

THE COMPUTER CORNER

No. 209. FIELD DAY IS OVER!

By Stan Kaplan, WB9RQR
715 N Dries Street, Saukville 53080 (262) 268-1949
wb9rqr@att.net

Yes, it has come and gone. This is being written on 2Jul, just a couple of days after the end, and insofar as I am aware the network worked fine, with one glitch. Our switch (similar to a router; it routes the data coming in from all the station cables into the main computer) uses 110 VAC. I had it on an uninterruptible power supply (UPS) so that it would continue with good power during the few minutes when the generator was being refilled with gas. Well, the UPS internal battery went bad! No sweat. I had a spare. After plugging in the spare, its internal battery died too! So, we pulled the UPS out of the system and went straight with generator power. It worked fine. The switch was powered down only for a total of about 4 seconds, while changing and removing the UPSs. We lost no data that we know of, and we can check that by comparing the data on each of the station computers with the master data on the main computer. So all is good. Do I know how we did? Not yet. Our data cruncher Zach Yatso (KC9ZNR) will report on that later.

Many of you know that I farm the ORC laptop computers out to members after Field Day is over. That is, computers should not lie on a shelf unused for the 10 months when they are not being prepared for Field Day or actually used for it. Therefore, I loan them to members who can use them. There are several "rules of use" that go with the loan. They must be plugged in at all times (unless you are using them temporarily on your patio or other site where no AC power is available). This is so the power supply can keep the battery charged (laptop batteries can easily be ruined by letting them run down). They must have access to the Internet, via cable or wirelessly, at least once a week for several hours so they can update. They must be returned promptly when called for, usually late April or early May. This is to give us time to digitally clean them up and fit them with any new software. So, if you can use a free laptop for ten months, make it to the next (July) meeting. They will be released to those who want one on a first come/first served basis. They are very nice little machines, with lots of memory, and they use a version of XP that is valid to 2019, so they will update automatically. They also have a current virus scanner and other useful utility programs installed.

When you return the laptop next spring, you will return it to Zach rather than to me. Zach has agreed to be our new Network Guru for Field Day. I introduced computer logging some years ago, followed by logging via a network, and now it is time for someone else to take over. It will be nice to see what Zach's expertise brings to the activity in future years. Thanks, Zach, for volunteering!

Hope you have/had a great 4th of July. Happy Computing!