

Static



The Starved Rock Radio Club newsletter for January 2009

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And...

Club's web site goes down for move along with the rest of qsl.net

Al Waller K3TKJ, who ran QSL.net for 13 years, retired from the task December 31st. The entire QSL.net web site, which includes Starved Rock Radio Club's site, was shut down. Numerous other clubs and mailing lists were also affected by the shutdown.

A message posted at www.qsl.net said that Scott Neader KA9FOX would be taking over and that the shutdown would be temporary. The entire operation was expected to be running again by January 3rd. The message indicated that Waller's hardware is being taken out of service and the data on it moved to the service Neader uses.

There are no indications that Neader intends to start charging for web space and email services. Of course, that could change. For now, he's seeking donations to keep the services going.

Waller also ran QTH.net and retired from it too. Neader runs QTH.com.

Frank KF9NZ is 2009 SRRC President

Secretary for about ten years, then treasurer for one, Frank Carraro is the club's new president for 2009. He promises to make club meetings more interesting starting with the first one he'll preside over in January. He's not saying how yet but he has "a couple of ideas" and says there may be "a couple of surprises". Frank also has expressed an interest in creating a regional hamfest because small hamfests are becoming less and less sustainable.

Frank would like more participation in club meetings. Only 19 voting members attended the December 8 meeting. Eleven of those votes went to Frank. Despite getting the post he wanted, he says he's dismayed by how few people attended.

He says, "I would have been happier if I had a bigger majority and I would have been happier if we had had a bigger attendance--a better representation of the club membership."

Frank believes the club's biggest problem may be members who aren't active, "either in attending meetings or taking on committee work or that sort of thing. I have been very active ever since I've been in it." He says it's not that everyone needs to be as active as him, but if you're going to join a club and not contribute to it, "What are you gonna pay 24 dollars for? To carry a little card in your billfold?"

Outgoing president Cecil Atwell KB9LNK says the members have spoken and more power to them. "We got

12 months to find out what he's gonna do and usually you can't get nothin' done in one year. It either takes two years. But we shall see what happens."

Cecil says Mother Nature and economics affect a club president's ability to do the job. "As far as the gas prices right now, I would love to have a hamfest right now," he says, referring to high gasoline prices of recent years making hams less willing to travel to hamfests.

Frank sent an email to The Reflector the night before the election saying that things would stay the same and meetings would stay boring with Cecil at the helm. But Cecil says he has no regrets. He adds that maybe he'll be club president again someday.

Eldon remains VP

Eldon KB9PZA keeps the vice president's job, albeit by less than a consensus. Just eight of the 19 votes cast went to him. Four each went to Rich N9OUW and Kurt KB9RKU, and three to Bill KA9FER.

Tom still secretary

Tom K9ML missed the meeting at which he was named secretary again by acclamation. (No one ran against him.)

Directors chosen

The club's directors for 2009 are Jim KC9FGU, Gary WK9G, and Dennis KC9EXG. Jim received 17 votes, Gary received 14, and Dennis got 13. Falling short was John AA9VT with 11.

Static Editor KO5HKO may be last elected

Elections for Static editor may be over. Rick KO5HKO ran unopposed and will serve for 2009. But vice president Eldon KB9PZA has proposed a

constitutional change to make the post an appointed one. Eldon says that way if the editor doesn't do the job, he can be replaced more quickly than by annual election. Eldon is not the only club officer who thinks this change would be beneficial. New president Frank KF9NZ said in an email on The Reflector in October that he thinks Static editor should be an appointed post.

Mark K9ZQ to serve as treasurer.

Mark K9ZQ is the club treasurer for 2009 by unspoken agreement of the members. The ballots for this race weren't counted. After the other races' ballots were counted, President Cecil KB9LNL announced that Mark had been elected treasurer. No objections were raised.

Mark was on the ballot with Sam KC9OJF who is too young to effectively carry out a treasurer's duties. There are no prohibitions in the club constitution against a 16-year old appearing on the ballot. However, Illinois contract law generally requires that a person be at least 18 years old to sign or cash a check.

Vice president Eldon KB9PZA later proposed amending the club constitution so that office holders would have to be at least 19 years old.

Neither Mark nor Sam attended the election meeting. In the treasurer's job, Mark replaces as treasurer Frank KF9NZ who ran for president and won.

Summary of SRRC Constitution Changes Proposed by VP Eldon

VP Eldon KB9PZA proposed at the December meeting the following changes to the club's constitution.

- 501c7 non-profit status instead of 501c3 due to a law change
- Static editor to be an appointed rather than elected post
- Allow write-in ballots when a nominee is removed from the ballot
- Elected officers must be members in good standing for one year, although the membership can reduce the prerequisite good standing to as little as three months on a case by case basis.
- Officers must be at least 19 years old.
- Allow absentee voting for sickness, handicaps, or work.
- Eliminate the special assessment provision
- Directors are to act as advisors to the officers at any time, not just "when requested".

It's likely that the new president, Frank KF9NZ, will name a constitutional committee soon to review these proposals.

New prez wants active club members

New SRRC president Frank Carraro KF9NZ began taking charge of his term before it even began. The day after winning the club election, he sent an email to The Reflector asking for committee chairman volunteers. He indicated that there will be a good reason for whoever is chosen to head whatever committee.

"Just because a person has been head of a committee for years is no reason to continue in that job. People get stale and comfortable, or bored and discouraged. Long tenure is not a reason to change either."

Frank requested those interested to say what goals they would set if appointed to serve.

His advice for anyone chairing the Activity Committee is to have a variety of activities to talk about. "More than just a list of next month's hamfest!" he says. "I want creative thinking here."

Frank was disappointed by the small response volume a week after he put out the call. He reported receiving "just one reply that was not really responsive".

"If no one wants these committee chairs, we might as well fold up the club," he said. Likening the search for committee chairs to work at a private company, Frank says he wants everyone to have at least one goal. He says every manager at a company would be expected to have goals and his salary would be linked to his ability to meet them.

SRRC Meeting Dates in 2009

Barring any unforeseen changes, these are the club meeting dates for Starved Rock Radio Club in 2009:

January 5, February 2, March 2, April 6, May 4, June 1, July 6, August 3, September 14, October 5, November 2, December 7.

ICE STORM FELLS CLUB ANTENNA

The club's 2-meter dipole antenna hit the ground in the wind and ice storm the weekend of December 21st. The antenna's mast is bent in two places. Club members who've been discussing the problem believe both are salvageable. However, the antenna may become a backup rather than return to use as the main antenna for 147.12 MHz.

In one of his last acts as club president, Cecil KB9LNK got the club back on the air on 2 meters by hooking up the W9MKS repeater to a four-bay antenna that remained on one of the towers behind the clubhouse. Starved Rock Radio Club's 2-meter repeater was on again by Friday the 26th with FM voice capability using the same tones and offset as before. The four-bay is expected to provide less range than the dipole. As of press time, no one was sure exactly how the two compared. Also, APRS remains down as of press time.

With more snow and ice, thunderstorms, and even flooding forecast during the middle of the week, incoming president Frank KF9NZ sensed the urgency in getting something on the air. He pointed out in messages on "The Reflector" that there are other working antennas on the club's towers and that the club should put them to use for public service.

During the 147.12 outage, the weekly Sunday night ARES net took place by simplex on 146.55 MHz. Joe Tokarz KB9EZZ says he and Adam Lind KB9JKE took checkins, Joe from Ottawa and Adam from Spring Valley.

Pictures of the fallen antenna were posted to www.qsl.net/w9mks/repeaterant.

Director wants to create youth post

Few young people show up at Starved Rock Radio Club meetings. We members with kids, even kids who are interested in amateur radio, don't usually bring them. The last young person who showed up with enthusiasm and the desire to contribute to the club, was told he couldn't help the club the way he offered to.

Sam KC9OJF was too young to be treasurer. But club members didn't seem to have a clue how else Sam might contribute. The idea that someone under 18 would show up and want to be so involved apparently didn't occur to anyone in 2006 when the club's constitution was drafted and adopted. Sam could have been elected according to the club's rules, but state and federal laws would have severely limited his ability to carry out his duties. He wouldn't be allowed to sign a check. At best, he would have needed another club member to co-sign.

Newly elected director Gary WK9G suggests creating a youth liaison position.

"If there's positions that the youth can't hold, I think there should be a position that only they can hold," he says. "Different clubs have different limits to what age...here we could have a youth position that has to be held by someone less than 18."

"It'd be nice to have a position that he could run for, and we could all vote on and see if he could get elected to it," Gary says, remarking that it's important to keep young people involved so the club has a future.

Gary made his suggestion at the December meeting, one month after Sam's nomination for treasurer.

Your input, please

This is the first issue of Static that I've put together. We all should be able to judge in a few months whether I deserve to keep this job. I hope to apply my experience with general news reporting to the specific needs of Starved Rock Radio Club. If you have an opinion about what should or shouldn't be in Static, please tell me in person or email me at hamradio@koshko.com. It's possible there are things I don't know enough to write about but you do. In that case, you should offer to write an article. Definitely alert me to errors. And please bear with me while I work out some kinks. For example, I have about 55 addresses to get right when I mail & email this. -- Rick

PRESIDENT'S LETTER – JANUARY 2009

For those who don't know me very well, I will give you a brief autobiography. I was born in 1935 on the north side of Chicago, an only child. I graduated from Bateman Elementary School in 1949, went to A.G. Lane Technical High School and graduated from that fine school in 1953. From there I entered Illinois Institute of Technology studying Electrical Engineering. I had to leave that Institution in 1956 for family reasons, and went to work for the Baltimore & Ohio Chicago Terminal RR as a Tower Operator.

In 1958 I enlisted in the Illinois National Guard where I served 7 years including some active duty time. I never heard a shot fired in anger. I was discharged in 1968 with the rank of sergeant E-3. For the last two years I was Communications Sergeant in a battalion headquarters

In 1970 I was promoted to Supervisor of Communications of the then C&O-B&O RR. During the next 22 years I was a Supervisor of Communications, or Signal and Communications as the Engineering Department of the railroad changed along with the company name. In 1992 I retired as the senior Supervisor of Communications of CSX Railroad. During this time I continued my education with various courses until 1989 when I was awarded the degree of BSEE from what was somewhat more than a diploma mill.

I married Anne Dunfee in 1971. We had four children of our own and became foster parents to numerous others. We adopted six of them along the way.

In 1993 I moved with my family to Seneca where I had a vacation home. I had an interest in amateur radio since high school, but never was able to get my code speed up anywhere near the 15 WPM required then. Since I no longer had all the railroad's communications and electronic gear I had played with for 22 years, I decided to get my ham license, and practiced daily while reviewing the technical side, and in January 1994 I took the exam at the old Odeum hamfest. I passed everything except the 25 WPM Extra code test, so I had an Advanced license. I joined the SRRC later that year.

I was elected Secretary of the Club in 1995. I was re-elected several times until I had a strong disagreement with the President at the time, and did not run. I accepted the job of Repeater Committee Chair in 1999 when no one else would accept the job.

I was appointed ARRL Emergency Coordinator in 1997 and held that job until 2007. I am now an ARRL Technical Specialist, and an Assistant Director of the Central Division.

I am proud to be able to say I am President of the SRRC. It is a very long-lived organization with a proud history of service to the ham radio and general public communities. I intend foremost to continue to extend and increase that history.

By Frank Carraro,
KF9NZ

Starved Rock Radio Club president for 2009