



Official Publication of the
West Allis Radio Amateur Club

Hamtrix

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Volume 73, Issue 5 May , 2024

MAY CLUB HAPPENINGS



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

WARAC 4th Tuesday
Breakfast
At the Forum
Layton & Hyw 100 at
8:30am

The Milwaukee-Florida Net
time is:
7:15 – 8:00AM Central
8:15 – 9:00AM Eastern
Mon through Sat

Meeting
Tuesday May 14, 2024 7pm
New Berlin Community Center
14750 W. Cleveland Ave.
New Berlin, WI
Between Moorland and Sunnyslope
Presentation
Field Day Preparation
Dave Garnier WB9OWN

Wisconsin QSO Party update

While spring cleaning keep a look out
For Items
For May's meeting
TRUNK to TRUNK
Sale
6pm to 7pm

Sendik's Grill fundraiser
May 18, 2024
11:00 to 4:00 pm
At the New Berlin store
Be there

2024 ARRL Field Day is June
22
Colonel Heg Memorial Park

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**BUY A BRAT FROM WARAC
SATURDAY, MAY 18th**

**WARAC'S SPRING
SENDIK'S GRILL
FUNDRAISER**



**WARAC is back at the New Berlin
Sendik's 3600 S Moorland Rd
Sat May 18th from 11:00 to 4:00 PM**





WARAC 4th Tuesday Breakfast

NOTE NEW LOCATION

Several years ago there was talk among Nut Net members that we should get to meet each other. A breakfast get together idea was started. It was open to all hams, XYL/partners and anyone who wanted to learn about amateur radio. Even visiting OM/XYL couples joined us.

So, on the fourth Tuesday each month at 8:30 am we meet at **The Forum Restaurant, corner of HWY 100 and Layton, Greenfield, WI**. Looking forward to seeing you, mark your calendar.

Phil, W9NAW

WARAC

Find Us On The Air

VHF Simplex 146.55 Mhz



Looking for a Club Member to chat with? Fire up the VHF rig and give a shout out on the VHF Simplex Frequency 146.55. You'll be surprised how often someone is listening. Hit the PTT and say "Hello"

DMR - BM TG 3155 WI State



The WI State 3155 TG is available on all the local DMR Repeaters AND via your HotSpot. Put yourself monitoring and come find a Club Member

Nut Net - Mon to Sat on 3.985 Mhz @ 8:15 AM



Join The Nut Net on 80 Mtr SSB from 8:15 to 9:00 AM Mondays thru Saturdays. Check-ins are from all over WI. You'll be a Nut Netter regular in no time. This is a general discussion net that gets your day started out right.

Milw - Florida Net - Mon to Sat 14.290 Mhz 7:00 AM



Join Tom, K9BTQ, for this early morning Check In Net, Mon thru Sat on 20M from 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM. Get the news to get your day started out just right.

6 Meter Chat - Wed, Fri 50.160 Mhz @ 9:30 AM



Paul, W9PCS, hosts this informal 6m online get together on Wed and Fri starting at 9:30 AM. This is a round table discussion and everyone is welcome to drop by and join in.

WARAC April 9th 2024 General Meeting Notes – By Pierre Porter KD9SSY

Feroz WU9N Opens the meeting

Motion to accept March meeting minutes – *Approved*

Treasury report – *Approved*

News – New Berlin Community Center is scheduled to be demolished. Not sure when, but it seems like we will be able to use the building on Sunnyslope and Cleveland

Dave WB9OWN Field Day presentation

History – 1933 FD

Review of 2023 FD

Overview of 2024 FD

Location Colonel Heg Park

We should bring some tarps just in case of rain

Located position for VHF station

AC power – Checking into

Generator – Checking into

Since FD is intended to simulate an emergency response the general sentiment is to battery (or solar) but AC or generator may be a backup plan.

ARRL theme: Be Radioactive

Trunk to Trunk (a.k.a. Junk to Trunk or vice versa) prior to May 14th meeting

5:30 - 7:00 pm

Merit badge discussion and volunteers

Takes place at Daniel Boone shooting range, May 11th

Session one 9a – 12 noon, session two 1pm - 4pm

Sendiks – May 18th

Mike WO9B – Website update

Feroz WU9N – “Show-and-Tell” - TinySA Ultra Spectrum Analyzer

Not sure who - Abbreviated Wisconsin QSO report

Respectfully Submitted

Bill Dargis KD9BJZ

Secretary WARAC, April 9, 2024

Contest Corner and DX Report

Michael Falk, AA9RK

As spring bounces along, the weather gets warmer, and the sporadic-E clouds heat up the six meter band. There are several interesting events in May that you might want to know about:

On Saturday, May 11th, check out the Spring Sprint on 6 meters from 6-10 PM. There should be several local stations on the air, but if there's any interesting propagation at all, you'll have a good shot at making lots of contacts. If conditions aren't great, the stations tend to focus on FT8 (50.313 MHz), but when propagation gets better, stations will move to SSB (50.125 and up) and CW (50.090 to 50.100). That same weekend, there is the 24 hour long Alessandro Volta RTTY DX Contest, the Canadian Prairies QSO Party, and the SKCC Weekend Sprintathon (focusing on CW sent with straight keys).

On the weekend of the 18th and 19th, there is His Majesty King of Spain Contest, a big CW event, along with the Arkansas QSO Party. There is not much on the calendar on May 24th-26th because there is one event that overshadows all the others, the CQ World Wide WPX Contest (CW). This is my favorite of the CQ World Wide events. Everyone works everyone, though you get more points for working stations outside your own country and your own continent. Multipliers are the call sign prefixes you work. Sorry, W9s and K9s; you aren't a rare multiplier this time. I feel like I am at about a medium level of rarity with my AA9 call.

The weekend after that, we are already into June (!!) and there will be a ton of digital activity. There are two PSK31 contests you might like. (PSK contesting is a lot of fun. I use fldigi to participate.) One is the PODXS 070 Club's Three Day Weekend Contest, and the other is the 10-10 International Open Season PSK Contest. At the same time, ARRL's International Contest will be running on 160 through 6 meters (no WARC bands, obviously). That contest allows you to use any digital mode except RTTY. I imagine the vast majority of the activity will be FT8/FT4, which might be the easiest digital mode to use, but you can use PSK, Olivia, Feld-Hell, MFSK, or whatever else appeals to you. This is a relatively new contest, and lots of stations have been on the air in recent years for this event.

As June goes on, there are a bunch more ARRL contests. The second weekend is June VHF Contest, the third weekend is Kids Day, and the fourth weekend is Field Day. Check my June column for more details on those.

What's the DX news?

CP7DX is Argentinian stations activating Bolivia, on HF, from May 11-19.

8P9CB, Barbados,

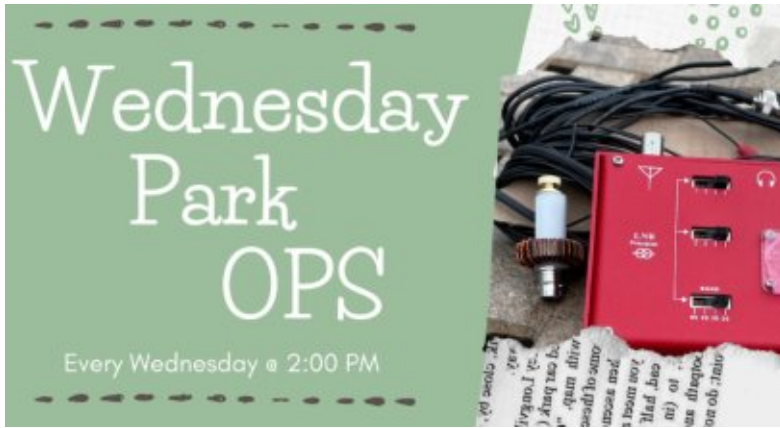
ZC4GW is Cyprus Sovereign Base Area – technically a British Overseas Territory – is QRV from May 17 to May 27, primarily on CW.

8Q7KR, Maldives, will be on the air on 10 meter SSB only from May 19-31. They'll be low power only, so use your tall antennas for this one.

FT4GL, Glorioso Island, is a French territory in the Indian Ocean. This is primarily a digital operation from May 24 to June 19. They will be on a couple hours per day, one station on FT8, the other SSB or RTTY, on HF.

See you next month,

-Michael AA9RK



2024 May Notes

The 2024 Park Season is upon us. Following the usual form, I did sneak in a park trip or two in early March. Alas the weather patterns for March and April were not terribly inviting. I've got this aversion to snowmobile suits and doing picnic table park ops. I'm just a reptile looking for a hot rock to get to start my day. A cup of coffee is a welcome addition as well.

I'm going to introduce some changes for 2024. Time to shake things up. Last year I don't think we went to one new park. The original idea was somewhat of a wandering exploration of the Milwaukee area and it has gotten to the point where the trips are primarily to the well known, well trodden locations. I've kind of got my nose to the wind looking for new spots to explore, which can be something of a roll of the dice. Very exciting to check out a new location. Sometimes, they don't turn out well, but you make the best of it.

There was a big development over the winter that offers new possibilities. It seems our POTA overlords have added a bunch of new approved locations right here in Milwaukee. That opens up some nearby possibilities to do POTA activations without having to drive an hour away. With that being said, the need to stick to 2:00 PM on Wednesday's also evaporates.

So where does that leave us? For 2024 I'm going to reduce the frequency of the events to about twice per month. Secondly, I'm going to try to make one of those a POTA park which I think will be a positive for everyone, a stronger motivation to fire up a radio. I am also not necessarily tied to Wednesdays given the POTA focus. Every day is a POTA day, so I think that means we will be able to select the best weather days.

I grant you this will cause some randomness to the schedule, but that can be handled via the email alerts as well as the Facebook postings. The goal will be to get the event published at least 2 days in advance. I think this will mean the email notifications will be pretty important. You might consider signing up for that.

I'll be putting out the first Park Op in a week or so. Time to kick start the season!!

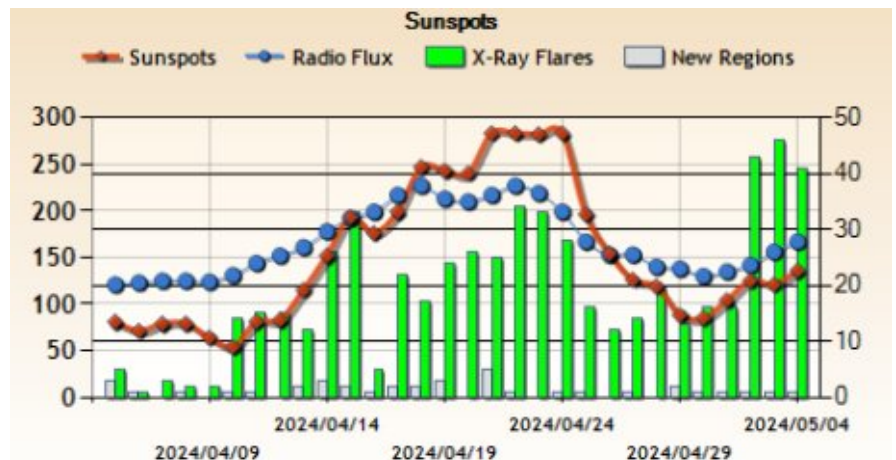
Join our mailing list to receive the weekly announcement direct to your inbox. To join, send a note to mike@palomonet.com



May 2024 * Hamtrix * By Michael Johnson, WO9B

Digital HF: The Ivan Express

From April 15th through April 24th, the Solar Flux Index (SFI) exceeded 200. My chart indicates a peak around 230 on April 18th, which immediately caught my attention. As someone with a doublet antenna (my sole HF antenna), I was particularly curious about how these high SFI numbers would impact the higher HF bands. Despite my long tenure in the hobby, I don't recall encountering SFI values this elevated before. Intrigued, I decided to explore the bands.



These atmospheric conditions may not break records, but they coincide with today's widespread weak signal digital modes, such as FT8 and that is a new territory. The ability to copy

signals 20 dB below the noise floor is a game-changer for amateur operators like myself. Essentially, a simple dipole antenna and 100 watts of power can make you a formidable player. Given the immense popularity of these modes, DX stations are practically ubiquitous—like proverbial low-hanging fruit ripe for the picking.

Case in point: At 0300 Z tonight (May 5th), both 15 and 17 meters are wide open, with signals spanning from Argentina to New Zealand. FT8 is the only activity on these bands, and this trend continues into the early hours.



This phenomenon isn't an anomaly; it occurs nightly. Before dawn, propagation shifts eastward, favoring European signals. Transequatorial propagation remains constant, ensuring South America is always heard. Africa tends to follow the European pattern. Meanwhile, Asia and the Pacific come alive around 2200Z and remain active throughout the night. This cycle repeats as the sun rises and sets, provided solar storms and X-ray flares cooperate.

Continued next page

Copying signals is one thing; logging them is another. The map below illustrates the 17m contacts logged during a 20-minute period around 10 PM on April 25th. These consecutive QSOs occurred after my initial call, and DX stations kept responding—an unusual occurrence given my station’s limitations. These were all 50-watt and a wire QSOs, spanning a wide range of mostly Russian stations. I affectionately dubbed it the “Ivan Express.”



While I’m not a focused DX chaser or a regular FT8 user, I’m fascinated by the ease with which digital modes facilitate global signal exchange. Unfortunately, favorable conditions don’t last forever, so seize the opportunity while it lasts.

2024 Challenge for our membership. Have someone you meet, Ham or Ham wannabe come to a meeting this year!

Swap Corner

If you have something ham related you are looking for or you would like to sell or give away. I would be happy to post them in Hamtrix

Editor

It is time to thin the herd. I have acquired too much radio stuff. I am ready to sell:

Ten Tec Omni D : All solid state, 160-10m (no WARC bands), 100 W transceiver. It has a couple of small quirks (PTO needs to be greased; SWR meter isn't accurate), and it still has all the original filter caps. If you're going to use this rig hard, it might need a little work to update it. But I made POTA CW and CQ WPX SSB contacts with it recently, and got good signal reports. I have the matching power supply and an Astatic Microphone for it. \$400 or best offer for radio, power supply, and mic. I'm inclined to make a good deal for a club member. I also have the matching CW keyer and a Signalink USB which is wired for this radio, if you are interested.

Ten Tec Argo 556 : This is a QRP rig with 10 watts of output power. It works on CW, SSB, and digital (if you have a Signalink or similar). This radio has band modules; to change bands, you pop a piece out of the radio and pop a new piece in. That system works very well. I have nine band modules (160, 80, 40, 30, 20, 17, 15, 12, and 10 meters). The modules go for upwards of \$70 apiece on eBay. I'm asking \$500 for the radio, microphone, and all nine band modules. It works like a dream on CW with an internal keyer and fast QSK. It is a power miser and gives me a lot of hours of operation on one battery. (I have installed Powerpoles on the power cable.) Recently this rig saw some use on 20 meters FT8 with the Signalink, and it has been my Winter Field Day rig twice. Again, let me know if you are interested in the Signalink to go with it.

UT5JCW Transverter : This is a 144/28 transverter, meaning you transmit on (for example) 28.390 MHz and it will come out on 144.390 MHz. This is a Ukranian transverter which I bought in 2020. It needs 5 watts of drive on 10 meters for 15 watts out on 2 meters. It has some frequency stability issues as it changes temperature, which is a known issue with these transverters. It is fine on FM, pretty good on SSB, and usable on CW, but difficult to use on FT8 without modifications. When I got my FT-991, which is an all mode radio on VHF, I didn't need this transverter anymore. I paid something like \$120 new for this, but I will sell it for \$50. It is installed in the aluminum housing, and comes with a power cable onto which I've installed Powerpoles.

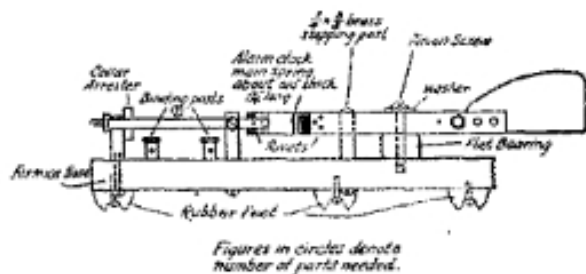
Contact Michael AA9RK: (414) 254-5619 or aa9rk@e-falk.com

Making Your Own Bug

By Ralph E. Kepler, 80T

HEREWITH the long-promised semi-automatic sending machine dope. The machine described is similar to, yet vastly different from, the regular bug as used on telegraph circuits. It has been

less than 20 or 25 dots before dying out. To adjust the dot-contact, press the dot-push and move the contact screw in until it just touches the dot contact spring. Here it should be locked. The rest of the machine to be adjusted to the operators' touch.

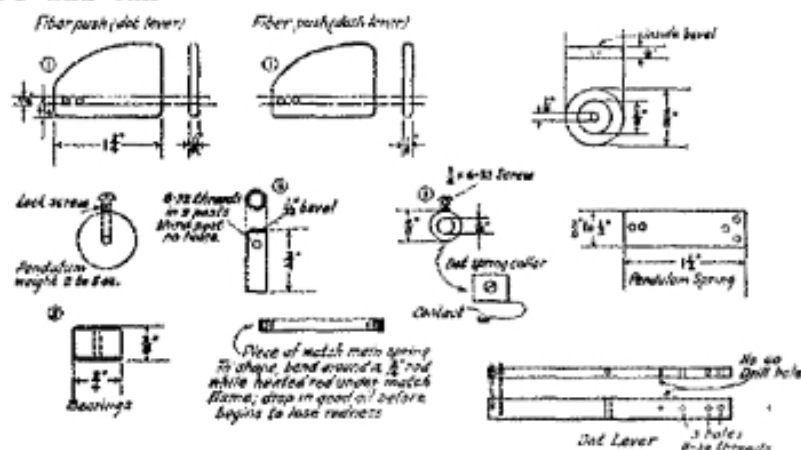


used on a "fast" bonus wire by myself for a period of about 6 months, and by several other operators on faster circuits. The main reason for this peculiar looking piece of machinery is the defeat of cost. I am at present using the bug at 80T and can find no difference in signals between it and a regular factory-built bug.

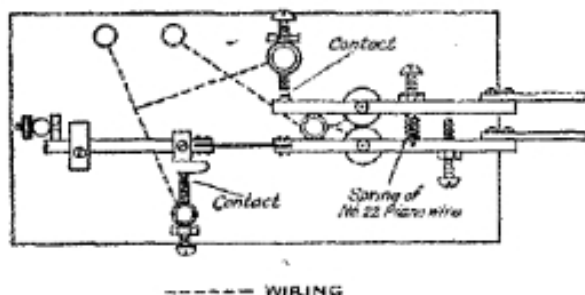
The sketches are almost self-explanatory, and the dimensions are not at all critical. That is, they do not have to be lived up to in utmost detail.

The pendulum spring and weight that govern the speed of the dots deserve a word or two. The spring must be firm, and vibrate with not too much lag after pressing of the dot-push. The weight should be made so

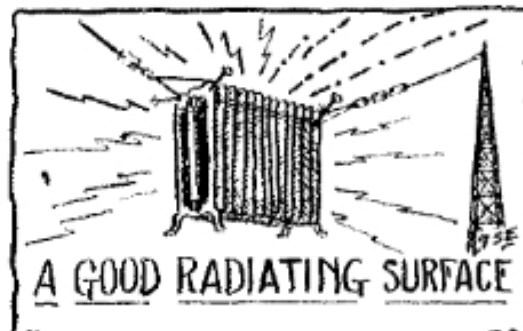
(Please, if you make one of these speed keys, do not learn how to use it by putting it on the air. One of these automatic keys can make more hash out of a good International Morse than a three-year-old with St. Vitus dance, if the operator does not know how to use it. Practice with the thing with a buzzer and battery, in some hole where you will not bother a single person; and don't take it out of there for use on your transmitter until you are certain that you can send as well and about as slowly as on your regular key. Then no one will revile you for using a "bug" key, but will bless you; for the "bug" key can



produce some of the best code you ever heard if properly handled.—Ed.)



that it will not allow the pendulum to make over 40 dots without beginning to die out, nor



What to do in an Unsettled World

Tom Langer KD9FPC

Just got an email letter from our financial person. They were discussing the markets in these crazy times. Where to start? The wars in the Middle East? Our northern and southern borders? Ukraine and Russia and everything around that? Energy issues, inflation, crime? The list can go on. But, we as hams have a great part of the remedy!

Ham radio provides stability to many, many people. To hams it means a simpler less stressful time. It means days and/or evenings when our heads were and are wrapped around some new project or sorting out some quandary or another. Ham radio means our “shack”, in whatever form it is in to have a place to just be a ham for a while.

When we are out and about, ham radio provides a stable and reliable group of people that we know are safe and will be alongside whenever there is a need. I remember a recorded radio exchange I listened to once. Wish I could find it again. It was a ham on the road up in northern Wisconsin who was driving through what sounded like a very heavy snowfall. Along his way the vehicle they were driving slid off the road and into a ditch. While it was a 4 wheeler, it was solidly stuck. And, it was also obvious that others weren't around for help.

He had the idea to crank up his ham radio and send out a call. He had a repeater list (2m VHF) with him and began with hitting the repeaters around him. I know, you are asking yourself, why didn't he use a cell phone? Because where he was located, there was no cell signal. But by staying calm he thought of his ham community. All he knew was that he and his family were in a dangerous situation and he was going to work this out.

After a bit of CQ Mayday, he was talking with a local ham operator. That operator started getting together a posse of sorts. They also contacted the police. In short order he had police, a group of helpful hams and a tow truck. A bit later the truck was pulled out and all set to rights. I do wish I knew how long all of this process took. But, one wonders what would have happened to this family if when the cell didn't work, and that one ham set the wheels in motion for help.

I would add here this is why Field Days and similar emergency drills are very important, along with POTA and the rest. They get us thinking about ways to make power where there isn't any. Food and preparations. To set up antennas from little more than string and wire. Because, as they like to say, when the world goes sideways, ham radio is one of the few reliable things left assuming the operator has a plan and know how. Some days I wish Field Days would return to its roots rather than having become essentially one more contest. And I also recognize that standing out in the cold isn't much fun for Winter Field days, but it is needed too. Guess we can just hope the world goes sideways in summer.

These are the kind of things hams do for each other. Heck, anyone really. Solid people who are reliable and value the things that are right. We are out at the events providing communications. We are working with police agencies providing communication and support. When disaster strikes it is impossible to know how many people are helped if not saved from bad situations because of ham radio and a willing operator.

Continued next page

The instability is why it is so vitally important that during these times we offer younger people a look into a more reliable, safer and more stable time. We do offer the tech things that attract many younger people. Think FT8/4, Packet Radio, SDR and all of the others. But we offer something so much more. A look into a different world where there are standards for behavior and not some free for all. Where they are able to reach out and talk to someone else, in their city, state, country and beyond. A chance to really contribute in important ways to society. And while we may not think so, very affordably relative to so many other activities. Ham radio is alive. And it is the people, not the equipment! But like any good activity, there's lots of that to choose from. And if that doesn't work, just bring ~~them~~ to see the picnic tables full of food at the meetings!

So, for all of us it is time to show younger people and other older people that in these very unsettled times there is a place to go and rock solid people to meet. Ham radio and the folks of our clubs.

Editorial

Another month has passed, and it's becoming increasingly plausible that we'll soon enjoy spring weather, especially following the relatively warm winter we've experienced.

I've been dedicating some time to refining my ideas for a portable antenna suitable for travel in areas where supports for an end-fed antenna, like Mike WO9B's sparkplug gear antennas, are nonexistent. I've explored a couple of approaches. Firstly, I've been working on a small kit that provides me with a compact coil and a collapsible whip spanning four feet. Winding the coil proved to be the most significant challenge, with 140 turns on a 4-inch tube using small enameled wire. To tackle this, I found two tricks particularly helpful. First, I wrapped electric tape over every ten turns, aiding in keeping track of the count. Second, I devised a method for counting the turns by taking a picture of the tube, blowing it up on a computer screen, counting out ten turns, measuring that segment, and then extrapolating the total. This method proved effective enough that I was able to tune it on forty meters.

Now, with the prospect of nicer weather and some free time on the horizon, I'm eager to test it out and see how well it performs.

The other antenna I've been exploring involves using a ten-foot collapsible whip along with a tuner. It's slightly larger but still quite manageable for packing purposes.

That about sums it up.

73,

Frank KA9FZR

(edited with chatgpt.com)

A Million Disconnected Ham Information

Tom Langer KD9FPC

CAUTION: What you are about to read may cause you to learn, cause unplanned purchases of new rigs and hopefully smile!

When one writes for magazines, newsletters and more, one learns to do a lot of research. Generally I manage to have way more material than I need. Such is the case now. So, for the next few minutes we'll share facts and oddities that make Amateur Radio (AR) so much fun and interesting. At the end I will list a bunch of sources. Sometimes though it is just a note on the odd scrap of paper without source. So, I shall apologize up front.

For Example did you know we have a Patron Saint? It's true. In 1982 Father Maximillian Kolbe (SP3RN) was named a Saint by the Pope. Seems that during WWII the Nazi's charged him with espionage. He was found guilty and sent off to Auschwitz. After his arrival 10 prisoners escaped the camp. Camp officers demanded the death of ten captive prisoners in retribution. Father Kolbe volunteered to be one of the ten to die. He was killed along with nine other prisoners. When named a Saint the declaration included his radio operation and communication.

Or, another interesting note. When on the radio we are "broadcasting". Radio got that name from farmers who broadcasted seed when planting. The name stuck. We can thank the small family farmer for our activity name today. While talking radio, the "Most Powerful" radio station in the U.S. is WLW in Cincinnati, OH at 700 KHz. In the 30's it operated at 500KW radiated power. Still broadcasting today, though at the newer legal limit. Nielsen tells us that in the fall of 2022 there were 82.3 million listeners to AM. Too bad for EV cars that cannot get AM due to RF interference.

And, did you know the Eiffel Tower is one gigantic radio antenna? It was used for military purposes first. How about this? Ham radio at legal limit is 750 times more powerful than a walkie talkie at legal limit. And globally there are about 3 million hams. Seems pretty well known the number is about 750,000 in the United States. But, Japan ranges from about 380,000 to well over 1.3 million depending on the source of data. Whatever, the United States and Japan seem to be the biggest. How's your DX to Japan? And God only knows the number of unlicensed hams, frequently aka preppers.

AR operators are 85% male... come on, let's get more females in the hobby. Not just involved with making food for Field Day. Operators tend to have an infinity for weather, science, history, most over 50 and many are private and/or commercial pilots (guilty here). And according to one author on Quora, AR "can never be fully mastered" given all of the bazillion options and emerging technology. Sort of says if one isn't interested they are not paying attention!

Speaking of history, here's a quick summary. AR is well over a century old. Marconi was the first "ham". 1912 we got our first assigned frequencies generally pushed above 1.5MHz. In 1913 we got call signs. Were pushed off air for WWI. After, in 1923 we had the first "DX" between the UK and CT in the U.S. It was in the 1930's that spark gap moved into CW.

In 1947 SSB was becoming all the rage. The only AR during WWII was the Emergency Radio Service operating VHF. Late 40's we see the beginning of civilian RTTY, mostly thanks to military surplus. In the 50's they just could not seem to sort out the license structure. There were the A/B/C licenses then Advanced, General, Novice, Conditional. All had minimum code requirements. Anyone ever a Technician Plus??? In 1953 we had the very first moon bounce!

In the 60's there was all kinds of activity. One of the biggest was OSCAR, aka the beginning of satellite radio. In the 70's repeaters came into being. Then, in the 80's the FCC approved the use of ASCII signals which

supported packet radio... and on to digital the ham world went. It was also the decade of Space Shuttle communication, the VE testing program and more. Since, we have seen the no code licensing Tech/Gen/Extra licensing. Today AR areas of the hobby are SSB, CW, digital, satellite and T.V. transmission in very broad terms. Within each are dozens of areas to concentrate. No one person will ever master them all.

Today AR is... a lifeline for emergencies, used as a tool for scientific and communication research, a way to connect through satellites, talk to astronauts in space, moon bounce and a million other purposes. It is a way of global communication "through the air". And, it is a great educational tool for teaching communication, electronics, physics, geography, history, public service and so much more.

Ok, last paragraph. It is important to include what NerdCave says are the types of AR operators...

OM... yeah, the 85% as opposed to the XYL

The Collector aka awards are me. Got a wall full of certificates!

The Rag Chewer... speaks for itself

The Helper... will always jump on with a helpful suggestion even if they have no clue

Car Guys, Music Guys, etc., etc.

The Tuner... uses an old rig at a full 100W with frequency wandering all over the place, usually covering a pile up or contest

The CB'r... speaks for itself

The Appliance Operator... always getting the latest and greatest rigs

The Net Controller... will always show up at a net and is not short on discussion

The Contester...if it's not a challenge with awards and a newsletter mention, don't bother them

Obviously all very tongue in cheek and meant for a heh heh. I got a kick out of it, and I could see me in a few.

OK, that's not the last paragraph. This is. Now, according to redpitya the 6 most famous hams;

Yuri Gagarin UA1LO and 1st human in space.

Les Hamilton GM3ITN and alerted the Brits that the Falklands were being invaded via radio

John Sculley K2HEP, yup was once the prez of PepsiCo and now big kahuna at Apple

Qaboos bin Said al Said A4IAA, was Sultan of Oman

Juan Carlos EA6JC and former King of Spain

Marlon Brando FO5GJ

Quick, check your logs!

OK, I lied. But I must go to the loo now, so have to quit! I hope everybody enjoyed this, learned some things and is already thinking of new things to do with Amateur Radio. This is truly an interesting hobby with the greatest bunch of people worldwide. Head for the shack and search someone up now.

ELMER

by Rich Regent, K9GDF



Stamp Prices Jump on July 14, 2024

by Rich Regent, K9GDF

On July 14, 2024, one-ounce mailing goes from 68 cents to 73 cents, almost a 7.4 percent increase. For an average family, postage will cost \$36.50 annually to send an assortment of 50 letters, holiday greetings, birthday cards, Christmas cards and to pay bills by mail.

International Mail

, which is \$1.55, flies up to \$1.65. Metered Mail jumps from 64 cents to 69 cents. Additional-ounce price for single-piece letter increases from 24 cents to 28 cents. For example -- two-ounces is \$1.01 and 3-ounces is \$1.29.

Remember penny postal cards? The new post card postage, like a QSL card, will increase from 53 cents to 56 cents. Price tables are available on the Postal Service's website: <https://pe.usps.com/PriceChange>.

USPS explains that as changes in the mailing and shipping marketplace continue, these price adjustments are needed to achieve the financial stability sought by the organization's Delivering for America 10-year plan. This plan includes \$40 billion in capital investments during ten years, which is \$15 billion more than in the USPS base capital plan. This capital will pay for better package processing networks, facility space upgrades and procurement of new processing equipment.

Assuredly, USPS claims that their prices remain among the most affordable in the world. The Postal Service is also seeking price adjustments for Special Services products, including Certified Mail and Money Order fees. There will be no price increase for Post Office Box rental fees. In fact, the Postal Service will apply a price reduction of 10-percent for Postal Insurance when mailing an item.

Imagine this concept -- to mail a regular one-ounce envelope it will take 24 commemorative sized 3-cent stamps. Those many stamps will cover an area on the envelope nine inches wide by four inches high, and it will still need a 1-cent stamp glued somewhere to complete the 73-cent new rate. Of course there needs to be space for Shipping To and From addresses. Such a crazy envelope would have to be bigger than an envelope qualifying for the one-ounce rate. So to be practical, we must use higher denomination stamps in the mix, because overlapping stamps or sticking extra postage on the back of an envelope is not USPS approved.

If you pay bills by mail, consider changing to online banking and payments, Also, the Internet includes free e-mail and greeting card features to stay in touch with associates, friends and relatives. Hopefully, with electronic methods, a supply of discount postage and previously purchased forever stamps, you may not be overwhelmed by these new mail price increases.

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DON'T KEY LIKE A PHONE MAN



SLOW SPEED CW QSO NET

Monday's - 8:00 PM - WBOAFB Repeater 147.045 + 127.3 Tone

CW Practice

One of the best and maybe the only way to get better at CW is practice. Having someone else who also wants to practice also helps. Just makes it more fun.

The West Allis Radio Club is going to try to help. We are running a CW practice net on Monday at 8pm The repeater is 147.045+ 127.3 the CW portion is on HF

Mike WO9B has been joining me and setting up some practice but we are open for suggestions on where to go with this. Come join us.

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Newsletter Editor
Frank Humpal, KA9FZR
fhump@milwpc.com

Past President
Frank Humpal KA9FZR

West Allis Radio Amateur Club
P. O. box 511381
New Berlin, WI 53151-1381

West Allis Radio Club
PO Box 511381
New Berlin, WI 53151-1381