



THE TELEGRAPH

February, 2025

Annual Meeting

Club members gathered for the annual meeting on January 14, as required by the Club's bylaws. Board nominees, as approved at the November 2024 member meeting, were duly elected. Dale Mathisen, K0DTM, joined the Board as a new member-at-large. Welcome, Dale, congratulations and good luck!

Two President's Awards also were presented. One to Roger, AE0TE for his excellent work editing and producing the Telegraph. Well, done Roger. Chuck Hanson, NA0L also was recognized for his good work as videographer and archivist of the Club. Chuck's work played on a continuous loop during the meeting, and we all saw ourselves during meetings, operating events, POTA outings and special events. Chuck also is the Club's informal drone pilot, making it a bit easier to set up wire antennas for many of our events.

On behalf of the Scholarship Committee, Dick Roberts, N0UC reported on his initial discussions with the Dakota Division Director about a possible affiliation with the ARRL Foundation in the administration of our scholarship fund. We have worked hard to find suitable candidates and award them monies for their continuing education. The ARRL has helped other similarly situated clubs. It was the sense of the membership that Dick should continue his initial discussions with the League, in an effort to understand how it and SEMARC might collaborate. Stay tuned for further developments.

Thanks to Dan, W0DOGUP for coordinating refreshments for the evening. Another fine repast for those in attendance.

Operating Events

Late January and early February brought two operating events involving club members. The first was Winter Field Day (WFD); the second, the Minnesota QSO Party (MNQP).

Under KDOIIRF's leadership, a merry band of members took to the cold weather and prepared and operated WFD. Once again, Cottage Grove graciously allowed the use of Fire Station #3 and the warming hut for us.

WFD encourages amateurs to test their emergency communications capability and overcome the challenges of a harsh environment. Mother Nature surely accommodated us with cold temperatures, stiff winds and slippery surfaces. Not everything worked well, including the hands and noses of members, as the outside antennas were set up, NAOL, drone pilot, had his drone driven by the wind into the tree we intended to serve as an anchor point for one of the antennas. Several present worked to get the drone down safely; with cold fingers and some mumbling, the first end-fed was raised. Duct and electrical tape didn't maintain its elasticity long in the cold winds.

While one bunch continued work on the first antenna, NAOL with the encouragement of NOUC, flew a line over the fire station and its antenna mast to serve as a line for the raising of the second antenna. We were all grateful that NAOL's drone had not been mortally wounded in its earlier encounter with the tree.

Batteries were moved, operating positions were established, rigs made operational and the group was ready to begin operations. Operate we did, over the course of the 30-hour event. KDOIIRF reports the following stats: 143 CW contacts; 173 SSB contacts; 12 digital contacts. The results were 328 Qs, 483 points, with a number of bonus multipliers available to WFD teams. We don't yet have a final score, as that will be provided by WFD after review of our evidence submitted.

Multipliers were unlike those used in June FD. They include, but are not limited to, operating on 6 bands, operating six consecutive hours, use of digital modes, copying a WFD message, demo of Winlink capacity, etc. Particular kudos to Paul, KF9CP, for his work on the Winlink multiplier. More to be learned about this global email capability and its use in emergency communications.

What was interesting to me, was the use of the digital mode JS8CALL. JS8CALL is a variety of FT8 that allows for a greater exchange of information and comment by the operator. KDOIIRF downloaded the program at the site and had it operative in relatively short order. More to be learned about this mode, too.

Thanks to Dave's spouse Jennifer, for the excellent chili provided as our Saturday evening meal. We all tried to be more healthful in our food and snacks during WFD, although we desperately needed a sugar boost on Sunday morning. :>)

NAOL and I maintained a mental log of those participating. We both hope that no one was missed in this list: KBOSED, KE0HAL, KDOI RF, KA8VHF, WK0X, KF0NOK, NOUC, KA0HYR, KF9CP, NOWUE, NAOL and NOBM.

Brian, NOBM reports that the following members participated in the intraclub scrimmage during the MNQP: WK0X, NOUC, NAOL, NOWUE KA0HYR and NOBM. The group made 339 contacts, split 213 CW and 126 SSB. We score more than 39,00 points and recorded 167 multipliers (states and MN counties).

Other Events

Members are reminded of two other events in the upcoming months.

The first is an invitation by John, KOJDD to join him at his QTH on Saturday, March 29th, 2025, to participate in the CW World Wide Prefix Contest. CWWW WPX is an operating event/contest where the intent is to work as many other stations and call sign prefixes as possible. It is a fun event and a gracious invitation to work John's station. It'll be a great chance to shout into the mike. make Qs and build a score under John's call. John emphasizes that all are invited to stop by and join in. He especially wants to offer newer hams an HF experience.

His QTH is at 4118 Woodlane Drive, Woodbury MN. John's shack is outside of his home: you can spy it just under the tower. (It's an actual ham shack). Registration is not required. Just show up, learn about HF operating and contesting. The event runs from 10:00 AM to 5:00PM. John even says its OK for CW ops to drop in and visit.

The second is Skywarn training and certification/re-certification. As many members know, the club has sponsored this training in past years. Just as this edition of the newsletter was being completed, many of you received a groups.io notice from Dave, KA8VHF, that the training session will be held on May 3 at the Church. KA8VHF has coordinated these sessions with Skywarn staff for years and it is much appreciated. For additional information, check the Metro Skywarn web site or reach out directly to KA8VHF at finster99@comcast.net. Public service has been an important component of the Club ... ARES, Skywarn, service agreements with Washington county, Cottage Grove and two other townships. Continuing education is a must for us all to stay current.

Periodic Opportunities to Meet, Participate and Socialize

In addition to the operating events, special events and educational opportunities, members can plug into SEMARC activities on a weekly and monthly basis during the year.

All members are encouraged to check into Board meetings, the second Tuesday of the month.

Monthly member meetings are great opportunities to learn and catch up with fellow members, the last Tuesday of the month.

Volunteer Exam Teams have made the entry into the hobby LOTS easier than traveling to FCC Field Offices for licensing. The SEMARC VE Team offers exams on the third Saturday of the month at the Church. Our lead examiner, Dan, WDOGUP is always alert to folks who want to join the VE Team. If you're so inclined, give him a shout.

Weekly opportunities also abound: First Tuesdays (when reactivated); Wednesday evening nets (CW, ARES, general member net, Win Link training, etc.). Every week in his Sunday mailing, Chuck, NAOL reminds all of those opportunities. Pay attention to Chuck's efforts to inform and join in. You don't have to do it every week; just join as your schedule allows.

Programs

KOJDD presents at the February meeting. The title of his presentation is "From no code 2 know code". Join John as he recounts his journey learning code, provides some tips on moving forward, offers some advice about what worked for him. I suspect it will be an enjoyable program.

As he and I have discussed, there's no wrong way to learn the code...there are often just better ways to learn it.

Some questions about coax, feedlines, choosing the best transmission lines and figuring things out at your stations, prompted Dick, NOUC to offer a program covering those topics. He is expected to do that in March.

So, come prepared: Will I use coax to feed my antenna? What are the attributes of different types of coaxes? How do I limit radiation on my feedline? How do I fasten connection? What other types of feedlines could I use? In addition to his knowledge, Dick likely has sample of almost any coax made.

Member Profiles

We will our previous practice of profiling members of the Club, to learn a little more about each other, our ham radio interests, and recommendations about how the Club can better serve everyone. The profiles likely will focus on new members and licensees initially. Participation by members is voluntary: don't be surprised if the editor reaches out to you.

For now,

73

AR (end of message in CW)

