



Official Publication of the
West Allis Radio Amateur Club

Hamtrix

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Volume 72, Issue 8 August , 2023

AUGUST 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



August Monthly Meeting Pizza in the Park

Tuesday Aug 8th
6:00 PM to 8:00 PM



Lions Park

Picnic Shelter #2
14900 W Overland Trail
New Berlin, WI



See page 7 for map of Pizza meeting location

Sendik's Grill Fundraiser
Will be on

September 9, 2023

Save the dates and join us.

**Board Meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday August 15 2023 (Third Tuesday).
Time: 7:00PM – 8:00PM**

Online Link: <https://meet.jit.si/WARACHamRadioClubVirtualMeeting>

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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 General Meeting Minutes – July 11, 2023 @ St. Francis Milton Vretener Memorial Park

Club Meeting called to order by Feroz WU9N ~ 7pm.
Attendance: 15 – 14 Members, 1 Visitor.

June Meeting Minutes: Approved.

Treasury Report – Bill N9KPH: Income \$15. Expenses – QSO Party plaques + postage \$648.30. FD- Park fee \$87.95, BPFs \$256.75, Beverages \$41.84. Gen fund balance \$4,413, Gen fund CD \$5,000, Scholarship CD \$12,181.

Dave WB9OWN: Did a summary of 2023 Field day.

Program - City of St. Francis Fire and Police talked on technology use in the police and fire department vehicles. Fire dept. brought 1 Fire truck, 1 Paramedic unit. Police dept. brought 2 squads.

Meeting Adjourned ~ 8:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted
Bill Dargis KD9BJZ
Secretary WARAC, July 11, 2023



Contest Corner and DX Report

Heading into the Dog Days of August, what's on the air? Well...

QSO Parties are getting back underway, with Maryland-DC from 1400 on August 12th to 0400 on August 13th. The exchange is your entry class and state. (Entry classes are Club, Rover, OddBall, Mobile, QRP, Standard, Amplified, and Unlimited. Intrigued? I am.) Go to w3vpr.org for more details. Kentucky State Parks on the Air is going on at the same time. The Colorado QSO Party runs at 1300 on September 2 until 0400 on September 3.

The North American QSO Party-SSB takes place on 160 through 10 meters on August 19th and 20th. The NAQP events are a ton of fun and are manageable, at only 12 hours long for the whole thing. Single operators are allowed to operate 10 of the 12 hours. (The contest period is 1 PM to 1 AM here.) It is also limited to a maximum of 100 W, so the big guns will have to turn it down and level the playing field for the little pistols. It's an easy exchange, too – name and state. This is a fun one to try, even if you're not ordinarily a contester.

World Wide Digi DX Contest runs from 1200 on August 26 to 1200 on August 27. It's FT4/FT8, 160-10 meters, and grid squares are the exchange. You get bonus QSO points for each 3000 km (1800 miles) between you and the DX. Also, each grid field is a multiplier – for instance, EN would be one multiplier – so it truly is a worldwide contest.

The CWOps CW Open consists of three separate four-hour sprints. They run from 0000-0359, 1200-1559, then 2000-2359 on September 2. You exchange serial number and name. You can compete by yourself or sign up to join a team with up to 9 other hams, and then your scores will also be counted as a team score.

This month I want to focus on the VHF+ Sprints, because they are starting before the next Hamtrix will be out. There are actually Fall Sprints (run by the Southeastern VHF Society) and Spring Sprints (sponsored by the Central States VHF Society). These are all mode contests, but for practical purposes, most of the activity is FT8 and SSB. It is a great way to encourage operation on the weak-signal modes on VHF. I usually point my beam down toward Chicagoland, where there is a critical mass of VHF ops, but there are strong VHF stations all around Wisconsin too. Another great thing is that these contests are all on different nights of the week, so if you miss one, you might be able to make the next.

- 50 MHz Fall Sprint is from 2300 on Saturday, August 26th to 0300 on Sunday, August 27th.
- 144 MHz Fall Sprint is 1900-2300 Local on Monday, September 18th.
- 222 MHz Fall Sprint is 1900-2300 Local on Tuesday, September 26th.
- 432 MHz Fall Sprint is 1900-2300 Local on Wednesday, October 4th.
- The Microwave Fall Sprint (902 and above) is 0800-1400 Local on Saturday, October 7th.

Details on all of these can be found on contestcalendar.com .

On the DX side...

The IOTA (Islands on the Air) event is in full swing, all bands, all modes. August 26-27 is the W/VE Island QSO Party, building on the IOTA excitement.

- If you are able to use the QO-100 satellite, 9J2SEU/P is QRV from Zambia and Z21MV is active from Zimbabwe. (Uplink is on 2.4 GHz, and downlink is on 10 GHz.)
- CN2DX (Morocco) is on 40-6 meter SSB and CW.
- Minami Torashima (Marcus Island) is the easternmost Japanese island, over 1000 miles from Tokyo. No one lives there permanently, just military and scientists. It is a separate DXCC entity. JG8NQJ/JD1 is operating from there with CW and FT8 through October.
- MS0INT/P is supposed to be QRV from Fair Isle (north of Scotland, between the Orkneys and Shetlands) from August 25-28. This is a tiny, sparsely populated island, only widely known because it's mentioned in the BBC Shipping Forecast.
- DL2AH is activating Rota Island in the Marianas as KH0/DL2AH in late August/early September, and Guam as KH2/DL2AH in mid-late September. Uli will be headed to the Marshalls and Micronesia after that.
- 9Q2WX (Democratic Republic of the Congo) is on HF all modes from August 20 through September 9.

What would you like to see in this space? Send me an email: aa9rk@e-falk.com

-Michael AA9RK

**Wanted to buy;
5A or 10A Variac, such as a General Radio W5MT3 or W10MT3.**

**Brian Ganiere AD9AL
brianganieri@wi.rr.com
414-745-5134**



August 2023 * Hamtrix * By Michael Johnson, W09B

SDR Bytes

SDR's are wonderful additions to your shack. If you are looking to spice up your operating world just a bit, these handy devices can provide the means to explore and extend your radio opportunities. But it can be a fast moving hobby niche. So this month we take a look at some of the latest (maybe not the greatest) SDR kibbles and bytes (sic).

RadioBerry SDR: Ready for some bleeding edge? This is certainly close. The RadioBerry is a Pi-4 hat SDR that offers both Rx and Tx covering 0 - 30 Mhz.. That sounds great, but there are some gotchas to consider. On the Tx side, the power output is in the milli-watt range with no onboard low pass filters. But hey, this is all about experimenting so that is OK. Best to check out the Tech Minds video <https://youtu.be/ECZGMbpfl34> to get a sense of this device. Got a Pi4? Here is a very ham end use. Here is the [purchase link](#).

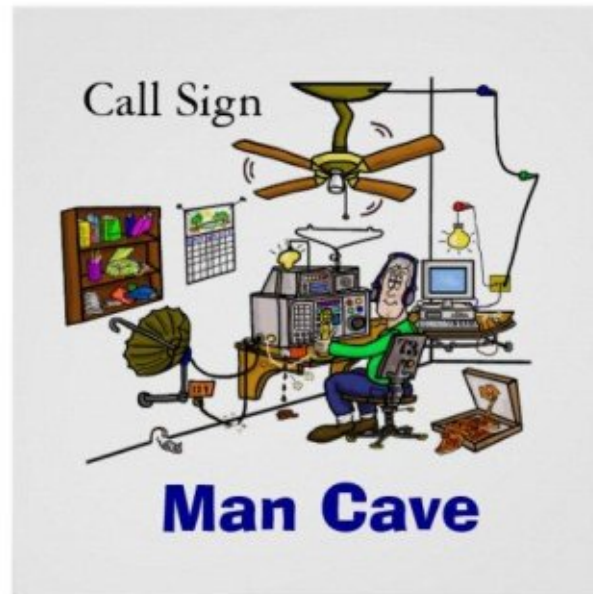
Virtual Audio Cables: Once you've knocked your SDRPlay around a bit, maybe it's time to start really hamming it up with these versatile receivers. Most SDR software packages offer tons of Add Ons to extend the usability into often times obscure areas of radio. For us hams, your interest in 800 trunking or ADS airplane tracking may wane after a few weeks. So how about setting the SDR up as an alternative received for our favorite ham digital modes? You bet!! All that is needed to direct the output via a Virtual Audio Cable to your favorite digital program: WSJT-X, DigiFlex, SlowScan TV... you name it. VB Cable is a free version, <https://vb-audio.com/Cable/index.htm> that may interest you.

SDR Connect, Where Are't Thou? SDRplay has been threatening to retire their venerable SDRuno software package for over a year now. In the all too familiar vaporware system of software/hardware updates, the product announcement precedes the promise by a mind numbing duration. To wit, SDRplay announced the SDR Connect software at Dayton 2022 only to see Dayton 2023 come and go without more than a paragraph of added story. Looks like the "Sad Trombone" story will be with us for still some time. There's a business school "How Not Too..." in here some where. <https://www.sdrplay.com/sdrconnect/>

Trunking System Decoding: One of the take-aways from our wonderful outing last month with the St. Francis PD and FD was their use of trunked communications. Oh sure, you can just fire up any of the easily available internet listening sites, like <https://openmhz.com/systems#WI>. But why do that when you can torture yourself for for days on end piecing your own monitoring system together using your trusty SDR receiver as the core? It is a real challenge as coverage will only be as good as your receive antenna. But you can get this to work with a healthy dose of sweat followed by a double of patience. This is actually a winter project for me. Actually it's a two-fer: LEO satellite reception and 800 mhz trunking reception all from one handy discone antenna. Foolish? Totally. Fun? Absolutely.



**August pizza meeting map
Picnic shelter #2**



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



Nut Net Breakfast

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

Phil, W9NAW

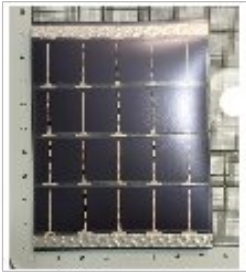


August 2023 Update

Well we took some time off. Between Field Day and Dayton things were just out of control. Given the choices, the balloon project took a way back, back seat. Yeah, OK it was a couple weeks of long faces, but it turns out to be not all bad news.

That's right, in the meantime up popped an article or two that redirected our efforts for a power source solution. The solar panel was a real problem from a fabrication standpoint. Our original plan was to use a series of 1"x1" thin cells wired together and backed with a rigid foam. With no offense to W9PCS, it was proving to be a plumber's nightmare of a fabrication. The project had hit a snag.

The article pointed to some products sold by Zektech which seemed perfect for our situation. We ended up taking delivery of some ready-to-go solar panels (<https://www.zektech.com/product-page/copy-of-solar-cell-for-pico-balloon-polymer-4-8v-50ma>) and a new transmitter (<https://www.zektech.com/product-page/wspr-tx-pico-transmitter>)



These literally came in the mail just a few days ago. They look great. We are getting the team together to evaluate the new products and actually assemble a test transmitter/power system. Bill will be very pleased. He has been patient with my antics for a couple of months now.

That's this month's update. More to come.

If you want to participate, send a note to Mike, WO9B mike@palomonet.com



From the Editor

Another month. To keep things interesting we took a longer trip on our Wednesday park activation. Up to the Northern kettle Moriane State Park area for a Parks on the Air activation.

The formal PARKS ON THE AIR requires a State or federal park, Woods Wildlife area etc. for activation. We chose the Mauthe Lake park.

Got there on time, set up two rigs: an SSB one and a CW one. Started to make contacts. Then the propagation gods decided to shut us down. Both 40 and 20 meter went dead. The whole summer has been interesting propagation wise. Even dependable bands have been interesting. Eighty meters usually works well for the morning nut net but lately it has been noisy and signal strength can go from loud to below noise level in minutes.

Does keep the hobby interesting!

Have a good day

Frank KA9FZR

ELMER

by Rich Regent, K9GDF





2023 August Notes

The heat is definitely on!! We have had a fun, yet challenging month. It was a Who's Who of name brand parks and one POTA field trip up to the Northern Kettle Moraine area. Did you make any of these?

We started this month at Greenfield Park but the site selected was a picnic area at the north west corner just off 124th st. A nice group formed, but then so did the clouds and we ended up getting rained out after only 30 minutes or so. So much for no shelter.

On the 12th we met up at Lion's Park in New Berlin. Great choice, but the weather was not in our favor yet again and we managed to get just a little wet. The shelter and nearby parking mitigated the damage and frankly, we hardly noticed. Managed to get a couple of radios setup and they worked great.

As promised in last month's update we shook up the normal park sequence and did a POTA activation. We went to Mauthe Lake Recreational Area which is just north of Kewaskum in the Northern Kettle Moraine on July 19th. The place was magnificent. The bands were less than kind to us but we managed to set up two radios, one SSB and one CW and pulled out only 9 contacts. There were only three of us, but it was great.

Finally, our last activation was on the 26th at the old reliable Valley View park again back in New Berlin. I was looking for something close in with a great shelter as rain was a big factor. Small group of us showed up despite it raining throughout the event. Well, it did stop raining at the end. Naturally. The only radio was a remote connection into WO9B's home station. It sure was easier to deal with an internet connection over dodging the raindrops setting up an antenna.

So it seems after a couple of years of picture perfect weather week after week, this year we are getting our fill of rain. Who knew?

Keep an eye on the Facebook page or sign up for the email alert. The park selections will be in line with the weather predictions. Oh, and we will be doing another POTA park this month. Most likely it will be a one hour drive each way, but it is definitely worth the trip.

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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