



Official Publication of the  
West Allis Radio Amateur Club

# Hamtrix

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Volume 66, Issue 2 February, 2019

## FEBRUARY CLUB HAPPENINGS

### Club Meeting

St. Peter's Episcopal Church,  
7929 W. Lincoln Avenue, West Allis  
February 12, 2019 7:00 PM

Erwin WI9EV Swapfest results.

Wisconsin QSO party Tom K9BTQ

Mike WO9B on a MN QSO party mobile adventure

**This will be the last opportunity to correct your  
info in the Club Directory**

Premeeting dinner

Johnny V's Classic Café, 1650 S. 84th St. at 5:00PM.



#### NUT NET

3.985mhz

Monday-Saturday

8:15am CT

#### NUT NET

Breakfast

8:30am fourth

Tuesday

of the month

#### Milwaukee-Florida Net

Every Day on 14.290 Mhz

7:00AM - 9:15AM ET

6:00AM - 8:00AM CT

#### Sunshine Committee

If you know of a member who  
could use a bit of cheer or  
support,

Barb Garnier (KD9HPS) is now  
the Sunshine Committee Chair.

You can get hold of her at 414-  
529-3536 or

[barbsewsblue@gmail.com](mailto:barbsewsblue@gmail.com).

#### WARAC 2-meter net

Every Wednesday at 8pm

SEWFARS W9TJK Repeater 146.820 standard (-)  
offset

127.3 Hz CTCSS

if repeater down try 146.55 simplex

#### Wisconsin QSO Party

March 10, 2019 - 1800Z to 0100Z March 11

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## The President's Shack February 2019

Had enough of winter yet? Been a tough go these past couple of weeks. But we're tough. This is all too normal for WI. The good news is we are well past the halfway point. It's all sunshine and seashells from here on. OK, well maybe a couple of speed bumps along the way.

So let's get right to it. This will be a short President's Shack this edition. I'm kind of beat up from the long weekend. No not the Super Bowl, but the MN QSO Party. My son and I ran the contest mobile and had a really good time. But then you'll hear all about it at the meeting.

This month for the meeting we have a couple of the usual programs for February. First up will be Erwin, WI9EV to discuss and dissect our Mid Winter Swapfest results. We had superb weather and a huge turnout both for attendance and club members pitching in to share the work of hosting this remarkable event. Erwin will be more than happy to fill us in on the whole deal. Can't wait.

The second program will be all about the upcoming WI QSO Party on March 10<sup>th</sup>. Once again this is the event which puts WI on the front burner. The hot ticket. Numeral Uno!! Tom, K9BTQ will bring us up to date on the latest changes and updates. What we really need is your participation in the event. Last year WARAC finished in second place in the club competition with 13 entries. We really need another all out effort again this year. So get on the air. Make some contacts. Submit your LOG!! Seriously any effort, large or small is appreciated. So let's go get this on one.

As an operating event the WIQP is a lot of fun to work in a group. The club meeting is a great place to fill out your team and finalize your plans. I'm planning on running a mobile operation again this year. I have not got it all figured out yet, but my oh my, running mobile is fun and challenging. No

matter your plans, jump into the event and spread some Q's around. I won't be hard.

Speaking of mobile operations, the final presentation for the meeting will be a short presentation on my MN QSO Party mobile adventure. It was a warm-up for the WIQP for sure. The old saying "Practice, Practice, Practice" sort of comes to mind.

Don't forget the Johnny V's pre-meeting dinner, for those so inclined.

See you at the meeting!!

73's

MJ,W09B

Check out our Facebook page!!! Start Posting!!!!  
<https://www.facebook.com/WestAllisRAC/>

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## From the editor

February is the month of crazy weather, at least so far. More of a continuation of the crazy weather this year than something new.

There is not much to report this month. Looking forward to the QSO party is always fun. Depending on weather I will go on a road trip with Mike W09B. This will be our third trip so we'll see how this one is. Each trip is a new adventure and a learning experience. I keep volunteering to go along on them. The two we have been on have been an adventure to say the least.

I ordered some parts for my circular antenna project. Then it will be depend on weather and propagation to see what I learn from it. More to follow.

Frank KA9FZR

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## WARAC General meeting Minutes

Social meeting at "New Berlin Ale House"

No minutes taken. • —• —••

### West Allis Radio Amateur Club, Inc

P.O. Box 1072. Milwaukee, WI 53201

#### Board Meeting, January 22, 2019

##### Officers

Mike John, WO9B

Steve Dryja, NO9B

Bill Reed, N9KPH

Barb Garnier, KD9HPS

##### Board Members

Tom Macon K9BTQ

Phil Tollefson, WA9AQL

Frank Humpal, KA9FRZ

##### Guests

Erwin, WI9EV

David Garnier, WB9OWN

##### Meeting Agenda

1. Elect Board Chairman: Mike Johnson
2. Swapfest Chairman Report-Erwin, WI9EV. Consolidated timeline, raffle up for renewal, chore list to be presented at December club meeting.
3. Treasurer's Report-Bill, N9KPH
  - a. Banking: CD Status
  - b. Financial Reports. Discussion of options
  - c. Financial audit reviewer lined up: Fred LeMere KD9IGO
4. Secretary Report-Barb, KD9KPS
  - a. 2018 directory. Bill's wife putting it together for review at December meeting  
Still awaiting some applications and dues
  - b. Howard transferred documents to Barb for storage
5. Scholarship Chairman report submitted by Howard for 2019
6. Equipment Sales Chairman Report-Steve, NO9B. Donations received.
7. Hamtrix Editor Report-Frank, KA9FZR – Not presented
8. W1QP Chairman Report-Tom, K9TQ. 10M contest canceled for the year. ? Combinations wth Canada contest?
9. Program Committee Recommendations: December 80m loop by Fred Lemere/final Swapfest discussion. January 6:30 New Berlin Ale House Social get together. February Swapfest wrapup
10. Board goals for 2019: 1. Site change 2. Web page 3. Funding

Meeting closed 9:06pm

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From

[http://home.windstream.net/johnshan/cw\\_ss\\_stories\\_al7n.html](http://home.windstream.net/johnshan/cw_ss_stories_al7n.html)

Ed - AL7N

When I was a young feller, somehow I became interested in the Morse telegraph. I don't know rightly why, but something about those strange clicking devices down at the railroad depot caught my attention, and fascinated me from an early age. The men (and women) who operated it and understood the peculiar clattering language of the Morse instruments seemed bound together by some strange bond quite unlike any other group of people.

My curiosity was aroused to the point that I decided I would also learn this strange language, and profession. It didn't come easy or rapidly. I would go to any telegraph office around when I was a kid, and listen to the chatter of the Morse sounders, trying to understand what they were saying. I got thrown out of more than one railroad telegraph office as a pest in those early days. But the fascination remained. I managed to teach myself the old original Morse wire code, and eventually scrounged some real Morse telegraph instruments and other equipment with which to practice and continue learning. I also kept listening to any wire I could overhear. In those days circa 1950-1960, there were still plenty of telegraph offices that had working Morse wires, and it was possible to get this kind of practice. One day, strangely enough, it all began to make sense, and from that day on, I have been able to "read" what was coming over the wire.

To be sure, there were operators whose sending I could not read, and speeds that were beyond my ability sometimes, but gradually, I got so I could read most any normal wire working at speed, and it was and is as plain as print to me. To this day, Morse is just like a "voice" speaking to me. I do not hear the clicking and clacking, I hear what "the wire" is SAYING.

Eventually, this led to employment with a railroad company, and that employment enabled me to complete my education, with an Electrical Engineering Degree, which in turn allowed me to continue my employment in the

telecommunications field throughout my life. Some of this employment actually was as a telegraph operator.

As to the profession of "Telegrapher" during the period 1860-1960, one doesn't have to delve very far into any of the history of the period to find out that the Morse telegraph followed the settlement of the western United States to every corner of the land. The continent was spanned by a single telegraph wire in 1861, which put the famous Pony Express out of business overnight.

Actually, the Pony Express was in reality acting as a temporary "bridge" between where the telegraph wires already ran, and existed primarily to carry telegrams between these points, where they could be relayed via wire to their destinations. Also, wherever a railroad went, so went the Telegraph wire alongside it. This was usually mandated in the construction charter of the railroad companies as telegraph service was a requirement in order to acquire the Federal land grants for the right of way.

Mining camps, almost as soon as it was apparent that they would develop any size at all, were quickly linked by telegraph wire to the rest of civilization. The wire was hastily strung to the place, and the operator arrived with his instruments in a box, a tent and a bedroll and was set up for operation immediately. The wire would be available for business just as soon as the instruments were connected, and a ground rod driven. If you stop and think about it a little, it was something vital to the growth of such a place.

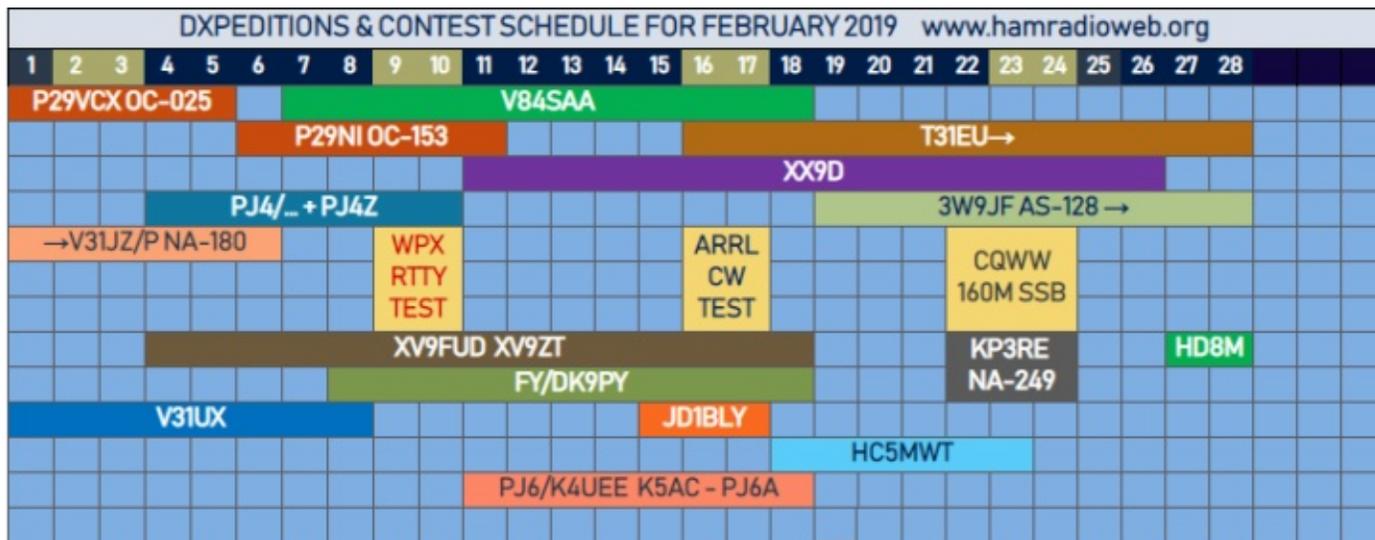
Back then, there were no telephones, no television, no radio, nor any other rapid means of corresponding over any distance. If you needed or wanted to correspond with someone in another town or distant part of the country, you could send a letter, which would be carried by horseback, stagecoach or steamboat, and might get where it was going in a week or two. Then you waited a similar amount of time for an answer. Or, you could travel there yourself, again spending perhaps days or weeks enroute. Businesses trying to operate faced huge problems with supply - stores had to order goods; mines had to order supplies and machinery; banks had to handle money, and all this was extremely hard to do when it took days or weeks to get a letter over the road to and from other places.

**Continued pg 8 AL7N**

# DX / CONTEST UPDATE

<http://www.iz5cml.it/dxschedule>

**DX:** February represents some decent opportunities: T31 Kiribati will have an all out effort. XX9D Macao will also do a full court press. But the winter months represent an opportunity for Caribbean locations due to vacation and contest operations. Without a doubt, FT8 is the way to go. It puts typical stations in the hunt. Aside from the chart below, band condx are not expected to improve. Depending on



your source, we are at or near the cycle minimum. Just have to deal with it. It will get better.

**Contests:** We are back into the heart of contest operations this month. State QSO Parties are once more on the agenda with the WI QSO Party, Mar 10<sup>th</sup> being the best option available. The PACC contest is a gem. Work a couple of Dutch stations, enter and you will receive a really nice medallion. Good stuff. Jump in and make some RF in the following:

- CQ WW WPX RTTY Feb 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>
- ARRL International DX CW Feb 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>
- Dutch PACC Feb 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> (Every entry receives a medal)
- Carolina Weekend QSO Party:
- WI QSO Party Mar 10<sup>th</sup>

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## Special Event Corner

February, 2019

By **Bill Reed/N9KPH**

Here's a summary of some of the events that may be of interest during and early February and early March.

Next page

**State QSO Parties**

South Carolina – 2/23 to 2/24

North Carolina – 2/24 to 2/25

Idaho – 3/9 to 3/10

Oklahoma – 3/9 to 3/10

Wisconsin – 3/10 (Be there!!)

Louisiana – 3/16 to 3/17

Virginia – 3/16 to 3/17

**General Interest Events:**

02/16/2019 | Ice Station WØJH (Frozen Lake Portable)

Feb 16-Feb 18, 1600Z-2300Z, WØJH, Stillwater, MN. Stillwater (MN) Amateur Radio Association - SARA. WØJH is operating portable from a frozen lake in Washington County, Minnesota. Certificates will ONLY be sent via e-mail in PDF format. (Send requests with standard QSL confirmation info to: IceStationWØJH2019@radioham.org). (My past contacts with this station have been very enjoyable. You can really tell that they're having a good time.)

02/22/2019 | President George Washington's Birthday

Feb 22-Feb 23, 1600Z-1800Z, WS7G, George, WA. Celebrating George Washington's birthday from the city of George, in the state of Washington.

02/28/2019 | "2019 Rare Disease Day" Special Event

Feb 28, 0000Z-2359Z, N4R, Sparta, TN. WA4CZD. 14.246 7.246 7.115. QSL. QSL to home call of WA4CZD and via BURO with home call of WA4CZD.

**Noteworthy Contests:**

ARRL Inter. DX Contest, SSB - 0000Z, Mar 2 to 2400Z, Mar 3, 2019

A full listing of contests can be found at:

<https://www.contestcalendar.com/contest.html> • — • — •

**Hamtrix Sale Corner**

**This month we have a listing of club donated and member items:**

Yaesu FT-920 HF transceiver with a new mike and power cable. Will not transmit on AM—processor chip is not longer available. Instruction manual is available online. Very good condition. Asking price is \$650.

Ameritron AL-811H HF power linear amplifier. It is in excellent condition with low hours of operation. Output of 600 watts CW is obtainable with only 50 watts of drive. Manual is included. Selling price is \$650.

Kenwood TS-570(S)G HF/6m transceiver with mike, power cables, instruction and service manuals. Recently checked over by AVVid: "checked OK, very clean radio, inside and out". Asking price is \$700.

Lambda Regulated PS, model LK 340A, very good condition. Output is 0-20 VDC @ 8A. Seller wants \$25.

Ryobi Cordless drill-driver, model HP62, new. Operator's manual and carrying case included. How about \$10/obo?

Club members—do you have anything you want to list in this column?

For additional information about the above items, contact Phil, W9NAW, 414-425-3649.

Phil, W9NAW

5 Feb 2019

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# Wisconsin QSO Party

Sunday, March 10, 2019

By Tom Macon, K9BTQ

It won't be long now! Just four Sundays from now will be the 2019 edition **What would it take for WARAC to be No. 1 in 2019?** We will talk about this, and more, at the upcoming meeting!

So, before the meeting, please think about what you need to get on the air for our party? Can you get on the air – ideally on 80, 40 and 20? Do you have a way to log your contacts? Do you have a strategy for your operation?

The two most popular logging programs are N3FJP and N1MM+. See [N3FJP Tips](#) and [N1MM Tips](#) on the WIQP web page for more information. When WIQP 2019 becomes history, we will want your log! It doesn't matter how many Q's you

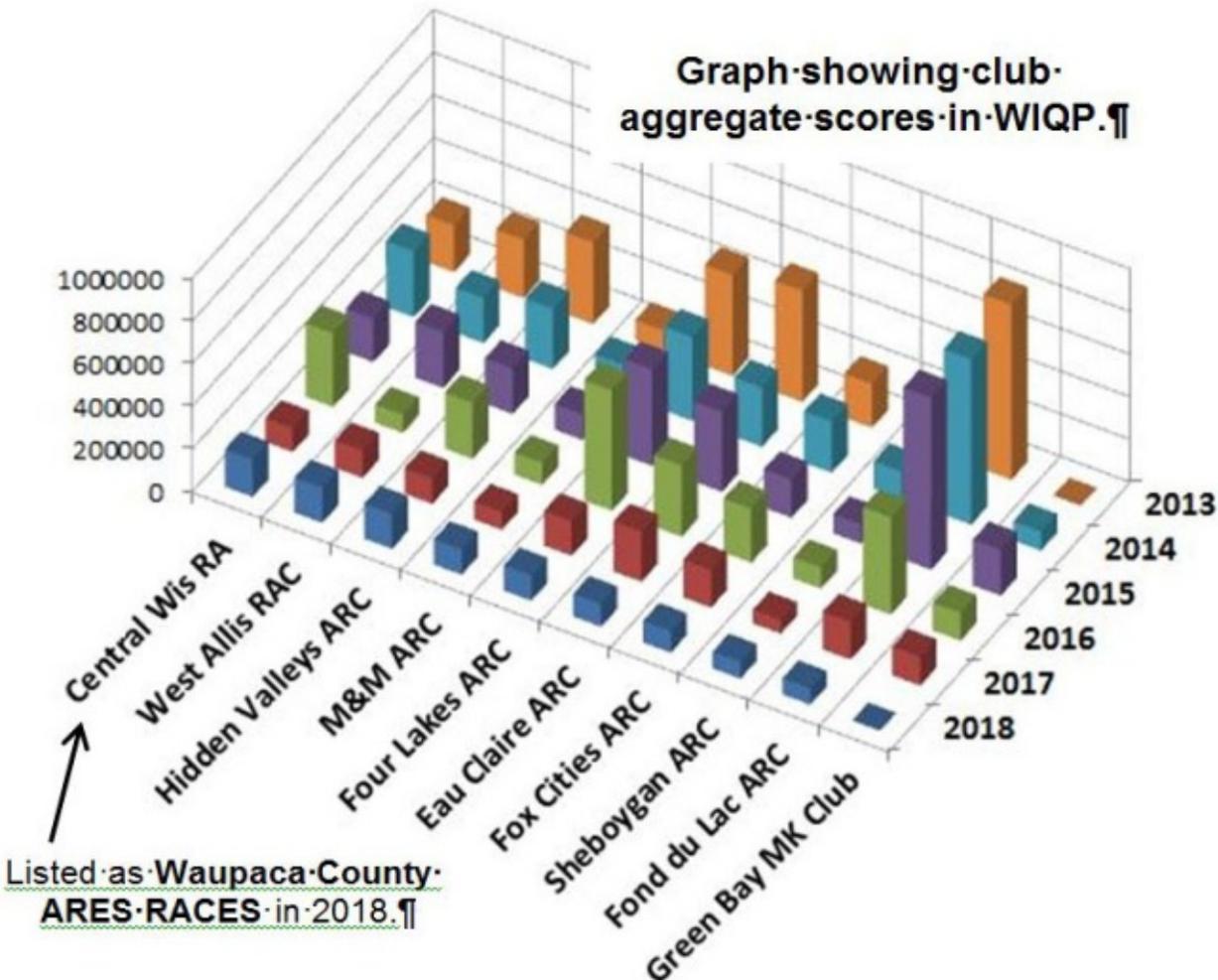
make – we still want it. If you have questions or problems with your setup or log submission, please post your questions on the WIQP reflector or contact us at [wiqp@warac.org](mailto:wiqp@warac.org).

WIQP is only seven hours – 1:00pm to 8:00pm local time and it has something for everybody, from hard-core contesters to casual “mom and pop” operation and everything in between. So, get on the air on March 10 because you're a member of the sponsoring club, or because you want to run up a high score, or just for fun of it, but, by all means, get on the air! on of our Wisconsin QSO Party! Since the March club meeting will be two days after WIQP, the upcoming February meeting will focus on this event.

The contest will be pretty much the same as in recent years. The rules and other information have

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Graph showing club aggregate scores in WIQP.



been published on the WIQP page of our website - <http://www.warac.org/wqp/wqp.htm>. Seven hours of operation from 1:00 PM to 800PM CDST. Remember, the first day of Daylight Saving Time.

As you know, QSO parties are about working counties and we hope that all Wisconsin counties will be activated, either by mobiles passing through, portable stations, or by local hams.

Last year, logs were received from 70 of our 72 counties, but there was some activity by local stations in the two "missing" counties, Ashland and Taylor. Over one-third (27) of our 72 counties were activated only by mobiles this year compared to 29 last year. We'd like to see more local stations on the air in many counties. For more information on county activation in past years, see [Activate All 72!](#) on the WIQP web page. The [table](#) there has a page with activation data from each of the last six years plus an AllYears page that is a composite to give an overall idea of the action over those years.

Information on Planned Mobile Routes for 2019 will be published on the web page around March 1, and will be updated as information comes in. Mobile route postings may be made on the [WIQP reflector](#) (please join if you're not a member), by email to [wqip@warac.org](mailto:wqip@warac.org) or on the [County Hunters](#) website, as in past years.

The graphic on page 7 is about the club aggregate scoring of ten prominent clubs in Wisconsin. One thing that's obvious is the decline in scores over the six years, largely due to the waning sunspot cycle. But the other thing to note is that WARAC was the No. 2 club in 2018! (The club names are sorted by the 2018 scores).

So our club score is not far behind the No. 1 club score. **What would it take for WARAC to be No. 1 in 2019?** We will talk about this, and more, at the upcoming meeting! . \_\_. \_\_.

## AL7N

The telegraph changed all this immediately on its arrival. It brought a means of comparatively instantaneous communication with almost anywhere, and as such, had an immediate and profound effect on the general commerce of any area it reached. It also brought a means of standardizing the time of day. With the telegraph, clocks and watches could be synchronized manually or electrically anywhere the wires reached. This was important to the operation of the railroads especially.

After it's invention and perfection in the late 1840's, the Morse telegraph was THE prime method of rapid communication all across the country until well into the twentieth century. Soon the entire nation was criss-crossed with iron telegraph wires in all settled areas. One reason the Morse telegraph expanded as it did, and stayed in operation as long as it did, was the fact that it was a stone-simple technology that required little in the way of equipment, and it was RELIABLE. That reliability had a lot to do with the people who operated it.

The term "Brasspounder" originated because the telegraph key or sending device was made out of brass, and the people who operated it pounded out the messages in Morse code, letter by letter. Telegraphers were also called "Lightning Slingers", probably because electricity in general was not well understood by common people. Origin of this term could have come from two different ideas: The speed of telegraphic communication was so rapid, compared to other methods, it seemed to be "lightning" fast. Also, Lightning, the real kind that strikes things, makes a bright flash, and lots of noise, was often attracted to telegraph wires strung on the pole lines, and this may have had to do with the term as well. Telegraphers worked with electrical things. Lightning was electrical, so the connection was easy to make by the lay person.

The man or woman who was a telegrapher in any small or large community held a rather unique place in the doings of the place. It was he or she who first became aware of any "news" from outside the immediate area. Word of important events reached the telegrapher's ear first, before anyone else in the community. This put an extremely heavy responsibility on these individuals, as it was

**Continued pg 11 AL7N**

# Swapfest 2019 Review

Another W.A.R.A.C. Swapfest is behind us, and all feedback says that people had a good time and that it was worth their effort. This year, we initiated a sponsorship program, whereby companies could get recognition on our web page, Facebook, and at the Swapfest in exchange for cash sponsorship or a door prize donation. This resulted in quite a few really nice door prizes and raffle prizes. We had raffles, just to liven things up a bit! We specially ordered the balmy weather. These factors resulted in a 12½% total attendance increase over the past couple years.

W.A.R.A.C. thanks all of the sellers and ham organizations who bought tables. We sent feedback request e-mails, and the returned surveys indicated that folks were generally pleased with the foot traffic and their sales. The most mentioned topic was donuts – pricing and that we ran out by 10:00 A.M.

To me, the key to pulling off this successful Swapfest is our W.A.R.A.C. volunteers. Half of our club membership was there to pitch in on Friday or Saturday or both. Most took the same job as in prior years. The experience, professionalism, and caring attitude was not lost on attendees and sellers. The volunteers’ experience helped things go smoothly, even when the inevitable glitches occurred. I heard several spontaneous positive comments regarding how helpful our volunteers were. You guys are the greatest!

Now, it’s time to begin planning for the W.A.R.A.C. 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwinter Swapfest on January 04, 2020! Please send in your ideas for improving the event.

-Erwin von der Ehe (WI9EV) • —• —••





**AL7N**

imperative that they kept what they knew to themselves as they delivered their messages to the rightful recipients. While there were some instances of telegraphers breaking this "code" of conduct, they were relatively rare. For the most part, telegraphers kept their profession on the highest levels of ethical conduct.

An example of this is shown in the story of two men in a small-town telegraph office, a manager, and the "trick man" or shift operator manning the instruments. A short message came over the wire, coded urgent, that was addressed to the local bank manager. The message read: "Do not open tomorrow. Bank examiners will arrive tomorrows train". The manager overheard the message as the operator copied it down - neither man looked at the other, but both men understood the impact this message would have. Shortly, after a period of silence, the manager simply said "Deliver it." And that was that.

Either man could have spindled the message, put on his coat and hat, and gone to the bank to draw out all their money before they delivered the message. But neither man did. Most telegraphers adhered to an unwritten code of confidentiality in just this way. Until 1934, there was no law requiring it.

Telegraphers were also often the only immediate means of summoning aid during disasters. There are many true stories of heroism by telegraph operators during floods, wildfires, earthquakes, and other such happenings, where aid was summoned by brave operators manning the key in the face of extreme danger, sometimes losing their lives in the process.

As our country was settled and the "Wild West" was gradually tamed, the local telegraph operator remained an important member of the community, serving as a vital link or interface between the vast network of wires and clicking telegraph instruments, and the general public that made use of it. The telegraphers handled people's personal correspondence, the good and the not so good, faithfully for nearly 100 years.

The manual Morse telegraph was the only practical means of rapid communication between distant points until well into the 20th century. It was extensively used by railroads, mining companies, oil and gas pipeline companies, banks, brokerage houses, and the newspaper industry for widespread operational control, information transfer, and news dissemination and reporting. It literally reached almost every part of the nation, with large relay offices and hundreds of wires in big cities, to small "Mom and Pop" cubbyhole offices with a single wire in small town railroad stations, hotels and general stores.

Beginning about 1920, the manual Morse Telegraph was eventually

and slowly replaced by more mechanized and faster technology, and finally faded away altogether, almost without notice in the early 1970's. Today, it is all but forgotten in the mainstream of life with the internet, widespread universal telephone service, and radio and television broadcasting.

Those people who knew the Morse system, operated it, and spoke it's unique language, have almost all gone on as well, and are now only fading shadows on the far horizon.

Ed Trump, AL7N     • —• —••  
A "Brasspounder"

- Officers and Board
- President  
Mike Johnson WO9B
- Vice President  
Steve Dryja, NO9B
- Secretary  
Barb Garnier KD9HPS
- Treasurer  
Bill Reed N9KPH
- Directors  
Frank Humpal, KA9FZR  
Phil Tollefson, WA9AQL
- Newsletter Editor  
Frank Humpal, KA9FZR  
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- Webmaster past president  
Tom Macon, K9BTQ

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## 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. Meet-  
ings 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.