



Hamtrix

Volume 53, Issue 4 April, 2008

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Meetings & Events



April 8
Club Meeting
Program:

Elmering Night

April 15
Field Day Meeting

April 22
Board Meeting

May 4
Material Due for Next
Hamtrix

May 13
Next Club Meeting



The President's Shack

by *Howard Smith,*
WA9AXQ

While I certainly enjoyed my week of sunshine in Costa Rica, I am sorry that I missed the WIQP discussion at the last club meeting. From what Tom, K9BTQ, told me, it was quite interesting. Needless to say, the WIQP logs have been rolling in, and the work of scoring the contest is just beginning. I had fun working the contest, but only had 51 phone Qs, and a score of 2,295. I used the search and pounce method. I am sure that I would have done better if I had called 'CQ contest'. I just have this fear of creating a pileup, and not being able to handle it. Guess I just need to jump in and get used to it. Maybe next year.

Thanks to all of the club members that manned our club table at Superfest 2008 this past Friday and Saturday. Superfest is a very popular event and lots of people stopped by our table to chat. I talked to a couple of people who thought they would come to the next club meeting. We are always looking for new members and this is another way to let people know about

our club.

The Board continues to look for interesting programs to present at club meetings. One area that I think would be interesting is presentations about the different radios that we all use. I don't think it would matter if the radio is old or new, just presenting your experiences with it would be very interesting. Do I have any volunteers? Let me know if this would make for a couple of interesting programs and if you would like to be one of the presenters.

Field Day is the next club activity, so you should mark June 28th and 29th on your calendars. Field Day chairman, Tom, K9BTQ, is making plans for a Field Day meeting to plan this year's operation. See his announcement of the date and location on page 5. It's another chance to operate, have some fun, and enjoy time with club members.

Elmering, one ham helping another ham, has a long history in this hobby. The meeting program for April is *Elmering Night*, so bring your questions as well as your expertise, and we can all learn something. Hopefully, everyone will go home with a new idea to try, or a new solution to an old problem.

See you at the meeting.

Howard Smith, WA9AXQ
President, WARAC

Bring Your Questions!

Elmering Night

Antenna problems? Rig problems? Contesting problems?
What's **your** most frustrating problem?
Bring it to the April 8 club meeting and get some answers!

Bring Your Knowledge to Help Others!



From the Minutes...

By Lynn Tamblyn, K9KR
Secretary

**Minutes of the General Meeting
March 11, 2008**

The meeting was called to order at 7:42pm by Vice President Tom Macon, substituting for Howard Smith who could not be present.

Secretary Lynn Tamblyn was also not able to be present, so George Dunco agreed to take minutes.

Introductions - We had three visitors - Cody, son of Wes Anderson N9YE, and a new ham, Greg Hahn, KC9MYA. Club members introduced themselves.

Tom asked how many members participated in the Wisconsin QSO Party. About six of those present indicated they had. A brief discussion of WIQP followed while a complete discussion was delayed until after the program.

Volunteers were requested to man the club table at AES Superfest on March 28 and 29 and five members volunteered. Volunteers were requested to assist with a club survey that is being planned by the Board and Ron Gorski volunteered for this. Also, volunteers were requested to help with data entry of paper logs for WIQP. Carol Zach and Susan, George Dunco's daughter-in-law, were volunteered in absentia.

Tom announced that Field Day is June 28 and 29 and that a Field Day meeting would be held during April.

PROGRAM

The program was Six Meters, the Magic Band, by Wes Andersen, N9YE. He discussed how he got into six meters in the 1990's and a bit of history of activity on the band prior to that. He talked about FM, SSB and CW operation as well as propagation conditions on six. Wes also showed a simple attic beam made out of 2 x 4's and electrical tubing.

The meeting was resumed after the program with further discussion of WIQP. Preliminary QSO counts reported were, N9AU, 320; K9IAC, 235; W9NAW, 215;

K9BTQ, 207 and WB9PUB, 174.

Chuck Craven announced the club 10-Meter Contest results for 2007. Mixed mode winner is Lynn, K9KR and Phone winner is Chuck Craven, WB9PUB. Full results will be published in the next issue of Hamtrix.

Tom Macon briefly commented on web site hit rates immediately prior to WIQP.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.

For the Secretary,

George Dunco, AA9SR, and Tom Macon, K9BTQ

**Minutes of the Board Meeting
March 25, 2008**

The meeting was called to order at 7:50PM. by Howard Smith.

Board members present: Howard Smith, Tom Macon, Dick Wood and George Dunco. Phil Gural was a guest.

WI QSO Party - Chairman Lynn Tamblyn, K9KR, could not be present so there was little discussion of WIQP. Tom and Howard mentioned that they have converted about 25 of the 34 paper logs received so far into electronic logs.

Swapfest - Chairman Phil Gural presented the board with alternative ticket prices for the 2009 Swapfest. Phil recommended an alternative that keeps the admission prices the same (\$4 advanced, \$5 at the door) and increases the table price to \$19 each. The price reduction for more than three tables would be discontinued. In case of bad weather, these prices will cover the rental costs with 125 admission tickets and 150 tables sold in advance. The board voted to accept this alternative.

AES Superfest - Dick Wood will go to Superfest Friday afternoon to set up the club's table. He took the club banner and table material. Two other members are signed up for Friday and five have promised to be there Saturday. Tom will make some business cards promoting WARAC similar to the Swapfest ones given out in January.

Club Survey - Tom Macon informed the Board that Ron Gorski volunteered to serve on a committee to prepare a

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2007 WARAC Officers and Board			Hamtrix — Editor & Publisher	
President	J. Howard Smith, WA9AXQ	414 425-5626	Submit newsletter material to:	
Vice President	Thomas W. Macon, K9BTQ	414 543-3878	Tom Macon, K9BTQ	
Secretary	Lynn C. Tamblyn, K9KR	262 534-9655	3547 S. 95 St	
Treasurer	Richard M. Wood, W9JBE	262 542-5118	Milwaukee, WI 53228	
Director (2008)	Robert F Zach, KC9AGX	414 328-3691	414 543-3878	
Director (2009)	George Dunco, AA9SR	262.782-6325	tmacon@wi.rr.com	
Director (1 year)	Wes Andersen, N9YE	414.423.0640	◆◆◆◆	
Board Chairperson	J. Howard Smith, WA9AXQ	414 425-5626		

THE RESURRECTION

by Tom Macon, K9BTQ

One of the things I've learned about contesting in recent years is the need for calling CQ a lot. My experience is that using S & P (search and pounce) on phone yields about 25 QSO's per hour, or roughly one every two minutes. On the other hand, calling CQ can generate rates of two or three per minute if enough people hear you. Looking at this another way, if you call CQ and get only one answer every two minutes, your QSO rate is still no worse than S & P.

So a guy needs to call CQ a lot. Calling CQ for five or six seconds and listening for about the same length of time in between figures out to about 10 calls over two minutes. This can make for sore vocal cords.

The answer is a so-called voice keyer, a voice recording and playback device that goes between your microphone and the mic input of your radio. There are a number of ways to do a voice keyer. Undoubtedly the easiest way is to simply buy a radio that has one built in.

Probably the cheapest way to get voice keyer capability is to use a computer with a sound card. Most contest logging programs support this feature including the N3FJP software that many of us use. To use the computer approach, your mic needs to connect to the sound card mic input and the sound card output goes to the mic input on your radio. Another connection, from the serial, parallel or USB port on the computer to the radio is needed so that the computer can key the radio when the recorded message is playing.

To me, there are two major downsides

to this approach. One is that the operation of your station is now much more dependent on the computer. If it decides to lose its mind, you not only lose your logging, you also lose your transmit audio. The other reason is RF feedback in the audio. With my luck, this is not something that might happen; it will happen! And it's a major pain to deal with.

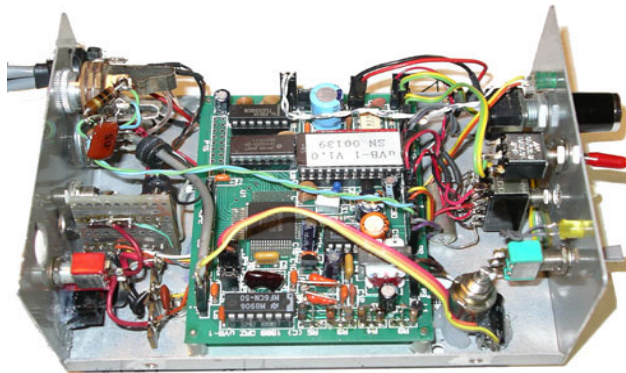
Another approach to a voice keyer is to buy a commercially made one as a station accessory. This is an excellent approach, but you'll spend

\$200 - \$300 for a decent one. For example, Gary, W9XT, (Unified Microsystems) sells a nice combo voice and CW keyer for around \$250.

A third alternative I've thought about is to home brew a voice keyer. Winbond Electronics sells an ISD25xx family of chips that is well suited for the voice keyer application. But there's a little more to this approach than connecting up a chip. Additional circuitry is needed to do everything a voice keyer needs to do. This would be an interesting project but it would take some time and effort.

In my case, I had a fourth alternative. In my Field Day junk box I had an old voice keyer that Lynn, K9KR put together nearly 20 years ago. We used it on FD for a good number of years before we began using Lynn's Kenwood 850 that has one built in.

The board in this old box, made by someone called QRZ Industries, can hold one 8-second message. Although limited by today's standards, I figured it was usable. It still worked, sort of, but it had



Inside view with the front panel on the right.

Ham Happenings

Around the area

Wisconsin Amateur Radio Club

Home of Phil, KC9CI
W159 N9737 Butternut Rd
Germantown
Wed, April 30, 7:30PM

Milwaukee Radio Amateur Club (MRAC)

Redemption Lutheran Church
Hwy 100 & Capitol
Thurs, April 24, 7:00PM

Ozaukee Radio Club

Grafton Senior Center
1665 7th. Ave.
Wed, April 9, 7:30PM

CQ3TUE

Old Country Buffet
16750 W Bluemound Rd
Tues. April 15, 11:15AM

South Milwaukee Amateur Radio Club

Wed. May 7, 7:00PM
Legion Post 434
Shepard Ave
Oak Creek, WI.

Amateur Radio Testing

Saturday, April 26
9:30AM
Amateur Electronic Supply
5720 W. Good Hope Rd

NOTE

Please do not contact meeting places for information.

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Upcoming Meeting Programs

April 8

Elmering Night
Save up your questions!

May 13

Remote Station Operation

June 10

Field Day

Have an idea for a program? Something you'd like to hear about? Let us know - Contact a Board member!

Scuttlebutt...

- A **Field Day** Meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 15, St Mary Parish Office. See page 5
- There's a new club in town! The former Menomonee Falls Amateur Radio Club is now known as the Wisconsin Amateur Radio Club (WiARC) and has moved their meeting place to the Germantown Police Dept Emergency Operations Center Annex.
- March 28 and 29 was the annual Superfest at Amateur Electronic Supply. Our club had a PR table and a number of potential new members stopped by. Rumor has it that Eddie Smith, W9DYO, won a prize. Did anyone else win?
- If you noticed that this issue of Hamtrix is a little thin, it's because no articles were received this month. This is **your** newsletter. Please write an article!



Thanks!

Thanks and a tip of the editor's hat to the following contributors to this month's issue of **Hamtrix**

Put Your Name Here



Write an Article
This means You!
Please??

Voice Keyer

(Continued from page 3)

always had problems with RF feedback and also suffered from some trim pots that had become intermittent. And it had grown a lot of internal haywire from multiple connector and cable changes for different mics and radios. I decided to take a shot at resurrecting it. I also decided that since it had always been pretty much of a sow's ear, that it would stay that way. A silk purse it would never be. I just wanted it make it useable.

I was able to dig up the original documentation for the QRZ board, so I reviewed that and decided where I wanted the controls, connectors and input/output cables to be located. I also mapped out what wiring would be needed inside the box, where shielded cable would be needed, etc. Then I tore everything out of the box and began rebuilding it.

The old box had plenty of holes in

it but to my surprise, I didn't have many left over. I was actually able get the front and back panels laid out the way I wanted while reusing most of the existing holes.

I dealt with the intermittent trimmers by getting rid of them. I haywired the QRZ board to my mic and radio, determined the necessary value for each trimmer, then replaced it with fixed resistors. If I change microphone or radio in the future, the lack of adjustability may be a problem but I chose not to worry about that.



The end result.

Inside the box there had been a loose reed relay (for keying the radio) and other components just hanging on wires. I was able to mount them on a little perforated board and find room to secure this board inside the box. I then rewired the box, keeping audio grounds separate from other grounds wherever possible. I also included a number of small ferrite cores around

(Continued on page 5)



- April 10 - Howard Smith, WA9AXQ
- April 16 - John Zach, K9JAC
- April 20 - Dick Wood, W9JBE
- April 21 - Ron Crown, KA9JCP
- April 23 - Dave Knaus, N9QA
- April 29 - Phil Tollefson, WA9AQL

*Wedding
Anniversaries*

- April 8 - Lynn and Joanne Tamblyn
- April 28 - John and Carol Zach

Minutes

(Continued from page 2)

survey for the club membership. George Dunco will set up a meeting in the next month for the committee to work on this.

Field Day - Tom said that there should be a Field Day meeting in April. Phil will look into the St. Mary parish meeting place for the third Tuesday. Tom also said that a verbal commitment has been obtained to have FD at Crystal Ridge again this year.

Circus Parade - Dick Wood mentioned that plans are coming together for a Circus Parade in 2009. He said he would look into the possibility of setting up a station on the circus grounds as we have in the past.

Programs - the April meeting program will be Elmer Night and the June program will be on Field Day by Tom Macon. A program is needed for May. Tom said he would look into two possible programs that have been

suggested at previous board meetings; weather topics by Mike Falk or telnet spotting by Dean, K3GGN.

Howard discussed the preparation of a club Operation Manual with a list of possible activities that need to be documented and a basic outline for the document structure. He will prepare a sample document using the annual Awards Dinner as the topic. Phil will help out by providing a write-up on the plaque and certificate sourcing process.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50.

For the Secretary,

Tom Macon, K9BTQ

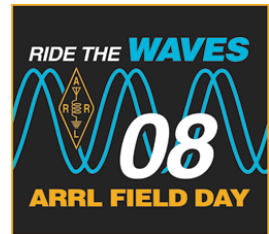
Field Day Planning Meeting

April 15, 7:30PM

**St Mary Parish office
9520 W. Forest Home Ave
Hales Corners**

Go into the upper parking lot just west of the church. Look for a sign on the door near the corner of the buildings that will guide you to the meeting room.

**June
28, 29**



Voice Keyer

(Continued from page 4)

audio cables that might be sensitive to RF, and I put bypass caps everywhere I thought it might help.

It was worth the effort. I've used this voice keyer in several contests and it sure is nice to be able to just listen while it calls CQ. Only once did I have a little trouble with RF feedback.

And there's another feature I've grown to like. I always use a headset when operating and, since the receive audio to the headphones passes through the voice keyer, it provides a sidetone so that I can hear the recorded message when it's playing as well as the mic audio. In fact, the mic is live all the time, so it's easier to hear the XYL calling me for dinner!

Three Generations of Hams

Congratulations to Liam Bennett, 10, grandson of Louie, W9GSV, who passed the exam for his Technician license at Superfest on March 29. Liam's new call is KC9NGW.

Liam's dad Terry Bennett, KB9YPS, successfully upgraded to General class the same day. Mom Janet is also a ham with the call KC9FQC.

The Bennetts live in the Wausau area.



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 / Repeater 145.170 MHz (-600kHz offset)

<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 7:30 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.