

# ARRL Midwest Division Convention

W1AW/Ø

Special Event Station

Joseph A. Council

KØOG

# Guest Operators

- Total number of guest operators: 75
- Guests with no callsign (all were youth): 4
- 20m-10m: 36
- 80m/40m: 38
- Satellites: 1

# Contact Log Synopsis

- Total QSOs: 399
- QSOs by day:
  - Friday QSO: 123
  - Saturday Q: 276
- QSOs by Band:
  - 80m QSOs: 2
  - 40m QSOs: 123
  - 20m QSOs: 68
  - 17m QSOs: 10
  - 15m QSOs: 74
  - 10m QSOs: 8
  - 2m QSOs: 77
  - 70cmQSO(sats): 37
- 4. QSOs by Mode:
  - SSB QSOs: 244
  - FM QSOs: 77
  - CW QSOs: 28
  - PSK31 QSOs: 13
  - Satellite QSOs: 37

# QSLs

- The ADIF log file containing all 399 contacts, as well as the log of guest operators showing name, callsign, station used, and time of operation was provided to Joe Carcia (NJ1Q), W1AW station manager at ARRL Headquarters, who will send QSL cards to all contacts. In addition, QSL card design graphics and suggestions will be provided, as shown below:



# Guest Operator's Certificate



# Lessons Learned

The convention planning committee was asked by several individuals, organizations, and commercial vendors to prepare a general organizational guideline for the benefit of those who may organize conventions in the future.

The following ten “Lessons Learned” is that generalized outline.

## **Lesson 1: How Soon To Start Planning**

Planning for the 2013 ARRL Midwest Division Convention started a full two years before the event with a full planning staff in place and regular monthly planning meetings. It took the first year to get initial speaker commitments and lay the groundwork for attracting vendors. Once the planning for the event was publicly acknowledged, it became easier to attract speakers and vendors. After about a year and a half, a snowball effect began with interested people offering suggestions, some of which were very helpful. Some of the success of our event could be chalked up to luck but our long planning run allowed us to be ready when luck came our way.

## **Lesson 2: Set up a planning organization**

Planning meetings are not simply venues for expressing opinions. Planning activities such as selecting and inviting speakers, contacting vendors, monitoring finances, and so on must each have a person responsible for organizing and reporting on it. Each meeting should include reports from each person, identifying both progress and problems showing up. This allows the full resources of the entire planning group to be marshaled to handle problems before they become critical.



### **Lesson 3: Follow up, follow up, follow up**

People forget that they have promised to do something, especially during long planning time spans. It is a mistake to assume folks outside your group will think your convention or hamfest is as important as you do. Your priorities are not theirs. Periodically check that the folks offering to help you are still willing and able to do so. We encountered situations in which the people we were working with had changed jobs or even moved away. This is especially important as the event date approaches.

## **Lesson 4: Choose your venue well**

The facility you choose for your convention matters. We were very lucky to have an excellent facility with an acre of exhibition hall space, a 700 seat theater, and three 50 seat forum rooms. Many comments from convention attendees indicated that the quality and size of the facility greatly enhanced their experience.

## **Lesson 5: Concentrate on the convention aspect**

Our goal for this event was to make it a convention, not simply a larger hamfest. The difference is that we concentrated on getting great forums and speakers in a nice venue. We paid the air fare for speakers coming from beyond driving distance and provided hotel rooms for the non-commercial speakers. Local hotels helped out providing us with 14 rooms for free. We also provided a large area with tables and chairs for people to gather, rest, and talk. A key point is that the goal of our event was to provide the best experience for attendees that our resources could provide.

## **Lesson 5: Raffle should be for the attendees**

We decided at the beginning that members of the Lebanon Amateur Radio Club and immediate family members would not be eligible to receive prizes. Furthermore, we decided that all prizes would be given out by the end of the convention. Both of these ideas were well received by the people attending. We had a large roller cage for hourly prize drawings but handled higher value items differently. We provided separate ticket tubs for each and did not require people to be present to win those high price prizes. That concept was also well received. Also, we had 13 people working in a large prize area so no one had to wait in line to buy tickets. Note: there is a separate complete review of the raffle available.

## **Lesson 6: Have an Opening Ceremony**

We felt our convention should have an official opening ceremony. We arranged to have the state of Missouri present a proclamation to the visiting ARRL dignitaries. We kept the ceremony to 30 minutes. To help start the convention off on a fun note, we handed out free tickets for raffle for a HF transceiver and a handie-talkie which were both awarded at the end of the ceremony.

## **Lesson 7: Make convention staff easy to identify**

Our convention emphasized the public service aspects of Amateur Radio. As part of that, we ran the convention as a National Incident Management System (NIMS) incident, using Incident Command System (ICS) procedures. To emphasize that, we wore ICS staffing vests. This was appreciated by visiting public service people. An unexpected benefit to these vests was that convention attendees were very happy to be able easily identify staff to get help or answer questions.

## **Lesson 8: Put up lots of signs**

Before the event, we felt we had placed a sufficient number of signs to help people find what they were looking for. We were wrong on that. Once a room becomes crowded with people milling around, signs are hard to see. We should have doubled our sign count. We did provide plenty of handouts with the schedule of forums and other activities. Those handouts were both expected and appreciated.

## **Lesson 9: BE FLEXIBLE**

Throughout both the planning and execution phases of the event, everyone must remain flexible. During planning, few ideas will be universally accepted as the best of what is presented. However, some idea must be chosen to provide structure for additional planning. Individual planners must expect that some their ideas will be considered and rejected by the group and not allow their egos to be wounded by this. As planning progresses, expect ideas and concepts to change. Ideas that might have been rejected early in the process may end being a solution to a problem encountered as planning progresses. Be flexible.



## **Lesson 10: Attitude Control**

Careful, detailed planning can never produce perfect execution. This concept is so obvious that most folks accept it unconditionally during planning. It is surprising how easy it is for this to be forgotten during the event. Once the event begins, there will be confusion, mistakes, and conflicts. Everyone involved must avoid becoming angered. As individuals, we must all avoid letting other folks flared tempers from getting us personally.

# THANKS!

- Thanks to all who helped with the W1AW/Ø operation.
- SPECIAL thanks to Louis, AIØLM for designing and running the reception desk.
- Thanks to all who attended the convention.

73,  
-Joe-  
KØOG