



# Branch Signals BCARC Newsletter

An ARRL Affiliated Club Since 1961



## Meeting Notice

The January 2003 meeting of the Branch County Amateur Radio Club will be held at 7:00 PM on January 21, 2003 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.

## January Meeting Program

Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA and his wife Vicky, AE9YL from the Ft. Wayne DX Association will join us to explain how to be a successful DX-er and also what it is like to be DX. This will be a great program...Lets all bring friends and really pack the place to show our appreciation to Carl and Vicky!

## Christmas Gathering a Resounding Success!

The 2002 Christmas Dinner and Gift Exchange were held at the Coldwater Country Club on Dec 17<sup>th</sup> with 31 members and guests present. The surroundings were very nice and we had the place to ourselves. The dinner was well prepared and very tasty. An informal poll of those attending resulted in enthusiastically positive comments about the meal and the location for the event. Many individuals suggested that we make arrangements that evening for the 2003 event. The gift exchange was a fun time and some lucky individuals took home some valuable gifts. You might ask the Voss family or Gerald Barnes about how they made out. (Made out being the operative words here). John Sistanich's wife won two tickets to the January 12 hamfest in Elkhart, IN.

## UHF Repeater Activity Increasing

There is more and more activity being noticed on our 440 Mhz club repeater. It has excellent handheld coverage around Coldwater and there are currently about 10 or more stations active on this machine. With the prices of dual or triple band equipment at record lows, perhaps those considering new equipment purchases should take advantage of the additional capability available by buying rigs with 440 in order to join the fun on UHF.

January, 2003

### WD8KAF Club Repeaters:

147.300 + 100 Hz PL  
443.300 +

Club Meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Tuesday of each month at  
7:00 PM 911 Center, Basement  
Training Room

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

### Club Officers 2003

#### President

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

#### Secretary/Treasurer

Bill Kubiak, KB8VWI  
517-639-4390  
[whkubiak@cbpu.com](mailto:whkubiak@cbpu.com)

#### Board of Directors

Tom Twite, K8CHS  
517-278-1831  
[ttwite@privacyone.net](mailto:ttwite@privacyone.net)

Arnold Hayward, NS8T  
517-278-8507  
[ns8t@arrl.net](mailto:ns8t@arrl.net)

James Voss, W8SST  
517-278-4636  
[w8sst@arrl.net](mailto:w8sst@arrl.net)

#### Emergency Coordinator

James Voss, W8SST  
517-278-4636  
[w8sst@arrl.net](mailto:w8sst@arrl.net)

## Repeater Committee Volunteers Sought

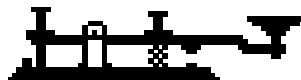
At the latest Executive Board meeting a discussion was held concerning the formation of a Repeater Committee to assist and advise the Trustee and the Executive Board with the administration and planning for the repeater. We are looking for three volunteers to serve on this committee. No experience required.



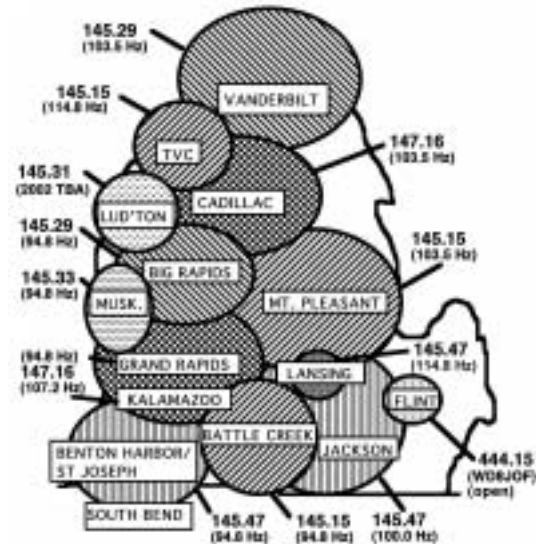
## Fox Hunt Planned

Plans are in the works for a Fox Hunt (Hidden Transmitter Hunt) to take the place of the June club meeting. We anticipate meeting at the 911 Center on meeting night as usual where we will receive the information concerning the "fox" and the teams will depart from there on the electronic trail. We plan a hunt that will last no longer than 1½ hours and we will reconvene at the 911 Center to discuss how well (or poorly) we did.

We recommend that up to 4 individuals (a carload) join together as a team to learn about fox hunting procedures and equipment develop their own plans for the hunt. There are a number of web sites that offer information on Fox Hunts and specialized equipment that can be built or bought to make direction finding easier and more accurate. We will publish a list of some of the web sites in order to get you "jump-started" towards being able to locate that elusive fox. A good place to get information is on the Internet. Search for "Fox Hunt" or "Rabbit Hunt" and you will find all sorts of stuff.



## Michigan Linked Repeater Map



A full sized version of this map is available on the web site of the Independent Repeater Association at [www.w8hvg.org/](http://www.w8hvg.org/). This is a good map to print and carry with you in your car. It is also a great resource to use when programming your radios as well.

## It's That Time Again...

No, it's not income tax time (yet) but it is time to pay your club dues for 2003. Annual dues are \$10.00 per year and need to be paid prior to March 1 in order to remain in good standing and participate in the various procedural votes taken at each club meeting. For those with multiple hams in their family the cost for all members beyond the original member is \$2.00 per year. This is a good low-cost way to increase our membership numbers. Full time students that are not eligible for family membership can renew their membership for \$5.00 per year. See Bill Kubiak, KB8VWI and he will happily take your money. We completed 2002 with 35 members and we would like to increase that number to 40 plus for 2003. Spread the word and bring your friends to the meetings.

## Repeater Do's & Don'ts

If you have *QUESTIONS* about the use of the club repeaters, *PLEASE ASK*. *FCC Part 97* rules apply at all times.

*LISTEN* for a few seconds before transmitting to be sure the repeater is not already in use or *ASK*, "Is the repeater in use?" Calling "*CQ*" on a repeater is generally not considered to be good practice.

In accordance with FCC requirements, the repeater has a *TIMER* set for slightly less than three minutes. The *COURTESY TONE* indicates resetting of the timer. Wait for the tone before transmitting. Failure to allow the timer to reset will cause the timer to turn off the repeater transmitter. The repeater will not work again until the input signal stops transmitting and the machine resets itself.

If you wish to *JOIN* a conversation in progress, wait until the end of a transmission and give your *CALL SIGN* promptly. There is time between the end of a transmission and the courtesy-tone. Stations already in conversation should wait for the courtesy tone before transmitting to allow others to join the conversation

If you need access to the repeater for an emergency while the repeater is in use, say, "*BREAK*" and give your call sign when you break into an ongoing conversation.

*ALWAYS ALLOW A BREAKING STATION TO TRANSMIT IMMEDIATELY*. This allows the station an opportunity to report emergencies or ask for directions or other assistance. This is particularly important during commuting periods and periods of bad weather when the need for emergency assistance calls is most likely.

*AVOID BUSINESS TALK*. When in doubt, *DONT*.

Remember that Amateur frequencies are *NOT PRIVATE LINES*. What you say on the repeater can and will be heard by many people (including the *FCC*) – Always remember that *YOU HAVE AN AUDIENCE* and if you don't want everyone to know what is said, then you should not say it on the repeater.

Do not say things that may offend others who may be listening. Be circumspect in discussing private personal family affairs on the repeater. Don't "advertise" that your house will be unoccupied during vacations, etc. and don't put

others at risk by commenting that another ham is out of town.

The repeater gives its own *ID*. *YOU MUST IDENTIFY* your station by giving your call sign every 10 minutes during a conversation and at the end of your participation. You do not have to identify the other stations nor do you have to identify yourself with every transmission. Failure to properly identify yourself puts you and the repeater trustee at risk. Remember that the *FCC* does listen to repeaters.

Remember that "*Q-SIGNALS*" are abbreviations intended for use on *CW*, not repeaters. "*Q*-Signals are not intended to be used as spoken shorthand. Say what you mean in words....*SPEAK ENGLISH*.

*MONITOR* the repeater. Members or visitors may call for assistance. Visitors may just want a friendly conversation on the way through.

If you hear what you believe to be *DELIBERATE INTERFERENCE*, do not attempt to communicate with the interfering station. Switch to the repeater input frequency and, if you can hear the signal, record the following information for use in locating the source: 1) signal strength, 2) your location, 3) date and time, 4) your antenna and receiver, and 5) any characteristics of the rf, audio or voice that might help in identification. Report this information to any officer of the club or the Repeater Committee. *DO NOT DISCUSS* interference incidents on the air.

While the repeater frequencies that we use are exclusive in this area, there may be times when other repeaters may be heard. Propagation conditions are occasionally such that we will hear the output signals from other repeaters and occasionally users of other repeaters on the same frequencies may bring one of our repeaters up at the same time they are talking on the intended machine. On our 2-meter machine we use tone access to help control this problem, but this measure is not always foolproof. The use of the minimum power necessary to access our repeaters will help minimize interference with our neighbors. *BE TOLERANT* of the annoyances resulting from these unusual conditions.





## Advanced Weather Spotter Training 2003

Indiana-Michigan-Ohio Skywarn and the National Weather Service of Northern Indiana will sponsor Advanced Weather Spotter Training 2003 on March 15, 2003 at Elkhart Central high School, Elkhart, IN.

Registration begins at 8:00 AM and class is from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Costs are \$25 until Feb. 15 and \$30 thereafter. Lunch and snacks are included.

See the IMO website at [www.imoskywarn.org](http://www.imoskywarn.org) for details and registration form. Only 500 seats are available and will be first come first serve. Hurry, as these seats will go quickly.

## Upcoming Hamfests

### **January 4**

Lowell AR Youth Club, Lowell, MI  
Contact: Al Eckman, WW8WW  
11700 Vergennes  
Lowell, MI 49331  
Phone: 616-897-4125  
Email: [AEckman@lowell.k12.mi.us](mailto:AEckman@lowell.k12.mi.us)

### **January 12**

Michiana Valley Hamfest Association Goshen, IN  
Contact: Bob Denniston, KA9WNR  
21970 Kern Road  
South Bend, IN 46614-9295  
Phone: 574-291-0252 (7-11 PM EST)

### **January 18**

Amateur Radio and Youth Club, Flushing, MI  
Contact: Clay Hewitt, KF8UI  
PO Box 7136  
Flint, MI 48507  
Phone: 810-233-7889  
Email: [kf8ui@arrl.net](mailto:kf8ui@arrl.net)

### **January 19**

Hazel Park ARC, Hazel Park, MI  
<http://www.qsl.net/w8hp>  
Contact: Jeff Albrecht, N8WR  
PO Box 368  
Hazel Park, MI 48030  
Phone: 248-642-3608  
Email: [n8wr@arrl.net](mailto:n8wr@arrl.net)

### **February 8**

Cherryland ARC, Traverse City, MI  
Contact: Joe Novak, W8TVT  
Phone: 231-947-8555  
Email: [w8tvt@arrl.net](mailto:w8tvt@arrl.net)

### **February 16**

Livonia ARC, Farmington Hills, MI  
Contact: Bruno Walczak, WA8DHP  
16601 Gofview Drive, Livonia, MI 48154  
Email: [wa8dhp@arrl.net](mailto:wa8dhp@arrl.net)

### **March 15**

Crossroads Hamfest, Marshall, MI

## News Flash!

After an absence of many years, it appears that we will again have a state convention in Michigan. This is great news. Here is the information:

### Michigan State Convention

October 31, November 1 in Holland, Michigan.

Planned Events: Dinner / Awards banquet on Friday; Wouff Hong Friday night (*If you have not experienced the Wouff Hong, you should attend just for this event*).

Saturday Swap and Forums

## New Year's Wishes

The Officers and Directors of the BCARC wish you and your families a Happy and Prosperous 2003.

## DX On the Bands



GEORGIA, 4L. Toly, 4L1MA has been QRV on 40 meters CW around 2030 to 2200z. QSL via ON4RU.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF EAST TIMOR, 4W. Thor, 4W6MM has been QRV using RTTY on 20 meters around 1100 to 1200z. QSL via TF3MM.

ANDORRA, C3. Peter, C31LJ has been QRV on 17 meters around 1400z and on 12 meters around 1500z. QSL via VE3GEJ.

DOMINICA, J7. Kelly, J79BEY has been QRV on 20 meters around 0100z. QSL via G1SSL.

OGASAWARA, JD1. Special event station 8N1OGA is QRV until January 12 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Japan Amateur Radio League. Activity is usually from 0800 to 2200z. QSL via bureau.

SOUTH ORKNEY ISLANDS. Jose, LU1ZA has been QRV on 15 meters around 2230z. QSL via LU4DXU.

ARUBA, P4. Alan, K4AVQ will be QRV as P40AV from January 4 to 18. Activity will be on 160 to 10 meters. He may give special attention to 160 and 80 meters using CW. QSL to home call.

NETHERLAND ANTILLES, PJ2. Chris, DL5NAM is QRV as PJ4/homecall from Bonaire, IOTA SA-006, until January 18. He is active using mainly RTTY as well as activity on 6 meters. QSL to home call.

PALAU, T8. T88HA has been QRV using RTTY on 20 meters around 0300z. QSL via JK1FNN.

CENTRAL AFRICA, TL. Charles, TL8CK has been QRV on 17 meters just after 0730z and then 10 meters around 0900z. QSL via F6EWM.

TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS, VP5. VP5/W6XK and VP5/N6EE are QRV on the lower bands, plus the newer ones, using CW, SSB and RTTY until January 7. QSL to home calls. They will also participate in the ARRL RTTY Roundup as VP5NN. QSL via NN6NN.

CHAGOS ISLAND, VQ9. Larry, WD0HSP is QRV as VQ9LA on Diego Garcia, IOTA AF-006, and is here for about a year. He may be active on 80 to 6 meters using CW, SSB, RTTY and FM. QSL via operator's instructions.

ANTARCTICA. Anton, ZS7/ZS4AGA is staying at SANAE IV Base, IOTA AN-016, until the end of January. Because of his busy work schedule here, his operations will be limited. QSL via ZS4A.

DX information courtesy of ARRL DX Bulletin

## Coming Attractions

The following programs are planned for the 2003 club meetings:

January: Ft. Wayne DX Association

February: Larry Wheeler, W9QR, Transmission lines – all you ever wanted to know about ‘em.

March: Skywarn Training courtesy of NWS North Webster.

April: ARRL Section Manager Debbie Kirkbride, KA8YKK.

May: TBD

June: Fox Hunt (Direction Finding exercise/contest).

July: TBD

August: Liars Club (?)

September: ARRL Great Lakes Division Vice Director Dick Mondro, W8FQT.

October: Club Auction

November: Annual Business meeting.

December: Christmas dinner and gift exchange.

Please note that there may be last minute changes due to bad weather during the winter months.

