



M.C.W.A. NEWS

Vol. 16, No.5

Since 1978

May 2016

MEETING NOTICE

May 3, 2016

Socializing: 6:30 PM

Meeting: 7:00 PM

Crystal Lake Bank
5100 Northwest Hwy (Rt. 14)
Crystal Lake, IL 60014

PROGRAM: Open Forum Night

Bring your questions and we'll try to answer them !

Officers & Staff

President.....	Jim McDonald, N7US
	jim@n7us.com
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Secretary	Roger Scott, KF9D
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Programs	Jack Hudson, W9MU
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News	Jerry Heien, N9AVY
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VE TESTING

Contact: Steve Maresso, KB9OLD at 847/ 477-3518

Testing is conducted quarterly at 7:00 PM on the third Tuesday for the months of February, May, August, and November . Walk-ins are welcome until 8:00 PM. No appointment is necessary. Testing requirements:

1. Cost for 2016 is \$15.00 (Cash or check made payable to ARRL). If initial test element is passed, the person testing may continue take the next test element(s) at no extra charge during the given session. Retesting of an element failed during the same testing session will require payment of an additional \$15.00 test fee.

2. Must show original and provide copy of Amateur Radio license and/or CSCE (if upgrading).

3. Must show a valid Government Issued Photo ID (Passport, Driver's License or State ID card) for identification.

4. SS Security Number or FRN number required.

5. Location: Free Methodist Church, 934 N. Seminary, Woodstock, IL 60098

Wayne Green, W2NSD/1 Many of us know who Wayne from his 73 and/or Byte magazines. However, newcomers to our hobby may not know who Wayne was. A brief article I lifted from another newsletter appears on page 2 here. In spite of all his rants against ARRL, he was always a member of ARRL, but used his rants as a means to up readership of 73. It was a great magazine in it's day which this editor preferred to QST.

May Hamfests

1 May Dekalb, IL Sandwich Fairgrounds
<http://karc-club.org>

Everything else is to far to drive

May Contests

- 7 - 8 10-10 Spring CW contest (with 10m in bad shape lately, 1 QSO should be a win !)
- 7 - 8 Indiana QSO Party
- 7 - 8 Delaware QSO Party
- 14-15 Arkansas QSO Party

May DX

- till 15 JG8NQJ/JD1 Minami Torishima
- till 20 V31BX Belize
- 8 - 15 E44QX Palestine
- 20-31 VK9NT Norfolk Is.
- 23 - 6 Jun ZD7VDE St. Helena
- May TN2MP & TN2BJ Congo Rep.





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What would Wayne (Green) do?

By: Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

Wayne Green was a crackpot...but he was a great one. For those of you who aren't as old as I am, Wayne Green, W2NSD, was not only the publisher of 73 Magazine, but also the founder of Byte and other PC magazines in the early days of personal computing. In 73, he would write these long, rambling editorials. Often, he would take the ARRL to task, criticizing what he thought to be some lunk-headed policy or another.

Just as often, he'd be encouraging hams to take up some new technology. He was, for example, one of the guys driving hams to set up repeater systems.

He would often exhort hams to get started in their own technology-related business. I remember one column where he urged hams to get involved in the home-security business. And, of course, when personal computers became popular, he wrote that hams should think about getting into that business. His reasoning was that our knowledge of electronics would stand us in good stead in those businesses.

Today, I think that he would be telling us to get more involved in with technologies like the Internet of Things, WiFi, or whatever other wireless technology is coming down the pike. "Wireless" is the key word here. These networking technologies are based on good, old radio, and who better to push these technologies forward than guys like us who understand radio.

This point was brought home to me last week as I was interviewing an executive of a wireless company for an article that I'm writing. He said to me that many of the companies he works with are taking a software-centric view to their wireless products. They simply use the reference designs provided by the wireless chip makers and expect those designs to work flawlessly in their products.

While they often do, he gave me an example where simply using the reference design was a colossal failure. In one case, he said, the company mounted the board inside a metal enclosure. Since the antenna was part of the printed-circuit board, the enclosure acted like a shield, and of course, the device had little or no range.

He went on to say that he thought that there was a real shortage of experienced RF guys in the wireless industry. Does that sound like an opportunity to you? It does to me. So, I'm going to make like Wayne Green here and exhort all you guys to get out there and take advantage of it.

This is not only a business opportunity, but a way for amateur radio operators to fulfill a couple of the "purposes" of amateur radio, as set forth in Part 97.1 of the amateur radio regulations. Part 97.1(b) says that one of the purposes of the Amateur Radio Service is "Continuation and extension of the amateur's proven ability to contribute to the advancement of the radio art." According to Part 97.1(d), another purpose of the Amateur Radio Service is "Expansion of the existing reservoir within the amateur radio service of trained operators, technicians, and electronics experts." Let's do it!

When he's not ruminating on the latest wireless technologies, KB6NU likes to make use of some vintage wireless technologies by working CW on the HF bands. He's also a prolific blogger (www.kb6nu.com) and the author of the "No Nonsense" amateur radio license study guides (www.kb6nu.com/study-guides). If you have a comment or a question, email him at cwgeek@kb6nu.co

de Maury (TN) ARC - January 2016

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Field Day 2016

June is just around the corner, and for the ham radio operator it means Field Day is not too far off. In fact this year, the weekend of June 25th and 26th will bring Field Day to life.

The ARRL, sponsor of the event, states the object of Field Day as being “To work as many stations as possible on any and all amateur bands (WARC bands excluded) and in doing so to learn to operate in abnormal situations in less than optimal conditions. A premium is placed on developing skills to meet the challenges of emergency preparedness as well as to acquaint the general public with the capabilities of Amateur Radio.”

MCWA would like to add one more item to the objective list, have FUN! This year we are changing our operating location to Emricson Park, west hilltop pavilion, in Woodstock. This will bring a new set of challenges in finding antenna locations and protecting operators and equipment from the elements. It also offers a great location to show off our hobby to the general public.

A well-attended planning meeting was recently held to discuss how members would like to organize the club effort. The consensus of the group was that we would like to have phone, cw, VHF and “Get on the Air” (GOTA) stations. This would place us in the 2A operating class. Many of the logistical items were discussed at the meeting, which provided a solid foundation to move forward.

However the planning effort has only just begun, and the real work is just about to begin. At the May and June regular club meetings, we will be asking for your participation. You can participate in one of several ways. We will need help with planning, set-up, equipment, operating, food, tear-down, and much more. You do not have to commit to an entire weekend, just come out and participate with the time you have available.

Filling operator slots on all stations is always a challenge. At the upcoming meeting we will pass around a sheet, asking people to sign up for operating time slots on one of the 4 stations of their choice. Please be thinking about what will work for you and come prepared to sign up.

Field Day is the major MCWA activity for the year. Don't miss out on the opportunity to come together with your fellow MCWA club members for socializing, food, operating, and most importantly FUN! Mark your calendars for the weekend of June 25-26, and we'll see you there.



Roger KF9D



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HOW TO AVOID A SCAM!!!

I am saddened when I hear that a fellow ham has been scammed. I have been involved in hundreds of transactions both as a buyer and seller along with posting a WTB (Want to Buy) advertisement. I consider myself someone of average intelligence and have never been scammed but I always follow these rules. This may have been posted earlier but perhaps some might find this helpful. I don't profess to be an expert and certainly don't want to appear to be smarter than the average ham; however, I can say that if you follow these rules, you will never lose a penny on a transaction. These are from a buyer's perspective, of course.

Rule 1. Insist on detailed photographs. If they say they don't have a digital camera, they probably have a cell phone. I don't believe that in this day and age a ham doesn't have access to a device that can take a digital photograph. If they have a computer and Internet access, they can provide you with photographs. Keep those photographs on your computer in case you have a dispute. Make certain that any defects in the unit are mentioned in an email and if the unit is working perfectly, make sure that is stated in an email. Of course the photographs will be evidence of the item's cosmetic condition. If they can't provide photos walk away.

Rule 2. Never pay for a transaction by any means other than PayPal. If you don't have PayPal, get it. It's free. If you don't want to link a bank account because you fear that someone will invade it (I don't see how that is possible, but regardless), then link a credit card. Do not use a postal money order (there is some protection there, but who wants to wait years for a resolution and go through all that effort). For the same reasons, do not wire transfer funds, don't use Western Union, don't send a personal check, etc. If the seller will not accept PayPal or doesn't have it (remember setting it up costs him nothing) then walk away. As a buyer, you pay nothing for the protection of PayPal. If you are unwilling to use PayPal, then read no further and good luck in the contest!

Rule 3. Once you have reached an agreement, have the seller send you a PayPal invoice. This is easy to do with PayPal. Also, confirm in writing how he will ship it, if it will be insured and that he will provide tracking.

Rule 4. Never pay for a transaction through PayPal as a family and friend. That provides you with absolutely no protection, including if the item is never shipped. Remember as a buyer, you pay nothing for PayPal's protection. If the seller objects to you sending PayPal to him as the seller of a product, and you absolutely have to own the radio, etc., offer to increase your payment by the 2.9% PayPal charges. If he won't do that, walk away from the transaction.

Rule 5. If there is a problem and you cannot resolve it with the seller, then promptly begin the process with PayPal to dispute the transaction. Have the emails and photographs ready if you need them.

Rule 6. If you post a WTB (Want to Buy) advertisement be prepared for the scammers. They will most certainly come. If you receive an email from someone who says they have the item you are looking for, the first thing to do is to go to their QRZ.com page. If it is a scammer, most likely the call he is using is not associated with an email address. These individuals look for hams who don't have an email address on their QRZ page, so you can't contact them and see if they actually have the item you are looking for. If they don't have email on QRZ, walk away. You have no way of verifying that is the person who has contacted you. Sure you can call them on the telephone and might be able to deduce if they are a ham and have the item, but who wants to go through that hassle. Often times you will notice that the email address they use is the first name of the ham followed by his call sign (usually a Gmail address). If there is an email on QRZ.com, email that person and see if he actually has the item for sale. Also Google the name of that ham and his call sign and see if anything appears stating that this individual's call-sign is being used by scammers.

Of course check feedback and if you want get a telephone number and talk to the ham, but in my humble opinion that is secondary to following the rules above. Unless you can afford to risk losing your money, I recommend the rules above. Remember there is always another radio!

Good luck. Dave w1wn



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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

North Korea There's been a lot of talk about the DXpedition(s) to P5 and that just what it seems to be. There was the December 2015 Dxpedition there by a Polish ham which received DXCC accreditation and there were others which received DXCC approval. Now the most recent one, P5DX, which was to happen this month has been scrubbed. The apparent reasons given were lack of funding and the operation was to be kept quiet until they were actually in operation from North Korea as requested by North Korean authorities ...seems like they wanted it to be a clandestine operation until it actually happened. The DXpeditioners were told to keep this quiet, but some idiot apparently leaked the info and everything was cancelled. Just another sad story of what may have been.

In these "interesting" times, with the government of North Korea being what it is, this editor views any DXpedition as extremely dangerous with the possibility of things turning sour by an unstable government which could on a whim arrest all DXpeditioners as "spies".

Perhaps the sanest thing to do would be to just put DPRK on the deleted list. Should the government there become friendlier in the future, they should perhaps be put back on the DXCC list.

Stray Being a Ham means if you screw it up and learn from your mistake it is perfectly acceptable.
W8WAM de eham

Stray I ran for my HOA and won. got around them with a TV antenna modified for 50-450 MHz plus 90' wire using #18 wire. THERE IS MORE THAN ONE WAY TO SKIN A CAT!

K1FPV de eham

Stray The most expensive radio, a legal Amp, and still you can't bust the pile up but along comes a QRP operator and makes the contact and his secret was.....

KI7DG de eham

The Art of Ragchewing Seems like there are fewer good, old ragchews on the air these days; a lost art? The message of ham radio seems to be "59 QSL" .. in and out and "thanks for the QSO. ! With this modern electronic age have hams lost the conversational skills? The old taboos used to be to avoid discussion of sex, religion and politics. Today you can probably hear all three in a matter of minutes. 75 meters seems to be a veritable hang out for these subjects. Used to be that many ham radio contacts were filled with interesting anecdotes from friendly amateurs. Hams need to regain their conversational skills.

The Joy of Ham Radio

By Grey Wolf

Much of what I am going to say will not come as any surprise to any of you out there. Recently on the Nuts bolts and Screws net the topic of the day was "What got you started in Ham radio? Many of the comments were the same. Either an Elmer who lived on the block with towers and glowing tube rigs or parents giving their kid a SWL radio to them and listening to SWL broadcasts.

I guess I fall into the last category. Even though my father was a well known radio newsman in the 1960's I never had the inclination to follow in his footsteps. He did however one day bring home a "New" Zenith transoceanic SWL radio. I would sit and listen to MW and SW broadcasts that were very popular back then, but I also heard the mumbling of other stations I could not understand (SSB Hams). Since the radio had no SSB

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"A SLIGHTLY REDUCED LOG"

If you have checked the HF bands from time to time in addition to spots on the clusters, you have noticed some challenging conditions across much of April. The solar indices plus noise from spring thunderstorms have created some difficulties for HF enthusiasts. My schedule across April also limited my time in the shack. Nevertheless, I logged some DX from 10m and down. Last evening I went into the shack and worked four DX contacts on 17m and 20m in a limited period of time after dark. This evening 20m is the hot band just before midnight local time. New Zealand is quite strong on 20m phone. Of course, the data portion is active, too.

Once we get through some of the sluggish solar indices, we will notice some increased propagation. Eastern Europe, Africa and other regions will be heard on 20m throughout the night. My contacts on 20m last night reported signals well over s9 both ways. Slavko, S57DX, said "Beautiful signal, Dave." These are signs of things to come as we approach the summer solstice in June.

40m and 30m have been very good as well. Some of the special DX operations across the month have spent a lot of hours on 30m. If you can dodge the lightning flashes, you will find some excellent DX on 80m through 30m every evening and early morning. I have not noticed much propagation on 6m yet, but 2m has had some enhancement. We are certainly hoping there are some improving conditions as we approach Field Day soon.

Although rumors persist about a P5 upcoming operation, you may count on some other calls for sure. In May, look for such stations as T88RF, 9Q0HQ, YJ0CS, E44QX, PY0NY, VK9NT, E51XYZ and ZD7VDE. If you like special event call signs, there is an abundance of them these days. Don't forget the abundance of National Parks on the Air (NPOTA) calls. And if you have never worked DX on 60m, please know that more foreign calls are using this band. I have worked Europe and some other DX on 60m in the past. It is an interesting band with unique characteristics. Of course each band has its own finger print and that is why we are fortunate to have so many "pieces" in the radio spectrum. If one band is down, another will allow for DX.

As we enter into more storms, don't forget to take precautions

against lightning strikes. Sometimes, especially when going out of the area, it is smart to disconnect the coax first.

Best DX and 73, Dave KA9OZP

Joy of Ham Radio - cont'd

capability it intrigued me as to what I was hearing. I too in the mid 70's got into the CB craze and had a few cool CB base stations. Back then unlike now the LIDS on CB were not quite as bad. Yes there was cussing and fussing and trash talk but even the Cbers policed the band to an extent. Still I yearned to get that CW test I found so daunting pass me and get on the air with ham radio.

Also during that time was the heyday of radio scanning which peaked in the 1980's. There was still no Internet or streaming audio, no Radio Reference or Broadcastify. So I took to listening to all the fun and weird stuff on FD/PD/GOV radio. I remember meeting a fellow hobbyist in a local coffee shop to get his list of Secret Service frequencies. He was slightly paranoid as if he expected agents to pop up and arrest us both at any time. Fortunately I also had a friend in that agency who was also a hobbyist.

If you ask me today what I find best about radio, it is the Hams who ragchew. Not only do you have some great conversations you can gleam good tech info from those who have been in the hobby for fifty years. Yes there are still "bad actors" out there hanging around 14.313 or 7.200 but they are the exception and thankfully not the norm. It is best not to feed the animals while visiting the Zoo. This brings me to another insight. Two camps exist today made up of both new and seasoned hams. Camp 1 states the hobby has declined or "dumbed-down" since the FCC did away with the code and made the test questions less technical. Camp 2 states that the future is here in the way of digital modes, SAT work, and the Internet. I say both are correct.

As of July 1st the FCC test for General will be rewritten more in keeping with the hobby, in other words you will have to really know the theory and not just memorize answers.

The world has changed much since 1963 and will not stop. While it's fun to reminisce about the "Good old days" it's even more fun to think what the future holds. Lastly tubes are not dead. The FEDs are contracting out work to get solid state tubes designed that will have more power, be damn near indestructible and cost less. This is a great idea no doubt with many of the scientist working on it either hams in their spare time or have coworkers that are.