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St. Paul Radio Club Ground Wave

Don Kelly, WA6ZMT, Editor
Dale Maroushek, NØPEY, Interim Publisher

KØAGF

www.stpaulradioclub.org
Club Repeater: 145.310 MHz
PO Box 9375
North St. Paul, MN 55109

NEWS AND NOTES FOR NOVEMBER 2013 — Volume 73, Issue 11

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

November 1, 2013

UST OWS LL54

7:30 PM

7:00 PM Socializing

PROGRAM

A Ham Hobby Business

Gary Follett, WØDVN

Gary's presentation will focus on various aspects of his means of conducting his "hobby business" as it relates to the oldest part of Ham Radio—swapping and trading of equipment. He'll discuss hamfests and other venues for locating equipment and will also discuss how this sort of business became a hobby in and of itself.

Gary has been an electronics hobbyist since he was 9, obtaining his first ham license as WNØDVN in 1962.

Not having money to buy anything, he built everything—cropping used resistors and capacitors out of junk TV sets from Bob's TV in Sioux City.

Upgrading to Extra Class about 1978, his call was WØSY for about 25 years,

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Dale's Details

Since many of us are dual members with the Mining RC, we had some fun at an antenna maintenance party out at Tartan Park on the 13th. Each time we work on the towers we learn some new things—good and bad. We also get feedback from other Hams with similar towers. So I'll call this a Lessons Learned column.

Item 1. We never invite a guy named Murphy, but he is always there. I think his callsign is ØHSHT.

Item 2. Main reason for the day was to inspect and repair as needed the cables and pulleys on the HY-Gain HBX-70 tower. W ØGHZ had his cable break last spring and the tower fell damaging the entire antenna array with the sudden stop causing whip-lash. Only one cable controls the four sections as they move.

Item 3. A new 220Mhz beam would be installed on the mast.

Item 4. Check over everything else to prepare for the winter contest season.

So what did we learn, and how did we fix it?

Trees near your tower will grow into its pathway. We had the trees

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Presidential Ponderings

THINGS PAST

A bit of a bummer – the Technician License class had to be cancelled due to low enrollment (St Paul Public Schools Continuing Education has a set minimum enrollment of 6 students). Our problem is shared by some other clubs, as enrollments are in the lower single digits for at least two other Technician classes. Hopefully there will be more students for the General License class in the spring (Stillwater managed to get 5 students for their General class this fall). We'll work on it.

John (KDØCAC) Faughn's explanations of what goes into planning an alternative power solution for you radio (with attached home I assume) was far too short, in that each component of a power system could take hours to fully discuss. But, he got us off to a good start, with his opinions and experiences with batteries, solar arrays, charging and monitoring systems, etc.

THINGS PRESENT

I have been AWOL for a bit, taking care of a widowed aunt in Illinois, and helping her settle things. As is often the case, there are a lot of property

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The OWS building is located on the University of St. Thomas (UST) South Campus.

From I-94, take Cretin Ave south about a mile to Grand Ave. Turn right into the UST South Campus. Park in the ramp on your left or the surface lot ahead to the right. In general, on-campus parking re-

strictions are not enforced after 6:00 p.m. on Fridays, but do not park in spots with parking meters unless paying or displaying a handicapped placard.

Enter the building just north of the parking ramp and take the elevator (in the hallway to the right) or stairs to the lower level. LL54 is not far

from the stairs.

For detailed maps, see www.stthomas.edu/campusmaps.

OWS: Owens Science Hall

Contact Kim Schumann in Disability Services at 651-962-6315 or kjschumann@stthomas.edu for any accessibility requests.

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then he switched to WØDVN, a version of his original call.

Gary has been most interested in the “tech” of ham radio, although he’s enjoyed a significant amount of DXing and ragchewing, too. He likes designing, building and fixing.

Gary’s tastes have always exceeded his income. Rather than settle for what he could afford on his main source of income, he decided to add a little revenue stream—doing a little buying, trading, repairing and selling to fund his hobby interests.

Gary went to Radio City to scoop up a few goodies when Dan had his first sidewalk sale a few years ago. He says, “A while later, a friend called to report that someone on 2 meters was saying ‘Yeah, some old codger was up there buying up all the stuff.’ I guess that tells all...”

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trimmed back prior to this, but if we want to tilt it down, more will probably need to be cut off.

Our 160M dipole is hung from the top of the tower, with legs going out though the trees to tie offs in the woods. When the ends were untied, one wire side was found to be broken, and would need to be replaced. Not the first time for this as when your wire is in a tree and the wind moves the tree, it causes wear on the wire and eventually it will break. Ok, so start cranking the tower down as we pull in the 160M dipole with it. When lowering, the four sections move in unison and nest into each other. However, if one section happens to bind up and stop, due to twisting from wind load or just dirty and tight, the others will continue down causing a potential dangerous sudden drop when the stuck pieces free up from movement, weight or wind shift. Always have a spotter watching the cable loops as you lower your tower. Also, the winch can be

put into free wheel mode if you fully control the crank and have the locking lug lubed and free to fall back into position. Think Safety at all times. OK, we get it down.

The cable was inspected and pulleys lubed, looking good. The coax and rotor cables were checked; some tape added where needed and looked good too. Luckily we had left an extra coax run to the top, so we made up a jumper coax for rotor movement and added the 220Mhz beam to the mast. Not enough equipment or time to test it fully, but it should be on target.

In the mean time, others worked on replacing the leg of the 160M dipole. We dug around the shack and found enough 14 gauge wire to splice it back together, determined the length (a whole story in itself for later) rebuilt the feed point and had to leave it to be re-hung over the trees another day. It is hung off a rope and pulley system so we have control of it without the need to crank the tower down. We learned we should have our own tree climbers sling shot system for this, and I think one is in the mail now.

Other testing found the R-7 vertical to be virtually untuned on any band. The crew found time to bring it down on the 15th and found a new natural hazard. I’m sure many of you have previously heard about cobwebs and cocoons causing problems in antenna traps, or corrosion from contacts of dissimilar metals building unwanted capacitors in the system, or the hard-to-find broken wire or connector. Are you ready for this? In the control box for the R-7, 15 feet in the air straight up the mounting pole, ants had moved in and built a home for the year. A nice warm, wet nest shorting out many of the contacts inside the box, causing failure. It has since been cleaned and inspected, remounted and found to be still a problem. Some internal part must have let its smoke out and went to rest. More as it develops.

As you see, Murphy is always there,

pulling on the push parts and twisting the toggles. He keeps it wet when it should be dry and the other way at the same time and place. He can make a perfectly good coax jumper test fine for DC continuity and yet not pass RF properly. We have all met him many times over the years. He is a nice guy really, because he gets us to correct problems and make improvements to our gear. It’s just that he does it at the worst possible time and worst conditions. I think we should send him lots of Kool-Aid, so he could change his call sign to ØHYAH!

Dale, NØPEY

Member Update

Jeff Iverson (WB9DAN) is at home recovering with therapy after a stroke that left him with double vision and weakness in his left leg. Jeff has resigned as Secretary of SPRC.

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issues, with choosing what to get rid of, what to try and sell, and so on and so on. The whole effort is psychologically draining, and you will wish there were instructions from the deceased to help you. That point takes me back to a nice article that Dale (NØPEY) put in the September, 2012 Ground Wave, titled “Estate Planning.” The September 2012 Ground Wave is available on our club website, www.stpaulradioclub.org, in the GW archive section. You can help your relatives (eventually we all go) by doing an inventory of your radio “stuff”, and leaving suggestions on how to dispose of it.

Indeed, an inventory might also help you now, as you calculate how much insurance you are carrying to protect against damage or loss (you ARE carrying equipment insurance, aren’t you?). Most general homeowner policies don’t cover a lot of high end electronics--you may need a “scheduled articles” policy--but

check with your agent to be sure of your coverage.

If, during the inventory effort, you discover objects that you might wish to part with for a small profit, consider the club auction which is coming up on January 25, 2013. You might even get enough cash from the sales to put a down payment on the newer radio you have dreaming about so you can fill the holes in your shack created by selling older gear.

THINGS FUTURE

If all of this talk about equipment makes you want to sell or even acquire stuff, be sure to hear our program speaker at the regular member meeting on November 1st. Orcy Lyle (WØQT) has persuaded Gary Follet, to talk about buying and selling radio equipment.

Remember also that we have a table set aside for a mini-sized (or personal-sized) Hamfest, from 7:00PM to 7:30PM, during the social time. If you don't sell the item(s) you must take them home or you could donate them to the club for the evening raffle.

George, KØGCP

License Upgrade Class

Starts in January

Anyone interested in teaching one session should contact Allan Klein (WØNLY) at allankmn@cs.com.

Membership Meeting October 4, 2013

A meeting of the St. Paul Radio Club was called to order by President George Power at 7:01 PM.

34 Members signed in
0 Guests signed in

Secretary's Report: Minutes approved as printed in the [Ground Wave](#).

Treasurer's Report: None.

Membership Secretary: Dale reported we have about 60 members.

Committee Reports:

Education: The Fall quarter Technician's class was cancelled due to lack of students. But, Allan is planning a General license class for this Spring quarter (and would appreciate hearing from prospective teachers).

Web-site: The web-site is up-to-date.

Public Service/Emergency Communications: The TC Marathon is Sunday.

VE Exams: Exams will be given tomorrow. Because of the government shutdown, no new Tech licenses will be issued. Upgrades can operate since there is a grace period for renewals.

Old Business: We sent a donation to the DXpedition (\$100 from the club treasury and \$60 from our passing the hat).

New Business: We will have elections for two Board Members-at-Large positions at the November meeting, and we are still looking for volunteers for three areas (repeater committee, raffle and door prizes, and club publicity).

The business meeting was adjourned at 7:51 PM.

Program: John Faughn, KDØCAC, on alternative energy systems.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Iverson, WB9DAN, Secretary

Board Meeting October 11, 2013

A meeting of the St. Paul Radio Club Board of Directors was called to order on October 11, 2013, at 7:01 PM by President George Power.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

George Power, KØGCP, President
Dale Maroushek, NØPEY, Past President
Jeff Iverson, WB9DAN, Secretary
John Faughn, KDØCAC, At-large Board Member

COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND OTHER INTERESTED MEMBERS PRESENT: None

Membership: Dale reported we have 71 members as of today.

Program Ideas: Gary Follet for November, on buying and selling radio equipment. Working on programs for using an antenna analyzer, antenna modeling, etc.

Positions for November elections for Board Members At-Large: John will stay on. Jay is open either way. Not a ground swell of volunteers.

Raffle Manager: No volunteers to replace Joe yet. Joe will set up 3 months ahead.

Auction: It will be Jan. 25 and the location has been confirmed – OLG (same as last year), same cost to SPRC, we may revise the rules for selling a little bit, to make accounting easier.

Banquet: Planning for either the week before or the week after Easter (April 20). Jay will make room reservation when UST calendar opens up for April.

Repeater Issues: George will call Joe Z. for status. He also will call Twila about inventory. Let George know if you have any club equipment.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:29 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeff Iverson, WB9DAN, Secretary



Support the League
www.arrl.org/join



St. Paul Radio Club, Inc.
PO Box 9375
North St. Paul, MN 55109

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Meeting locations at UST are subject to change due to changes on The University of St Thomas campus.

Fri Nov 1	7PM Socializing followed by 7:30 PM SPRC Membership meeting. UST classroom OWS LL-54. See Page 1
Sat Nov 2	9AM Circuit Builders. OSS 415 UST Campus*
Sat Nov 2	9AM VE testing. Roseville City Hall. Contact Leon Dill, W0COE@arrl.net or 651-688-9964
Sat Nov 2	8:30 – 1PM Northland Antique Radio Club Swapmeet. St. Croix Lutheran HS, 1200 Oakdale Ave, West St. Paul
Nov 2-3	1500Z-2345Z, W0JH, Split Rock Lighthouse - Edmund Fitzgerald Special Event Station. SARA
Fri Nov 8	7PM SPRC Board meeting, OSS 121 UST campus (Alternate location is OSS 415)
Sat Nov 9	9AM Circuit Builders. OSS 415 UST Campus*
Sat Nov 16	9AM SPRC breakfast. Midway Perkins on University Ave east of Snelling.
Sat Nov 16	After Breakfast. Circuit Builders. OSS 415 UST Campus*
Sat Nov 23	9AM Circuit Builders. OSS 415 UST Campus*
Sat Nov 30	9AM Circuit Builders. OSS 415 UST Campus*
Fri Dec 6	7PM Socializing followed by 7:30 PM SPRC Membership meeting. UST classroom OWS LL-54.
Sat Dec 7	9AM Circuit Builders. OSS 415 UST Campus*
Fri Dec 13	7PM SPRC Board meeting, OSS 121 UST campus (Alternate location is OSS 415)
Sat Dec 14	9AM Circuit Builders. OSS 415 UST Campus*
Sat Dec 14	9AM VE testing. Roseville City Hall. Contact Leon Dill, W0COE@arrl.net or 651-688-9964
Sat Dec 21	9AM SPRC breakfast. Midway Perkins on University Ave east of Snelling.
Sat Dec 21	After Breakfast. Circuit Builders. OSS 415 UST Campus*
Sat Dec 28	9AM Circuit Builders. OSS 415 UST Campus*

*Circuit Builders is each Saturday morning if someone is available to open the lab and there is no conflicting activity. Check the SPRCCB Google Group to confirm that the lab will be open.