



THE TELEGRAPH

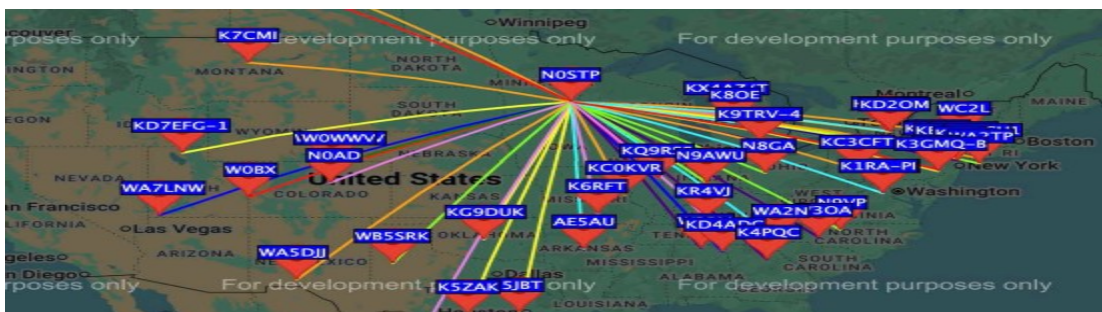
Second Quarter, 2026

This edition of the Telegraph is being released early, so that members can be informed of two major operating events in June. See their descriptions later in the newsletter.

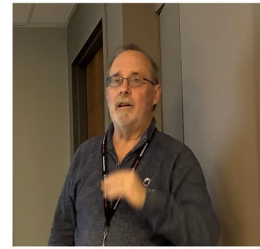
Meeting Updates

The Club continued its member meetings with two strong programs in April and May.

April's presentation was by John, K0JDD on the WSPR mode. John's program was titled, "Why Shout When You can WSPR?" Members were encouraged to use the WSPR mode for the week prior to the meeting and presentation.



As John indicated, if you're using the WSJT-X program for FT4 or FT8 or meteor scatter, you are 95% of the way to using WSPR. WSPR...weak signal propagation reporter, a low power beacon activity that can be used to determine propagation conditions. Club members accepted John's challenge to try the mode and, true to his promise, his technical presentation on the mode was followed by an analysis of each member's results from WSPR week. More than 15 members got a chance to review a map of stations that had received and reported their transmissions. It was very interesting to see how members, at different times, with different antennas, on different frequencies were heard by other hams operating the mode. Each participating club member had the chance to comment on his experiences, what they had learned and how they would use the mode in the future.



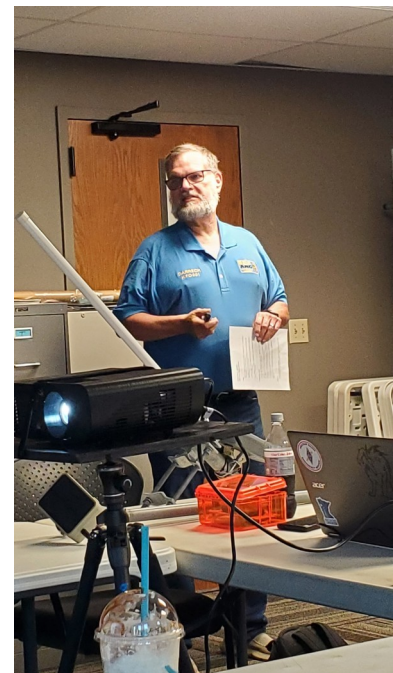
As a bonus, John prepared and delivered a tongue-in-cheek certificate to all members who participated. For those who missed the meeting, John's presentation has been uploaded to the SEMARC website and can be viewed at leisure.



May's presentation was delivered by Darreck, K000I, EC for Washington County ARES. Darreck had two topics he chose to discuss: 1) the development of a mesh network for Washington County and 2) a reminder for all ARES team members who are scheduled to participate in the REP (radiation evacuation drill) scheduled for June 10th. More on the drill later.

I had some familiarity with the operation of a mesh network. After all, Dave, KD0IRF, has set up a mesh network to support integrated real time logging between different stations/modes for the SEMARC Field Day efforts.

But I was curious as to Darreck's vision of a county-wide network designed to supplement voice transmissions in the course of an ARES response or exercise. First, the definition, which provided me some clarity: a network of nodes or devices connected to each other, allowing the transmission of information, even if one of the nodes or devices becomes inoperable. The network should be robust and have strong security. Darreck differentiated between meshcore and meshtastic operations and the reasons why their use developed differently in Europe and the United States.



Darreck continued to describe the devices, the state of the network presently, his plans for its expansion and how it is viewed supportively by Washington County and the city of Cottage Grove. He also demonstrated the actual passing of messages and addressed security and interference questions raised by the audience. Plans include extending the network to Woodbury and northern Washington County in the near future.



Public Service

The 1934 Communications Act, which established the FCC and the initial conditions for licensees, required a showing that the licensee would operate in the Public Interest, Convenience or Necessity (PICON). Many of us long termers had drilled into us the requirement for public service. I wasn't aware of the Act when I was first licensed, but my mentors constantly stressed the obligation to engage in the service activities of the hobby. It made no difference whether service was in NTS, MARS, RACES, ARES, Skywarn, CAP, Phone Patches, S&R operations or other efforts, as long as you served.

I was always amazed, when I represented amateurs before agencies and local governments on tower issues, how willing the amateurs were to stress the public aspects of amateur radio. Unfortunately, very few of them had actually fulfilled that obligation. That made for some challenging discussions

That spirit of service is present in SEMARC....and we will see that twice in the month of June.



REP Drill



The first time will be on June 10th, when Washington County ARES participates in the REP drill for the Prairie Island nuclear plant. REP is an acronym for radiation evacuation planning, and the drill focuses on all of the evacuation aspects resulting from a nuclear episode at the plant. All ARES members have undergone the required federal/state training required for the drill. I learn a lot each time I go through it. While it may be too late for some to participate, make plans to do so for next year...and consider joining the ARES group. Lots to learn. The ARRL has several emergency communications learning modules on its website, as a start on your becoming accredited in ARES.

ARRL Field Day



The second chance will be during Field Day, which occurs on the last full weekend in June, this year on the 27th and 28th. Many of us have a great time operating on FD, but it's important to remember that this event is designed to demonstrate that amateurs can get out in the field,

under varying conditions, deploy antennas and rigs and successfully communicate with other amateurs across the country.

In other words, show our abilities to deploy on behalf of the public.

Dave, KD0IRF will again chair Field Day. He discussed this event briefly at the May member meeting. He already has commitment by a Cottage Grove City Council Member to visit the site. And he already has undertaken some of the other bonus requirements of FD....like Facebook a posting describing the Club's effort, outreach to news media, etc.

So...what are bonus requirements in FD? Lots...and many of them focus on our ability to be of public service. Dave is always on the lookout for members to undertake the requirements of bonus activities. Bear in mind that, if you take the responsibility for one of the bonus activities, you will increase the SEMARC FD score! A few of the bonus activities can add as much to our score as 50 to 100 actual QSOs!

To wit:

- media publicity
- promoting the FD through social media
- setting up in a public location
- having a public information table
- originating a FD message to the Section Manager
- handling NTS messages
- making a satellite QSO
- copying the ARRL FD bulletin
- conducting an educational activity
- having a GOTA station (get on the air) so newly licensed hams and visitors can get on the air with proper support and/or control
- having a safety officer (with a real job description and report to be made)

Of course, lots of hands to set up and take down antennas and equipment for FD.

Many hands make for lighter work.....check out FD on the League website, give some thought to how you might help and reach out to Dave to volunteer. And of course, join us for a fun weekend.

Future meetings

There is no member meeting in June...FD will have tuckered us all out.

However, here's the schedule for programs in our third calendar meetings:

July – John, KOJDD returns to the speaker's podium to describe All Star Link, a network of ham repeaters, base stations and connected hotspots connected by VOIP.

August- John Pope, WA0VPI will discuss the HIS and his preparation to support medical missions in the Honduras and the ways ham radio helps this initiative.

September- Rosalie White, K1STO will discuss a range of topics from her experience as an ARRL staffer and now an ARISS International Delegate and ARRL senior management team member.

Future Operating and Other Events

Operating events for the third calendar quarter include a POTA outing. And, in the fourth calendar quarter, a foxhunt and a special event station. Leaders are needed for POTA and the special event. Speak with any Board member to offer your thoughts and volunteer to lead one of these efforts.



Periodic Opportunities to Meet, Participate and Socialize

NAOL's weekly Sunday Bulletins is an easy way to keep abreast of activities in a timely fashion. Chuck does a great job of reminding members about net activities other events and gatherings, just so that you'll be able to get them on your calendars. Some of these opportunities are regular and well acknowledged; others require a little more planning. For the club to be successful, we all need to tackle those opportunities, enjoy them and, if possible, volunteer to lead or support them. Consider how you can help for the rest of 2026

