



Branch Signals

Newsletter of the Branch County Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

Vol. II Number 11 November 2003

An ARRL Affiliated Club Since 1961

Here's the situation...

Utility companies with deep pockets are promoting a new



scheme -- with great potential for causing harmful interference to Amateur Radio operators nationwide. The FCC is considering possible rule changes to aid these commercial interests who want to use existing electrical power lines that run along nearly every street and road, and into every neighborhood, to carry high-speed Internet service into homes and offices.

Why is this important to you? *Broadband over Power Line* ("Access BPL") feeds broadband digital signals onto power lines using **high-frequency RF from 2 to 80 MHz** -- right on top of 80 meters, 40 meters, 20 meters and every other popular ham band all the way up to 6 meters. And it's not just the ham bands -- short-wave listeners are at risk too. Although this technology is already allowed, the industry wants the limits to be relaxed -- with greater interference

potential to your ham radio operation.

These BPL signals could transform HF from a quiet haven that hams enjoy to a noisy industry wasteland, changing ham radio forever. It's already hard enough to maintain a regular schedule with your friends, hear weak DX signals, or copy a maritime ham in distress. Imagine trying to do that through several S-units or more of broadband garbage. Imagine not even being able to throw your rig in the car and escape it through mobile operation -- power lines are everywhere! Will you have to operate from a remote site just to enjoy a quiet QSO?

ARRL works to protect Amateur Radio.

Rest assured that ARRL -- your national association for Amateur Radio -- will do everything possible to protect our service. For nearly 90 years, we've been on the front lines, fighting for the privileges you earned when you received your Amateur Radio license. You know that ARRL is the only ham radio organization that maintains a professionally staffed office in Washington. Our representatives speak directly with government officials and monitor potential assaults on our bands.

Commercial interests have a strong arm on Capitol Hill. In the political world, power equals numbers. As an ARRL member and donor to the Spectrum Defense Fund, you add your voice to the thousands of active hams who are saying, "No! You will not make our frequencies useless!" (Text from ARRL Web Site)

More on this at the next meeting...

WD8KAF Club

Repeaters

147.300 + 100 Hz PL

443.300 + 123 Hz PL

Club Website:
www.qsl.net/wd8kaf

Club Meeting 3rd
Tuesday, 7:00 PM at
911 Communication
Center Basement
Training Room





Repeater Update

Last month I went out on a limb and speculated that our new Motorola Micor repeater system may be back in service by October 6. For once my prediction was accurate as we wheeled the cabinet into the Sheriff's Department, plugged it in, and fired up on the evening of October 4. We did some testing and calibration and turned it loose on the hams of the county.

Initial reports have been very favorable. Receive coverage seems to be a bit better than the previous machine and it can be heard a long ways away. We are still in the process of mapping our coverage area to learn where we are strongest and weakest, keeping in mind that our coverage area is purposefully limited by the Repeater Council. This is done in order to prevent interference amongst repeaters that operate on the same frequency.



Our New Baby

In the picture above, the repeater itself is contained in the 6 ft cabinet. The Cat 200B controller is also in the cabinet along with our control receiver (not present when photo was taken). The large cylinders to the right of the repeater are our Wacom duplexers (cavities) that allow us to transmit and receive on the same antenna at the

same time. Just above the duplexers is the old GE Master II repeater that the Motorola replaced. It will remain on site as a backup in case the Motorola needs to come out of service for one reason or another.



All Buttoned Up

The new controller seems to be working well with it's synthesized voice identifying itself and also periodically reminding everyone that we have a net on Tuesday evenings and also making announcements of pending club meetings. There are additional features that will be incorporated in the near future as we learn how to use this piece of equipment. The one very nice thing about this controller is that it can be programmed by computer, thus saving endless hours slaving over a hot touch-tone pad.

There are some plans in the works for some additional enhancements to the repeater and control system that will make the machine easier and more pleasant to use. We are interested in your comments about the new repeater and hearing about your experiences while using it.

And speaking of using it, it is there for YOU to use, so please feel free to have your conversations there. Of course our repeater on 443.300 is also available for those that have 440 equipment. This is a great little repeater that works very well and doesn't get enough use either.

We look forward to hearing you on both of the Coldwater repeaters!

VE Test Session Schedule



15-Nov-2003

Sponsor: FULTON CTY RADIO CLUB

Time: 10:00AM (No walk-ins)

Contact: Howard W. Fuller (419) 825-5443

VEC: ARRL/VEC

Location: Archbold Police Dept

405 E Lutz Rd

Leave message on machine

15-Nov-2003

Sponsor: W5YI-VEC

Time: (Walk-ins allowed)

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

Email:

DICKKI8C@JUNO.COM

VEC: W5YI VEC

Location:

Call for site location & time
Jackson, MI 49204

15-Nov-2003

Sponsor: KALAMAZOO ARC

Time: 9:00 AM (Walk-ins allowed)

Contact: David H. Watt (269) 345-8892

Email:

DWATT@SECANTCORP.COM

VEC: ARRL/VEC

Location: Kalamazoo County Sheriff Dept

1500 Lamont Ave

Kalamazoo, MI 49001



Emergency Coordinator's Comments Jim Voss, W8SST



This column brings with it an unexpected piece of news. Most of you will remember our State Emergency Coordinator, Jim Wades, WB8SIW, who has visited our club a couple times recently. I received word on Monday that Jim has resigned his position. No information was immediately given as to why and state leadership is accepting applications for the position. Jim is a well-known and respected name in Emergency Communication throughout the Midwest and he'll be missed by this E.C.

Arnie, NS8T, brought up a timely topic of discussion on a recent Branch County Emergency Net. Did the Great Blackout of August prompt you to change anything about how your station is set up? I know a number of you are using deep cycle marine batteries for backup power and some have generators. If you don't have something to power your rigs during times of power outage now is a good time to consider what you might be able to set up, before the next one comes along.

If the California fires are still blazing when you receive this newsletter here are a couple frequencies to check for emergency coms: Communication is mainly taking place on VHF. The San Diego ARES Net has been activated on 7.233 MHz with 3.905 MHz as a backup. The Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network (SATERN) also has been

using 7.233 MHz as a coordinating frequency.

Till next month... Jim

Technician Class Announcement



The Branch County Amateur Radio Club is pleased to announce that the next Technician Licensing Class will begin soon.

This 8-week class will be held on Saturday mornings in the basement training room of the 911 Center. This is the same place that we have our monthly meetings.

The classes will be held at 9:00 to 11:30 A.M. and will be taught by Jim Voss, W8SST, Arnie Hayward, NS8T, and Larry Camp, WB8R. The cost for the course will be \$20.00 for books and materials. This does not include the Testing Fee of approximately \$12.00.

The class schedule is as follows:

Dec. 6, 2003:

Organizational Meeting

(Ham radio demonstration, Class plan discussion, collect money for books [\$20.00, non refundable])

Dec. 20, 2003:

Distribute books and first assignments and answer questions. (This will be a short session)

Jan. 10, 2004 thru Feb. 28: Eight weekly classes

Mar. 6, 2004:

License testing for all classes. (This will be an open VE testing session held in the basement Training Room of the 911 Center.)

For this class we will concentrate on attracting young people, but there will still be plenty of room for students of all ages. The instructors feel that we can accommodate up to 25 students.

The testing session will be open to all who would like to take any of the amateur tests.

This is a good opportunity for all hams to do what they can to encourage interested individuals to join in the fun and earn their first ham license.



New PC at Club Station at 911 Center

As a result of the generosity of Greg and Diana Fowler of Bronson, the club has a new (to us) Compaq Presario computer and a 17" Sony Trinitron monitor for use in the club station. Our plans are to utilize this computer for various digital modes and contest logging such as Field Day, etc. We will also have access to the Internet courtesy of Kurt Spaulding and the 911 Center. This is a very nice enhancement to our station and we would like to add a second computer for a second operating position. Thanks also go to Jon Voss for getting the computer ready to go.





DX on the Bands

VIETNAM, 3W. Eddy, XV9DT is QRV as 3W22S until December 31 to celebrate the 22nd South East Asian Games hosted in Vietnam. QSL via operator's instructions.

NEPAL, 9N. 9N7XD has been QRV on 15 meters between 1045 to 1330z and then on 20 meters from 1630 to 1730z. QSL via JA7KXD.

OMAN, A4. Alex, A45WD has been QRV on 80 meters around 2330z. QSL via YO9HP.

BALEARIC ISLANDS, EA6. Laci, HA6NL, Zsolt, HA6PS, Tibor, HA6ZV and Sanyi, HA7JJS will be QRV as EA6/homecalls/p from November 2 to 9. During the HA-QRP Contest they will be signing EA6/HA5RT/p. QSL contest call via HA6NL and all others to home calls.

IRAN, EP. Shahryar, EP4PTT has been QRV on 20 meters SSB around 1600z. QSL direct.

LIECHTENSTEIN, HB0. Look for Laci, HB0/HA0HW/p, Tomi, HB0/HA4DX/p and Geza, HB0/HA4XG/p to be QRV from Masescha from November 2 to 10. They will be active on 160 to 10 meters with an emphasis on the low bands, using CW, SSB and RTTY. QSL to home calls.

PANAMA, HP. Special event station HP100RCP will be QRV on all bands and modes from November 1 to 3 to celebrate the 100th

anniversary of the Republic of Panama. QSL via bureau.

NETHERLANDS, PA. A group of operators from the Belgian branch of the International Police Assn. will be active as PA/home calls from EU-146, from October 31 to November 2. Activity will be on 80 to 10 meters using CW, SSB and digital modes. They will participate in the IPA Contest as PA/ON4IPA. QSL contest call via ON6ZV and all others to home calls.

CANADA, VE. Rick, N1RL will be QRV from the Society of Newfoundland Radio Amateurs' Marconi Commemorative Station VO1AA on Signal Hill. QSL via operator's instructions.

(DX Info courtesy of ARRL)

Club Station Activity

If there is interest amongst the membership, we will open the Club Station on Saturday morning, Nov 8th to allow individuals the opportunity to make contact with the Edmund Fitzgerald special event station. This special event station will be placed on the air by the Stu Rockafellow radio club from the Detroit area. This commemorates the 1975 sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald in Lake Superior just off Whitefish Point. They will be using the call sign "N8F" and special certificates are available.

See the October issue of Branch Signals for frequencies and other details.

In order to activate the station, we will need someone to volunteer an HF rig. We can use the deep cycle battery at the Club Station as a power supply.

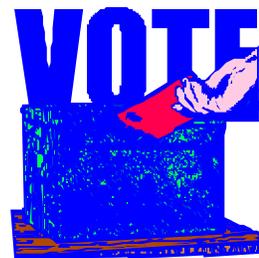
If you are interested in participating, please contact WB8R.



Happy Thanksgiving



The Officers and members of the Board of Directors wish you and yours a happy and safe Thanksgiving holiday.



The November club meeting is our annual business meeting where we nominate and elect the slate of officers for the coming year. This is a very important meeting and all members should do their best to attend and vote.

Only members in good standing are allowed to vote in this election (and on any vote taken during the year). To be in good standing, individuals must have paid their dues for the current year. If you would like to be certain that you are in good standing, the Secretary/Treasurer (Bill Kubiak) can tell you.

We will be electing the following officers and board members on the 18th: President, Secretary/Treasurer, two year Board Member, and if the incumbent president is re-elected, a one year Board member. If the current President is not re-elected, then by Constitutional decree, the outgoing President will assume the one year Board position.

Just like government elections, it is the duty of every member to make his or her selection and cast their ballot. See you there.