



ARRL Midwest Division Newsletter August 2020



Midwest Division Amateur Wins Hiram Percy Maxim Award

by Rod Blocksome, K0DAS

The Hiram Percy Maxim Award is bestowed each year by the ARRL Board of Directors to the ARRL member who best exemplifies the ideals of the league established by the founder of the ARRL over 100 years ago – Hiram Percy Maxim, W1AW. What is unique about this award is that eligible candidates must be 21 years or younger at the time of nomination. Candidates for the award are first submitted to the Programs & Services Committee. The PSC then submits the selected candidate to the full board for approval.

I'm proud to announce the recipient of the Hiram Percy Maxim Award for 2020 is Jakob M. Nagel, AD0JA, of Wright City, MO. Here is the Motion I submitted to the ARRL board of directors at our July meeting. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

*PSC Motion 4
Moved: Mr. Blocksome
Second: Mr. Holden*

WHEREAS Jacob M. Nagel, AD0JA, has been licensed since 2012 and has continually demonstrated he exemplifies the spirit of Amateur Radio with learning new technologies, providing community service and helping with emergency communications; and

WHEREAS, Nagel has been instrumental in providing technical assistance to the OKAW Valley Amateur Radio Club and the Egyptian Radio Club of Illinois for the installation and upgrading of their club repeaters; and

WHEREAS, Nagel has donated significant time and resources working with the Germantown (IL) Fire Department, advising them on upgrading their communication systems; and

WHEREAS, Nagel has shared his knowledge and love of the hobby at numerous hamfests and events, including speaking at the 2016 Dayton Hamvention Youth Forum; and



ARRL Midwest Div. Newsletter — Aug. 2020 p. 2



WHEREAS, Nagel shares his expertise in on-line forums and as an administrator for the RepeaterBook.com forums; and

WHEREAS, Nagel has been actively involved in such projects as the River City Robots organization and the Channel Cats FRC team, allowing him to integrate the knowledge he has gained through amateur radio with other technical ventures in electronics;

THEREFORE, The ARRL Board of Directors bestows on Jacob M. Nagel, ADØJA, the 2020 Hiram Percy Maxim Award.

Congratulations Jakob !



The Future of Our Hobby !

by Ron Lowrance, K4SX

Recently I have read articles and hear commentary by Ham operators that Amateur Radio's future may be in jeopardy and no longer exist in the future. This subject has been discussed and written about as long as I have been a licensed Amateur Radio operator. Ham Radio, as it is referred to, is an extraordinary global communication network, respected by governments worldwide. What we as licensed operators do with it going forward is all of our responsibility.

With that said, below is my perspective at a high level regarding these dire predictions.

1. Is Amateur Radio doomed to die out in the not too distant future?

Amateur Radio (Ham Radio) in my opinion is NOT going to go away and no longer exist in the future. I have been listening to comments like this since I came into this wonderful hobby January 7, 1963, as a young boy. When the "war" between SSB and AM was raging in the late 50's and early 60's many people made dire predictions for Ham Radio. When the ARRL instituted Incentive Licensing in the 60's and changed the licensing structure, many got very upset and proclaimed doom and gloom for Ham Radio and the end to the ARRL. When the FCC changed the licensing requirements and eliminated Morse Code as a license requirement, the Ham community was in an uproar and once again proclaimed the demise of Amateur Radio. As we now know, Morse Code (CW) is now a desired mode of communication, being pursued by many who were not required to learn it and has become as popular as ever. For a view of all the changes that have taken place over the years go to the following link; <https://ema.arrl.org/a-history-of-amateur-radio-license-changes/>

Articles written and discussions within the Ham community continue to proclaim the same message of Ham Radio's demise. Ham Radio is **not** going away but continues to evolve and change over time with respect to technology advancements and spectrum usage.

2. Do band conditions affect the general Ham Radio population's attitude toward our hobby?

The past SC24, we are now in SC25, did not produce very good band conditions. This was discouraging for many and I believe created a perspective of limitations within our hobby. As an example, for some of us, band conditions produced lots of DX we just had



to change our operating habits based on the time of day and band of choice. Now that we are at the very beginning of SC25, band conditions on HF will begin to improve with the peak occurring somewhere around 2025, + or -. If the latest scientific predictions are correct, SC25 will be one the best on record, <https://arxiv.org/pdf/2006.15263.pdf>. This will most likely fuel and energize a more positive view of Ham Radio and I believe bring new licensees into the hobby and those back to Ham Radio who lost interest.

3. Taking advantage of the vast technical and operating facets of Amateur Radio

There is absolutely no way any one person can master all of the aspects of this hobby. As a matter of fact, the hobby is more technical than the average Ham operator is able to comprehend, including me. I believe this challenge draws people to our hobby.

The Ham Radio population as compared to the US population has for the most part always been a very small percentage overall. Amateur Radio was never going to be a vocation entered by the masses. Since Ham Radio is technical in nature, not all would be naturally attracted to become a licensed Amateur Radio operator. But for those who are not as technical and want to become part of Amateur Radio, they can be attracted to the hobby through the challenges of contesting, award achievement, community service, and rag chewing with people across the globe which build a life-long network of acquaintances/friends who have a similar interest both in and out of Amateur Radio.

The list of interests in Ham Radio are vast, for example; DX chasing, award chasing, satellite communication, moon bounce communication, equipment building (home brewing), collecting and restoring older equipment, antenna and feedline design, VHF/UHF communication (near and far), repairing equipment, software development for Amateur Radio, rag chewing, and the list goes on and on. For this and many other reasons Ham Radio will not die!

4. Closing thoughts

All of us within the hobby should consider taking a more active role in mentoring new Hams and even mentoring those Hams who have lost interest and are no longer active. Positive thinking always endears those within Ham Radio and those outside of Amateur Radio. One important aspect to always consider is how the public perceives Amateur Radio. Our actions and attitudes make a big difference.

I certainly hope Ham Radio exists for many years to come. I believe it will and with all of us supporting and promoting Amateur Radio it most definitely will. One more thing; worldwide involvement and support of Amateur Radio is one of the critical factors ensuring this hobby will exist in some form or the other for the foreseeable future.



BEARS/MDC ARC Field Day Report

by Eric Zust, W0TT

The BEARS/MDC ARC have been operating Field Day as a club since 1971, either as a Class A portable station, a Class F EOC station, or jointly with a First-Responder organization. See a summary of club results at: <http://w0ma.org/index.php/field-day/8-field-day-history>

This year would prove to be different because of the Covid 19 Pandemic, a St. Louis City and County shutdown, and the company's EOC being closed except for limited personnel and essential operation.

The ARRL recognized these challenges and instituted temporary rules waivers that would allow club members to operate from their home QTH's and would be allowed to submit scores to be combined into a club total. <http://www.arrl.org/news/temporary-rule-waivers-announced-for-2020-arrl-field-day>. So in accordance with these waivers, the BEARS did not plan their typical group activity, but instead encouraged their members to operate from home stations, or in small-group portable stations.

Here are the results of these distributed operations (may not include all entries):

BEARS members participating and submitting as: Boeing Employees ARS - St. Louis								
Call	Class	Section	CW	Digital	Phone	Power Multiplier	Bonus Points	Claimed Score
AAØCL	1B1B	MO	150			5X	250	1750
ABØRX	1B1	MO		98	12	2X	250	666
ADØWX	1E	MO		9	102	2X	250	490
K2DP	1D	MO			401	1X	50	451
KFØADW	1D	MO			17	2X	50	84
WØTT	1D	MO	948			2X	50	3842
WBØQLU	1D	MO	33	8	111	2X	150	536
Total - Boeing Employees ARS - St. Louis								7819



The ARRL temporary rules waiver allowed each participant to submit his scores for only a single club, so several of our BEARS members operated Field Day, but submitted their scores for a different club:

other BEARS members participating in 2020 Field Day			
AAØVE	1E	MO	St. Louis QRP Society
NØLD	3D	OK	Edmond Amateur Radio Society (EARS)
WØDF	1D	MO	St. Louis QRP Society
W9MXC	1D	IL	Lewis and Clark Radio Club
WB8EJN	1E	MO	Multi-op with AEØDC, 30 6M QSOs from home QTH, not submitted

All in all, it was pleasing to see a dozen BEARS members operating Field Day at their home QTH's, or at portable operations.

Here are four vignettes describing the Field Day operations of club members:

Gary - AAØCL

The operating station picture shows my tablet computer sitting on a small Coleman cooler. I had to put it up there in order to insert the power plug into the bottom of the tablet. The Samsung tablet runs Windows 10 and feeds from the camper's 12 volt system. Everything ran off the two parallel flooded-cell marine batteries, including lights and vent fan. I had no AC power. Batteries were kept charged during the day by the single 190 W solar panel on the roof (separate picture). Charge dropped to 73% during the night and was charged back up to 100% in about 1/2 hour or so.



AA0CL Operating Position



AA0CL Solar Arrays



I ran the QRP exercise with my K3 radio. The KX3 would have been much more efficient but it needs some work and I had plenty of battery after all. Of course, with field antenna (Buddipole) and QRP, I'm not even thinking of running a frequency. All was search and pounce.

Buddipole antenna is set up with both vertical and dipole antennas. 40 meters uses the shock-corded whip and two radials, running east and west.

Twenty meters uses the dipole. "Negative" lead is common between one leg of the dipole and the two radials, so the dipole legs are not the same length - but they're amazingly close. This is the same antenna configuration I used last year at my sister's farm, so I thought the initial set-up would be the same.

Not hardly. Surroundings have a big effect on the Buddipole and the initial tune-up gave me a 1/2-hour late start into the event.



AA0CL Buddipole Antenna



George - ABØRX

I operated Class 1B1 at Taum Sauk State Park in Southeastern MO. I made 98 Digital QSOs and 12 Phone, 208 QSO points, 250 Bonus points for a claimed score of 666 (Yikes). That's how it went this year. I had a lot of setup issues this year. Lots of trouble getting the antennas up and the wires kept getting caught in the trees. Had unacceptable SWR on 20M and 40M. Ended up having to replace the 40M antenna and punted on 20M.

Also planned on running SO2R with one station on digital and the second on SSB but had trouble getting the 2nd station up and running.

Since the band was open, I spent most of the time on 6M FT8. Went to 40M SSB after it got dark and 6M closed. Just got a run going and had to QRT for lightening. The Next morning, I expected a lot of activity on 40 and 80M SSB but found very little. Switched to 40M FT8 then went back to 6M FT8 when it opened back up.

Got several new grid squares on 6m so it wasn't all a loss.



ABØRX Camp and Operating Position



AB0RX Antenna Amid Trees



Bruce - KFØADW

Bruce is a new ham, first licensed earlier this year, so this was obviously his first Field Day. And unfortunately he had to go-it-alone as a Class 1D operation for the reasons discussed earlier.

He operated SSB and made QSOs with VT, WI, AL, GA, TX, MD, VA, OK, AR and NH. He was able to hear many more stations, but couldn't break through the pile-ups with 100 watts and no directional antenna.

He had some challenges with the logging and submittal. He wasn't able to run N1MM on his Apple ecosystem, and instead used a MacOS logging program called RUMlogNG that captures frequency and mode from the radio. A callsign lookup function (hamqth, qrz, etc.) can populate each QSO. Unfortunately, it wasn't set up for ARRL Field Day and therefore wouldn't export a Cabrillo format file. He found another MacOS contest logging program called Skookum Logger that enabled me him to construct a Field Day log and enter his QSOs with the ARRL.

Good Job Bruce, on your first time out!



KFØADW in his Shack



Eric - WØTT

I operated from my home QTH using my usual favorite CW mode, and my calling-CQ style. I did not use the amplifier so as to score a 2X power multiplier for each QSO.

I ran “Sweepstakes” style, calling CQ and trying to maintain a good QSO rate. But changing bands when the rate died down a bit and there was greater activity on a different band. I operated my full waking time during the 24 hr contest period, and made 963 QSOs with a net of 948 after dupes.

At 1800 UTC on Sunday I “pulled the big switch” and took a much needed nap. I came back to the station a few hours later, and only then remembered that D-class stations are allowed to use the full 27 hour period. This would have enabled me to break 1000 QSOs, something that I’ve never done in a single-op contest effort. My bad!

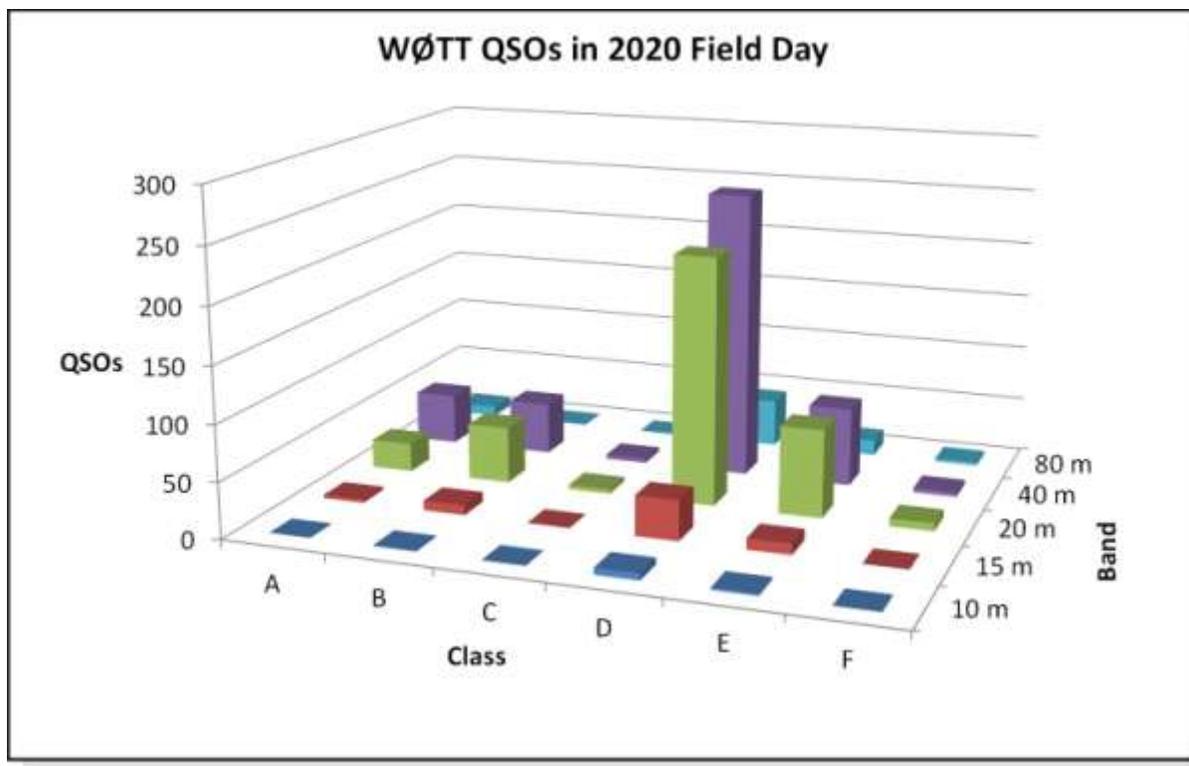
While operating, I got the impression that there was much more Field Day activity than in previous years, since I was maintaining a good QSO rate throughout the whole time period. In previous years, I remember some “dead times” where QSO activity would fall way off.

I justified this by the Covid situation and rules waiver, which I believe drove many operators away from their clubs’ Class A stations, and into Class D or E home stations.

This notion was somewhat confirmed in the July 16 ARRL Letter: <http://www.arrl.org/arrlletter?issue=2020-07-16>, where ARRL Contest Program Manager Paul Bourque - N1SFE quoted:

"As many participants chose to operate from home this year, and given the 2020 rules waivers, we have seen a tremendous increase in entries over last year's event."

To further test this notion, I plotted my QSOs vs bands and entry classes.



Looking across the depth axis shows that 20 and 40m were my “bread and butter” bands where most of my QSOs were made. And this is very similar to my long term experience from previous years, while operating CW from the Midwest.

But looking at the horizontal axis shows a very interesting effect. The vast majority of my QSOs were made with Class D and E stations, operating from their home QTHs. This is the reverse of my long-term experience where the preponderance of participants operated from traditional Class A or B portable stations.



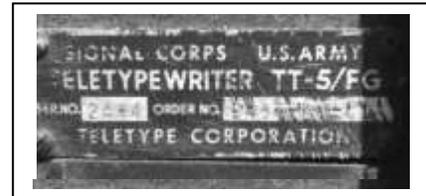
EISENHOWER MUSEUM NEEDS HELP

by Bruce Graves, NØROL

Attention RTTY operators! The Dwight Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum in Abilene, KS has received a fully operational World War II Model 15 teletype machine, along with its radio interface and many rolls of paper, that it wants to display for educational purposes. But it needs a little help in restoring its appearance and getting it up and running.



This Model 15 is exactly the type of machine that the communications officer on General Eisenhower's staff would have used for orders and messages from the general to his commanders in the field. The steel nameplate of the U.S. Army Signal Corps is clearly visible at the top of its housing.



If any clubs or RTTY operators are willing to help, contact NØROL, brucewdm@gmail.com. This would make a great public service project for a worthy organization and would generate gratitude and amazement not only for the museum but also for members of the public who would be fortunate enough to see this classic machine in operation, clacking and clanking away to produce written messages from radio waves snatched out of the air.

<https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/visit-us/virtual-visit>





Does Antenna Height Really Matter?

by Rod Blocksome, K0DAS

Some say it does. Here is a current photo of my 3-element StepIR beam.



As you can see its height above average terrain is 12-inches. So what's going on here? Is it:

- A. An HOA compliant antenna installation?
- B. An experimental NVIS antenna for 20 through 10 meters?
- C. A repaired antenna awaiting re-installation by tower climber since I turned 75 and XYL doesn't think I have any business climbing towers now?
- D. An innovative cost saving antenna installation?

Let's examine each of these possibilities. First most of today's hams live under some pretty strict antenna regulations promulgated by the Home Owner Associations. There is a TV insurance commercial that says it all. So this antenna might possibly pass muster – especially if I painted it green in the summer and white in the winter. Some would say this is “out-of-box thinking” while others just label it “crazy talk”.



NVIS stands for “Near Vertical Incidence Skywave”. In other words an antenna radiation pattern that directs most of your RF energy straight up to refract off the ionosphere above you and return your signal back to hams out to a few hundred miles away. Antennas low to the earth in terms of wavelength are ideal for NVIS. But the optimum frequencies are always below 10 MHz. So 14 to 28 MHz isn’t going to work well for NVIS but most of the RF from this antenna at 12-inches is going to be dissipated in the soil so it really doesn’t matter. The signal will be very weak – but hey, it’s “experimental”. You could dump the full legal limit of RF power into this antenna and find yourself welcomed with open arms by the QRPP gang.

Option C. doesn’t need much explanation. We are all orbiting the Sun once a year. Sooner or later, after you have made a lot of these trips around the sun, you will find yourself in this situation. The solution - put a few bucks each year into the “antenna fund” so in the future you can hire a tower climber – or else be content with a low antenna.

Option D. really does save money. There is no rotator required, no tower, less coax, and little or no TVI. Contacts on the bands are few and far between which leads to less time on the radio and more time for the XYL’s “Honey Do List”.

The correct answer (printed upside down) is “C” (in case anyone really cares). And remember, “Higher is Better”. 73s and Good DX - de Rod, KODAS

Direction Finders and Fox Hunting

by Pat Connell, W0OJU

I am trying to drum up interest in direction finding in the Omaha area. My long term goal (and hopefully the Aksarben Radio Club) is to organize and host a Midwest fox hunting competition in 2021.

We have two local club members who have done it and are little shy about addressing a bigger group. (I did it last with my father and my uncle when I was eight years old.)

I am looking for some leads as to who might be willing to do a Zoom presentation for our club?

I believe that this is something that we might be able to drum some school competition and maybe get some new hams in the process.

Thanks in advance for your assistance.

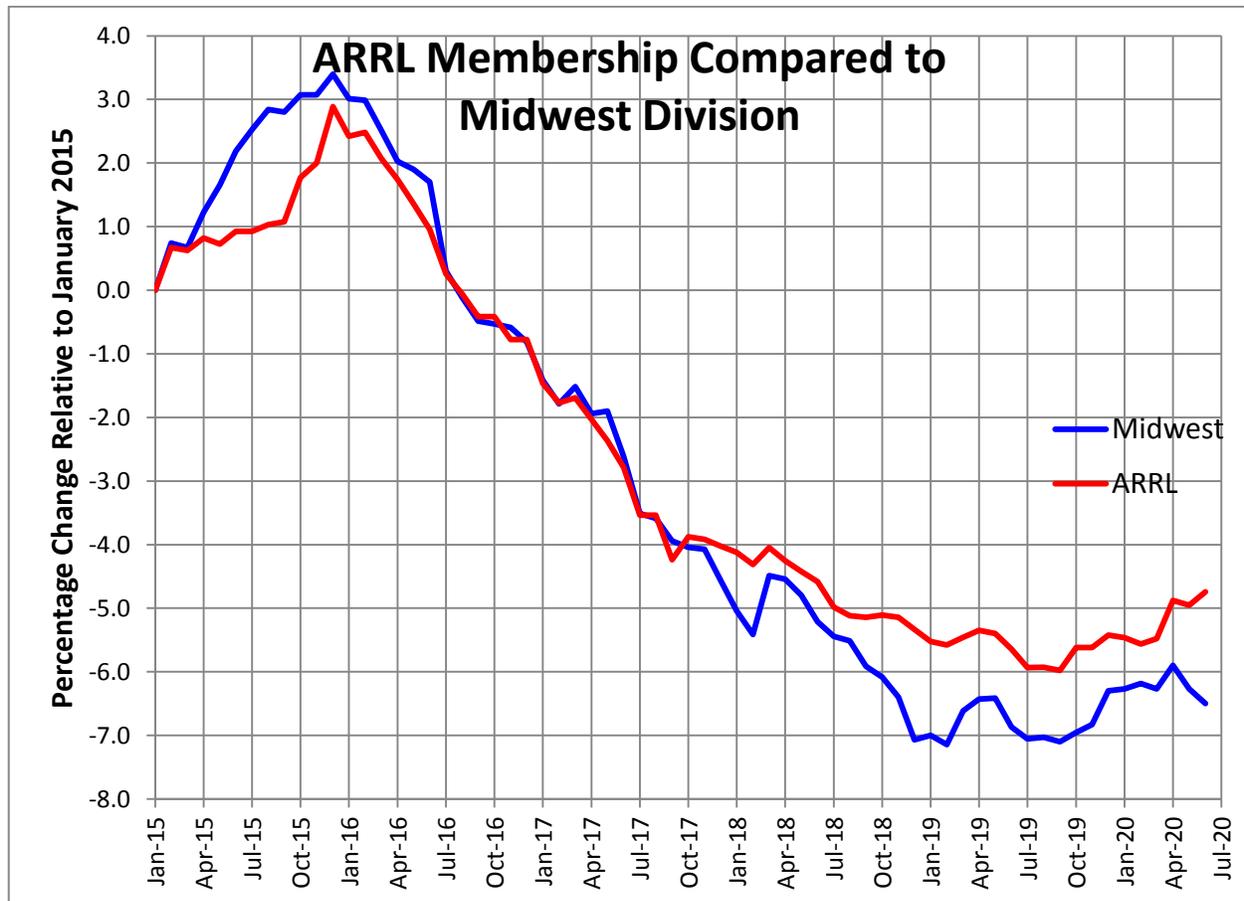
Pat Connell W0OJU formerly N0BNY, KA0ELX, WN0PMW, V3MK, V3MC, VP1MK
Vice President Aksarben Radio Club



ARRL Membership Statistics Update

by Rod Blocksome, K0DAS

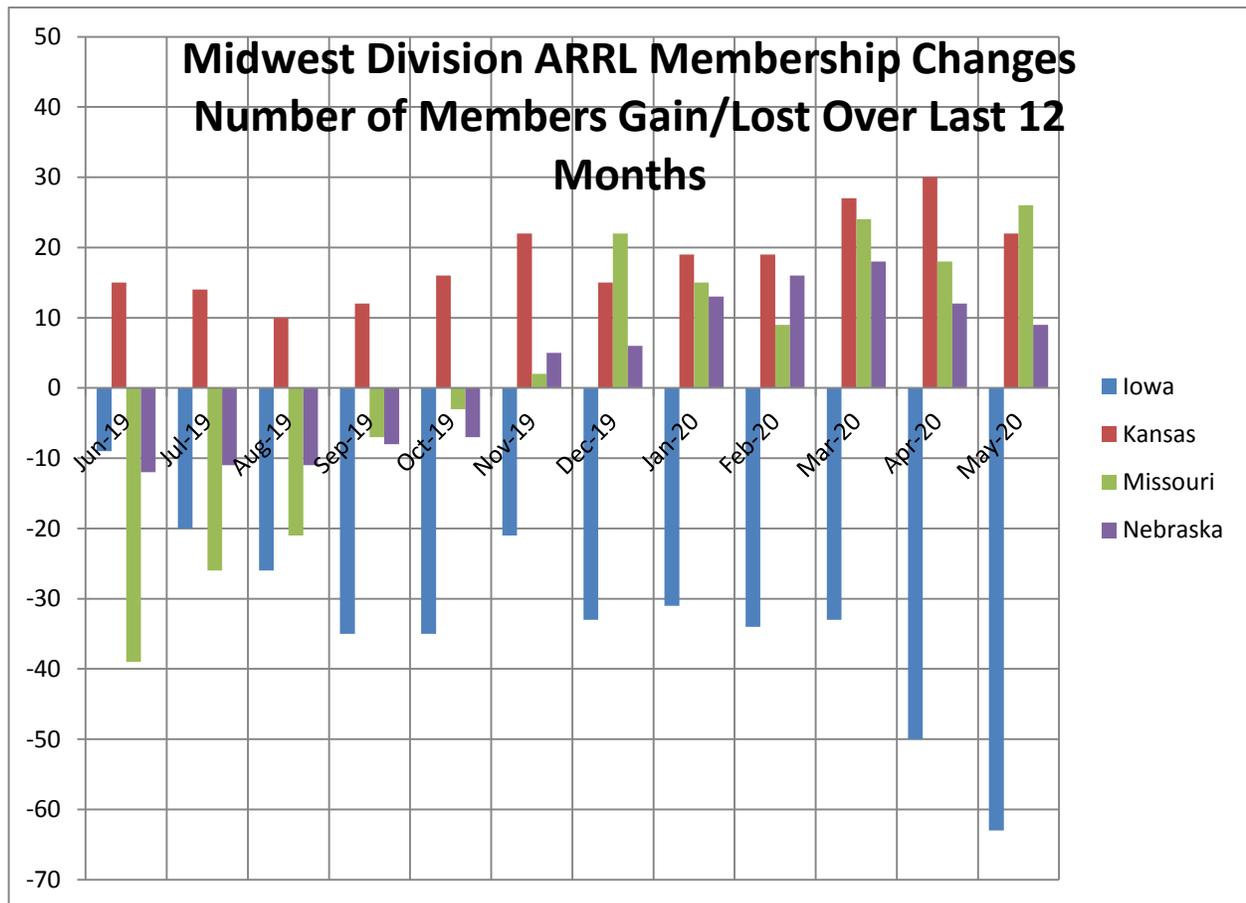
During the month of June total ARRL membership increased 0.2% while the Midwest Division decreased by 0.2%. The Midwest Division had a decrease of 16 members in June – putting us back to a total of 6,546. Below are the charts updated as of **June 30, 2020**. Perhaps the virus and our lack of hamfests and club meetings are the reasons. But let's get innovative and reverse this trend. Invite a non-member ham to consider joining ARRL and explain to him/her the benefits of membership. It is so much more than just a subscription to QST. Invite them to browse the ARRL web site at www.arrl.org





Included this month is the chart showing section **membership numbers** relative to a base line of 12 months prior. As you can see, the Kansas, Nebraska, & Missouri Sections have maintained a positive membership for the last 12 months. Conversely, Iowa has done just the opposite for the past 12-months. Nebraska and Missouri initially declined but then climbed into a positive gain about Christmas time. I can't explain the reasons, but armed with the data, let's all work hard to bring more hams into ARRL membership.

It won't be easy with all the hamfests canceled, but hopefully this will change in a few months. I'm very concerned with the continued decline of ARRL members in Iowa. If anyone has ideas on turning this trend around, please let me know.





Midwest Division ARRL Hamfests & Conventions

08/08/2020 - 08/09/2020 - [CVARC Hamfest, ARRL Iowa State Convention](#) – CANCELED

08/09/2020 - [St Charles Amateur Radio Club Hamfest](#) – CANCELED

08/22/2020 – **Joplin ARC Tailgate**

Location: Joplin, MO

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Joplin Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

Website: <http://joplinhamfest.org>

09/05/2020 - **Reno County Kansas Amateur Radio Association 2020 Hamfest**

Location: Hutchinson, KS

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Reno County Kansas Amateur Radio Association

Website: <http://www.rckara.org>

10/03/2020 - **Wichita Area Hamfest**

Location: Wichita, KS

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Valley Center Amateur Radio Club

Website: <http://www.vcarc.org>

10/04/2020 - **Southeast Iowa Hamfest**

Location: Columbus Junction, IA

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Muscatine ARC & Washington Area ARC

Website: <http://www.MuscatineARC.org/se-ia-hamfest>

10/31/2020 - [ARRL Nebraska State Convention 2020](#)

Location: Lincoln, NE

Type: ARRL Convention

Sponsor: Lincoln Amateur Radio Club

Website: <http://www.lincolnhamfest.org>

10/31/2020 - **Halloween Hamfest** – CANCELED

11/21/2020 - **Northeast Nebraska Hamfest**

Location: Norfolk, NE

Type: ARRL Hamfest

Sponsor: Elkhorn Valley Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

Website: <http://www.qsl.net/evarc>



State QSO Parties in the Midwest Division

Kansas

August 29-30, 2020, Sponsored by Bob Harder, W0BH, Hesston, KS. For details go to <http://ksgsoparty.org>

Iowa

September 19, 2020, Story County ARC Sponsor: <http://www.w0yl.com>

Midwest Division Special Event Stations

01/01/2020 | Iowa State Parks On-the-Air Centennial Celebration

Jan 1-Dec 31, 0000Z-2359Z, various, Dubuque, IA. Great River Amateur Radio Club. All bands, all frequencies, as available. Certificate & QSL. IASPOTA-2020, c/o Great River Amateur Radio Club, P.O. Box 1384, Dubuque, IA 52004. Members will operate with their own call signs from state parks throughout Iowa. Operating as time permits, mostly weekends. QSL for contact; certificate for 5 parks. See website for complete information.

08/12/2020 | Iowa State Parks On-the-Air Centennial – Fort Atkinson

Aug 12, 1500Z-1900Z, W0OEL, Fayette, IA. Rural Iowa and Buchanan County Amateur Radio Clubs. 14.240 7.240. Certificate. Great River Amateur Radio Club, P.O. Box 1384, Dubuque, IA 52004. IASPOTA-2020 Fort Atkinson is not the stuff of which legends are made. Fort Atkinson was built to keep the Winnebago Indians on Neutral Ground (a 40-mile-wide strip of land established by the Treaty of 1830) after their removal from Wisconsin in 1840, and to provide protection for them from the Sioux, Sauk, Fox and from white intruders on Indian land. Certificate & QSL managed by Great River Amateur Radio Club, P.O. Box 1384, Dubuque, IA 52004. QSL for contact; certificate for 5 parks. See website for complete information, <http://www.w0dbq.org/rule> <https://www.w0oel.com>

ARRL Midwest Division Leadership



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Kansas Section Manager: Ron Cowan, KB0DTI

Missouri Section Manager: Cecil Higgins, AC0HA

Nebraska Section Manager: Matt Anderson, KA0BOJ

DX Advisory Committee: John Yodis, K2VV (MO)

Contest Advisory Committee: Glenn Johnson, W0GJ (IA)

Midwest Division Volunteer Counsel: Craig Long, K0CSL (IA)

Division Legislative Action Chair: Mike Edwards, WB9M (MO)

Legislative Action Coordinators: Nick Critelli, K0PCG (IA); Bruce Frahm, K0BJ (KS & NE); Mike Edwards, WB9M (MO).

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Midwest Division's website: <http://www.arrlmidwest.org/>