

The **MORA**nnouncer



The Official Newsletter of the Mora Open Repeater Association

719 Fair Oaks Drive - Mora Minnesota 55051

<https://www.morahamradio.com>

Amateur Radio when all else fails!

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NEW NAME – NEW LOOK!

The Mora Open Repeater Association begins the new year with some major changes to its official newsletter. With the launch of the revised newsletter comes a new look, and a new slightly modified name.

The new name, **The MORAnnouncer**, is simply a modification of **MORA**nnouncements, which was shortened to sound more inclusive of more than just *announcements*.

“It’s about news and information,” MORA Chairman Ken Broshofske, KJ9W says in his latest post on the MORA website. “Nothing is going to change in terms of content. Most of the news in our newsletter is relevant to us at a local level, but we include important regional and national items. ‘Announcements’ as such are just a part of the newsletter, so the new name is intended to sound more inclusive of everything.”

The new look introduces a new header which will only appear on the front page. With no more redundancy of seeing the header on every page as has been the case in the past, there will be more room inside for news and other items of general interest.

MORA EVENT CALENDAR

6:00 PM THURSDAY JANUARY 18 2018: CHILI COOKOFF & TRAINING
KANABEC COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES BUILDING IN MORA.

9:00 AM SATURDAY JANUARY 27, 2018: MORA BOARD MEETING
MORA HEADQUARTERS, 719 FAIR OAKS DRIVE IN MORA

Be sure to check www.morahamradio.com for possible event updates.

THE 2017 MORA CHRISTMAS PARTY



Mary Campbell, KEØMAL, (left) and Jerry Whitaker, WBØOFB, (right) shown in the foreground with other members and guests at the Christmas Party & Awards Banquet on December 9th.

The Mora Open Repeater Association held their annual Christmas Party & Awards Banquet at Freddie's Restaurant in Mora on Saturday evening December 9th.

The party began with Social Time at 4:30 PM, with guitar music and song performed by aspiring radio amateur Bill Campbell. At 5:30 PM, the Awards Ceremony began, with Santa (KJ9W) announcing the 2017 Awards, and handed out by his loyal Elf (KAØAJF). The evening was capped by a buffet dinner at 6:30 PM, followed by a 7:30 PM music show by Elvis impersonator, Steve Mario. The show was over by 10 PM.

This was the first time that the Elvis Show was part of a MORA Christmas Party, and it happened quite by accident. It was discovered during an Elvis Show at Freddie's last April attended by KJ9W and KAØAJF that owner Mark Cannon had apparently double booked our party with the Elvis Show. When Mark verified he had double booked, he offered to combine the two events for us at a reduced price. MORA decided to accept the offer after consideration by the membership during the May meeting.

DESPITE SETBACKS, HOSPITAL LINK PROJECT MOVING AHEAD

The planned UHF Link Project for the Central Minnesota Regional Hospital Net is moving forward following several setbacks during 2017, including one in November when it was learned that the engineer involved in the programming of Motorola radio equipment at Duluth Superior Communications was accidentally killed while hunting in Northern Minnesota.

Mark Smith was an engineer at the DSC facility in Superior Wisconsin, and responsible for programming older Motorola radio equipment that was made available for use by the Hospital Net to link into remote areas of Eastern Minnesota - areas that up to now have not been accessible by the hub repeater located in the St Cloud suburb of Collegeville. The plan to connect the Collegeville repeater to the Ogilvie repeater via the VHF/UHF linking site at Milaca included use of a 20 year old Motorola repeater.

Programming the Motorola equipment has proven difficult. Adding to the difficulty is the absence of a transmit tone from the Collegeville repeater. The tone would aid in the programming of the squelch setting.

Motorola has been very reluctant to reveal much in the way of equipment programming information even to radio amateurs, which leaves a very limited access to those "ham radio friendly" engineers familiar with their equipment.

Ogilvie Repeater Engineer Jerry Whitaker, WBØOFB, says unless engineers at DSC find a way to program older Motorola equipment, this setback may very well render the equipment useless. Amid the confusion and uncertainty, an alternative equipment plan was developed and was moving ahead for the link site. This includes the employment of a Yaesu FT-1500 transceiver, and a Mirage Amplifier for the VHF side. Ogilvie repeater Custodian Ken Broshofske, KJ9W, reiterated however that the door still remains firmly open to use the Motorola equipment - provided it can be programmed.

If all goes well, installation and testing of equipment will happen just after the New Year holiday. In preparation for that, WBØOFB and KJ9W scoped out the link site at Milaca on Tuesday December 26th to determine what was needed for the final installation of the equipment.

MORA CHILI COOKOFF & TRAINING SESSION JANUARY 18

Think you can cook up a mean batch of chili? Well, here's your chance to put your recipe to the test at the annual MORA Chili Cookoff Event at the Kanabec County Health & Human Services Building in Mora at 6 PM on Thursday January 18th. This event launches the newly implemented MORA Meeting & Social Event format.

Members will sample the chili recipes to determine who will be the 2018 Chili Cookoff Champion. Last year, David Carter, NØRTY, won the cookoff.

The training session will be presented by MORA Webmaster KJ9W, who will explain how the Members Only Email System works. All MORA members have free email through the website, but few members have used it up to now. The training session attempts to clarify access issues and answer questions about how members activate their accounts after they are set up in the website.

TUESDAY EVENING EMESNET RESUMES JANUARY 9

The Eastern Minnesota Emergency Services Net will resume with the First Tuesday net on January 9th at 7 PM, with KCØDDV in his accustomed spot as the First Tuesday Net Control. However, the first Tuesday for January is being filled by the annual New Year Scatterbrain Net, with NØRJW as NCS.

EMESNET finished 2017 with a grand total of 523 check-ins in 50 sessions. It was the highest year-end tally since 2011, with an increase of 23 from 2016, but it was still far below the 630 check-ins tallied in 2009. Three of the sessions were tied for the most check-ins with 15, while one session had a low of 5.

KAØEVQ once again was the EMESNET check-in champion with 50, followed by KJ9W with 45 and WBØOFB with 44.

The monthly Net Control rotation will continue as before with KCØDDV, KJ9W, and NØRJW holding the first three Tuesdays. Fourth Tuesday nets are being temporarily covered by KJ9W until another Net Control can be found, and the rare Fifth Tuesday nets are being hosted by KAØAJF.

MORA BOARD OF DIRECTORS REELECTED

The results of the November 2017 election of MORA's governing officers came as little surprise to anyone as the three Board Members at Large and two office holders were re-elected without opposition to serve for another two years.

On December 9th, the Board held a brief meeting to select its chairman, and chose 68 year old Kenneth Broshofske, KJ9W, of Ogilvie to continue in that capacity. Elected to the Board as a Member at Large, Broshofske has announced that he will not seek re-election to the Board after this term.

Members at Large Jerry Whitaker, WBØOFB, will continue to serve as Vice-Chairman, and Charles Turner, KAØEVR, will continue as Assistant Treasurer. The position of Assistant Treasurer as such is not a required Board position.

Secretary David Carter, NØRTY, and Treasurer Eugene Sheggrud, KDØBUO, were also re-elected to their respective offices, and are required to serve on the Board.

The first Board Meeting for 2018 is scheduled for 9 AM Saturday January 27 at MORA Headquarters in Mora. Members are free to attend if they wish.

ST CLOUD SIGNALS EARLY START OF 2018 HAMFEST CALENDAR

The 2018 Hamfest Calendar for our region will start earlier than usual, with the annual St Cloud "Cabin Fever Reliever" event scheduled to return to its venue at the National Guard Armory in St Cloud on Saturday January 27th.

There was no information available as to why the event was scheduled earlier this year. In recent years, the St Cloud Hamfest has been held on the second Saturday in February, and last year's 100 Anniversary Hamfest was held at St Benedict College instead of the Armory.

Check the MORA Website Home Page for the latest Hamfest Calendar information.

THERE REALLY IS MORE TO TWO METERS THAN FM REPEATERS

Many Hams impulsively think of FM and repeaters when they think of activity on two meters. Lately however, there are members of MORA who are attempting to alter that line of thinking.

KEØQ, KJ9W, and WBØOFB are three local Hams who have recently had ragchewing sessions on two meter sideband, and there are others in the local area with capability of joining the fun at any time. Among them are ADØQT, NØOK, and KBØRFY, all of whom have expressed an interest.

Up to now, activity has been exclusively impromptu. When any of them announce they are monitoring on the Ogilvie repeater, any of the others that answer might ask to QSY to a sideband frequency to carry on an extended QSO.

On one recent afternoon, KEØQ announced he was monitoring. KJ9W answered, and shortly into the QSO he indicated an interest to QSY to sideband. The two of them set up shop on 144.205 MHz, and they were soon joined by WBØOFB, who had also been monitoring the repeater. This ragchew session lasted for upwards of 20 minutes before KEØQ had to break away.

While local propagation has been good, two meter band openings can make conditions even more interesting. During the summer, stationary weather fronts often settle across the area, and VHF propagation can often extend outwards during those periods for up to several hundred miles. It's also worthwhile to know that it is advantageous to have a horizontally polarized beam antenna and a power amplifier with a receiving pre-amp – however openings are often so good you don't always need special equipment to work two meter sideband DX. During one summer opening on July 30 1987, KDØCI worked stations in Mississippi and Missouri using only an Icom IC-271A barefoot with a Ringo Ranger Vertical mounted atop an antenna array on a 55 foot tower. The amazing thing was that his signal was good enough to be heard over another Ham using a beam and a 500 watt amplifier that he heard calling in the background!

Local sidebanding on two meters might lead to even more extra-curricular activity, such as CW operating. This would not hurt KJ9W's feelings one bit, as his goal is to revive his rusty CW operating skills in order to work toward obtaining a 20 word per minute Code Certificate.

As more local Hams look to establish base stations and upgrade to sideband capable equipment, an increase in sideband activity would seem inevitable – and welcomed.

MONITOR THE MORA WEBSITE FOR CONTINUOUS UPDATES

The Mora Ham Radio website is your best source for the latest local amateur radio news and information. Refer to it often for updates.

The date and time of the latest website revision is posted at the top of the Home Page, so you know right away when the site was updated.

If you have information that should be posted on the website, contact the webmaster at info@morahamradio.com

MORA JACKET PROJECT

The Mora Board of Directors will continue to consider bids for the possible purchase of custom three season jackets for members.

So far, the basic design for the jackets is for them to have a comfortable but light inside lining, exterior pockets, standard [not athletic] collars, at least one inside pocket, a bright yellow exterior to enhance high nighttime visibility, and black artwork for the MORA and Name/Call Sign Patches.

So far, two businesses have been contacted for estimates. Once the design is finalized and the bids are in, members will decide whether or not they wish to purchase them.

AREA HOSPITAL CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

For the past several weeks, the area in and around First Light Hospital in Mora has been a virtual construction zone as efforts are underway on the planned expansion for the facility. When completed, the hospital will have several new patient rooms, and a new emergency area – including a new Ham Radio Room.

The plans for the Radio Room were submitted as part of the expansion and will include two stations – one for VHF and another for HF. A multiband HF antenna will be added when construction is completed, and will create one of the most complete and efficient Amateur Radio Communications Centers in any emergency facility in Minnesota, and the location on the main floor in the Emergency area will be a significant improvement over its previously isolated and cramped second floor location.

For further details and the latest information on the expansion of the First Light Mora campus, go to <https://firstlighthealthsystem.org/expansion/>

Meanwhile in Pine County, the old hospital in Sandstone was replaced when the new EssentiaHealth Hospital opened this past fall. However, problems surfaced immediately when amateur communications between the new hospital and the Ogilvie repeater were not effective during simulated linking tests conducted during the late fall. An inspection of the hospital radio station found that the antenna system SWR measured in excess of 5 to 1.

Once repairs to the antenna system are completed, the Sandstone hospital will benefit from the new Milaca UHF Hospital Link with access to the Collegeville repeater via the Ogilvie repeater for the first time.

MORA MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER

Now is the time to renew your membership in MORA for 2018. Full membership dues for new and current members remain at \$20. Associate dues for non-voting members are \$10.

Contact Treasurer Eugene Sheggrud, KDØBUO, for details.

The Mora Open Repeater Association [MORA] is a 501.c.3 non-profit organization. Dues and donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.