



Branch Signals BCARC Newsletter

Volume II, Number 6

An ARRL Affiliated Club Since 1961



June, 2003
WD8KAF Club Repeaters:
147.300 + 100.0 Hz PL
443.300 + 123.0 Hz PL
Club Meeting on the 3rd 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
<i>President</i> Larry Camp, WB8R 517-278-0406 wb8r@arrl.net
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June Meeting Notice

The June 2003 meeting of the Branch County Amateur Radio Club will be a bit different this month as our program will be our Fox Hunt (hidden transmitter hunt). There will be no business meeting in June. We will meet at the 911 Center at 7:00 PM to receive some last minute instructions and to synchronize our watches and head off to find the elusive fox. Full details can be found elsewhere in this issue.



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And The Winner Is...



Don Cook, KC8PRM

Congratulations are in order for Don Cook, KC8PRM, the winner of the FT90 Dual Band mobile rig that the club recently raffled off. Our raffle was a success and we added \$378 to the club treasury after all bills were paid. A hearty Thank You goes to all who supported our efforts and bought tickets.



Technician Class Update

Our Technician Class is now complete. We finished the 8-week course with a final review session complete with a practice test.

One student refused to let a job schedule change impact his abilities to attend class, so he went to work on his own. Scott Townsend of Coldwater studied hard by himself and took and passed his Technician test in Jackson on May 10. Scott has subsequently received KC8WUH as his new call. One of our other six in-class students took his test early at the May 13 test session in Pleasant Lake, IN. Brandon Miller from Bronson passed his Technician test and three days later received his new call, KC8WSO. The remaining 5 students of our class opted to wait for our VE session on May 31.

Our VE Team held its first Test Session on Saturday, May 31 at the 911 Center. There were a total of 8 candidates eager to Rock 'n Roll.

We are pleased to report that all 8 test candidates were successful in passing at least one test and everyone walked away pleased with their performance.

These individuals passed the following elements:

John Stephenson from Hillsdale; Technician

David King from Litchfield; Technician and General

Chris Peters from Coldwater; Technician

Randy Kruger from Coldwater; Technician

Austin Mandoka from Bronson; Technician

John Gibson from Lansing; Technician

Bruce Wilson, WB8ZSK; Extra

Don Cook, KC8PRM; CW

Congratulations to the new hams as well as the hams that upgraded their licenses. We anxiously await the day when the callsigns for the new hams first appear on the FCC database. We anticipate that the calls will be KC8X.. so be prepared for the new calls to begin to appear on the local repeaters in the next week or so.

Thanks are in order for the class instructors, W8SST, NS8T, and WB8R and the VE Team members who worked this test session: N8JWC, KC8RYF, NS8T, W8SST, and WB8R. Your efforts are much appreciated by all members of the club.



Fox Hunt Information

The first Fox Hunt (in modern times, that is) of the BCARC is scheduled for June 17. There will be no business meeting in June.

We will gather in the parking lot of the 911 Center at (or before) 7:00 PM and quickly review the rules. Complete rules have been sent previously by email, but we will have hard copies available the night of the hunt.

Since the Fox will be transmitting every 5 minutes for one minute, it will be important to synchronize timepieces so everyone will know when to listen. The Fox will transmit for one minute followed by 4 minutes of silence. He will transmit on 146.42 Simplex and he may change power levels during the event.

At the transmitter site, there will be 5 tags placed on or near the transmitter numbered 1 through 5. The first team to locate the hidden transmitter should quietly and discretely take the lowest number tag and bring it to the Hunt Master at the 911 Center. Successful teams are asked to not announce the location of the Fox in order to make it fun for others who have not located the Fox yet.

We been looking forward to this event for a number of months now and if everyone enjoys it we can hold Fox Hunts periodically, perhaps on Saturday mornings. Over time we can hone our skills and become pretty good at locating potential sources of interference or individuals in trouble of some sort.

Anyone wishing complete rules can obtain them in advance by requesting them via email at wb8r@arrl.net or by calling 278-0406.

southeastern Illinois. This makes a number of times this spring that we've been able to duck the bullet. Thanks Mother Nature!

This month I'd like to share some of my favorite websites and frequencies which I use this time of year. I'm sure you have some of your own and I'd like to hear from you if your favorites aren't listed here.

If I were limited to one source of weather information it would have to be the **National Weather Service, North Webster, Indiana. (162.425)** I feel lost when I'm unable to see the latest radar on the Internet, but I can be confident that I'll receive any pertinent warnings via the NWS repeater in Angola.

When I'm near an Internet connection I'll be watching the Base Reflectivity, Short Range Radar Loop on the NWS/IWX website <http://www.crh.noaa.gov/radar/loop/DS.p19r0/si.kiwx.shtml> . From that site, I'm inclined to click on the Radars by State link on the left side of the page. This takes me to a map of the U. S. with clickable links to all NWS radars in the country.

If you need to learn more about what you're seeing on these radar shots visit this site: <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/radar/radinfo/radinfo.html>

Another website I find useful is the Storms Prediction Center Mesoscale Analysis Page <http://www.spc.noaa.gov/sfctest/> This map of the U. S. shows the last hour's radar returns along with all current watch boxes and each county that is under a warning of any kind. It's a great place to get a handle very quickly on what might be on the way.

Knowing how many lightning strikes are occurring in a given storm can be helpful and you can find this info at LightningStorm.com http://www.lightningstorm.com/ls2/gpg/lex1/mapdisplay_free.jsp

This site will tell you at a glance if your state has any current watches or warnings: <http://iwin.nws.noaa.gov/iwin/iwdspg1.html> and this one will show you reports turned in to the NWS nationwide by spotters and others who observe them. This site will also allow you to go back a number of days to look at previous reports. <http://www.spc.noaa.gov/climo/reports/>

Interested in tracking hurricanes? Try this site which will at times have live commercial radio broadcasts from the affected area. <http://www.hurricane-city.com/>

For hundreds (I'm not exaggerating!) of live weather images go to this excellent page <http://www.weatherimages.org/index.html#general>

EC's Words of Wisdom



Your EC, caught in the headlights, 2:00 AM.

Well, here I sit, it's 11:30 P. M. and I have to be at a VE testing session at 8:30 A. M. Why am I still up, you ask? Because Mother Nature has decided this is a good evening for tornadoes – great. Why does it always seem these watches come along on nights when one must be up early in the morning? I'm watching two different radar presentations and listening to several scanner frequencies and typing this column (at the last minute, of course). Tonight, it looks as if we're going to be spared the bad stuff as it has saved itself for

Here are a couple of sites dealing with the Palm Sunday tornadoes of 1965.

<http://www.mammatus.com/willbanks.html>
<http://www.mammatus.com/outbreak65.html>

One of my favorite 'weather map' sites to visit is this one, originating from Milwaukee Skywarn. Although oriented towards the hams in that area, there are over a dozen 'click on' maps here to glean much information from: <http://www.mke-skywarn.org/>

If you're anything like me, you'll enjoy exploring the links on these websites:

<http://cirrus.spri.umich.edu/wxnet/servers.html><http://www.weathergraphics.com/edu/index.htm>

<http://www.onthefront.ws/wxdata.htm>

<http://www.afn.org/~afn09444/weather/skywarn.html>

This site has links to free weather software: <http://www.bwca.cc/weather/software.htm>

If you don't find enough websites in these lists to make you happy you should visit <http://www.flash.net/~n5vav/wxhome.htm> which is the Weather Webring.

73, Jim Voss, W8SST- Branch County E. C.



2003 BCARC Programs

The following programs are planned for the BCARC meetings for the balance of 2003:

June: Fox Hunt (Direction Finding exercise/contest). No business meeting.

July: Larry Wheeler, W9QR, Transmission Lines – all you ever wanted to know about 'em.

August: The Three C's – An evening of Coffee, Cookies, and Conversation.

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

October: Club Auction

November: Annual Business meeting.

December: Christmas Dinner and Gift Exchange at the Coldwater Country Club.



Ham Mart

This is the place to list any equipment that you might have for sale as well as a place to list any equipment that you might be interested in purchasing.

As you might expect, the Branch County Amateur Radio Club bears no responsibility whatsoever in regard to any equipment, statements or representations made by owners or purchasers of any items listed in this column. Please email the details of any items you would like to sell to Larry at wb8r@arrl.net or to Steve at shadowman405@charter.net.

Wanted: Jerry, KC8QNS is interested in any LP's (33 RPM vinyl records) that anyone might like to get rid of. He will gladly take them off your hands. Preferred genre is classic rock, like The Rolling Stones, Pink Floyd, etc but classic country would be just as good!

You can contact Jerry at KC8QNS@arrl.net or see him at a club meeting.

For Sale: Amos Fleming has a very nice Heath HW-5400 solid state transceiver for sale. It has the WARC bands and is capable of split frequency operation for all you DX'ers. It has a keypad for direct frequency entry and comes with matching power supply with speaker and clock. Also included are 2 hand mikes and a desk mike. Call Amos at 278-8063.



HW-5400

Upcoming Hamfests

June 7

Independent Repeater Assn, Hudsonville, MI

June 14

Midland ARC, Midland, MI

June 15

Monroe County Radio Communications Assn, Monroe, MI

June 16

Lake County ARC, Crown Point, IN

July 12

Straits Area ARC, Petoskey, MI

September 6 & 7

Great Lakes Division Convention, Findley, OH



VE Test Session Schedule

(See the ARRL website for complete test information)

07-Jun-2003

IRA Hamfest, Hudsonville, MI

08-Jun-2003

Fulton County ARC, Wauseon, OH

09-Jun-2003

Michigan City ARC, Michigan City, IN

13-Jun-2003

Grand Rapids ARA, Grand Rapids, MI

14-Jun-2003

Eaton County ARC, Charlotte, MI

21-Jun-2003

Fulton County Radio Club, Archibold, OH

21-Jun-2003

Genesee County Radio Club, Fenton/Flint, MI

26-Jun-2003

SMARS, Battle Creek, MI

26-Jun-2003

Corunna VE Team, Corunna, MI

28-Jun-2003

BARA, Hastings, MI

28-Jun-2003

Motor City radio Club, Grosse Ile, MI

28-Jun-2003

Suburban ARA, Swanton, OH

28-Jun-2003

South Lyon Area ARC, South Lyon, MI



May ARES Net Statistics



Our VHF Net Manager, Don, KC8PRM reports 5 net sessions in May with a total of 58 checkins. Thanks to all who checked in and please remember that we still need some help with Net Control.



DX On the Bands

AZERBAIJAN, 4K. Rich, 4K7Z/F8LPX, will be active until the end of June. QSL via F8LPX, bureau ok.

FAROE ISLANDS, OY. OY/G4XRV plans to be QRV until June 2.

JERSEY ISLAND, GJ. Ekki, MJ/DF4OR, Tilo, MJ/DJ5BX, Rainer, MJ/DL1ZBO, and Peter, MJ/DL1FX, will be QRV from June 3 to 9 using SSB, CW and all digital modes on 80 to 10 meters. This will include activity from MJ/DJ5BX in the ANARTS WW RTTY Contest June 7 and 8. QSL via DL1ZBO.

FRANCE, F. TM0AR will be QRV in SSB on 10, 12, 15, 17, 20 and 40 meters from the International

Festival of Arts and Technologies until June 1. QSL via F5TJC, bureau is ok.

IRELAND, EI. EJ/DF5WA will work mainly in CW from the Aran Islands (EU-006) until May 31. He will then sign EI/DF5WA from the Irish coast (EU-115) from Jun 1 to 7. QSL via bureau.

POLAND, SP. Special event station HF25KVV is QRV until July 31 celebrating the 25th anniversary of the club station SP5KVV in Ostroleka. QSL via SP5KVV, bureau is ok.

ST. PAUL ISLAND, CY9. CY9A will be active July 24 to August 2, plus or minus two days for weather considerations. Look for ops N0RN, N5VL, K5AB, K5AAH, KO4RR and VE7SV. QSL via N5VL.

SAMOA, 5W. DL2AH, will be QRV as 5W0AH from July 3 to 15. He will then go to American Samoa, callsign not yet known, to operate from July 17 to 23. Look for operations on 40 to 10 meters, using SSB.

SVALBARD, JW. Tom, LA7VK, will be active as JW7VK until June 1. QSL to home call.

THAILAND, HS. Look for John, W6ZIP operating HS0ZEH from May 31 to June 17, mostly CW, on 40 through 10 meters with some SSB toward the end. QSL via his home call.

UKRAINE, UR. Special event call sign EN720K will be active from to June 1 to July 15 to commemorate the 720th Anniversary of Rivne City. The operators are Rivne Dx Club members Paul, UT1KY (ex EM1KY), Igor, UR5KCE and Taras, UR5KDX. QSL via buro.



Club Membership Now At 45

We have seven new hams in the area that have recently passed their Technician tests. Our club membership policy for newly licensed local hams automatically makes them members of the club free of charge for the balance of the year in which they were licensed. This means that we have added those seven new members to the rolls and our current total membership is now 45 members in good standing. After researching 40 plus years of club documents, your editor believes that this is a new high water mark of our club. More members mean that we can do more things as a club.

Programming Public Service Frequencies into your Mobile Rig

Most modern 2-meter rigs can be programmed with your favorite police and fire frequencies so you can listen on the go. This is an illegal activity for most people, but the law specifically allows hams to do so. The problem is that most police officers probably don't know that and that can lead to a problem if you are stopped and the officer hears police or fire calls coming from your radio. The appropriate statute (MCL 750.508) has been included here so you can print it and laminate it to carry in your wallet and in your car so you can delicately educate the officer if need be. Remember to be polite and also remember that this does not necessarily work in other states. If you are stopped by an officer while in a state other than Michigan, your best bet is to turn off the 2-meter rig.

VEHICLES EQUIPPED WITH SHORT WAVE LENGTH RADIO RECEIVING SETS (MCL 750.508)

Sec. 508. Any person who shall equip a vehicle with a radio receiving set that will receive signals sent on frequencies assigned by the Federal Communications Commission of the United States of America for police purposes, or use the same in this state unless such vehicle is used or owned by a peace officer or a bona fide amateur radio operator holding a technician class, general, advanced, or extra class amateur license issued by the federal communications commission, without first securing a permit to do so from the director of the department of state police upon application as he or she may prescribe, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than 1 year, or by a fine of not more than \$500.00, or by both fine and imprisonment in the discretion of the court. (2) This section shall not be construed as restricting the use of radar detectors.

Editor's note: This information was published a few months ago, but with the addition of 7 new hams in our club, we need to publish it again.

