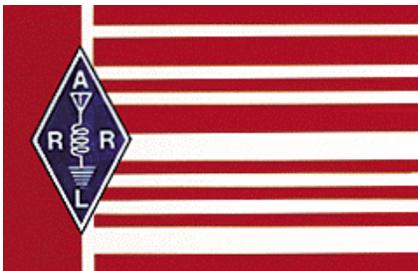




# Branch Signals BCARC Newsletter



## Repeater News



You may have noticed that the club's 2-meter repeater has begun talking to us. Even if it's voice sounds suspiciously like Randy, KI8BM, be assured that it is the repeater talking. The controller was recently reinstalled in the repeater after undergoing a CPU replacement and the addition of a voice chip. After some rewiring of the connection cable, the controller is up and running and sounding good again. Thanks to Randy and Dale for all of their efforts.

As of this writing, the repeater is located at the Sheriff's Department. The plan is to move the receiver to the 911 tower at the State Police post and link across via 440 to the 2-meter transmitter at the Sheriff's Department. This will allow us to take the duplexers out of line for refurbishment.

We recently found out that the 911 equipment at the 911 tower site has battery backup and the 911 crew would bring a generator to the tower site in case of a long-term outage. That means that we would be out of business until the generator was hooked up. To provide short-term emergency power for our repeater, the club has purchased a deep cycle battery that will power the repeater for at least

## Meeting Notice

The March, 2002 meeting of the Branch County Amateur Radio Club will be held at 7:00 PM in the basement Training Room of the 911 Center on US 12 west of Coldwater near the airport. Be sure to bring a friend with you to the meeting.

## Skywarn Training

The March Meeting Program will be our annual Skywarn Training presented by Steve Eddy from the North Webster office of the National Weather Service. We will plan an abbreviated business meeting (Yea!) so we can get right to the training. This is important stuff so be sure to mark it on your calendar.



## News Flash!

Mike, KC8PMG and Matt, N8JWC both recently passed their General Theory exams. Mike is still working hard on his code but Matt is probably all over the general band on HF by now. Congratulations to both!

**March 2002**

**WD8KAF Club Repeaters:**

147.300 + 100 Hz PL  
443.300 +

## COMING EVENTS

**March 19, 2002 (3rd Tuesday)  
Club Meeting  
7:00 PM 911 Center, Basement  
Training Room**

**2-Meter Net  
Tuesdays 7:00 PM  
(Except meeting night)**

## Club Officers 2002

### President

Larry Camp, WB8R  
517-278-0406  
[wb8r@arrl.net](mailto:wb8r@arrl.net)

### Secretary/Treasurer

Bill Kubiak, KB8VWI  
517-639-4390

### Board of Directors

Tom Twite, K8CHS  
517-278-1831

Arnold Hayward, KI8BN  
517-278-8507

James Voss, W8SST  
517-278-4636

### Emergency Coordinator

James Voss, W8SST  
517-278-4636

2 hours. WB8R has donated a charger that is designed to keep a deep cycle battery fully charged and ready to go.

We would like to eventually move our 2-meter receiver back to the Cablevision site with the antenna at 300 ft. In order to do this we will need to replace the antenna with a new one. The antenna at the Sheriff's Department is probably 10 years old and may need replacement also. We will also need to put up antennas to be used with UHF control links for the various pieces of equipment. As you can see, we are going to need to talk seriously about raising some money to pay for this equipment. If anyone has any fundraising ideas, please bring it to the attention to any of the club officers.

## Emergency Coordinator's Corner

### Jim Voss, W8SST

A quick plug for the upcoming Severe Weather Training session: Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 P. M. at the Branch County 911 Building. There will be a short business meeting followed by the training by a National Weather Service Meteorologist. Spring weather is right around the corner (honest) and this is the time to brush up on your storm spotting skills.



Speaking of the weather, I'd like to interest you in reporting snowfall during Winter Storms and Blizzards. Here's another way to justify our use of all those frequencies we have available to us. I didn't give you much info on this last month as I thought we were past all that for this season. Hah! This being Michigan, I was quickly proven wrong once again. The following information is gleaned from the *Michigan Net Public Service Communications Handbook* courtesy of **Jim Wades, WB8SIW**.

#### Winter Weather Emergencies:

When severe winter weather is anticipated for a portion of Michigan, special QMN net sessions may be scheduled to facilitate the reporting of either 3 or 6 hour snowfall amounts to the National Weather Service. The reporting period will depend on the severity of the event and will be at the discretion of the QMN General Manager upon consultation with the National Weather Service. The types of winter weather warnings for which QMN may be activated include:

Snow Advisory: A low-pressure system which produces snow (average of forecast range) greater than 3 inches, but less than Winter Storm Warning criteria

Winter Storm Warning: A winter storm capable of producing the following snowfall amounts is imminent:

Lower Michigan: 6 or more inches in 12 hours or 8 or more inches in 24 hours.

Upper Michigan: 8 or more inches in 12 hours or 10 or more inches in 24 hours

Blizzard Warning: Sustained wind or frequent gusts to 35 mph or more producing considerable falling and/or blowing snow-reducing visibility frequently to less than ¼ mile. Duration of the event will be 3 hours or longer.

During these situations, the following procedures will apply:

If possible, the schedule of net sessions will be announced in advance through a "QNC" bulletin during a routine net session. This bulletin will also be posted to the W8IHX-1 BBS on the QMN-Packet Radio System. If this is not possible, net members may be notified via telephone, pager, e-mail or similar method.

Net members are encouraged to purchase a [NOAA "weather alert" radio](#), which automatically sounds an alarm when a severe weather event is imminent. When severe winter weather is forecast for your area, monitor upcoming QMN sessions for appropriate bulletins.

If heavy snowfall has already begun in your area, and you have knowledge that a winter storm alert has been issued, please take the following steps:

Monitor the primary QMN frequency (3663 kHz) for five minutes *at the top of each hour* for an emergency activation or bulletins.

If conditions are such that the primary frequency is unusable, monitor the secondary QMN frequency (7063 or 1812 KHz) for five minutes *at the bottom of each hour* for an emergency activation or appropriate bulletins.

Snowfall measurements will be requested for either 3 or 6-hour periods, depending on the severity of the winter storm event. The amount transmitted to the NWS during each time-period should reflect the amount of snow, which, has fallen during that time period and the total amount of snow, which has fallen since the storm commenced (not the total since 630 PM (2330Z)).

#### Snow Fall Reporting:

Snowfall depth is typically measured at several locations using a yardstick or ruler. Choose locations that are generally free of drifting and appear somewhat consistent with respect to snow depth. As in the case of the rain gauge, areas shielded from wind tend to be most suitable.

When new snow falls upon previously accumulated snow, it is typically measured on a moveable surface, or a surface that can be cleaned-off since the last precipitation event. Examples include picnic tables, cars, or a snowboard built specifically for that purpose.

### How to Measure Snow:

Snow Depth is measured by taking three to five samples of snow depth and deriving the average value. Use this value when reporting snowfall via QMN. For example:

6.5inches  
5.5  
6.0

$\frac{+5.0}{23.0 \text{ divided by } 4} = 5.75 \text{ inches (or "575" on your message form)}$

If snow is already on the ground, place a piece of plywood or clear off a suitable surface at which new snowfall can be measured. Be certain to mark its location in such a way that you can find it after new snow has fallen.

Measure both the new snow, which has fallen, as well as the total amount of snow on the ground at the time of measurement. For example:

If 6 inches of new snow falls atop 10 inches, which were on the ground due to previous snowfalls, the message form would read 600/1600 or "6 inches of snow in the past 24 hours, a total of 16 inches currently on the ground."

### *Accuracy*

Snow can typically be measured to the nearest quarter inch, however, if possible, please try to measure snow to one tenth of an inch for greater accuracy.

Message format will be similar to that of the standard snowfall report. It will indicate the County, the fact that the report is either a 3 or 6-hour update, the amount of snow, which has fallen during that period and the total accumulation since the storm began. Because of the urgent nature of the message, the precedence of "**priority**" will be indicated in the preamble. For example:

*221 P W8IHX 5 WAYNE MI 1400Z NOV 26  
NWS-DTX*

*WAYNE 3 HOUR SNOW 420 / 625*

*MEYER*

(4.20 inches has fallen in the past three hours; 6.25 inches since the storm began)

*229 P WX8Y 5 BERRIEN SPRINGS MI 1700Z JAN 27  
NWS-IWX*

*BERRIEN 6 HOUR SNOW 575 / 900*

*WX8Y*

(5.75 inches has fallen in the past six hours; 9.00 inches since the storm began)

Routine 24-hour reports will still be transmitted on the early net session per standard operating procedures, even if an emergency activation is still in effect.

As you can see, this is also a good exercise to familiarize yourself with formal traffic handling as well. We'll talk this up come late fall next year, but in the mean time you can think about where you might locate your snow board.

See you on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

Jim Voss, W8SST

Branch County Emergency Coordinator

## Outgoing QSL Bureau

One of the greatest bargains of League membership is being able to use the ARRL Outgoing QSL Service to conveniently send your DX QSL cards overseas to foreign QSL Bureaus. Your ticket for using this service is proof of ARRL Membership and following the fee schedule below. For those of you who are not quite so DX active you can send 10 cards or less for just \$1.00. You can't even get a deal like that at your local warehouse supermarket! And the potential savings over the substantial cost of individual QSLing is equal to many times the price of your annual dues. Your cards are sorted promptly by the Outgoing Service staff, and cards are on their way overseas usually within a week of arrival at HQ. Approximately two million cards are handled by the Service each year!

QSL cards are shipped to QSL Bureaus throughout the world, which are typically maintained by the national Amateur Radio Society of each country. While no cards are sent to individuals or individual QSL managers, keep in mind that what you might lose in speed is more than made up in the convenience and savings of not having to address and mail each QSL card separately. (In the case of DXpeditions and/or active DX stations that use US QSL managers, a better approach is to QSL directly to the QSL manager. The various DX newsletters, the *GOLIST* QSL manager directory, and other publications, are good sources of up-to-date QSL manager information.)

As postage costs become increasingly prohibitive, don't go broke before you're even halfway towards making DXCC. There's a better and cheaper way -- "QSL VIA BURO" through the ARRL Outgoing QSL Service. See [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org) for more information.

## Incoming QSL Bureau

Within the US, the ARRL DX QSL Bureau System is made up of numerous call-area bureaus that act as central clearinghouses for QSL cards arriving from foreign countries. Volunteers staff these "incoming" bureaus. The service is free; ARRL membership is not required. Most countries have "outgoing" QSL bureaus that operate in much the same manner as the ARRL Outgoing QSL Service. The members send his cards to his outgoing bureau where they are packaged and shipped to the appropriate countries.

A majority of the DX QSLs are shipped directly to the individual incoming bureaus where volunteers sort the incoming QSLs by the first letter of the call sign-suffix. One individual may be assigned the responsibility of handling from one or more letters of the alphabet. All incoming QSL Bureaus have email addresses. Some Bureaus have active web pages.

See the W8 QSL Bureau homepage at <http://www.mrrace.com/ARRL/QSLBureau> for details.

## Amateur Testing

### 16-Mar-2002

Sponsor: Kalamazoo ARC VEC: [ARRL/VEC](#)

Time: 09:00AM (Walk-ins allowed)

Contact: David H. Watt (616) 345-8892

Email: [DWATT@SECANTCORP.COM](mailto:DWATT@SECANTCORP.COM)

Location: Kalamazoo County Sheriff Dept.

1500 Lamont Ave Kalamazoo, MI 49001

### 23-Mar-2002

Sponsor: W5YI-VEC VEC: [W5YI VEC](#)

Time: Call for time and walk-in info

Contact: Richard H. McGuire (517) 782-1430

Location: Call for site location & time

Jackson, MI 49204

### 11-Apr-2002

Sponsor: Goshen ARC VEC: [ARRL/VEC](#)

Time: 7:00 PM (Walk-ins allowed)

Contact: Lyle L Long (219) 875-8455

Location: Greencroft Retirement Center

Homan Building, Greencroft Blvd

Goshen, IN 4652

### 20-Apr-2002

Sponsor: W5YI-VEC VEC: [W5YI VEC](#)

Time: Call for time and walk-in info

Contact: Richard H. McGuire (517) 782-1430

Location: Call for site location & time

Jackson, MI 49204

## Did You Know...?

As of February 28, 2002 the number of Hams in the State of Michigan and in the U.S. is as follows:

	<u>Michigan</u>	<u>US</u>	<u>US%</u>
Total:	21197	680342	100
Extra:	3153	97812	14.4
Advanced:	2631	86372	12.7
General:	4583	138374	20.3
Tech Plus:	2596	84880	12.5
Technician:	7111	232974	34.2
Novice:	1123	39930	5.9

*Data courtesy of [QRZ](#)*

## Upcoming Hamfests

*Info from ARRL Website*

**March 16, 2002** 8 AM-3 PM

Marshall, MI

Southern Michigan ARS & Marshall HS Industrial Arts Club

**Contact:** John Malinowski, N8BGM  
20577 Division Drive  
Marshall, MI 49068  
Phone: 616-781-4540  
Email: [n8bgm@aol.com](mailto:n8bgm@aol.com)

**March 23, 2002**

Michigan City, IN

Michigan City ARC

**Contact:** Ron Stahoviak, N9TPC  
5802 North 400 West  
Michigan City, IN 46350  
Phone: 219-325-9089

**March 17, 2002**      8 AM-2 PM  
Toledo, OH

Toledo Mobile Radio Association  
<http://tmrahamradio.org>

**Contact:** Paul Hanslik, N8XDB  
3241 Schneider Road  
Toledo, OH 43614-2432  
Phone: 419-385-5056 or 419-535-6594  
Email: [kb8iup@arrl.net](mailto:kb8iup@arrl.net)

## Lone Missing Application Holding Up Vanity System

And then there was one. The FCC indicated this week that a lone missing paper vanity call sign application filed last October is holding up the resumption of routine vanity processing. On February 27, the FCC processed 33 vanity applications received last October 23 and 24. The following day, it ran another 41 applications received October 25 and 26. Processing remains stalled beyond that receipt date, however. FCC efforts, assisted by the ARRL, to contact the elusive applicant to have the individual resubmit a vanity application have proven more difficult than ever anticipated.

The FCC appears determined to hold off further processing until the remaining applicant is given an opportunity to resubmit an application and, thus, retain a place in the processing queue. Prior to this week, no amateur vanity call signs had been granted since February 1, when applications received at the FCC October 22, 23 and 24 were processed. The FCC later rescinded vanity grants for October 23 and 24, however, after it realized that it needed further information for an October 23 application. Until late January, no vanity call signs had been issued since October 30.

The ARRL estimates that some 2050 vanity applications now are in the FCC's processing pipeline--the majority of them filed electronically. The FCC's policy is to give equal processing weight to paper and electronic applications. Some two weeks' worth of October paper vanity applications apparently were mislaid after mail was sent off last fall for anthrax decontamination.

FCC Wireless Telecommunications Bureau personnel at the FCC's Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, office used information gleaned from payment receipts to contact the known paper filers via e-mail or telephone to have them resubmit copies of their vanity applications. That effort--again with ARRL help--led to this week's vanity processing.

*Courtesy of the ARRL Letter*

\* Congo, North Cook and South Cook operations approved for DXCC credit: Supporting documentation for the 9Q0AR (Democratic Republic of Congo), ZK1TUG (North Cook Islands) and ZK1ETW (North and South Cook Islands) operations during 2001 has been received and reviewed. The ARRL DXCC Desk has announced that these operations now are being accepted for DXCC credit.

Those who previously submitted cards for any of these operations and were denied credit may contact DXCC <[dxcc@arrl.org](mailto:dxcc@arrl.org)> and have their records updated without having to resubmit cards. Operators also may include 9Q0AR, ZK1TUG and ZK1ETW cards with their next submissions. For more information, contact Century Clubs Manager Bill Moore, NC1L, [dxcc@arrl.org](mailto:dxcc@arrl.org).

\* Ducie Island DXpedition launch in final countdown: The Daily DX reports that plans for the Ducie Island DXpedition of 2002 are now complete, and the group is in the final countdown phase. Approved last fall as a DXCC entity, Ducie has not yet been activated--which places it at the top of everyone's most-wanted list. The team expects to leave French Polynesia March 12. The first stop will be at Pitcairn Island to pick up supplies and equipment left from the first Ducie attempt last fall. The team then will proceed to Ducie Island for a one-week operation. Current plans call for round-the-clock CW and SSB operation on 15 meters (21.020 and 21.295 MHz). There will be some operation on all bands, 160 through 6 meters, CW, SSB and RTTY. HF QSLs go to VE3HO; 6-meter QSLs go via JA1BK.

\* Rare DXpeditions enjoy QSO: The DXpedition team at PW0T on Trindade and Ed Giorgadze, P5/4L4FN, in North Korea, worked each other on February 23 at 2230 UTC on 15-meter SSB. The scheduled contact was arranged by the pilot stations for each group--Rod Ingram, WC7N, for PW0T, and Bruce Paige, KK5DO, for P5/4L4FN. Giorgadze, from the Republic of Georgia, has been operating with oral permission from North Korean authorities, SSB only at this point.

Neither operation has been approved for DXCC credit.--Bruce Paige, KK5DO; The Daily DX

*DX News courtesy of ARRL Letter*

## We hope to see you all at the meeting on March 19!