

News Article about K0A Event

Woodbury Bulletin

Ham operators salute early beacon system

Members of the South East Metro Amateur Radio Club (SEMARC), including residents of south Washington and Dakota counties, set up a special event station commemorating early airmail and passenger service to the Twin Cities Sept. 9. They operated from a tent set up at Indian Mounds Regional Park in St. Paul, behind which was the 110-foot black and yellow tower and still operational beacon light atop the Mississippi River Bluff.

The special event was held to salute the airway beacon navigation system used by pilots in the mid to late '20s and early '30s until 1935 when the radio beacon system was implemented. The early system of towers, beacons and concrete arrows

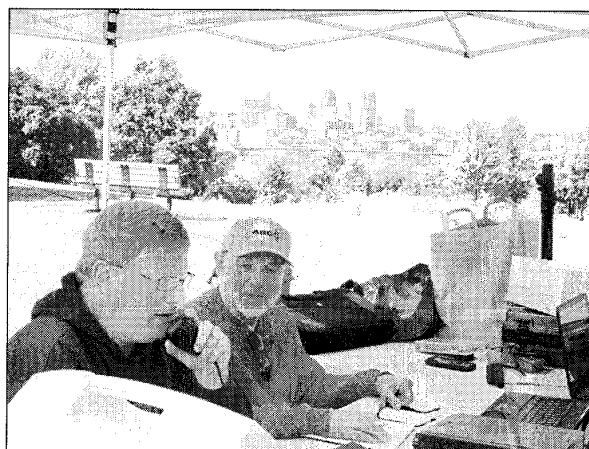
assisted pilots carrying passengers and mail in overnight service from Chicago to St. Paul. One relic of the system is a giant concrete arrow still located in Cottage Grove, which points to Holman Field in St. Paul.

During the special event, SEMARC members made 111 successful contacts across the country.

"We knew going into this event it was going to be a bit rough," said Dick Roberts, SEMARC member. "An extremely large solar flare just a day prior and all the activity related to Hurricane Irma messed with us a bit.

"Each ham radio operator we spoke to will be sent a certificate acknowledging contact," Roberts said.

In addition to making



Submitted photo by Greg Cosimini
Dave Finley and Gary Esler, both members of SEMARC, work the special event station.

radio contacts, SEMARC members welcomed park strollers, explaining the event and the role of ham operators in assisting public agencies

during regional, national and international times of disaster when regular communications channels fail.

EDUCATION BRIEFS