

## **Dakota Division 2021 Annual Report to the ARRL Board of Directors**

### **Membership:**

After three years of flat membership numbers in the Dakota Division, 2021 had a 1.6% increase in our membership totals. The 53 new members brings us to 3,361 members, roughly what the division had five years ago in 2016. While this makes up for the decline experienced in 2017 and 2018, we still have more work to do to achieve our peak membership numbers of 3,486 experienced in December 2015.

### **Hamfests:**

With the easing of in person restrictions hamfests returned to the joy of many. There was a total of thirteen ARRL sanctioned hamfests in the Dakota Division in 2021. Eight of these had some form of ARRL representative in attendance, either a Section Manager, Vice Director, or Director.

The hamfest calendar started slowly with only three hamfests in the first six months. However, it ended with a flurry of five events in September. The Dakota Division Convention closed out the hamfest season on the last weekend of September.

The Dakota Division Convention in Fargo, ND was well attended. Friday night had a good turnout for the Royal Order of Wouff Hong initiation ceremony. Saturday ARRL Forum had almost a packed room to hear CEO David Minster speech via Zoom.

### **Field Day:**

After hearing some of the other directors talk about their field day plans, I decide to visit as many field day sites as possible during the weekend. With Covid still being an issue only 34 groups set up typical field day sites. I managed to visit fourteen sites around southeast Minnesota and the Minneapolis/St Paul area. AE0EE, the Minnesota Section Manager visited roughly six sites. All sites were happy to see a ARRL representative visit and happy with receiving attention for what they were doing. I plan to repeat this in 2022 trying to hit a different group of clubs.

### **Clubs:**

Clubs continue to struggle the Covid situation and to get members involved. At the beginning of the year almost all were doing some sort of virtual meeting, either something like Zoom or on their local 2-meter repeater. While people participated, the personal interaction was missing which made it challenging for some to get involved. By fall we saw the move to mixed meetings with in-person and virtual for those who were not comfortable yet for the in-person part. However, now clubs are moving back to all virtual as Covid continues to do its thing and fills the local hospitals.

During the year 18 presentations were made to clubs, with only one being in person. In July I assisted the Maple Grove Radio Club in their communication support for Bike MS: Ride Across Minnesota. I was paired with the EC from Olmsted County for this two-day event. It was educational for me as the last time I did something like this has been years. The group asked me back for next year.

Having no historical data on club activity in the Dakota Division, I've been able to document 76 active affiliate clubs. For 2022 I've identified 9 clubs with key anniversary affiliation dates, 100, 75, and 50 years. We will be working towards getting them the appropriate recognition over the next year. I also will be working with the section managers this coming year to refine my list of active affiliated clubs.

While researching the affiliated clubs in the Dakota Division, I've identified 45 clubs that appear to be inactive. Some of these I know longer exist. This makes me wonder what is the benefit to the ARRL to keep long time inactive clubs on the affiliated club list? I think we need to develop a process to clean up the list and then any club that has been inactive for 5 to 6 years will be removed, after verification. This would be a big help to future directors, section managers and other field service volunteers to use the list.

**Closing Comments:**

I've had a steep learning curve about the ARRL operations, procedures, and methods. I appreciate all the help and guidance everyone has provided. There is still much to learn, and I will continue to work hard to support the ARRL and the organization.

I've also seen many positive changes at the ARRL. I've received many positive comments from members about what they have seen the past year. I know in the Dakota Division part of the increase in membership numbers is a direct result of these changes. We need to continue to improve our member support and response and move further into improving our support of affiliate clubs.

Respectfully Submitted

Bill Lippert  
ACOW  
Director Dakota Division

Lynn Nelson  
WOND  
Vice Director Dakota Division