



Official Publication of the  
West Allis Radio Amateur Club

# Hamtrix

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Volume 64, Issue 1 January, 2017

## JANUARY CLUB HAPPENINGS



**NUT NET**  
3.985mhz  
Monday-Saturday  
8:15am CT

**Milwaukee-Florida Net**  
Every Day on 14.290 Mhz  
7:00AM - 9:15AM ET  
6:00AM - 8:15AM CT



### Club Meeting

St. Peter's Episcopal Church,  
7929 W. Lincoln Avenue, West Allis  
January 10, 2017

How Amateur Radio Operators are Integral to Effective  
Emergency Management". By Jim Burns, KD9CIV

[Join us for a pre-meeting dinner](#)  
[at Johnny V's Classic Café](#)  
[1650 S 84th St at 5:00pm](#)

**2017 Dues will be collected at the  
meeting.**

**West Allis Radio Club  
Swapfest**  
January 7, 2017

**New Repeater: N9BMH Repeater 146.820 (-)  
PL 127.3**

**WARAC 2-meter net**  
Every Wednesday at 8pm  
SEWFARS K9ABC Repeater 146.820 standard (-)offset  
127.3 Hz CTCSS  
if repeater down try 146.55 simplex

**Wisconsin QSO Party**  
**March 12, 2017**

1:00PM CDT to 8:00PM CDT  
[Click here to go to web page](#)

Club jackets and hats!  
Go to club Web site and click on  
The GOLD MEDAL IDEAS block  
[For more info or click here](#)



## *The President's Shack January 2017*

It's winter and another round of Holiday cheer has become a memory, so it must be **Swapfest** time! This will be our third year in the round **Arena building** and I think we have adapted well to this venue. Since everything is in one building, it has a nice, busy ambiance. In my opinion, the only major drawback is the lack of handicapped access around the main entrance and balconies.

As you know, running a swapfest takes manpower, so let's all turn out and make our 45th Swapfest another success! The proceeds of this event fund many of our other activities, so that's another incentive.

Co-chairman Erwin reports that table sales are good and the weather promises to be sunny but chilly (10°) morning. It should be a good day for a Swapfest! I hope to see you all there dark and early Saturday morning!

The program at the upcoming meeting will be "**How Amateur Radio Operators are Integral to Effective Emergency Management**". By Jim Burns, KD9CIV. Jim is Deputy Director of Emergency Management in the City of New Berlin. This should be an interesting, in depth look at the role of Amateur Radio in emergency communications.

In addition to the main program, we will have the Swapfest fresh in our minds so we'll talk about that, too. As always, your suggestions and comments on how things went will be welcome.

It's barely two months until the 2017 **Wisconsin QSO Party on Sunday, March 12!** Time to start thinking about your operating plans - possibly operating mobile? - or setting up a portable station in another county?. Or, how about a group of members getting together to do a multi-op station?

Anyone interested in spearheading this? Please let me know if you are. Along with this, it would be great to activate our club call, W9FK.

This year our meeting on March 14 falls after the QSO Party, so our **WIQP** focus will be at the February meeting. At that meeting we will cover a number of aspects of the QP. Stay tuned for details.

Another item important at this time of year is renewing your membership. About half of our members have paid and we need to sign up the other half. Dues are due! See Howard – either at the Swapfest or at the upcoming meeting.

Were you on the **10 Meter contest** in December? Personally, I was unable to spend more than a couple of hours on the air. To me, activity seemed a little light. What was your experience? We'll talk about it at the meeting. Meanwhile, **send in your logs**, both to the ARRL and to Chuck, W9WLX, for our club contest. You can also bring 'em to the meeting.

And, as always, don't forget our before-meeting dinner at **Johnny V's Classic Café, 1650 S. 84th St. at 5:00PM.**

See you at the Swapfest, then at the meeting! Bring a friend to either or both events!  
Tom, K9BTQ

### **From the Editor**

Nice and warm in the house as another cold front comes through. It is winter in Wisconsin so this shouldn't be a surprise to anyone. Saturday will be our Swapfest. I'm sure many of you will be there along with me.

As most of you know a group of us from the club have been doing National parks on the air NPOTA activations during the year. Dave WB9OWN and his wife did two of them during the holiday season. Sounds like he had as much fun as all of us had during the year. See two articles on his adventures in this copy of Hamtrix.

If I understand properly this has been one of the biggest activities that the ARRL has had a hand in:

**Go to pg 9**

# **WARAC General Meeting Minutes**

## **December 13, 2016**

### **Introduction**

The meeting was called to order at 19:03 by President, Tom Macon (K9BTQ). Overall meeting attendance was 15 members, plus 0 visitors.

Louie Golembiewski (W9GSV) shared some memories & pictures of the W.A.R.A.C. early days.

### **Future Programs:**

- January, 2017: How Ham Radio integrates with Emergency Management
- February, 2017: WI QSO Party discussion
- March, 2017: Open

### **Tonight's Program:**

- Discussion of 2017 Swapfest update & volunteer information by Erwin von der Ehe (WI9EV) & Phil Gural (W9NAW)
- Video – Dayton Hamvention new venue

### **Announcements**

- Swapfest January 07, 2017 status – Need new testing location

### **Business**

- Motion was made and accepted to approve the November general meeting minutes as published in Hamtrix.
- Consider a different venue for general meeting dinner.
- NPOTA discussion – December contact frenzy was discussed
- 10m Contest – QSOs and propagation were discussed.
- WIQSO Party – last 4 years of data is updated & available on [www.warac.org](http://www.warac.org)

The meeting was adjourned at 20:56.

Respectfully submitted,  
Erwin von der Ehe (WI9EV)  
Secretary, W.A.R.A.C.  
2016-12-13

## **Dec board meeting not held due to holidays.**

### **CQ CQ CQ de WA4BXG WA4BXG K by Mike Johnson WO9B**

After sifting through the CW bands all weekend in the ARRL's November SS CW contest, the CW bands had gone from wall to wall signals to a lone CQ on 80 meters. That was it. Just this one station calling CQ. What a difference a couple of hours made.

I don't even know why I had the radio on. I'd done quite enough ham radio over the weekend working the contest. I'm not the type of operator that can sit at the radio for much more than a couple of hours. I need to move around a bit. But still, I come back time and time again. The hours build up and so do the QSO's. And this contest was a challenge as my operating Plan A quickly turned into Plan B and C when various pieces of equipment all had problems. Don't you just love this hobby?

But I did have the radio on, tuned to 80 meters. I was wrapping up the post contest ritual of updating logs and sending in the contest entry. It's all part of the process. It was about 11:00 PM and I was tired, but then right on frequency came the CQ. I don't know what it is, but a CW station calling CQ is an unmistakable attention getter for me.

The CQ was not the typical mechanically precise code all too common these days. The tone had that characteristic tube generated quality to it. Solid, nice to the ear, but a slight chirp, very slight, on key down. You could just hear it. And the characters were obviously being hand driven. It was a little messy to copy. Sort of like when you re-tune your ear to have a conversation with someone with a thick accent. After a few minutes, you just get it. How could I not respond. WA4BXG de WO9B K.

And so began almost an hour of solid CW ragchew with Sam from TN.

If you've never engaged in a CW ragchew, you don't know what you're missing. It's not like a phone or digital exchange. CW happens mostly in your head and it is funny how the thought moves so nicely into the key. Zen like really. Initially I was copying most of what Sam was saying in my head, but as the conversation moved on, I started to write it down verbatim. That way, it helps me to not forget to comment on something he said. By the way, we never got around to exchanging weather reports. Yeah, we were definitely off the usual ham radio QSO script.

The common lament heard is that no one ragchew's anymore. I don't think that is the case. Listening to 75 Meter Phone at night, well it is end to end ragchews. Not exactly my cup of tea, but clearly the fan base is much bigger than myself. I think it is better to say that most QSO's just aren't destined to be ragchews. You just have to be in the right mood and mode to make it

happen. That combination does not happen all that often for me. The biggest part is you need to have someone on the other side who is good at it. Being a good ragchewer is an under appreciated skill. Just like top contest operators, the good ragchewers are few and far between. They just have a knack for it.

Well, turns out Sam has the knack. So, for the next hour or so we chatted about this and that. Very enjoyable. Regarding his signal, turns out his station is equipped with the latest 60's and 70's gear. You know you've hit the honey pot when the equipment report includes words like "xmtr" and "rcvr". At first I thought he was just using standard cw abbreviations but when they were followed by Heath HX-10 and Hammarlund HQ180, I knew this was the real deal.

What a difference his station is from mine where I am using a little YouKits HB-1B QRP radio with a Hardrock HR-50 amp. The equipment difference between our two setups couldn't be more stark, but for that one QSO on that one evening, it couldn't have mattered less. New tech or old tech, they both ragchewed pretty darn well.

At the end of the QSO, I pulled the plug and hit the hay. After a long day or so of fast contest copy, QRM and chasing multipliers, too end it with a laid back comfortable CW ragchew was, well, just the best.

Thanks Sam and I'll be looking for you down the log!!

Michael Johnson, WO9B

Post Script:

I wrote the initial article a few days after the SS CW Contest in early November. I bumped into Sam again in mid-December and you guessed it, we had another nice long QSO. I didn't recognize his call until the logging software popped him out as a repeat. So, if you're looking for an easy going QSO, look for Sam, WA4BXG somewhere around 3.55 Mhz at, oh, about 11:00 PM. By the way, I don't think we discussed the weather the second time around either.



# Field Day 2016 Recap

## By Chuck Dellis, W9WLX, FD Chairman

Happy New Year! Field Day 2016 results were published in the December issue of QST and made available on the ARRL website; so it is time to put the ribbon on WARAC's 2016 event.

We had a total of 830 QSOs, 368 on phone and 462 CW. Our QSO score was 2584 plus 950 bonus points, giving a total of 3534 points. Thanks to all involved!

Here is the breakdown of our performance.

Overall, out of 2697 entries, WARAC was 408. That puts us in the top 15% of all participants. Out of all stations operation in the 2A class, WARAC was 82 out of 376, placing in approximately the top quarter of all 2A entries.

For the WI Section entries, WARAC was 6 out of 46. A very nice showing, putting us in the top 15% statewide.

### Top 6 FD Participants for the WI Section:

Call	Final Score	Class	Total QSOs	Power	Number of Participants	Club Name
N9AU	7,478	2A	1,886	Low	7	MM Expeditionary Force
W9MVA	7,004	2A	2,080	Low	6	Mississippi Valley ARA
N9AW	5,322	2A	1,096	Low	13	W/K ARC of Greater Milwaukee
K9OM	4,638	1E	1,097	Low	1	
WB9EGZ	3,585	1E	531	QRP	1	
W9FK	3,534	2A	830	Low	16	West Allis RAC

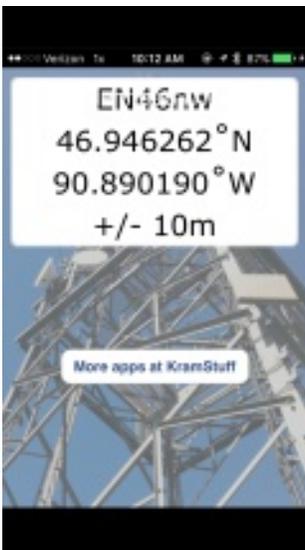
Thanks to everyone who made it a success. Be sure to watch for future announcements for Field Day 2017. We will be ramping up for the event in late March/April.

## Dave Garnier WB9OWN Apostle Island NPOTA activation

On 12/27 I "activated" Apostle Island NPS park, specifically the "Sandy Bay Ranger Station"... Say what?! As some of you may know I am a Amateur Radio operator... 2016 has been the 100 year anniversary of National Park System (NPS) and there has been this ham radio contest called "National Parks On The Air" (NPOTA). The object is to setup a temporary ham radio station from ones car and make as many conversations (QSO's) as possible. This is called "activating" the park... There are some 400+ parks units so this quest becomes a quite the challenge. (Think of making QSO's as the electronic version of collecting stamps.) Anyhow we "activated" Apostle Island "Sandy Bay Ranger Station" The weather was interesting, the wind was blowing 20 mph, snow flurries and outside temp was -10. We had a blast!!! Within 2 hours time, I worked 133 stations, (37 states, 7 Park to Parks, Canada and Spain.) My operating station was in the backseat of the Camry, I folded down the back seat rest and operated my ham radio station there, it worked nicely! Barb was the backup scribe for logging the QSO's, without her it would have been difficult, Thank you Barb! She also had a blast and would do it again. Here are some pictures.

73's

Dave WB9OWN

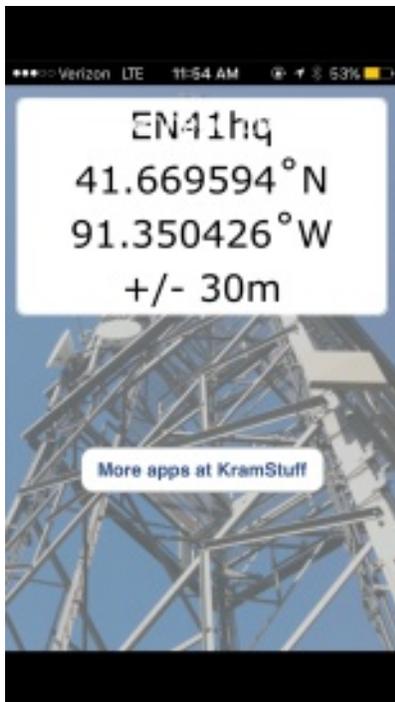


# Dave Garnier WB9OWN Herbert Hoover National Historical Site NPOTA activation

On the last day of 2016 and of "National Parks On The Air" (NPOTA) radio contest, I "activated" Herbert Hoover National Historical site in Iowa... I operating for 4 hours on the 20 meters band, I logged about 206 QSO's, contacted 14 other NPS parks, 34 states, 3 Canadian provinces, Panama and The Azores... Barb wanted to try her hand at "contesting" and a amateur radio operator in Panama was kind enough to answer her call, and he wasn't in the contest! This gentleman stated that wanted to give a beginner the thrill at talking to a distant station, which he did! How nice is that? Note. Some of these Nation Park Sites are considered "sensitive," President Hoover and his wife are buried here, this is hallowed ground. One has to be mindful of this fact and pick an inconspicuous spot to operate. The NPS staff was great to work with, even tho my radio activities was outside their normal envelope... Everyone should visit these national treasures, they are priceless.

73's

Dave WB9OWN



## NPOTA info

Official ARRL NPOTA page - this is public page - you don't need an FB account

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/NPOTA/>

Auto login LOTW software & Generation of XLS spread sheet:

Single Page ARRL NPOTA Checklist <http://software.ad1c.us/NPOTA/index.html>

### from editor pg 2

Over a Million log entries that is amazing number by any count! One has to wonder what they will follow it up with. I will say I enjoyed the activations.

After the swapfest the clubs next activity will be the QSO party. Time to put it on your calander and start thinking how to have fun with it.

A thank you to Mike WO9B and Dave WB9OWN for contributing to the Hamtrix. If you have an interesting Ham radio experience think about writing it up and getting it published.

73

Frank KA9FZR

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Newsletter Editor

Frank Humpal, KA9FZR

[fhump@milwpc.com](mailto:fhump@milwpc.com)

Webmaster

Tom Macon, K9BTQ

West Allis Radio Amateur Club, Inc.  
Tom Macon, K9BTQ  
3547 S. 95 St  
Milwaukee, WI 53228



## WEST ALLIS RADIO AMATEUR CLUB, INC.

PO Box 1072  
Milwaukee, WI 53201  
W9FK  
<http://www.warac.org>

***See our Web Page or contact us  
for more information on***

- WARAC Memorial Scholarships
- Wisconsin QSO Party
- Midwinter Swapfest
- Worked all Wisconsin Counties Award
- Amateur Radio Classes

WARAC holds meetings on the second Tuesday of each month and board meetings on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Meetings are held at 7:00 PM at:

**St Peter's Episcopal Church  
7929 W. Lincoln Avenue  
West Allis, WI**

Entry is off the alley at the rear of the church.  
A wheel chair ramp and chair-lift are available.