Rally at Osseo, Wisconsin

The RV Radio Network is converging at Osseo, Wisconsin for the 2018 Fall Eyeball Rally. The hosting campground is Stoney Creek RV Resort. The campground has recently been renovated into a resort, adding many new level sites, improving the facilities, cabins, lodge, roads and numerous other improvements to make camping more pleasurable.

Access to the Resort is very easy. If you use a GPS, it will take you right to it.

Pat Ryan N9JIX is hosting this rally. Plans for several meals are being made. Pancake breakfast, a sausage gravy over biscuits, possibly sweet rolls and who knows what else she has up her sleeve.

There will be plenty of time to tour the area. There is a Mennonite grocery store close by near Fall Creek, city of Osseo across the interstate bridge where the world famous Norski Nook originated and still exists. Their pies are the most famous but their food is very good also. 30 miles to the south at Black River Falls is the Ho Chunk Casino while to the north of Osseo by 20 miles is the City of Eau Claire with tons of places to see, things to do and places.... Well, you get the idea. There is too much to mention in a short article.
Net Manager's Report

Hello everyone!

This has been a rough winter and spring for me. My brother became ill and passed away this spring, then I had surgery. All is well now so can finalize plans for the 2018 Fall RVRN Rally at Osseo WI. The rally is scheduled to be at Stoney Creek RV Resort, Osseo WI 54758 on September 7 through 11, 2018. Please make your reservations directly with the campground and use the PROMO CODE: SCHOOLSPECIAL. Also, please complete the rally application and send to me so I know who is coming and to get the supplies. Since time is short, please don’t delay. The campground does fill fast.

We will be having our pancake breakfast and a few other meals and activities. You will have plenty of time to tour the area and even try a piece of pie at the world famous Norski Nook in Osseo. More Info on the Rally is on our webpage, so please check it out. Our Webmaster does an excellent job.

Remember, there will be a drawing of Radio Equipment for those that attend the Rally and are a paid up member in the RV Radio Network.

Just to remind everyone, you make the rally a Good Time when you attend. Remember there will be a drawing of Radio Equipment for those that attend the Rally and are a paid up member the RV Radio Network.

Now, the important part of this report is for all traveling to the rally and during your summer travels, be safe. I look forward to seeing friends and meeting new ones.

73 & 88, Pat N9JIX

Don’t let this be your last issue of The Network News.

If you are no longer camping, traveling far from home or whatever the reason, you can still stay in touch with friends and keep up with the RVRN current activities by renewing your membership.

We don’t want to lose you! Your membership means a lot to the RVRN. Our motto says it all – “Friends keeping in touch via Amateur Radio and RV’s”. The first four words are the most important.

Please consider renewing your membership today.

Thank you.

73, KF9SU Marshall Kiel (Treasurer)

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Technical items included in the Network News is for your information only. They have not been tested by the RVRN officers or staff. The RV Radio Network accepts no legal responsibility for such information and cannot guarantee the article will pertain to your situation.

The Network News invites you to share your hints, tips and articles of information with fellow members. Send them to the Editor by US mail or E-mail. Please include your contact information.

Additional and updated news is available on the RVRN web site:

www.RVRadioNetwork.com
146.52 Reasons to Monitor VHF Simplex
By WE2F Matt Maszczak

I make a point of monitoring 146.52 whenever I drive. It's a habit that my first Elmer W6LSW instilled in me. Around home, I almost never hear anyone on simplex. I put out a call occasionally, but I'm rarely met with a response, but I still monitor it with dogmatic fervor.

How many times have you been riding down the highway when a car that resembles an AWACS flys by in the fast lane? Don't you want to know how he or she can fit that many antennas on a car? Wouldn't you like to see a picture of the dashboard of such an aerial-laden vehicle? Well, if you were both monitoring 146.52, you'd have the answers to your questions.

Arguably, the best thing about Morse Code is that it is ubiquitous. Any Ham that learns the code, quickly redoubles his/her reach in the amateur community. Its simplicity and consistency lend the code to being a Ham Standard. Even Hams that don't know the code, know what it sounds like and can probably pound out a few letters—even if it's just S.O.S.). The same goes for 146.52. If every Ham in the world (or at least the USA) took the time to monitor and make calls on simplex, there would be a more universal feel to the VHF allocation rather than tiny little cells and haunts or local repeater groups.

Generally speaking, if you can work someone on VHF simplex with a mobile rig (35w or so) or HT (5w or less), they are close enough to help you out in a pinch. So, if you happen to run out of gas, get a flat tire, or find yourself navigating the aftermath of a natural disaster, being able to raise a like-minded Ham on 146.52 could prove very helpful.

The problem is, most Hams don't monitor VHF simplex anymore. Why? Who knows? The most reasonable argument I have heard is, "No one is ever there." While overstated, it isn't far from the truth. The point is, unless a large chunk of us start to monitor and use the frequency, it will be continue to be silent and worthless.

The solution is simple. Tune into 146.52 simplex whenever you can. Announce your call and see if anyone responds. If you hear another, return the call. Program the channel into your scan lists too. You can still spend time working your buddies on the repeater, but why not try and contact them simplex; whether it's on 146.52 or some other frequency. And, if you ever see my little black coupe rolling down the highway, give WE2F a call, I'll be listening. What about you?

Full article available at: http://hamnroll.blogspot.com/2014/05/14652-reasons-to-monitor-vhf-simplex.html

Article edited due to space constraints.

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IN MEMORIAM

Regretfully, we are informing you of the passing of these RVRN members:

12/06/2017 Net# 11 Doug Boswell KW0K
02/22/2018 Net# 1178 Loretta Anderson, XYL of Andy W2UCZ
04/30/2018 Net # 305 Jack Folluo N0ROB

Please keep these families in your prayers.

Please keep me informed of any RVRN members who pass away. Send me the obituary notice to kf9sumjk@gmail.com so it can be posted in the Network News and announced for reflection at the rally.

Annie N9INS
What a great Eyeball Rally! Hamcation has become a huge hamfest with a reported attendance for 2017 reaching over 19,000 and is now the third largest in the world, and is second only to Hamvention in the USA - and our rally was right in the midst of it. The hamfest spread across the Central Florida Fairgrounds and filled all 3 large event buildings on the grounds. I haven’t seen any published numbers but I estimate there were at least 200 RVs on site, including many who had purchased tailgate / flea-market sites.

We arrived at the fairgrounds about 10:00 AM on Wednesday, early bird day, and there were already about 30 RVs lined up waiting for the scheduled 2:00 PM opening of the gates. The gates opened early, at about 11:30 and one by one the RVs were ushered into the camping area and each RV scrambled to find their ideal site on a “First Come” basis. We wound up with a location in the central camping area that had room for 4 of our members to park together with individual 20A and 30A electric outlets and shared water. Most of the rest of our members parked at the north edge of the fairgrounds by the lake where most of the WBCCI group was parked. The only Wednesday activity was happy hour at 4 PM.

There were 24 RVRN members registered for the rally in 13 coaches, and there were several more members who were able to drop by the hamfest and visit but were not participating in the rally. The WBCCI RV Service Net always has a large contingent at the hamfest and many of our members are also members of that club so we worked with them to schedule our events avoiding conflicts with their schedule, and WBCCI graciously invited us to participate in their morning nets, afternoon happy hours, and their Thursday pot-luck lunch.

Hamcation was from 9:00 AM till 5:00 PM on Friday and Saturday so we scheduled most of our rally activities for Thursday afternoon leaving as much time as possible for our members to enjoy Hamcation activities. We started after the WBCCI Thursday pot-lunch with our rally opening ceremony which included a flag ceremony representing 6 states and a memorial for 3 silent keys since the last rally: Leo Hunter K9GDI, Bill Major KI4OCN, and Doug Boswell K0WK. After the opening everyone stayed around and attended the First Timer meeting for the 6 couples who had never attended an RVRN rally. The meeting included information about the origin of our network, our nightly nets, rallies, and a who’s who explanation of our current organization.

Next was the general membership meeting. We started with a reminder of that we were having this rally at Hamcation because at the 2017 fall rally Bill Major, KI4OCN, had suggested having the spring rally at Hamcation and volunteered to host the rally. So this rally was a memorial to Bill. We recapped the meeting at the rally last fall then we heard a current treasurer’s report showing our balance and our membership numbers are up from the numbers reported last fall. A general discussion of current state of the network followed.

We have picked up some new Net Control Stations since last fall and participation on the evening net is up despite the terrible band conditions that continue to plague us. Often there are double and even triple relays required in order to pass information on the nightly net.

There have been no Advisory Board meetings since the last rally but plans are being made to allow the board to conduct meetings over some technology other than face to face.

The website has had a face lift recently including the beginnings of a historical archive section that currently contains documentation of the founding of our network. A large part of this is from the informative newsletters which Hal Cummins, KJ4TD, has recently made available. This is very much a work “in progress” and will take some time to complete. Watch the website for updates.

There was an update on the Rally Survey that was circulated after the rally last fall. The biggest request was for more technical forums and seminars covering both ham radio and RV topics. Other suggestions included more pot-luck meals, campfires, and VE sessions. Tours and free ham radio events were also suggested. Regarding location, most responders preferred rallies in their part of the country but would probably go to one rally per year at a distance. Resorts with lots of amenities were not needed – basic campgrounds would be fine. While some said boon docking would work, most wanted at least water and minimal electric service available.

Some problems with the survey format on the website resulted in some of the responses being incomplete. However the survey was successful in that it generated some input from the membership without which we don’t know if we are meeting the members’ expectations. So we will continue with some type of questionnaires or surveys either on the website or via email.
The membership meeting wrapped up with the announcement of the 2018 Fall Rally to be held at Stoney Creek RV Resort in Osseo, WI on Sept 7-11. There are 15 sites being held for us but ONLY until March 15 – just over 1 month away, so there is a short time for making reservations. After March 15 they will turn any unreserved sites loose and you may find there are no sites available – so get those reservations in early!

During the hamfest we had an RV Radio Network table in the SWAPS building (indoor flea-market building). We spoke to a lot of hamfest attendees about the RVRN and handed out about 70 brochures. Interest varied between just picking up a brochure to several who had significant interest in the network. We hope that interest results in a few more participants for our evening net, and just maybe a few new members. Thanks to all who helped man the table during the hamfest hours.

The rally concluded with a “Dutch” group outing to Golden Corral on Saturday evening. We had a great time dining in a relaxed environment and recapped the rally activities – then we drew for the prizes. We had 2 radios that were purchased at a good price from Ham World of Talladega AL.

The second prize was a UV-6R dual band HT, the latest HT offering from Baofeng. It was won by Charlotte – NSTKY

The main prize was a TYT TH7800 Dual Band UHF/VHF mobile radio with dual display, cross band repeat, and a separation kit – won by one of our newest members, Marcia – KE4ZDS.

**Coin in Freezer Tip**

Contributed by Hal Cummings KJ4TD

Why should you always put a coin in the freezer before you leave home for an extended period?

Have you ever come home from vacation, business trip or maybe a weekend away with the family, and noticed your digital clocks flashing the wrong time? You quickly realize that you had a power outage while you were away, but it's basically impossible to tell when it occurred or how long it lasted. It’s, therefore, also impossible to tell just how long the food in your freezer may have thawed, gotten destroyed and then frozen again.

Or is it? In connection with Hurricane Matthews, which recently swept over parts of the eastern United States, a woman named Sheila Pulanco Russell shared a clever trick on her Facebook wall with anyone who was forced to evacuate their home. But the trick is certainly also good to know in case of any prolonged departure from your home, and it will ease your mind about whether or not the food in your freezer is good to eat - or best be thrown out right away.

The trick lies in the magical combination of three simple, but effective, tools everyone already has at home: a mug, a coin and some tap water.

In a Facebook post which quickly received hundreds of thousands of reactions and shares, Sheila explained how to proceed. She wrote: “For those of you who are evacuating from the coast, I just heard a great tip. It’s called the one cup tip. You put a cup of water in your freezer. Freeze it solid, then put a quarter on top of it and leave it in your freezer. That way, when you come back after you’ve been evacuated, or have been on vacation. You can tell if your food went completely bad and just refroze, or if it stayed frozen while you were gone. If the quarter has fallen to the bottom of the cup, that means all the food defrosted and you should throw it away. But if the quarter is either on the top or in the middle of the cup, your food may still be OK. It would be a great idea to leave this in your freezer all the time. Then, if you lose power for any reason, you will have this tip to fall back on. If you don’t feel good about your food, just throw it out. The main thing is for all to be safe.

Simple, effective - and definitely a money saver, because you don’t have to toss loads of food unnecessarily. Please share this nifty trick on to all your friends.
Jack Folluo N0ROB Tribute

Jack Folluo, NØROB, passed away on April 30 from pancreatic cancer, which he had been battling for 18 months. He was 88. He had retired from the St. Louis Police Department as a sergeant and previously had served in the Navy.

Jack lived about two miles from us in the southern suburbs of St. Louis, MO. I had talked to him on the RV Radio Net but we never met in person until a few years ago when he was experiencing high SWR at times. I offered to help him and asked for any information that might give us a clue. He said he mainly operated on 40M but didn’t remember ever having the problem on other bands. He also said the trouble only occurred after it rained, so we began looking for a water problem. Whenever I was there the trouble never appeared, but we looked for possible problem areas. I connected my antenna analyzer at both the radio and right at the antenna - several times - and everything always looked good. As a precaution we disassembled parts of the antenna and cleaned up the joints. Of course, we never knew if we corrected the problem since it wasn’t occurring at the time. However, after the next rain the problem would often reappear - but not always. After working on it several times over a period of a couple months and finding nothing, I quizzed him for any other information that might be helpful; did he do anything during, before or after rainstorms? He said yes, he always disconnected the coax from the radio. Ah Ha! Turned out the problem was in the coax connector at the radio. Depending on which way the connector was oriented, the weight of the cable sometimes caused loss of continuity. After several tries of rotating the connector as I connected it, I finally got it to fail. I replaced it and the trouble never returned. We had a good chuckle over the many hours we wasted looking for a problem that was corrected in a few minutes. Well, I guess they weren’t wasted as we became good friends and enjoyed many conversations on numerous subjects. Jack was an interesting guy. He especially liked old cars and owned a mint-condition 1931 Cadillac.

During his cancer treatments he was weak and was afraid he would not be able to get back up the stairs from his radio shack in the basement. Knowing that he had served as a net control operator for many years and that he really missed getting on the air, I offered to move the equipment up to the main level, but he refused, saying his goal was to get strong enough to negotiate the stairs. It wasn’t meant to be, so he decided to install a chair lift and returned to the air in February. It was good to hear him again and several net members welcomed him back.

If anyone wants to send condolences or comments to Jack’s family, please e-mail them to me. I’ll print and give them to Jack’s wife, Joann.

Jack’s friend,

Wayne Ashwell, KØOHB
k0ohb@arrl.net
At the 2017 Fall Rally Membership Meeting, there was a question raised regarding low rally attendance in recent years. It was pointed out that this was not a new topic and had been discussed at several of the most recent rallies with no resolution. I asked for specific suggestions and some that were made involved having more publicity of upcoming rallies in newsletters, on the nets, in emails, etc. There was also a discussion about what those present expected from a rally and someone suggested we poll the members to get a better feel for what the membership wanted in our rallies. So I agreed to put together a simple survey on the website to see what suggestions we might get.

The survey was somewhat short lived due to some technical issues including some spam attacks, and some of the suggestions and comments were scrambled or lost, but we did get some results that will help us make plans for future rallies. There were 12 respondents over 18 days before the survey was discontinued. All questions on the survey were optional so some opted not to answer all of the questions.

Types of RVs reported were
- Class A: 5
- Class C: 2
- Class B: 1
- Travel Trailer: 2
- 5th Wheel: 1

How long have you been an RV Radio Network Member
- 5 have been members for 10-32 years
- 1 has been a member for 8 years
- 5 have been members less than 5 years

Given 2 rallies per year, how many do you expect to attend over the next 3 years
- 2 expected to attend 4 of 6
- 1 expected to attend 3 of 6
- 1 expected to attend 2 of 6
- 5 expected to attend 1 of 6
- 2 expected to attend none

The average comes to 3 - 4 rallies each per year.

Distance willing to travel to a rally:
Answers ranged from 300 - 2000 miles with average of 767 miles.

Home Location: Preferred Rally Location
- Southeast: 4 Southeast: 6
- Northeast: 3 Northeast: 1
- Southwest: 1 Southwest: 1
- Northwest: 0 Northwest: 1

Of the 8 responses, 4 preferred rally locations be in their home area
Several commented that they preferred mid-west as a home or rally location but that option was not on the survey.

Power requirements
- 50A: 6
- 30A: 4
- 20A: 1

Preference for time:
- Mostly Scheduled: 5
- Mostly Fee Time: 6

See Survey Results, page 8
The rest of the survey asked what activities were preferred, and asked for comments. The most frequent preferences were for Seminars/forums, Social Time, and Pot Luck. (Many other comments included references to eating.)

Several references were made to or needing only the basics and others referenced not needing fancy campgrounds, resorts, etc.

Most often mentioned desired activities - and some items from comments:
- 5 references to Seminars - especially technical seminars related to RV and/or Ham radio
- 4 references to "Social" time - and several other references using similar terms
- 3 references to Pot Luck and 2 additional to food and meals
- 1 reference to "dining out"
- 2 references to local tours
- 1 reference to Ve testing and learning sessions
- 1 reference to touring each other’s ham stations
- 1 reference to evening games, board games, or cards
- 1 reference to more free time

Only 1 respondent had previously hosted a rally, and only 1 (the same one) said they were willing to do so in the future. One other said “maybe” to hosting a rally in the future.

Many commented that they frequently assisted the host at rallies.

What about YOU?

New Member Survey

The results from the Member Survey 2017 are in a previous article in this newsletter. Now, at NEW survey is available for you which may take up to 10 minutes to complete. The link to the survey is: https://goo.gl/forms/ptwPv2W1J1XVR4z13 . Hank K4HM may have the link posted on our website by the time you read this. You should also have received an email from him recently asking you to complete this survey.

This survey will assist the Board and future Rally Hosts in determining what you – the members of this organization – desire for rallies. The way we conducted rallies when we first began have gradually changed throughout the years. We have had a change of membership due to attrition and new membership. Results will be posted at a later date (to be determined).

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Dues Are Due

It’s that time again. Dues are due. All 2018 and prior years are now history. If your expiration date as posted on the member profile in the RVRN website is June 2018, please take the time to write a check and send it to me. You can also complete the member renewal application and then send the check to my address as listed. Your application is automatically sent to me.

If your expiration date is 2019 or beyond, you are paid up until then.

Need help? Email me.

KF9SU Marshall, Treasurer
The RV Radio Network
2018/2019 Membership / Renewal Application
31 May 2018—01 June 2019

Name: ___________________________________________ Call: ___________________ Net #: ________________

Spouse: ___________________________________________ Call: ______________________________

Address: ___________________________________________ City: ______________________________

State: _________________________ Zip: _______________ ARRL (Y) (N)

Phone: (Home) ________________________ (Cell) ______________________

Email: _________________________________________________ All Newsletters are Emailed

New Membership: $14.00 Signature: ______________________________
Renewal Membership: $12.00 Make checks payable to: RV Radio Network

Mail to: Marshall Kiel KF9SU
1401 Parkview Dr
Tomah, WI 54660-1067

Whoooooo Gets What …

News, photos & Bios: Annie N9INS (Editor)

Renewal: $12 1401 Parkview Dr
Decal Orders: $1.00 ea Tomah, WI 54660-1067

Changes in Address, Roster & Net Info: Marshall KF9SU

SK notifications: Annie N9INS

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

RV Radio Network Skeds
All Times Central

Daily (7 days/wk) 7265 KHz 7:00 PM CDT
7265 KHz 7:00 PM CST
All Freqs ± 10

Mobile & Rally Talk-in
146.55 Simplex
Rally In Park: 146.48
What works for you?
by Marshall Kiel  kf9sumjk@gmail.com

Often, I get asked what should I use for a HF mobile antenna, especially for my RV?

I’m not sure that I am the right person to answer that question. I don’t have an antenna on my RV. However, I do a considerable amount of looking at what others have and asking questions about their setup. I have used items like a Hamstick type of antenna, a dipole to a long wire. I plan to try my 43 foot vertical antenna this summer. All my antennas have been experimental – at least to me. I at least remember to have a radiator and a ground, and a cup of coffee nearby.

This isn’t really a survey, but yet, it kind of is. The question is: What works for you on/in your RV?

Please send me an email with your response. Don’t be shy. If I need more information about your antenna, such as homemade or manufactured, brand, model, etc. I would like to contact you for additional details. If you feel so inclined to write an article for a newsletter, please do so. I could use more articles.

Your information may help “newcomers” to mobile HF (and possibly VHF/UHF) even if they have been Amateurs for over 50 years. I’m sure you have many tidbits of advice for problem solving as well.

Meanwhile, I’ll be looking for RVs with antennas and bending ears for information, especially at rallies.