



Official Publication of the
West Allis Radio Amateur Club

Hamtrix

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Volume 71, Issue 9 September, 2022

SEPTEMBER CLUB HAPPENINGS



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. Contact her: 414-529-3536 or barbsewsblue@gmail.com.

Meeting
September 13, 2022 7pm
New Berlin Community Center
14750 W. Cleveland Ave.
New Berlin, WI
Between Moorland and Sunnyslope
Presentations
To be announced

Premeeting dinner
New Berlin Ale House 5:15pm
16000 W. Cleveland Ave
West of Moorland Rd.



WARAC @ Sendik's Grill

11:00 AM to 4:00 PM

SATURDAY SEPT 10, 2022

3600 S MOORLAND RD, NEW BERLIN, WI



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Editor's Corner

September is here. With my pacemaker upgrade seems I missed a lot of the summer fun. Did make a lot of the Wednesday park activations. They have been well attended this year. We all know weather will be closing that off for a while.

My Pacemaker upgrade is done and I on the road to recovery. I'll share some of the story at the meeting.

The Illinois QSO party is coming up Oct 16, 2022. Last year Mike WO9B and me set up a mobile rig in my car and we spent about 4 or 5 hours on the road to see how it worked. I used an old screwdriver antenna I had picked up at a good price. If I'm up for it we will do it again this year. A fun time and good excuse to play radio.

Not much else happening here. Hope to see you at Sendik's for our fund raiser and at the meeting.

73

Frank KA9FZR • —• —••



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 Quarterly Board Meeting – July 26, 2022

A quarterly board meeting was called by Frank WA9FZR, this was a Jitsi meeting
<https://meet.jit.si/WARACHamRadioClubVirtualMeeting>

The board meeting was called to order 7:01 pm by Dave Garnier WB9OWN.

Officers Board Members Present

Feroz Ghouse WU9N, Dave Garnier WB9OWN, Tom Macon K9BTQ, Bill Reed N9KPH, Phil Tollefson WA9AQL. There were no visitors.

Bill Reed has announced he will be stepping down from being the WARAC Treasury effective October 2022. Bill has been the treasurer for past 5 years. Bill, thank you for your service to the club.

Meeting Agenda – Frank called the meeting but there was no meeting agenda. The following was discussed:

- Meeting Presentations for the next couple months, “What can we do?”
- Feroz suggested having a “tailgate swap-fest” for September or October meeting, this would be in lieu of having a general presentation. First we have a short general meeting then adjourn to the parking lot.

Other business updates

- There will be Sendik’s fund raising event September 10, 2022.
- Having the club banner at these fund raising would answer the question “Who are you and what do you do.”
- Dave will bring ARRL handouts to Sendik's event, “what is ham radio and what can we do.”

Carol Zach (the wife of John Zack) passed away July 8, 2022. She will be missed by those who attend the 4th Tuesday of the month breakfasts.

Meeting Ended @ 7:45pm

Respectfully submitted,
 David Garnier WB9OWN
 Secretary WARAC, September 5, 2022

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2022 Challenge for our membership. Have someone you meet, Ham or Ham wannabe come to a meeting this year!



2022 Sept Notes

The 2022 season is coming to a close. September will be the last of the official park ops for the year. If you have not joined up yet this year, you really should get on it. The weather has been fantastic this season, excepting a couple of rain days, but the temps have been perfect and the support from the Milwaukee community has been fabulous. Pick a week and come on by.

This past month we visited mainly close by parks in the New Berlin/Greenfield area. These are well known haunts and the picnic tables have filled up well. The Kulwicks Park venture saw some real radio's being set up as NK9G and W9LR put their QRO chops on display and made a whole morning of it. We actually had to do some radio band coordination. What a treat.

Everyone is welcome and we always have an extra spot on the park bench. We always have more assistant operators than we have radios. That seems to be part of the charm. We try to accommodate everyone by selecting parks with good shelters, plenty of picnic seating and nearby parking. This is a wonderful place to bring your latest project or solicit opinions on your shack problems. Bringing a radio is completely optional. Most of the folks are there for a bit of sun and conversation.

So come and join the fun. After all, it's only an hour!!

When: Every Wednesday from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM +/-

Where: New Park every week. Announcements are on the WARAC Facebook Page

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



DX UPDATE:

ZL7/K5WE will be active from September 9 to 21. Jeff will be on most modes 160M to 10M
XT2AW September 3-19

I plan on attending the W9DXCC Conference this month. Look for a report in my column next month.



Propagation:

WO9B sent me a link to a chart on solar numbers. Check it out. <https://www.solarham.net/progression.htm>

Contesting:

Colorado QSO Party	1300Z, Sep 3 to 0400Z, Sep 4, 2022
Tennessee QSO Party	1800Z, Sep 4 to 0300Z, Sep 5, 2022
Alabama QSO Party	1500Z, Sep 10 to 0300Z, Sep 11, 2022
Texas QSO Party	1400Z, Sep 17 to 0200Z, Sep 18, 2022 and 1400Z-2000Z, Sep 18, 2022

For more contests check out: <https://www.contestcalendar.com/contestcal.html>

You can also check page 72 in the September 2022 QST for more contests.

Special Event Stations:

For special event station listings (there are many) check out:

<https://www.425dxn.org/index.php?op=wcal>

If you have further ideas or suggestions for this page please let WA9BZW (Al) know.

wa9bzw@arrl.net



Gary Sutcliffe, W9XT, accepts a plaque on behalf of the Ozaukee Radio Club, presented by Chuck Dellis, W9WLX, Wisconsin QSO Party chairman. The award is for First Place in the Aggregate Club Competition, which is for the highest combined scores of all participating club members. The presentation was made at the August 10 ORC meeting.

Radio is Magic

- If you aren't impressed by the fact that you can wobble a few electrons in a wire and thereby wobble a few electrons in a wire half way around the world, you have no soul.



Nut Net Breakfast to start, AGAIN

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 will once again meet at Gensis Restaurant, corner of HWY 100 and Beloit Road, Greenfield, WI. Looking forward to seeing you, mark your calendar.

Phil, W9NAW



Sept 2022

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Hamtrix

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By Michael Johnson, WO9B

Digital Enabling - Windows

Last month's article generated some feedback that I thought might be helpful to toss out for general discussion. Seems my easy time with setting up and running VARAC was not universally blissful for a couple of you. Integrating digital software to operate an unfamiliar mode can be tricky. And it is not just the mode software, but really any of the support programs we use in our computer assisted ham shacks. My shack may not be typical, but I've recently integrated a new HF radio in the mix and this caused two weeks of confusion, frustration and stress. My experience is familiar to those navigating the complicated task of getting it all to work.

The specific issue that was brought up was difficulties one ham had getting VARAC to work with his Ham Radio Deluxe (HRD) installation. In his installation, the HRD software takes a leading role and requires integration through the HRD software to the mode software. That is fine if you have a very popular, well supported application like WSJT-X, but something freshly new like VARAC means those integration paths may not exist. A trip to the VARAC Forums verified the issue and what's more confirmed that the solution remains a work in progress. Bad me for hyping the simplicity of getting VARAC up and running. This is a classic YMMV (Your Mileage May Vary) situation.

Each shack is plumbed differently. Still, computer controls and assists equates to sharing of information between software, radio gear and accessories. The common technique is to provide that information via serial ports though IP connections are gaining share. In the Windows world, port sharing can be challenging. In my shack, my needs require CAT information and controls as well as data being sent to various pieces of gear. In the Icom/Yaesu/Kenwood world this is typically handled with a single USB cable that manifests itself as a single Data/CAT com port and a USB Audio Device. At any given time the Data/Cat info wants to be used by logging software, WSJT-X, SDR software, Contest software and perhaps others. All is fine except Windows only allows a single port connection. That causes problems.

The solution is to invoke a port sharing strategy. HRD incorporates that within its software, so that makes life easy until something new and unsupported comes along. For non-HRD users, there are a number of port sharing solutions. Some are free-ish and others are commercially available. Let's look at two possibilities for you to consider.

Omnirig, <http://www.dxatlas.com/omnirig/>, gives you the ability to share com port CAT control between various softwares. The catch however is that the shared software must recognize Omnirig as a supported radio. My shack uses Omnirig to share between three pieces of software: LOG4OM, WSJT-X, SDR Uno

continue on page 11

and SDR Console. It is free software and is infrequently updated. It uses .ini files for your radio and that can result in odd happenings if your radio is an obscure model. The software pretty much runs in the background once set up.

Virtual Serial Port Emulation: VSPE, <http://www.eterlogic.com/Products.VSPE.html>, is true serial port sharing software. It is not free, but costs only \$25 and gives you fine grain control over your serial port sharing, splitting needs. I have been using this for years and it is marvelous software. You can set it up to run as a service so that it becomes a background application. I use this primarily due to N1MM not supporting Omnirig and simply rewrite the radio's non-sharable windows com port to a sharable virtual comport. That way both Omnirig and N1MM can use the CAT information simultaneously. No com port sharing conflicts.

Having used both Omnirig and VSPE for years now, when a new mode or piece of gear pops up, integration is relatively easy. To me, VARAC was a simple task of downloading it and setting it up. It caused no reverberations with my other software. This is not a magic solution, but for me, for this one instance, everything worked as advertised.

HAMFEST/CONVENTION

09/10/2022 - Ozaukee Radio Club Regional Fall Swapfest

Location: Cedarburg, WI Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Ozaukee Radio Club (ORC)

Website: <https://www.ozaukeeradioclub.org/>

Wisconsin Antique Radio Club Inc.

Go to their Web Site at

<https://warci.org/calendar/>

For Dates Location and info

Antenna Tech / Technical Articles

What is a Screwdriver Antenna?

Posted by Mark Haverstock, K8MSH on June 24, 2022 at 1:41 pm

When I first heard the term screwdriver antenna, I thought it was a joke. I immediately thought of stories about loading wet noodles, bedsprings, and random trees in the forest as antennas. Or perhaps the screwdriver antenna was a myth, something like the Wouff-Hong.

Many of us have used loading coils to match a vertical antenna, and that's the principle behind the screwdriver antenna. A screwdriver is a vertical antenna with a remotely adjustable center-loading coil. Intended for mobile operation, it may be adjusted to cover any band from 6m to 75m. The antenna takes its name from the use of a reversible DC electric motor like those found in electric screwdrivers. It takes the hassle out of moving clips manually along the coil.

History

The original DK-3 Screwdriver Antenna design was created by Don Johnson (not the Miami Vice star). Don, W6AAQ (sk), was also author of a book on HF mobile operation, 40 years of HF Mobileering. When the FCC first authorized HF mobile, a group in the San Francisco Bay area decided to go mobile on 75 meters. They chose 3995 KHz as an operating frequency to reduce the possibility of high-power fixed stations interfering.

Johnson and the group conducted field tests with home-brewed antennas using a field strength meter to see who had the strongest signal. He came up with the idea of using a metal tube with a whip on top of a coil that fit inside the tube. During his search for a method of tuning the antenna remotely, Denney Moore, W6MHP (sk), suggested using the motor from a cordless screwdriver—and the screwdriver mobile antenna was born. Johnson received a patent in 1991 for the device and thousands were sold.

Theory of Operation

Screwdriver antennas combine a loading coil with a whip antenna, typically 32 to 102 inches long. The loading coil is adjustable to cover multiple HF bands, and the unused portion slides into a hollow tube. Concealed inside is a reversible DC motor. The motor, operated remotely by a momentary switch or an electronic controller, moves the whip and loading coil so that part of the coil is inside the base (and electrically bypassed, or inactive) and the rest of the coil is in use as a loading coil tuned for the selected band.

When changing frequencies, the antenna loading coil is extended or retracted to tune the antenna to the new frequency. A gear-motor turns a threaded rod (typically 1/4×20 all-thread) in and out of a nut or threaded boss attached to the bottom of the coil. This in turn moves the coil in and out of the mast. Contacts at the top of the mast slide along the outside of the coil, adjusting the resonant point.

Since this adjusts the loading coil to resonance, no external antenna tuner is required. Very low SWR can be achieved on any frequency in the HF ham bands 80-10 meters, depending on the length of the whip that is used. Shorter whips work better on the higher bands such as 6-15 meters; longer whips will work on 80 and 40 meters.

DON'T KEY LIKE A PHONE MAN



SLOW SPEED CW QSO NET

Monday's - 8:00 PM - WB0AFB 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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