



# OPEN MIC

A NEWSLETTER OF THE  
RUNESTONE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, W0ALX

JUNE 2016

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## SCHEDULE FOR JUNE 18

8am: Breakfast, Brass Lantern, Alex

10am: Monthly RARC Meeting, Glenwood State Bank, Alex

A major agenda item will be final planning for the 2016 FIELD DAY which will be held at Brophy Park west of Alexandria. Please come and help the club make this a successful FD.

The program Wayne WA0EBZ has planned for this meeting includes:

1. A 3 min. video set to music - "My Favorite Things About Amateur Radio Field Day".
2. A 30 Min Video - Field Day with the Paul Bunyan Radio Club, Bemidji, MN.

## [PRESIDENTIAL SPLATTER...](#)

### **Cyberhamming Comes of Age**

Just this morning from the communications headquarters I call my shack, I was able to check propagation, read real-world reviews of a piece of gear I'm interested in, informed a fellow ham that I had received a misdirected QSL that was due him and checked a DX Cluster for DX currently on the air -- and that's just for starters. Seems like the Internet's much vaunted threat to amateur radio has become, in reality, a boon. The 'Net has, through the mostly individual efforts of thousands of hams worldwide, matured into an almost inexhaustible resource.

I have a pretty extensive ham radio reference library with books on antennas, homebrewing, electronic theory, rules and regulations, DX'ing; you name it, I've probably a tome on the topic. But amateur radio is too big for anyone's personal book collection to cover comprehensively. And what about time sensitive activities like contests, regulatory announcements, hamfests, club meetings and conventions? Where else can you find, at your fingertips, the schematic diagram for a 60-year-old Hallicrafters receiver, or the QSL manager for that ZL8 you just worked? Shopping for a new, or used, piece of gear? It's all just a click away on your internet provider.

In addition to the multitude of valuable services and site listings offered by eham.com, there are hundreds of "jump" sites catering to your personal ham radio interests. Having a problem with your

rig? Housing covenants and antenna restrictions got you down? Can't find that octal socket for your "hollow-state" construction project? There's a myriad of mailing lists providing forums (and answers) on radio interests from the pedestrian to the arcane.

Who knows, the Internet may prove to be just the "kick start" ham radio's needed (and we've been endlessly debating) for years. That's it for this month.

73; Wayne

## RUNESTONE ARC MEETING MINUTES MAY 21

1. Members Present: Jim KB0INZ, George N0RCL, Dave (RCL's guest), John W0JAR, Norm W7ISD, Bill KG0DX, Roger KD0UTA, Alden N0MIC and Wayne WB0KUG
2. In the absent of Wayne WA0EBZ VP Norm W7ISD presided over the meeting.
3. April minutes were noted; N0RC for approval, KB0INZ seconded, passed.
4. W0JAR Treasure reported a beginning balance of \$3610.90, income \$49 (dues), expenses \$47 (to ARRL), ending balance of \$3612.90. KG0DX for approval, KD0UTA seconded, passed.
5. Trustee KB0INZ had no new news from his office.
6. Technical Director WB0KUG reported that all repeaters appear to be functioning as designed.
7. Public Information Officer KC0SAL had no report but it was noted that the annual Field Day article appeared in the Echo Press a week or two ago. Was also sent to several other area publications.
8. WA0EBZ was the "winner" of the contest by making at least one contact with different numeral callsign within the month. Nice job Wayne.
9. No progress reported on the SuperLink situation.
10. KG0DX reported on the activity level during two recent mini special events: Filmore Park in Alexandria and Conservation Park in Sauk Centre. More will be scheduled.
11. WB0KUG reported that Brophy Park is reserved for our Field Day use. Brad Bonk is the new county park superintendent...seems to be easy to work with.
12. KB0INZ requested that the data for a 4:1 balun be sent to him. (Update: he has the data and new balun has been ordered and should be here for FD.)
13. Field Day discussion: a) KG0DX to contact KC0TAF regarding trailer and his participation (update-affirmative on both, he says, "with bells on."), b) food issue still open for discussion, c) KG0DX will bring club trailer-generator-tower-storage unit, d) need a couple 100 ft. power cords, e) need six fence posts, f) WB0KUG will place W0ALX on the ARRL Field Day locator.
14. KB0INZ volunteered to store the club trailer at the conclusion of FD. KG0DX reviewed the location and it will work just fine.
15. Discussion regarding storage of club equipment centered on purchasing a cargo type trailer adequate to the task. KG0DX reported on two such trailers in Osakis; one new \$3250, the other used \$2350. WB0KUG motion to authorize expenditure of up to \$1800 for a cargo trailer with size of at least 6x10 and towable by regular passenger car or small truck.
16. WA0EBZ will do the program in June.
17. W0JAR was authorized to purchase up to four 3' jumper cables in preparation for field day.
18. N0RCL volunteered to be the clubs' QSL manager. It was noted that most QSL requests will come to the Trustee who will in turn give them to N0RCL for timely response.
19. The Annual Picnic will be at Kensington Runestone Park on August 27<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with the day long 80<sup>th</sup> RARC Birthday Celebration. WB0KUG has reserved the park for the day.
20. Discussion on RARC meeting day; talk centered on Saturday vs. weekday. To date, having meetings on Saturday has not increased participation. No recommendations were put forth.
21. N0MIC has some radio equipment he's considering donating to the club.
22. It was noted that WB0KUG, KG0DX, WA0EBZ, KD0MOM and KC0QAL participated in Mama Marla's annual event at Clotho.

23. N0RCL motioned to adjourn, WB0KUG seconded, passed.

24. For the mornings program W0JAR had us all take the 5 wpm CW test. Some did very well, the rest of us...not so much. There was consensus that we should do this each month for short time. Thanks John, it was fun.

## 2016 MONDAY NITE NET CONTROLS

January	Tom KD0MOM
February	Jim KB0INZ
March	Bill KG0DX
April	Mike W0MKE
May	Roger KD0UTA
June	Bill KG0DX
July	George N0RCL
August	Jim KB0INZ
September	Jim NN0Q
October	George N0RCL
November	
December	

## UPCOMING EVENTS

June 4: 8am Breakfast, Truckers Inn, Sauk Centre

June 14: FLAG DAY

June 18: 8am Breakfast, Brass Lantern, Alexandria

June 18: 10am Runestone Monthly Club Mtg, Glenwood State Bank, Alexandria

June 28-29: FIELD DAY at BROPHY COUNTY PARK

July 2: 8am Breakfast, Truckers Inn, Sauk Centre

July 4: INDEPENDENCE DAY

July 16: 8am Breakfast, Brass Lantern, Alexandria

July 16: 10am Runestone Monthly Club Mtg, Glenwood State Bank, Alexandria

## Design Advances Make Portable Operation Easier, More Fun

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

I've just returned from the Dayton Hamvention. Dayton was a blast as usual, and if there's one thing I took away from this year's event it's that portable operation is not only becoming more popular, but more sophisticated as well. In fact, it's a virtuous circle. More sophisticated portable equipment is making portable operation more popular, which is spurring manufacturers to make more sophisticated equipment, which is making portable operation even more popular, and around we go.

This is perhaps most easily seen in the evolution of the Elecraft products. One of their first rigs was

the K1, a small rig that was frequently toted out into the field, even though it wasn't really designed for that purpose. It had a small form factor, but had a conventional front panel layout.

The next evolution was the KX1. This CW-only radio was designed specifically for field work. It originally only covered 40m and 80m, and had a very limited front panel, but its built-in battery pack and KXPD1 paddle made it a great choice for portable operators when it was introduced in 2004.

A big leap forward was made when they introduced the KX3 in 2012. This radio combined a bunch of features never before found in a portable rig. The KX3 features an SDR architecture and covers all modes, including (SSB, CW, Data, FM, AM); used the same full-sized LCD display as the K3; has advanced DSP features; and can be connected to a computer via USB for firmware upgrades and for use with other ham radio software. The KX3 is so full-featured that many operators use it as their main rig with a suitable linear amplifier.

At Dayton 2016, Elecraft took this concept even further and introduced the KX2. It's about half the size of the KX3, but yet has almost all of the features of the KX3. There was a tremendous amount of buzz over this radio at Dayton among portable operation aficionados. The base price of the KX2 is \$750, and with options, will cost you about \$1,000.

Of course, Elecraft isn't the only company competing in this market. LNR Precision sells a radio called the LD-5, and at Dayton, they introduced the LD-11, which like the KX3 and KX2 features an SDR architecture and covers 160m - 6m. This radio goes for about \$800, and has also proven to be popular among portable operators.

Dayton also had a number of exhibitors that supplied products other than radios to aid portable operation. There were several portable antenna manufacturers, including Buddipole ([buddipole.com](http://buddipole.com)) and PackTenna ([packtenna.com](http://packtenna.com)), and BiEnno Power ([biennopower.com](http://biennopower.com)) was also there, showing off their new lithium-iron batteries,

While radios like the KX2 and LD-11, at relatively low prices, allow operators to easily get out into the field, portable operation would not be as popular as it is without organized activities. Programs like the Summits on the Air (SOTA, [www.sota.org.uk](http://www.sota.org.uk), [na.sota.org](http://na.sota.org)) and the National Parks on the Air (NPOTA, [npota.arrl.org](http://npota.arrl.org)) make portable operation even more fun. These programs do this by providing a structure in which operators can find one another and gain awards for operating. SOTA did not have a booth at Dayton, but NPOTA was a big part of the ARRL section there.

If you aren't already a portable operator, you should give it a try! You don't have to invest a bunch of money in a rig to just try it. KX1s have been had for less than \$400, and simpler QRP rigs cost a lot less. Getting outside and operating in the fresh air is a lot of fun and could give you a whole new perspective on amateur radio.

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Dan, KB6NU, is the author of the "No Nonsense" amateur radio license study guides, and blogs about amateur radio at [KB6NU.Com](http://KB6NU.Com), and you can contact him by e-mailing [cwgeek@kb6nu.com](mailto:cwgeek@kb6nu.com). Listen for him operating his KX1 from the park or beach this summer.

## **2016 OFFICERS/DIRECTORS**

Wayne WA0EBZ    PRESIDENT

Norm W7ISD      VICE-PRESIDENT

John W0JAR      TREASURE

Bill KG0DX	SECRETARY
Wayne WB0KUG	TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
Jim KB0INZ	TRUSTEE
John W0JAR	DIRECTOR (2017)
Mike W0MKE	DIRECTOR (2018)
Norm W7ISD	DIRECTOR (2019)
Andy KC0SAL	PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER