[Perkins Restaurant](#)
2050 Frontage Rd W
Stillwater, MN

Broadcast radio is often referred to as "The theater of the mind"; where we fill in the missing visual component from our imagination. There is a similar process in amateur radio as we make a new contact. The QSL card serves to confirm this visual link in an otherwise sightless media.

From early handwritten origins to fanciful popular comic based designs, operator or shack photos, and contemporary computer generated imagery; this presentation by Randy KDØVKB will take a look at how these cards evolved and the fanciful artwork that makes them a cherished bit of ham radio lore.



SARA On the Air

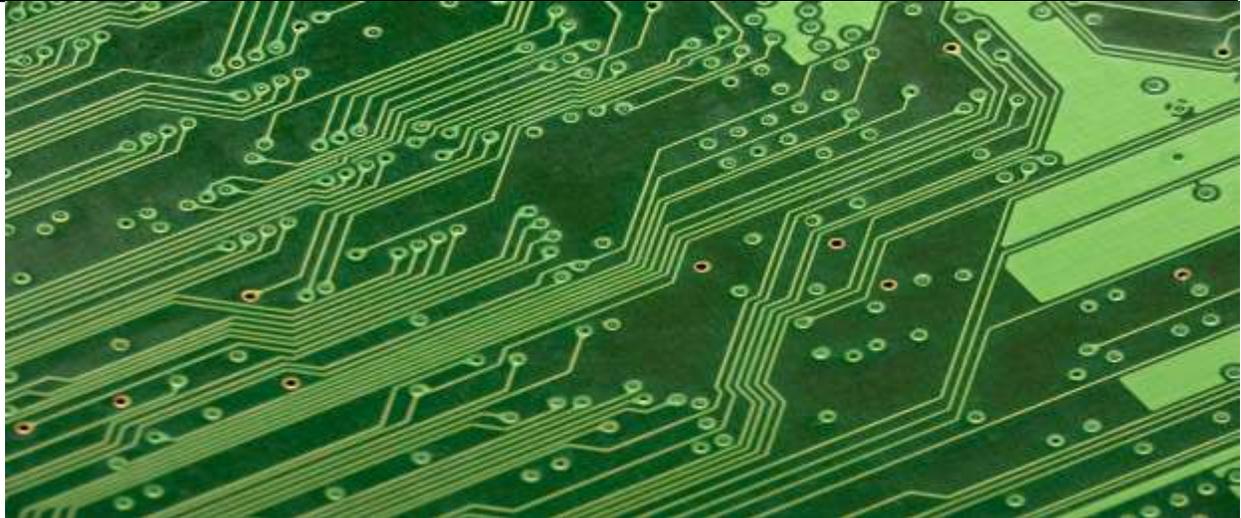
SARA Phone Roundtables:
Daily @ 20:00 Local:
(*except* Tuesday & Thursday)
1.966 MHz LSB +/- QRM
(*alternates: 21.316 MHz or 50.166 MHz USB +/- QRM*)

Monday @ 09:00 Local:
3.856 MHz LSB +/- QRM

SARA Weekly Nets:
Wednesday @ 21:00 Local:
SARA 2m Repeater
147.060+ MHz (Positive offset)
DCS/DTCS 026(Normal)

Digital Net:
Sunday @ 19:00 Local:
3.58215 MHz USB
(500-1000 Hz) on waterfall
Mode announced via email

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



IARU: Help Wanted to Remake Amateur Radio for the 21st Century

Are you a “young” ham? Want to help remake Amateur Radio for the 21st century? Frustrated that there are so few of your friends and age group that are interested in ham radio? Frustrated that Amateur Radio is in a rut, not doing more or different things with technology? Concerned that an aging demographic means ham radio is dying? And that our frequencies will be sold out to the highest bidder because there aren’t enough hams to show that we use them?

So are we. And we want to do more than talk – we want to do something about it.

More on the IARU website:

<https://www.iaru-r2.org/en/help-wanted-to-remake-amateur-radio-for-the-21st-century/>

(Thanks to Greg, KØGW.)

Bandwidth from the President

Greetings from my shack, de Joe KCØIO.



As I was preparing to send out the weekly HF Digital Net, it struck me that I could use that broadcast email to spread word of more than just the Net. So I thought I would expand that email to cover all the activities of the Stillwater Amateur Radio Association during the coming week. As I prepared and sent the first “SARA This Week” I realized just how much SARA does in a week to engage our members as well as other hams in this hobby of ours.

We have round robin ragchews on 160m 5 nights a week, two 2-meter ragchews (Two Meter Tuesday and Wednesday Round Robin), a weekly Monday Morning gathering on 75 meters and the HF Digital Net for on-air activities. Add the weekly Eyeball QSO Party on Thursday evening (followed by the informal “afterglow” at Norman Quack’s). We’re running the Technician license class through mid-April. The 2nd Saturday club meeting 9 times a year. 2nd Saturday breakfasts that fills tables early, by 7:15 we’re spreading into surrounding booths. It continues with special event stations – at least 2 a year; Field Day; Radios in the Park; and more. I think it all adds up to be one successful amateur radio club!

It takes more than a few people to make this all work as well as it does. People like WØOXB and WØELC leading ragchews. The instructors for both the Technician and General License classes lead by WØGAF. New Ham help facilitated by NØBJE and KEØQQN. NØBJE also does a fantastic job welcoming hams visiting our activities or the dropping in on the repeater. The MAP program facilitated by WØOXB and others. Special Event Station participants and the team lead by NØDRX that handles the QSL work. The work of N9TOW and K0HAS on our repeater, along with KBØUXV. The Remote Base Team with WAØTDA, NØCIC, KEØN, AGØH and others. And the VE team leader NØDRX along with the rest of the VEs in the club (Shel had 10 VEs lined up for the April 23 session within minutes of sending out the call for help). KØAIF and KØVOB for the trailer storage spot, as well as hosting the annual Ice Station WØJH. The problem with calling out specific members is that I know I will miss someone who is making just a much of contribution. If you are one of those I haven’t specifically recognized, I apologize, but please know that your contributions are greatly appreciated. That could be applied to just about every member of SARA. As your president, I try to keep the path forward clear and open. Having the participation and support of every member makes the job immeasurably easier. And it makes for a successful amateur radio club!

I mentioned last month that the Board would be looking at adding WIRES-X capability to our repeater. I'd like to update you on that project. The project was approved by the Board at its February meeting. A Yaesu FTM-100DR, an HRI-200 Wires-X interface, and a Dell mini cube computer have been purchased for the link node we will be establishing. Doug N9TOW has taken the lead on getting the equipment set up and the necessary WIRES-X registrations completed. We are indebted to Zack AAØU for offering to host the node at his QTH plus providing a power supply, antenna, and internet access needed to make it all work. We hope to have the node online in the coming weeks. Our WIRES-X node will be accessible through the System Fusion digital voice capability of our repeater. Access to rooms such as MNWIS, the DARC Room, and Handihams will likely be available. Some rooms will be linked at given times for nets such as the Handiham daily net, the weekly Handiham Tech net, the weekly MNWIS Tech net. It's likely a SARA room will be established for members to access the repeater from outside the normal coverage area. The default room has yet to be determined.

Looking at digital modes activities, I did a show-n-tell on GridTracker at a recent Eyeball QSO session. Those attending expressed much interest in the capabilities of the program, the ongoing efforts of the authors to expand those capabilities, and the price of the program – FREE! If you use WSJT-X or JTDX, look at GridTracker at tagloomis.com. I think you'll like what you see. The VP8PJ South Orkney Island DXpedition that just wrapped up used FT8 in fox/hounds mode. It was the hottest topic on the FT8 social media outlets. Some of those folks get a bit impatient... but I'd imagine that same can be said about those trying to get them on SSB or CW.

Check your release levels of your digital modes and rig control software regularly. FLDigi is at 4.1.09 released 1/13/2020; FLRig is at 1.3.49 released 1/13/2020. WSJT-X remains at 2.1.2. Ham Radio Deluxe is at v6.7.0.262, but be sure to read the license key information from HRD before installing it. Win4IcomSuite just had an update released raising it to v1.284. As of this writing (March 2), GridTracker had just released 1.2.0302. The authors have been pushing out an update just about weekly.

The March 14th meeting will have Randy KDØVKB share "The Art of QSL Cards." Be sure to join us Don't forget the pre-meeting Breakfast will be at Perkins Restaurant 2050 W Frontage Rd (Hwy 36 & Washington) in Stillwater at 7:15 AM. The breakfast gang hopes to see you there!

73 es CUL de KCØOIO



Ice Station Confirmations



As usual, 20m was our “bread & butter” band with 55% of our contacts for the recent Ice Station event. However 40m with slightly over 35% was a major contributor. Generally found propagation on 40m to be longer than usual for the time we were on. While I expected decent propagation on 40m for the Midwest, we were frequently working pretty much coast to coast on 40m. We encountered periods of substantial QSB on both bands at varying times, but consider that to just be part of the game and feel our operators & loggers did a good job dealing with whatever conditions they encountered. Slightly under 10% of our contacts were on 75m, with several of them being multiple contacts with some of our local hams.

Is Feb 27th when I am writing this and all confirmation requests received to date have been compared to the event logs. While going through the logs to verify contacts, I have tried to also pull out and include contacts made by SARA members. We usually send confirmations for about 33% of our event contacts and currently have just over 30% confirmed. Usually expect to have to do some research for some of the requests, primarily due to the random nature of how requests get submitted, but normally have been able to confirm all requests received. Unfortunately 3 of the requests received so far for this event will not be confirmed. In addition to the 202 contacts that are confirmed so far, I have also been able to confirm for a gentleman in Germany, a

pair of 20m SWL reports on 2 different days.

When looking and comparing the confirmation requests and band those requests are for, it gets a bit interesting. Just under 25% of our requests are for 20m contacts and slightly over 38% are for 40m contacts. Even though quite a few more contacts were made on 20m, there is only 1 more 20m request than there is for 40m. I did a quick sort of just the confirmed contacts and that list includes 40 states and 5 Canadian provinces. This is just those whom have been confirmed and know this list would include others if all contacts were included.

Most of us who heard comments over the air, know WØJH events have developed a following. Several requests mentioned having worked WØJH for either this or other events previously and many are already looking forward to Split Rock again. A few were aware that we had more than one station in operation and wanted to know if they worked the station on the lake or the one on the shore. That sent me digging into the raw unsorted log files to verify which station they worked.

I always get a warm fuzzy feeling when we get new people involved. I know of at least 2 instances where we made contact with newer hams. One of them was in WA and while he had been licensed for a few months, he had upgraded fairly recently and we were his very 1st HF contact. We also worked another person for his 1st ever HF contact, who had been licensed for less than a month.

SARA members Chris KEØQQM and Owen KEØROK both participated on-site and got some exposure to HF. Am hoping to see them even more active with the mic in their hand in the near future.

Shel NØDRX
SARA Trustee



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.



March and Daylight Time have arrived! Now we are seeing substantially more daylight into the early evening hours, and that means higher absorption and more static as thunderstorms fire up in the southern states.

If you are looking to use the remotes to rack up a few more states on bands like 160 and 80 meters, you might have to get up early and take advantage of the early morning skywave propagation before the thunderstorms start to build, driven by sunlight. 73, Pat, wa0tda@arrl.net

Membership & Email Accounts

As of February 27th , SARA has 95 current members, eight of whom have prepaid dues for next year as well. Membership application and information is on the radioham.org website.



Many SARA members are likely not aware that current members are eligible to have a radioham.org email address. This is not to be confused with the SARA member email list that is used to keep members informed of current activities, but is an account that you can use as you would any personal email account. All of these accounts are set up as `YourCall@radioham.org` , so you must have a ham license. Also you must be a current member of SARA, so if your membership lapses, these email accounts are purged and any information in the account is deleted and is not recoverable. These aren't of use for some, but if you will use it and would like one set up for you, let me know. There are a few that have been in the system that have not been used for quite some time. Inactive accounts just add clutter, so great if it will be used, but don't bother to set one up if it won't be used.

Shel NØDRX
Trustee@radioham.org

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



King of Clubs - Part 2

By Patrick Tice, wa0tda@arrl.net



Photo: Portable HF guy at Hara Arena one year. (2005) How do you manage an avocation that has so many different specialized interest areas?

Last time we established the value of clubs vis-a-vis causes and explained how the two concepts shared some characteristics. Clubs, we concluded, cannot be replaced by causes, and both have value depending on the circumstances.

Clubs tend to be interest-specific. When I was in elementary school, my best friend and I were both interested in rocks and minerals. His mom discovered a rockhound club, and we all joined. It was all about knowing one mineral from another, where rock hunting might be productive if you were looking for something specific, what other club members had found, and so on. Camera club, which I joined in ninth grade, was specific to photography, and that subject area was narrower back then because no one had camera-equipped drones or anything digital. Of course the basics of composition and technique were elemental, but there were some of us who always had to go farther, learning to process our own film. Still, it was cameras, film, and processing.

It was in my high school years that I got interested in radio, and then Amateur Radio. Once I got my license just before university, I began to realize that I had entered a "hobby" that had a scope so overarching that it would be hard to chart my course. There were so many different interest areas within ham radio that - even though I read every ham radio magazine I could find at the university library - I knew I would benefit by meeting others who were also newly-licensed. I joined the local Mankato Area Radio Club and the Mankato State University ARC. Both clubs were a wealth of information delivered in an atmosphere of fun and cooperative activities like

ARRL Field Day, informative club meetings and programs, and public service activities.

When I remember those early years in ham radio, I think about what it takes for a radio club to be the best for not only the new hams who need help with the basics, but for everyone who is interested in lifelong learning across a wide spectrum of activities and skills related to radio communication.

My last career was as the program coordinator for the Handiham System. Working with a ham radio nonprofit program provided a unique opportunity to interact with radio clubs. I learned what kind of clubs were active and healthy and what kind were going nowhere or perhaps even dying. Some were large, with a hundred members or more, while others were small. Size matters in clubs, but not as much as you might think. What I found out was that although large clubs (usually located in urban areas) had more resources, small clubs could still compete on the basics.

And what are the basics?

I'm glad you asked! The clubs that were most successful had several things in common.

Mission: A club needs more than a common interest in ham radio to be successful. It needs a sense of mission - a reason to exist and move forward in service to its members and the greater community.

Leadership: Nothing happens in a club unless its members make it happen. Someone has to point the way to help club members focus on what is important. Good leaders volunteer in their areas of expertise and know how to read the room. They move the club forward in support of the mission.

Outreach and Education: This is the single most important predictor of the overall health of a club. If a club has a strong outreach to the community and a solid education program offering ham radio classes, it is going to build membership and continue to exist. I was always sad to hear from a club that was liquidating its assets and dissolving, and even though they were donating their assets to the program I was running, it meant that there was one less club out there. These clubs usually had no education program and simply met to talk and drink coffee. Fellowship is good, but to be vital, a club needs to build membership.

Communication and Programming: For a club to attract and retain membership, people have to know that it exists, and once they walk in the door, there has to be a reason for them to come back again and again. Good communication is essential. The successful club updates its website and leverages other tools to tell its story both inside and outside the club. Its meeting programs vary in topic to address different aspects of ham radio.

Activities: Successful clubs get out of the clubhouse! Special event stations, nets, public demonstrations of Amateur Radio, ARRL Field Day, public service communica-

tions - all are essential to member engagement and outreach to the community.

Mentoring: Nothing builds membership loyalty better than knowing you have a friendly place to get help with our complex and sometimes challenging activity. The best clubs have helpful study groups and a cadre of members who are willing to share their expertise with other members. A culture of friendly helpfulness is shared across the entire membership.

At SARA, we have all of those things. You might say... The King of Clubs! Thanks to our great members and leaders, we are one of the clubs with a bright future.



Photo: Joe, KCØOIO, and Keith, AGØH, build an antenna for remote HF station WØEQO. (June, 2016)

VE Session Scheduled

The next SARA exam session is scheduled for 6 pm April 23, 2020 at Boutwells Landing. This would be an ideal time for anyone who has been working to upgrade to Extra to do so, as the new question pool for Extra class takes effect on July 1, 2020. If you are an ARRL VE and would like to work this session, let me know at the upcoming SARA meeting, or drop me an email.

Shel NØDRX

The Early Ham Gets The Bacon



The table for breakfast prior to the Saturday Monthly Meetings fills up quickly, so plan to arrive ahead of the scheduled time (7:15 AM) for prime seating.

[Perkins Restaurant](#)
2050 Frontage Rd W
Stillwater, MN



Public Service

The “Lift and Loop” trail in Stillwater will hold a Ribbon Cutting on May 16 at 10 AM followed by an attempt to set the Guinness Book of World Records *longest line of people holding hands*.

The trail and the record attempt will use the old lift bridge, follow up the old highway to Houlton WI, around the new bridge, and back to Stillwater. The event will require at least 7000 participants, with 10-15,000 persons anticipated including dignitaries from both states. Current planning involves various parking lots with shuttle buses carrying participants.

Hams are currently planned to be involved in operations, traffic, and medical issues during bus transportation with possible fixed radio locations as well. Please pencil in the date of May 16th and help with communications if you can. Your participation will be greatly appreciated. Amateur Radio Coordinators for this event will be Joe Heitzinger and John Regan working with Washington County COML Nate Timm; Please stay tuned for additional details.

John Regan, KAØHYR

“Ice Station WØJH” Special Event

Lake Elmo / Lake Elmo, Minnesota
February 15 - 17, 2020



Members of the Stillwater, Minnesota Amateur Radio Association (SARA) operated a portable station on a frozen lake in east-central Minnesota (~10 miles east of St. Paul). Having strong Scandinavian heritage, Minnesotans have been known to do crazy things to break the monotony of the long winters. (Some say hams do crazy things too!) This was our seventh consecutive year for this craziness!

Using the club's call, WØJH, two-person teams (operator & logger) operated from Lake Elmo, MN (Washington County; Grid Square EN34rx). Our primary station was an 8'x8' portable shelter on 20" of ice. It was hooked to a 160-6m center-fed Zepp antenna (253' long, 45' high) that ran north and south in trees along the shore. It was fed by 100' of 450Ω ladderline and a 4:1 balun with coax to the shelter. A Kenwood TS-590 ran 100W thru a MFJ-986 antenna tuner.

We also operated a few hundred feet away on shore from our club's 6'x12' enclosed trailer. This station included an Icom IC-7300, a MFJ-986 antenna tuner pushing 100W into a 160-6m center-fed Zepp antenna (299' long, 55' high) that ran east and west strung from trees. Laptops were used for all logging. Most operation was on SSB; 20, 40 and 75m. Heat for stations was from portable propane heaters.

We operated 3 days, ~6 hours per day. We (YOU) generated huge pile-ups; with hundreds of contacts throughout the U.S., Canada and several DX countries.



Confirming QSO with: WB7ESV

Date: 16 Feb 2020 Time: 1730 Z

Frequency: 14.260 MHz Mode: USB

Report: 59

SAMPLE

FB Dave OM, TNX for being part of our Special Event!
Catch you later my friend ... 73, *Dave (WØXB)*

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

Upcoming SARA Meetings & Events

See Details in Newsletter

- **March 14: Monthly Meeting; Boutwells Landing, Oak Park Heights**
- **April 11: Monthly Meeting; Boutwells Landing, Oak Park Heights**
- **April 23: VE Exam; Boutwells Landing, Oak Park Heights**

Board Meetings are held Thursdays the week following Monthly Saturday Meetings at the Stillwater Public Library

Thursday Eye Ball QSO Parties are held weekly (6-8:00 pm) at the Stillwater Public Library

2020

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

SARA Needs YOU!

Get involved ...
 Make a difference ...
Have fun!



www.radioham.org

Facebook: SARA - Stillwater Amateur Radio Association

