



THE TELEGRAPH

April, 2025

March

The end of March closed with a bang for SEMARC and the action continues into the new month.

NOUC returned to the podium discussing the characteristics of coax and other transmission lines, considerations for those anticipating buying coax or improving their stations. Dick confessed to me the difficulty of the topic of feedlines and antennas, as volumes have been written on those topics. He decided to test the knowledge of members by asking a limited set of questions, then figure how he would direct the discussion. I was absent but other members reported the presentation and demonstration were quite good and valuable. Of course, Dick with his VNA/TDA was able to assess the condition of several runs of coax and showed members how they could evaluate their own coax lines. He also ventured into matching transceivers with antenna systems. As Dick said, the SWR is still as high as it was on the antenna: it's just that the tuner (transmatch) makes it possible for modern transceivers not to be distraught about the load they confront. All in all, a good program.

Still digesting the discussion about feedlines, a number of members jetted to the QTH of KOJDD on Saturday morning. John graciously offered members the chance to listen in and operate the CQWW WPX contest. Folks had the chance to see John's antenna setup and ask questions. It was much fun and fellowship and....in a quiet time, John pulled out a code oscillator and paddles and we all had the chance to practice some code.

April is on us; we note that KA0HYR has organized the first yearly meeting of South Washington County ARES. It will occur on April 7 in the admin room of MHealth Fairview's Woodwinds Hospital. The meeting begins at 6:30 PM and, in addition to administrative actions, our activities for the year will be discussed. I suspect that we will have visitors from Washington County: it'll

be a good time to be face-to-face with our served agency. The County has a good working relationship with our ARES group and has been supportive of our efforts. Kudos to John, who retired as EC but came back to lead this ARES unit after W3QLC's untimely death.

Operating Events

The new operator event tentatively scheduled for March at the Fire Station has been re-scheduled to May 17. That day is Armed Forces Day and we have obtained a special event call sign for our operation.

It will be a chance for newer/less experienced amateurs to set up and operate a station. It will involve choosing and setting up antennas, deciding what modes and frequencies to use, setting up the station equipment, logging, and interconnecting all equipment necessary for a successful operating event. At our member meeting in April, we will ask how many newer/less experienced amateurs can commit to the event. If the response is small, we may decide another way to operate that day including, if possible, members operating from their home stations using the special event call sign.

WDOGUP's foxhunt is on tap for April. It's the Saturday before our member meeting. The hunts are fun; make room in your calendar to attend. So close to the member meeting, it's possible that a fun review will be had a few days later.

Don't forget.... Skywarn training and certification/re-certification. Dave indicated 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.

Periodic Opportunities to Meet, Participate and Socialize

Lots of ways to connect with other and potential members: monthly meetings, special operating events, Board Meetings, First Tuesdays, Wednesday night nets, serving as volunteer examiners.

Chuck, NAOL, does an FB job keeping members informed of activities with his weekly mailing. If (bad member) you've deleted one of his emails, no problem. Just check the SEMARC website or contact one of the Board for help.

Programs

The program committee, (K0JDD, NOUC and NOBM) are always on the lookout for good programs. There is one program not scheduled for 2025, August. If you have any good ideas for topics and speakers, contact either of the three. Be prepared to offer the right information to a committee member or be authorized to extend an invitation yourself, on behalf of the club. After all, many hands make for lighter work.

ARRL Activities

Most of our members know we are a Special Service Club of the ARRL. We work hard and offer a variety of service and programs to maintain that classification.

This issue of the Telegraph encourages SEMARC members to periodically review the offerings and benefits of the League.

Just recently, I noted an On-The -Air video offered in conjunction with the magazine of the same name. It is a two-hour session on how to operate your handheld. Give it a looksee. I wish I had something like this with my first handheld. It would have made reading the manual a lot easier. Even a casual review of the League's website shows the great educational and operating benefits available to members.

Member Profiles

Our member profiled in this edition of the newsletter is Bruce MacDonald, KF0NOK.

Bruce was licensed in 2023, but the radio bug hit him earlier in life. As he recounts, a childhood friend and he noticed a house with a large tower and wires stretched over a semi-rural lot. The two of them screwed up their courage and knocked on the door. The old timer invited them in and showed what radio was all about. He gave Bruce a 1966 Amateur Radio Handbook, which he still has.

A 4H club unit on radio led to a high school and college summer job on a local 1000 watt AM radio station in northwestern Wisconsin. There, an engineer schooled him in more of the technical aspects of antennas, feedlines and transmitters. Coupled with the graciousness of his first Elmer, the radio bug was firmly planted (only in seed fashion).

Bruce went on to obtain a degree in journalism and had a successful career with Minnesota Public Radio in a series of positions.

On retirement, that seed of amateur radio took root and Bruce is now an extra class ham. He admits he still learning...but he has been an active member and volunteer in the club. Welcome Bruce, and thanks for your efforts on behalf of the club.

73

AR (end of message in CW)