

The Monitor

Voice of the Twin State Radio Club

October 2008



Message from the President

Summer is on the way out so time to get those outside projects finished! Our vehicle committee can also use a hand getting the welding done on the trailer. Watch the email reflector for more details and schedule. After the welding will come the countertop installation. If you want to help out let Dave Coulter, WA1ZCN, know.

Bill Burden, WB1BRE, has a very nice article in this issue on the Post Mills, VT Crop Walk for Hunger and our involvement. It's a great opportunity to have a first experience with EmComm training and APRS. We can certainly use a few more folks and we have a few extra APRS trackers available for mobile use. We might even get featured on Channel 3 News this year as they have expressed interest in covering the event.

The October club meeting will be delayed one week due to Nearfest happening on the normal 2nd Saturday.

See you at the meeting!

William Daugherty
KX1Y

Upcoming Events

Nearfest	October 10-11, 2008 Deerfield, NH
Crop Walk for Hunger	October 12, 2008 Post Mills, VT
TSRC Meeting	October 18, 2008, 9:00 am EBA's, Hanover, NH

The ARES E-Letter

August 26, 2008

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Rick Palm, K1CE, Editor

Minnesota County Fair Evacuated Thanks to ARES Spots

On August 13, 3:30 PM, severe weather moved into southwest Minnesota from the north starting in Marshall. Coincidentally, the Murray County ARES team had a booth at the Murray County Fair with a mobile radio for 2 meter and HF exhibits.

As the severe weather moved in, Dan Anderson, KD0ASX, District 5 EC, called a SKY-WARN net on the Slayton repeater and served as net control. Five trained ARES members in the field reported in. As the storms moved south at a fast pace, the net was moved to the Worthington repeater, which is located on the Minnesota/Iowa border.

Disclaimer

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This effected warnings for the operators in Iowa.

The Murray County Sheriff and the County Fair board, along with 30 other people were at our booth at the fair listening to our SKYWARN observers. Based on their reports, the Sheriff evacuated the county fair. The Murray County Medical Center in Slayton was also listening to the reports, and prepared the hospital and its patients accordingly. (Three trained hospital staff are Amateur Radio operators).

During a rough day with two tornado warnings, the ARES/SKYWARN team was able to provide fast weather reports to the region and warned many people. Murray County EC Kevin Haney, KC0YKX, thanked his operators, including Dan Anderson, KD0ASX, Arl Weinrebe, KD0BJW, Desirae Weinrebe, KD0DWB, Rick Hansen, KD0BJY, and the Murray County ARES team. -- Kevin Haney, KC0YKX, NREMT-B, Murray County, Minnesota EC <http://www.MurrayCountyARES.org>, <http://www.LakesAreaCitizenCorps.org>

CROP WALK 2008 IN POST MILLS, VT

Once again we are approaching the time for the annual CROP walk around Fairlee, VT. This walk is to raise funds to help fight hunger at home and abroad. I have included a brief explanation of the organization and the project.

For many years, the Twin State Radio Club has supported this effort sponsored by the Congregational Church in Post Mills, VT. We do all the communications and provide safety support for the walkers. In the past two years, we have been using APRS to track the walkers with both bicycle and vehicle mounted APRS units. The projected display during the walk back at the church is now a very popular thing with "viewers" asking if we are going to do that again this year!

The walk begins and ends at the Post Mills Congregational Church on Rte 244 in Post Mills, VT. The route goes around Lake Fairlee with road surfaces ranging from good tarmac to typical Vermont gravel. The walk is about 6 miles in length with flat to gently sloping

conditions. The church provides two check points on the route with water, etc for the walkers. Route marking is usually handled by the church.

Our role has been to provide a safe walking experience for the walkers and to maintain communications along the route and back to the church. We also help with any unexpected logistics problems and have transported walkers back to the start/finish. There is a registered nurse out on the route and we make sure she has comm support when in her vehicle. Generally, they have 20-30 walkers, but there can be more depending on weather, etc.

This year's walk will take place on Sunday, October 12 with the walk start at about 2 PM from the church. We have found that we should plan to arrive at the church about 12:30, so as to coordinate with the walk leaders and to establish our communications system. As in past years, Dot KA1LDS has volunteered to be net control at the church. We will plan to operate on 146.58 Simplex as the primary frequency with 145.33, PL 100 as backup and talkin.

I plan to be one of the mobile units and we will need two other mobiles/bicycles for general traffic monitoring and for checking the

walkers condition during the afternoon as well as a Ham to accompany the nurse. Usually the walk is over sometime between 5 and 6 PM. The church also serves a great lunch for all the walkers and workers as well!

Please let me know if you can help on this effort and your preference - mobile, check point, bike or walker communicator.

Bill Burden WB1BRE

We have had many questions about Crop Walk over the years- mostly, "what does CROP stand for?", so I pulled some basic facts off their web site:

What does CROP stand for?

When CROP began in 1947 (under the wing of Church World Service, which was founded in 1946), the name was an acronym for the Christian Rural Overseas Program; its primary mission was to help Midwest farm families to share their grain with hungry neighbors in post-World War II Europe and Asia.

Reflective of a program that for several decades has been both urban and rural, today CROP stands for Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty and identifies interfaith hunger education and fundraising events sponsored by Church World Service and organized by 21 CWS/CROP regional offices across the U.S.

In some CWS/CROP regions, CROP has come to mean Communities Reaching Out to People.

****Where do CROP Walk funds go?**

CROP Walks help to support the overall ministry of Church World Service, especially the grassroots, hunger-fighting development efforts of partner agencies in some 80 countries. CROP Walks help to provide tools of hope that empower people to meet their own needs. From seeds and tools, to wells and water systems, to technical training and micro-enterprise loans, the key is people working together to identify their own development priorities, their strengths and their needs -- something CWS has learned through some 60 years of working in partnership around the world.

In addition, each local CROP Hunger Walk can choose to return up to 25 percent of the funds it raises to local hunger-fighting programs.

****How do CROP Hunger Walks help out here at home?**

This year CROP Walks will share nearly \$4 million with food banks, pantries, community gardens, and other local efforts nationwide. This support is made possible when local CROP Walks choose our unique option of returning up to 25 percent of what their CROP Walk raises to hunger-fighting programs in their own community.

Call for Volunteers: Unity Elementary School is interested in starting a ham radio club. All interested parties please contact William Daugherty to find out more details.

W1FN CHECKS IN TO THE SEPTEMBER ARRL VHF QSO PARTY

This contest is one of four that ARRL runs during the year for VHF'rs- January, June, August and this one in September. The spread allows us to experience different propagation conditions, depending on the time of year. Of course, the biggest challenge, weather wise, here in New England is the January contest, so operating in great weather in September was a welcome relief. Also it gave me a chance to check out my antennas, rotors and towers before the bad weather arrives.

Prior to the contest, I remembered that I needed permission from the club callsign custodian, Dave KA1CRP, to use the call in the contest. Dave was out west on a vacation, but luckily, he was on Email as he traveled. Sent the request and got instant approval! Thanks, Dave!

There are several options for operating in these VHF+ contests and this time we did a multiple operator (Dot and I), high power, four band operation. Dot was a great help on the front end of the contest, but had other things scheduled for the weekend, so I was a single operator much of the time.

A note on single operator vs multi-operator contesting at VHF+. Generally a VHF contester

has two options for antenna and station configurations. If you are doing all single operator contesting, a multi band rig is preferable and having all antennas on one tower/rotor is much more efficient. In VHF contesting, once you make a contact on one band, you inquire to see if the other operator has other bands operating and move through the bands making additional contacts- one contact per station per band. With all the antennas pointing in the same direction, you can move quickly through the bands without adjusting the antenna heading.

If you plan to do more multi-operator contesting, then you need to have each band on a separate tower/rotor as each operator will be calling CQ or hunting on his/her assigned band. Requests to pick up a station on more than one band are handled verbally between the operators. Of course, this also means a separate rig for each band. In the January QSO Party, we tie logging computers together for ease of logging and to provide each operator with the big picture as the contest proceeds.

Obviously, having both versions is not practical, unless you have very deep pockets!

My station setup has 2M SSB, 6M SSB and 432 SSB on separate tower/rotors. The 222 antenna is on the 432 tower- currently I'm only running 5 wts FM and get a few nearby contacts with it. I ran 80 wts on 6M SSB into a

5 element yagi, 100 wts on 2M SSB into a 10 element yagi and 500 watts on 432 SSB into a 22 element yagi.

The contest started at 2PM on Saturday, Sept 13 and ran till 11 PM on Sunday, Sept 14. We made a total of 63 contacts in 33 grids for a total claimed score of 2409 points. We all had hoped for sudden band opening on 6M as we have seen in other contests- openings to Florida and other southern states and to the upper midwest have been occurring at various times, but that was not the case for New England this time.

We use grid squares as the locator and almost all contacts were in FN. I did make contacts in Pennsylvania, including one on 432 MHz. Since I work the contest "circuit", I ran into many acquaintances over the contest. Also, got a break on 6M as the Nashua Area Radio Club 6M SSB net was running Sunday night during the contest. I checked in and picked up a few more easy contacts!

Each contest has different conditions and this time I was surprised to hear 2-3 CQ's on 432! Usually, we start on 6M or 2M and then go for the challenging contact on 222 or 432. Also, I was able to make all of two contacts on 222 FM, with Mitch WB1GQR in Essex Jct and Mike N1JEZ up in northern NH. There is a fair amount of activity on 222 SSB during these contests, so I am looking at setting up a better station.

The pace on these contests is casual and we stop to talk with old friends and acquaintances along the way. Chatted with Dale AF1T over in Henniker, NH and he is doing well in his recovery from a heart attack and bypass surgery.

Since I'm not a "big gun" on 6M or 2M, I use the "hunt and pounce" approach, usually starting at 6 M. The first couple of hours of the contest are very active with all the big stations working all the other stations on each band. Then it tends to slow down and I didn't do an overnight session as the pickings are slim. It picks up again on Sunday as many new stations suddenly appear- apparently they were all out mowing lawns or doing BBQs on Saturday and cranked up the rigs on Sunday morning. I operated till a little after 9 PM on Sunday and was pretty satisfied with the result.

6M- 32 QSOs
2M- 21 QSOs
222- 2 QSOs
432- 8 QSOs

Not an earthshaking result in the VHF+ contest world, but satisfying with 100 wts or less on the two primary bands- 6M and 2M. I only worked three other stations in FN33, so there is plenty of room in our grid square for more operators on these contests!

Give one a try sometime or contact me if you would like to try your hand at VHF+ contesting!

73, Bill WB1BRE

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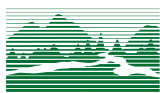
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Don't forget to check the TSRC Home Page!
Make it your default start page!
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