



Official Publication of the  
West Allis Radio Amateur Club

# Hamtrix

Volume 59, Issue 8 AUGUST, 2012

## AUGUST CLUB HAPPENINGS



### August Club meeting

August 14, 2012

### Program

Ham Nation video

with Bob Heil and Gordon West

Join us for a pre-meeting dinner  
at Johnny V's Classic Cafe  
1650 S 84th St at 5:00pm

WARAC 2-meter net

Wednesday at 8pm

MATC repeater 147.045 standard offset

127.3 Hz CTCSS

## Club Happenings

Reserve

5Jan13 for our club

Swapfest

## FOR SALE

WARAC has been donated a crank up pole tower, estimated to be 40 feet extended. The whole tower is rotated by a CDE Ham-M rotator mounted at the base. A winch system allows the tower to tilt also. Antennas mounted on this tower are a 430 MHz. ringo ranger, 9 element rotatable horizontal/vertical 2M beam and a 2M horizontal "square-lo". Tower is in good condition and could be used for a digital TV antenna system "up North", beam antennas or a trailer mounted emergency communications antenna system.

Please contact Phil, W9NAW, for additional information and availability. Viewing pictures will be available at the next club meeting. Sale proceeds go the WARAC Scholarship Fund.

**NEW** club jackets and hats!

Go to club Web site and click on

The GOLD MEDAL IDEAS block

For more info



# *The President's Shack August 2012*

We have received word from the ARRL Foundation that Tyler Lehman, KC9FKE, has been selected as the 2012 recipient of WARAC's David Knaus Memorial Scholarship. Congratulations to Tyler! He is from Marinette, WI, and is a second year student in the UW system where he plans to earn a degree in a medical, technical or science related field. Go our website to read Tyler's thank-you letter to our club and other information. <http://www.warac.org/sch/>

With Tyler's award, WARAC has given out more than \$48,000 in scholarships since 1987.

If you weren't at Jim Wilkins' house on Saturday, July 14, you missed a good picnic. It was well attended and the food was excellent as was Jim's location. Weather was a bit warm but Jim had plenty of shade. Unfortunately, because of other commitments, I was unable to stay long. At the upcoming meeting, we'll be looking for feedback on how to make the picnic even better next year.

At the upcoming meeting, we will have a Ham Nation video with Bob Heil and Gordon West about the history of Ham Radio. Also, other videos will be available. For the September meeting, we plan to have a live D-Star demo by Dave Schank, KA9WXN.

Got ideas for programs you'd like to see? We're open for suggestions – please let me know!

Our Field Day article in the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel received mention in ARRL SM Don Michalski's July newsletter. As a result of this publicity, we have seen an increase in equipment

donations and requests for information about our club.

If you've got antenna plans for this summer, you'd better get busy! I hate to say it, but the summer will be gone before you know it.

Don't forget, we will again have dinner at Johnny V's Classic Café, 1650 S. 84th St. at 5:00PM before upcoming meeting. Everybody's welcome!

See you at the meeting! Bring a friend!

Tom, K9BTQ

## **From the Editor**

Another Hamtrix is finished. You might know that I was in a motorcycle accident just before the July board meeting. My damage was to my right elbow. I got a 3 stitch cut and a small bone chip. Other than that I had some bruises and some swelling in my right arm.

I was stopped waiting at a light to let me enter west 1894 at 27th street when I was hit from behind, pushing me and the bike forward. The bike was totaled according to the insurance company. All the protection gear I use seems to have done a good job.

Like Tom said the Club picnic went well. For Judy and me it was only a short visit since it was the first of four things we had scheduled for the day.

I had a good qrp contact last Sunday, 5 watts into my tri band antenna on SSB 20 meter I contacted Portsmouth NH. I am still surprised how far one can talk on such low power when everything comes together.

I found a couple of articles on the Internet where ham radio came to the rescue. Enjoy! If anyone wants to write something for Hamtrix I always looking for something of interest to put in!

73

Frank KA9FZR

# **WARAC General Meeting Minutes**

**July 10, 2012**

## **Introduction**

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by President, Tom Macon, K9BTQ. Overall meeting attendance was 15 with one visitor.

## **Program**

The evening's program was presented by Chuck Dellis, W9WLX, Field Day, 2012, Wrap-up. The second part of the program was Elmering, lead by Tom Macon. Everyone was encouraged to participate in the discussion.

## **Business**

Motion was made and accepted to approve the June meetings minutes as published in Hamtrix.

The Wisconsin QSO Party results are not yet available. Watch the WARAC website for publication.

Tyler Lehman, KC9FKE, is the recipient of the 2012 David Knaus Memorial Scholarship. Tyler is from Marinette, Wisconsin, and will be a sophomore at UW-Marinette this fall.

## **Announcements**

The club picnic will take place at Jim Wilkins' home on July 14 at 1:00. Bring a dish to pass.

There were 7 members present at Johnny V's for the pre-meeting dinner. The dinner starts at 5:00 and everyone is encouraged to participate.

Reminder—the Nut Net breakfast takes place on the 4th Tuesday of the month at Genesis restaurant, Highway 100 and Beloit Rd.

WARAC Swapfest fliers are available, see Phil Gural, W9NAW, for details.

The Racine Megacycle Freefest takes place at Sturtevant on August 11.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Chuck Dellis, W9WLX  
Secretary WARAC

# **WARAC Board Meeting**

**July 24, 2012**

Howard Smith called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

Present: Tom Macon, K9BTQ, Howard Smith, WA9AXQ, Chuck Dellis, W9WLX, Jim Wilkins, KC9KEQ, Dave Schank, KA9WXN, Leroy Haas, KC9NST.

## **Club Picnic**

The club picnic was well attended, 17 attendees. Suggestions for improvement were better organization of what food attendees bring and more communication about what the club provides. The picnic will be discussed at the next general meeting.

## **Wisconsin QSO Party**

No results available for publication at this time.

## **Club Operations Manual**

Howard Smith shared a draft of the Awards Dinner process. The authoring team needs to re-group to complete other items that are due.

## **Audits**

The 2010 audit is complete and 2011 audit is in process. Reports should be available at the next meeting.

The Board will investigate renewal forms for membership dues to insure up to date member information and to assist with accounting. Forms for the Awards Dinner will also be considered.

## **Programs**

August: Ham Nation video.

September: D-Star

October: ARRL Membership Benefits

Please continue to promote the 2 meter net on Wednesdays at 8:00 pm, 147.045, PL127.3

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Chuck Dellis, W9WLX

Secretary WARAC

## **Hams a Bright Spot During Power Blackout:**

**The ARRL Letter Vol. 22, No. 32 August 15, 2003**

When a power blackout struck at least a half dozen eastern states August 14, many Amateur Radio operators were ready and able to provide whatever assistance they could. Hardest hit were metropolitan areas like New York City, Detroit and Cleveland. In New York, residents and commuters found themselves stranded in electricity-dependent elevators and subway or rail cars while visitors ended up stuck at airports, which were forced to shut down. With the cellular systems overloaded or out altogether, the incident turned into a test of Amateur Radio's capabilities to operate without commercial power.

"It was a good drill," said New York City-Long Island Section Emergency Coordinator Tom Carrubba, KA2D. But, he adds, it was a cautionary tale too. "The lesson is that everybody gets a little complacent," he said. "Have emergency power backup and make sure it's working!"

By and large, Carrubba said, ARES members did what they were trained to do. "It's going to show the worth of Amateur Radio," he said of the blackout response. "There were people on the air immediately."

Diane Ortiz, K2DO, the Public Information Coordinator for NYC-Long Island was one of them. When power went down in her Suffolk County community, she started up an informal VHF net. Over the next 20 hours or so, it passed some 500 pieces of what Ortiz described as largely "health-and-welfare traffic."

"People are getting on and helping," she said. In addition to handling messages for people stranded in the city, amateurs also relayed useful information, such as which stores or filling stations were open and operating. With many radio and TV stations dark, and hams were able to help fill the information void, Ortiz said.

In the Big Apple itself, ARES teams provided communication support for Red Cross Emergency Response Vehicles (ERVs) set up at main transportation centers in Manhattan. ARES members also accompanied ERVs on fire calls.

RACES activated in most Greater New York City area counties after a state of emergency was declared. Some ARES teams--including a few across the Hudson River in New Jersey--activated or remained on standby to help if called upon. In New Jersey, a net linked the Red Cross lead chapter's N2ARC in Princeton with other New Jersey ARC chapters.

Michigan Section Manager Dale Williams, WA8EFK, reports scattered ARES activations. Williams, who lives in Dundee south of Detroit, was without power August 15 and relying on his emergency generator. Some Michigan ARES teams assisted emergency operations centers and the Red Cross.

In Ohio, Section Emergency Coordinator Larry Rain, WD8IHP, reports that all ARES organizations in northern Ohio were activated after the power grid went down. Still going strong at week's end were ARES teams in Cleveland and Akron. "ARES is handling communication support for Ohio Emergency Management in the affected cities and communities," Rain said. Ohio VHF and UHF nets and the Ohio SSB net on HF have been handling blackout-related traffic.

Nancy Hall, KC4IYD--who lives 20 miles west of Cleveland--said she's glad she'd taken the ARRL Emergency Communications Level I class. "I have to say that being a ham and knowing about emergency preparedness did make life easier for me and my family," said Hall, who's now signed up for the Level II class.

New England states were far less affected by

the blackout. ARES/RACES operators in the region were on standby after the blackout. Only Connecticut and sections of Western Massachusetts reported significant outages, and ARES nets activated in both states.

Bill Sexton, N1IN/AAR1FP, an Army MARS member, said his emergency power capability permitted him to check into the Northeast SHARES (National Communications System HF Shared Resources Program) net and maintain e-mail contact after Berkshire County lost power.

"The experience proved once gain the great strength of ham radio in an emergency," Sexton said. "It is self-starting, and it is everywhere."

**By Patrick Lynch**  
**Daily Press**  
**Published July 25, 2003**

Larry Wheeler, a control room engineer at Surry Power Station, has never seen Walter Siebert. Doesn't know a thing about him or the place where Siebert lives - Valley Lee, Md.

But Wheeler, without leaving his James City County house last week, saved Siebert's life, according to Siebert's son.

Wheeler was home from work last Tuesday, listening in on radio traffic from a mock emergency drill at the nuclear plant. Wheeler - who just last year became interested in amateur radio, also called "ham radio"- was flipping through the designated frequencies for the drill when a call for help caught him off guard.

Distress calls aren't supposed to come over the frequency Wheeler was using. But more than 100 miles away - three peninsulas to

the north of here - 83-year-old Walter Siebert had no other choice.

Siebert, who was home alone, was having serious chest pains for more than an hour. He tried to call 911, but the calls apparently were routed to somewhere in Virginia. Siebert's family members still aren't sure what happened with those calls, and Verizon is investigating.

Siebert had no time for that. He gave up on the phone and clicked on his ham radio - a hobby he'd picked up almost 60 years ago, when he left the Army after World War II. Siebert went through frequencies until he heard a voice - Wheeler's - and then sent out his call.

"I heard someone saying, 'Help me, help me. I'm having a heart attack,' " Wheeler said. "Any time someone says they're having chest pains, it's serious."

Wheeler asked the voice where he lived, what his name was, why he hadn't called 911. Siebert told him who and where he was and explained the phone problem. Concerned it might be a prank, Wheeler asked for Siebert's registered call letters, and then looked them up on an online database. He found just what Siebert had told him: K3KBR.

From his house off Jamestown Road, Wheeler put a call out to those in the Surry drill that he had an emergency and to keep off the frequency he was using. He called the James City County emergency center and asked if they could call up to Maryland. He called the Maryland State Police after finding the number online.

A James City dispatcher got through first to Maryland emergency officials, at the 911 call center in Leonardtown. As best as Siebert's family can piece together, Siebert first tried to call 911 between 1 p.m. and 1:30 p.m.

Wheeler called James City dispatch at 2:13 p.m., said James City deputy fire chief Willie Howlett, and that dispatcher kept Wheeler on the line until they figured out the proper Maryland dispatch center to call.

## Tidbits

Tidbits...

The ARRL's Logbook of the World (LoTW) now contains nearly 438 million QSO records resulting in 59 million QSL records. The system has 52,000 registered users.

CQ Magazine has announced that they are reducing contest log submission time for all CQ contests to five (5) days. The first CQ contest affected by this new log deadline will be the CQ WW RTTY contest in September.

The James City dispatcher called Leonardtown at 2:34 p.m., and an ambulance picked up Siebert at 2:47 p.m., said Shirley Wood, director of the Leonardtown call center. Siebert was taken to St. Mary's hospital, where doctors removed a blood clot that likely caused the attack, and where Siebert recently was moved out of coronary intensive care.

The incident left Siebert's son, Martin, grateful for Wheeler's fast thinking, and grateful for his father's old hobby. The elder Siebert, a retired civil servant from Patuxent River Naval Air Station, lives with his son and his family. He keeps antique radios, "old vacuum tube stuff," around the house, Martin said. His antenna consists of a wire between two tree limbs. Martin strung it there using his bow-fishing rig.

Walter Siebert hasn't spoken with Wheeler, but his son Martin has, briefly. Walter is still in the hospital and so could not talk for this story. Walter did pass his thoughts to Martin, who passed them on to Wheeler.

"Dad attributes his living this long to that. I wouldn't have been home for another three hours," Martin Siebert said. "If it hadn't been for the guy on the radio.... If it wasn't for his radio, he'd be gone."

Wheeler said he's simply glad he was on the radio when he was.

"I was in the right place at the right time," he said.

But he also marveled at what a couple of ham radios can accomplish.

"It's pretty amazing," Wheeler said. "You have this little black box that sits on your desk, and a wire on your roof, and you can talk to someone in Sweden

### Officers and Board

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***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.