

# THE PLATTSMOUTH AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

# Communicator

# July 2018

## Reverse Beacon Network Beta Testing Separate Spot Stream for FT8

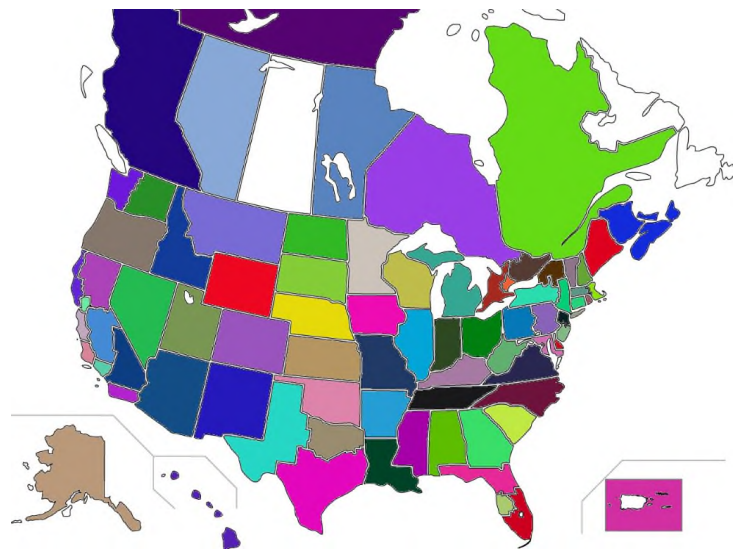
(ARRL 06/12/2018) As a beta test, the popular Reverse Beacon Network (RBN) has announced that it's now offering a separate telnet feed for FT8 spots (telnet.reversebeacon.net port 7001), in addition to the current spot feed (telnet.reversebeacon.net port 7000), which will be repurposed to handle only CW and RTTY spots. In addition, a beta version of Aggregator Version 5 that can handle FT8 spots received from WSJT-X will be available on the RBN website, with instructions on how RBN node operators can configure their nodes to spot FT8 call signs on one or more bands; this will not interfere with the ability to spot CW and RTTY call signs, the RBN team assured in its announcement, explaining its reasoning for the move. The beta test follows a limited alpha test aimed at getting a feel for the spot load and other implications of carrying FT8 spots on the RBN.

"The most striking characteristic of FT8 spots is their sheer quantity," the RBN announcement said, citing weekday statistics from May 23 and 24 when FT8 spots represented 86% and 87% of all spots, respectively, while CW spots were 13% and 14%, respectively, and RTTY spots were below 1%. Throughput on both days totaled some 30,000 spots.

"Whether due to the startling popularity of the new mode, or to the ability to spot stations at 22 dB below the noise level, it seems obvious that adding FT8 spots to our spot flow could have a huge impact on the infrastructure of the RBN," the RBN announcement said. "These numbers suggest that if only 20 – 30 RBN nodes added FT8 spots, those spots could outnumber the total CW and RTTY spots being delivered by the 140 – 150 nodes currently active on the network, doubling the total required throughput."

The RBN team said it wanted to find out whether RBN servers would be up to the task before the fall contest season. "Operators of 'retail' DX clusters are encouraged to offer the option of RBN spots with and without FT8 spots, as they now often give users a choice between spot streams with and without Skimmer spots, and to advertise when they begin to carry FT8 spots," the announcement said.

A beta version of Aggregator Version 5 that can handle



## 2018 Field Day June 23-24

Field Day is this weekend. Please join us at Young Memorial Park in Murray, NE. It's easy to find, we are in the park shelter right at the base of the water tower. Come for an hour or two or stay the whole time. Not used to operating? That's OK, it's a good time to practice and learn a new skill. You can work with an experienced and licensed operator even if you don't have HF privileges. It just might be the incentive to upgrade.

Operating isn't required, it's also a good time to see what's going on and to visit with some friends.

Last year we contacted all 50 states, 8 provinces and the Virgin Islands, missing only Saskatchewan, Newfoundland/Labrador and Puerto Rico for a clean sweep.

We made 509 CW contacts and 509 phone contacts for a total of 1527 points. With the low power bonus that made 3054 points for contacts and another 1150 points for the bonus items of Emergency Power, publicity, location public information Site Visits, Safety Officer and submittal on the web we had a grand total of 4204 points.

We plan to start setup around 9am Saturday with the meeting around Noon and operating starting at 1pm and continuing for 24 hours. You might want to bring a lawn chair and a cooler with water and your favorite soda.

*(Continued on Page 3)*

**2018  
PAID MEMBERSHIP**

- AGØL .....Steve Loyd [E]
- AIØN..... Chuck Engberg\* [E]
- K3CRF.....Dave Smith [E]
- K5LBS ..... Jerry Gault [E]
- KA0IJY ..... Keith Keene [E]
- KBØFSI ..... Pat McCollum [T]
- KBØLF .....Fred Ericksen [E]
- KBØOGO .....Roger Behrns\* [E]
- KBØZZT.....George Bellairs [T]
- KCØDTK.....Joan Bellairs [T]
- KCØHYD ..... John Titsworth [G]
- KCØHYE.....Shirley Titsworth [T]
- KEØXQ.....Bill McCollum [E]
- KGØKR .....Beth Engberg\* [E]
- KIØPY ..... Kevin Faris [E]
- N5SEZ..... Ray McNally [E]
- NØLZH.....John Harrington [T]
- WØDBW.....Derek Winterstien [G]
- WØZY.....Dave McLaughlin [E]
- WØZYD.....Debbie McLaughlin [G]
- W3DCQ ..... Bill Pulsifer [G]

*\*Charter Members #New Ham*

Note: Thanks to all who have paid their dues and many who have given additional donations. All donations are greatly appreciated. Please let me know of any corrections.

**Meetings are 8am the last Saturday of most months at Mom's Café in Plattsmouth.**

**Tuesday night get-togethers at Plattsmouth Burger King at 7 PM**



- P.A.R.C. Officers**
- President**  
**KBØOGO .....Roger Behrns**  
**rb55930@windstream.net**
- Vice President**  
**KCØHYD .....John Titsworth**
- Secretary**  
**WØDBW.....Derek Winterstien**
- Treasurer**  
**KIØPY ..... Kevin Faris**
- Newsletter Editor**  
**KBØOGO .....Roger Behrns**  
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**Louisville, NE 68037**  
**(402) 234-6775**

**Repeaters:**

443.45<sup>+</sup> is located in downtown Omaha  
 443.225<sup>+</sup> is located in Murray.  
 147.48 Simplex is also in Murray.

**Web Site**  
**[www.kb0smx.com](http://www.kb0smx.com)**  
 Maintained by Derek (WØDBW)

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**MINUTES of  
the  
MEETING**

The May 26, 2018 meeting was held at Mom's Café in Plattsmouth. The meeting was called to order at 8:20 am by President Roger Behrns.

Those in attendance were Roger (KBØOGO), Kevin (KIØPY), Derek (WØDBW), Steve (AGØL), Dave (WØZY), Debbie (WØZYD), John (KCØHYD), Shirley (KCØHYE), Beth (KGØKR), Gary (KBØKYT), Keith (KA0IJY), John (WR5I) and Jim (KGØRD).

The Minutes of the April meeting were not available.

The treasurer reported receiving dues of \$15 and no expenses which leaves \$285 in the repeater fund and \$735.35 in the general fund for a balance of \$1020.35. Steve moved and Keith seconded a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Passed.

It was noted that at the last meeting Gary was appointed as Field Day Chairman and Roger was appointed as Safety Officer.

The Village Board of Murray approved our use of the park for Field Day. There was some additional planning and discussion on Field Day.

The meeting adjourned on a motion by Shirley and second by Derek at 8:30.

PLATTSMOUTH ARC MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FORM					
Name		Call Sign		Class	
Address		City		State	Zip
E-Mail			Phone #		
Spouse Name			Call Sign		Class
Membership Type <input type="checkbox"/> Primary(\$15) <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse (\$5) <input type="checkbox"/> Student (\$5) <input type="checkbox"/> New Ham		● Additional donations are gratefully accepted. ● New Hams are free during the year they receive their first license. ● Please give this form and dues to the club treasurer or any club officer.		Donation for: <input type="checkbox"/> Repeater fund <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <input type="checkbox"/> General	
Any additional e-mail or cell phone #s?		Amount: <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer my donation to be anonymous.			

**Meeting Calendar**  
**Field Day June 23-24**  
**Meeting at Noon, 6/23**  
**at the Murray site.**  
**8am, July 28, 2018**  
**at Mom's Café**

**Field Day 2018**  
**is June 23-24**  
<http://www.arrl.org/field-day>

## MARS Urging Members to Use Computers that are Isolated from the Internet

(ARRL 05/29/2018) US Army Military Auxiliary Radio System (MARS) Headquarters is recommending that MARS members “migrate to stand-alone computer systems for [MARS] radio operations,” subject to the availability of a dedicated computer.

These computer systems (or their associated local area networks) should be ‘air-gapped’ from the internet,” Army MARS Headquarters Operations Officer David McGinnis, K7UXO, said in a message to members. “Although not a requirement for membership at this time, we will continue make this a condition of certain parts of our exercises.”

McGinnis pointed to remarks by Cisco researchers in a recent Ars Technica article about VPNFilter malware: “Hackers possibly working for an advanced nation have infected more than 500,000 home and small-office routers around the world with malware that can be used to collect communications, launch attacks on others, and permanently destroy the devices with a single command.”

McGinnis told Army MARS members that MARS Headquarters does not discuss specific cyber threats with MARS members or with the public. “We also cannot confirm or deny information about specific threats,” he said, adding that he had “no specific knowledge” about VPNFilter malware and no comment on the Cisco report.

For communication exercises this year, MARS established conditions for a certain portion of the drill that requires use of standalone computer systems “normally not connected to the internet.”

MARS member and software consultant Steve Hajducek, N2CKH, has recommend that members using the MIL-STD (military standard) Data Modem Terminal (MS-DMT) communications software employ stand-alone computers in conjunction with the software as a best practice for achieving a high level of performance. McGinnis said discussion of stand-alone computer systems on Hadjuceks’s support forums and their use in communications exercises let Army MARS Headquarters weigh in on the discussion. He pointed out that the MARS mission assumes that an internet connection is not available. He said used or refurbished PCs are widely available at low cost and could be dedicated to serve a stand-alone function.

“The most effective way to protect against threats that come from the internet is to isolate from the internet,” McGinnis added.

“Despite a stand-alone environment, we assume that all computer systems in private citizens’ hands are infected with hostile software code of some sort and are not secured,” he said. “No amount of virus and malware scanning software changes that assumption. We can, however, isolate computers by disconnecting them from the international network in which hostile software will report and receive instruction.”

McGinnis said future versions of MARS software will check for an internet connection and will disable the software. “We understand this lock-out does not provide security in and of itself; rather, its value is in changing the behavior of mem-

*RBN (Continued from Page 1)*

FT8 spots received from WSJT-X will be available on the RBN website, along with instructions on how RBN node operators can configure their nodes to spot FT8 signals on one or more bands.

“We will closely monitor how the RBN servers handle this new load, as more and more nodes begin sending FT8 spots,” the announcement said, adding that the RBN reserves the right to take any necessary steps to protect the core mission of the RBN, including shutting off the FT8 stream on major CW and RTTY contest weekends or discontinuing FT8 spotting altogether. Even then, PSKReporter would continue to carry FT8 spots, the announcement pointed out.

“We hope we’re not doing this in a vacuum,” the RBN team said, noting that it’s been collecting the views of contesters and DXers, “and we think that we’re headed in the right direction.”

The RBN team consists of KM3T, N4ZR, PY1NB, SV3SJ, and W3OA.

<http://www.arrl.org/news/reverse-beacon-network-beta-testing-separate-spot-stream-for-ft8>  
<http://www.reversebeacon.net/>

## Hamvention Forum Videos Now Searchable on YouTube

(ARRL 05/31/2018) Videos of some Hamvention 2018 forums are available in the YouTube Dayton Hamvention 2018 videos playlist. Among those available are the TAPR Forum, the SDR Forum, and the HamSCI Forum. (Thanks to George Byrkit, K9TRV)

<http://www.arrl.org/news/hamvention-forum-videos-now-searchable-on-youtube>

TAPR Forum: <https://youtu.be/ejfdhEhEDvU>

SDR Forum: <https://youtu.be/wIRcpTjcPcI>

HamSCI Forum: <https://youtu.be/S6YHnmXlln0>

bers,” he explained.

He encouraged MARS to monitor for internet security threats and determine how to secure their internet-connected and stand-alone devices.

MARS Program Manager Paul English, WD8DBY, told ARRL that the MARS goal is to isolate MARS members’ computers from the internet as much as possible. “Having stand-alone computers running as few other resources than MARS-related software improves the overall MIL-STD system software performance and further isolates computers from infections, malware, and hacking,” he said. English added that isolating the computers that members use for MARS-related activity is “a goal, but has not been directed.”

<http://www.arrl.org/news/mars-urging-members-to-use-computers-that-are-isolated-from-the-internet>

<http://usamars.us/>

<https://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2018/05/hackers-infect-500000-consumer-routers-all-over-the-world-with-malware/?amp=1>