



Branch Signals

Newsletter of the Branch County Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

Vol. III Number 1 January 2004

An ARRL Affiliated Club Since 1961

Kalamazoo “LOST” Team to Present Program at January BCARC Meeting

Members of the Kalamazoo County “LOST” Team will be on hand to tell us all about their adventures while setting up portable VHF/UHF/HF stations at various locations in and around Kalamazoo County.

The Team was brought to life in 1997 when it was suggested that some of the accumulating RACES equipment be taken out and “exercised” during the weekly RACES net. This has blossomed into a frequent event that has seen the LOST team activated at all outlying Fire Stations in Kazoo County as well as many other locations.

The Team has improved their skills and equipment and the group is now the official communications response unit for Michigan’s 5th State Police District.

You can expect to hear some very interesting ideas and concepts relating to developing and using emergency communications.

You won’t want to miss this meeting. See you there!



Technician Licensing Class

The latest version of the BCARC Technician Licensing class is off and running with a great group of students. We have 9 students enrolled for the class and they are hard at work on their first assignment as of this writing. The first class section will be held on January 10 in the Training Room of the 911 Communications Center.

The following students are enrolled in our class:

Denny Brauker, Bronson
Tammy Brauker, Bronson
Jon Uetrecht, Coldwater
Jake Ash, Coldwater
Corliss Fleming, Coldwater
David Smith, Quincy
Harry Fallon, Coldwater
Tom Romine, Coldwater
Bill Acock, Coldwater

Notes: Jake has already taken and successfully passed his test (KC8YUN) in Hillsdale, but is going to use the Tech class as an opportunity to learn more in preparation to taking his General test. Denny and Jon are both dispatchers at 911 and Dave is in charge of Emergency Services at the 911 Center. Harry was previously licensed as WN8VNS in 1977. We certainly have a diverse group who will do very well.

WD8KAF Club Repeaters

147.300 + 100 Hz PL

443.300 + 123 Hz PL

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Club Website:
www.qsl.net/wd8kaf

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**January BCARC
Meeting Notice:**
**Jan. 21 7:00 PM at 911
Communications Center**





2004 Meeting Programs

January:

Kalamazoo "LOST" Team

February:

Dale Williams, WA8EFK,
Michigan ARRL Section Manager

March:

Skywarn Training by
Meteorological team from NWS
North Webster, IN

April:

Liar's Club

May:

TBD

June:

Foxhunt

July:

TBD

August:

Coffee, Cookies & Conversation

September:

Dick Mondro, W8FQT, ARRL
Division Vice-Director

October:

Club Auction

November:

Annual Business Meeting

December:

Christmas Dinner & Gift Exchange



Repeater Update

Our repeater team is still working on locating a technician who is capable of reprogramming our Midland repeater onto the ham bands in preparation for putting it on the air.

Meanwhile, our Motorola repeater continues to work very well, but we suspect that there may be either a feedline or antenna problem (or both) at the repeater site at the Sheriff's Department.

The repeater team is working on several ideas to enhance and improve the coverage of both our VHF and our UHF repeaters. Stay Tuned!

VHF Repeater PL Change Planned

A period of time ago, The Michigan Area Repeater Council (MARC) set standards for sub audible tone (PL) usage for Michigan repeaters by location. The Lower Peninsula was divided into three parts and Coldwater is in the Southwest section. MARC specified that repeaters in SW Michigan should use a 94.8-Hertz sub audible tone. We have always used 100 Hertz, which used to be the standard for all of Michigan.

We are anticipating changing the VHF repeater over to 94.8 Hertz at some point in the future.

This change will require that all who use the repeater will need to reprogram their equipment for this new tone in order to use the machine. The repeater ID'er will tell listeners of the proper tone to be used. There will be plenty of publicity prior to the change.

It will take a while (a year or more) for the various repeater directories to catch up with our change. There are no plans to change the UHF tone requirement.

It's That Time Again



Club Dues are Due

Well, it is that time again. Club dues are due and payable as of January 1. The annual dues are currently \$10.00 per year. For those with more than one ham in the family, additional family members can join for \$2.00 each. Students who do not qualify for family membership can join for \$5.00 per year.

VE Test Session Schedule



January 8

Sponsor: Goshen ARC

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

Contact: Lyle L. Long
(574) 875-8455

Email: NILL@JUNO.COM

VEC: ARRL/VEC

Location: Greencroft Retirement Center, Homan Building, Greencroft Blvd, Goshen, IN 46525

January 17

Sponsor: Fulton County 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, Archbold, OH
Leave message on machine

January 17

Sponsor: Cascades ARS
Time: 10:00 AM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: Richard H. McGuire (517) 782-1430
Email: DICKKI8C@JUNO.COM
VEC: W5YI VEC
Location: Jackson Library,
Jackson, MI 49204

January 24

Sponsor: Kalamazoo ARC
Time: 9:00 AM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: John D Tucker (269)324-9085
Email: john.tucker@wmich.edu
VEC: [ARRL/VEC](#)
Location: Kalamazoo County Sheriff Dept.
1500 Lamont Ave (Off Lake St)
Basement Meeting Room
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

February 21

Sponsor: Fulton County 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, Archbold, OH
Leave message on machine

February 21

Sponsor: Cascades ARS
Time: 10:00 AM (Walk-ins allowed)
Contact: Richard H. McGuire (517) 782-1430
Email: DICKKI8C@JUNO.COM
VEC: W5YI VEC
Location: Jackson Library,
Jackson, MI 49204

March 6

Sponsor: Branch County ARC
Time: 9:00 AM (Walk-ins Welcome)
Contact: Jim Voss 517-278-4636
VEC: ARRL
Location: 911 Communications Center, Coldwater, MI



2004 Club Contacts

Officers

President:

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DX on the Bands

SOVEREIGN MILITARY ORDER OF MALTA, 1A0. IK0FVC, IOJBL, IK0FTA and IK0PRG will be QRV as 1A0KM from January 2 to 5. QSL this operation via IK0FTA.

BHUTAN, A5. Dane, S57CQ is QRV as A52CQ until January 14. He has been active on 40 meters around 1700z, 20 meters around 1200z and 10 meters after 0900z. QSL via S57DX.

BAHAMAS, C6. Brian, ND3F plans to be QRV as C6A/N3IQ from Treasure Cay, Abaco Island, from January 2 to 10. This includes an entry in the ARRL RTTY Roundup. Activity will be on 80 to 10 meters. QSL to home call.

US VIRGIN ISLANDS, KP2. David, N4KZ and Mark, K4MCE are QRV as special event station N4Z from St. Croix until January 6. Activity is on 160 to 6 meters using CW and SSB. QSL via N4KZ.

ARGENTINA, LU. Members of the Radio Club Argentina will participate in the 6th Andes Mountains Land Cross and be QRV as LS4M from January 4 to 15. Activity will be on all HF bands using CW and SSB. QSL via LU4AA.

BANGLADESH, S2. Bazlu, S21BR has been QRV on 20 meters around 1200z.

CAMBODIA, XU. Hiroo, JA2EZD will be QRV as XU7AAA from January 2 to 7. QSL via operator's instructions.

CAYMAN ISLANDS, ZF. Pete, N2LM is QRV as ZF2PD from Grand Cayman Island, IOTA NA-016, until January 8. Activity is on 80 to 6 meters using CW and SSB. QSL to home call.

New Ham in Town!

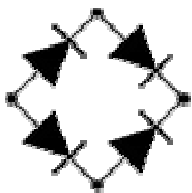


Jake Ash, KC8YUN

As mentioned elsewhere in this issue, a member of our current Technician class has already taken and passed his Tech test at a recent Hillsdale County VE Session. Jake has been assigned KC8YUN and is already on the air. Jake is now working on his General written test and expects to take this test when the balance of the Technician class takes their test.

When you hear Jake on the air, be sure to take a few minutes to get to know him and make him feel welcome.

Congratulations to Jake and my apologies about the picture. It was the only one I had!



Two Organizations Express Concern over BPL



NEWINGTON, CT, Dec 30, 2003

Two organizations have filed comments with the FCC that augment previously expressed worries about potential interference from and to Broadband over Power Line (BPL) systems. Picking up the "grave concerns" the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) expressed over BPL December 4, the nonprofit Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response Association (DERA) is calling on the FCC to require impartial BPL field testing as well as additional public comment and full and open public hearings.

"DERA concludes that serious interference to and disruption of critical emergency communications systems in several licensed services throughout North America would almost certainly result from BPL implementation as currently proposed," DERA's comments said. Endorsing FEMA's earlier remarks, DERA said proposed BPL systems don't just pose a risk of interference, they've already been shown to "actually cause harmful interference to licensed radio services."

The Amateur Radio Research and Development Corporation (AMRAD) filed additional test data with the FCC to support its preliminary comments suggesting that BPL systems are susceptible to interference from even modest Amateur Radio HF signals. AMRAD said its data demonstrate that amateur operation in the test neighborhood could cause many

homes to lose their Internet service. "At least an area out to a radius of 0.51 miles from the transmitting station could have their Internet connection interrupted," AMRAD said. "Closer-in homes would almost certainly have their Internet service interrupted."

AMRAD conducted an RF susceptibility experiment at the Potomac BPL test site in early November. The site is part of a Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO) system test that uses a mid-1960s vintage home with unshielded electrical wiring. The test neighborhood has overhead power lines. AMRAD found that at a distance of just over one-half mile, data transfer ceased in the face of a 100-W signal on 3980 kHz from a mobile transmitter. Adjacent to the test property, AMRAD said data transfer ceased in all but one instance at a transmitter power of just 4 W in the BPL operating band of from 4 to 21 MHz.

The ARRL hopes to complete an independent BPL engineering study by early 2004. Its will explore how BPL might affect HF and low-VHF amateur operation as well as how Amateur Radio operation could affect BPL systems.

Additional information about BPL and Amateur Radio is on the ARRL Web site. To support the League's efforts in this area, visit the ARRL's secure BPL Web site.

The BCARC has donated \$50.00 towards the ARRL frequency defense fund.

