



# Branch Signals

Newsletter of the Branch County Amateur Radio Club, Inc.

Vol. III Number 2 February 2004

An ARRL Affiliated Club Since 1961

## Michigan ARRL Section Manager to Speak to BCARC



Dale Williams, WA8EFK, Michigan ARRL Section Manager will be on hand for our February meeting on February 17. Dale will fill us in on the latest news on amateur radio, the ARRL, and the Michigan Section of the ARRL.

Dale recently took the reigns of the Michigan section of the ARRL when Debby Kirkbride, KA8YKK resigned due to personal reasons. Dale has previously served the hams of Michigan as Emergency Coordinator for Monroe County, ARRL Section Emergency Coordinator, and ARRL Section Manager, as well as many positions as an advisor to the ARRL.

Dale has a wealth of amateur radio experience both as an operator and as an ARRL Leadership Official. He is active in many facets of amateur radio and is recently retired from Motorola.

This is a meeting that you will want to attend.

## ARRL Calls for FCC Amateur License Restructuring

The ARRL has recently proposed that the FCC restructure the amateur licensing system to reflect the needs of ham radio in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The following proposals have been made to the FCC:

1. Create a new Entry Level license that would offer limited HF/Data and Phone/Image privileges on 80, 40, 15, and 10-meter bands as well as current Technician VHF/UHF privileges. Power would be limited to 100 watts on HF frequencies. There would be no Morse code requirement for this license.

2. Combine the current Technician, Tech Plus, and General licenses into a new General Class license, which would convey privileges that are the same as current General licenses, but with no requirement to pass a Morse code test.

3. The Extra class license would retain a 5 WPM Morse code test and would convey the same privileges as the current Extra license.

Before you run to your radio to make use of these new privileges, remember that these changes have just been proposed to the FCC. Any proposal to the FCC requires a lengthy period of study, followed by a Notice of Proposed Rule (NPRM), followed by public

## WD8KAF Club Repeaters

147.300 + 100 Hz PL

443.300 + 123 Hz PL

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Club Website:  
[www.qsl.net/wd8kaf](http://www.qsl.net/wd8kaf)

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**February BCARC  
Meeting Notice:  
Feb. 17 7:00 PM at 911  
Communications Center**

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comments and lengthy debate. All of this may take months or possibly years to accomplish. It all depends on how important the issue is to the FCC.

More specific information is available at [www.ARRL.org](http://www.ARRL.org)



## 2004 Meeting Programs

### **February:**

Dale Williams, WA8EFK,  
Michigan ARRL Section Manager

### **March:**

Skywarn Training by  
Meteorological team from NWS  
North Webster, IN

### **April:**

Liar's Club

### **May:**

Joe Turner, K8CQF, Michigan  
Section Traffic Manager

### **June:**

Foxhunt

### **July:**

Ft. Wayne DX Association

### **August:**

Coffee, Cookies & Conversation

### **September:**

Dick Mondro, W8FQT, ARRL  
Division Vice-Director

### **October:**

Club Auction

### **November:**

Annual Business Meeting

### **December:**

Christmas Dinner & Gift Exchange

## Club Dues are Due



Well, it is that time again. Club dues are due and payable. 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.

A committee has been formed to study the issue of club dues what activities the club wants to fund in the future and how those activities will be funded. As with most clubs, we are dependent upon our members and various fund raising activities for our operating funds along with occasional donations from generous members and friends of the club.

It has become clear that we cannot continue to maintain the same level of service to our members without some changes in our funding. This may mean an increase in our dues structure. We believe that the last increase in dues (to the current \$10.00 per year) was in 1985. What else can you think of that has remained the same price since 1985?

Randy, KI8BM and Mike, KC8PMG have offered to assist the Club Officers and Board of Directors in this study. Input from the membership is welcome as always. We expect to have a report ready by September.



Jim Voss, W8SST  
Emergency Coordinator

I should be well rested for this column, having taken the past two issues off. I hope you had a great Christmas and are enjoying the new year.

As I mentioned in November, our SEC, Jim Wades, has stepped down. He has been succeeded by Ray DeVlieg, KB8VNI, from Fenton. I had the opportunity to chat with Ray at the District 5 Emergency Coordinator's meeting last month and brought back some pertinent information for Branch County ARES/RACES cardholders. RACES members need no longer complete four courses of study to retain their cards. The only requirement during Ray's tenure will be completing the FEMA course plus any training required by the County Emergency Manager. In speaking with Kurt Spalding it was decided that he would like our members to complete a one-day training session in Damage Assessment. The training will be offered at the local 911 Center and it will be a free course. We must turn out 20 students to make the course worthwhile, so I need to ask all RACES cardholders to be ready to take this course when offered. Watch this column for the date

I hope you were present for the LosTeam presentation at the last club meeting. I'd like to suggest that all of us think about putting together a coffee can ready kit similar to what they use. A metal coffee can with plastic top which holds a fold up j-pole antenna with plenty of coax, 50 feet or so of line to hang the antenna from a tree or other tall object, a fishing weight to put on the end of the line for

throwing, extra batteries for a handheld, and a handheld (unless you carry it with you).

Here's a link to a small program that puts an ARRL Radiogram form on your screen in which you're able to fill in the blanks. <http://www.concentric.net/~ka8ykk/rgram.zip> Thanks to Ed KC8LBZ for providing it.

Here's an NWS website that will help you in understanding the radar images you see on their sites. <http://www.crh.noaa.gov/radar/radinfo/radinfo.html>

This is a good time to do some book learning while we're inside keeping warm and before the stuff hits the fan this spring. I'll try to have a list of other educational sites of interest in next month's column.

Till next month,

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

## VE Test Session Schedule



### **February 14**

**Sponsor:** Eaton County ARC

**Time:** 12:30PM

(Walk-ins allowed)

**Contact:** Devon Wiley

(517) 543-1785

**VEC:** [ARRL/VEC](#)

**Location:** Eaton County Sheriffs Dept-EOC

1250 Independence Blvd

Charlotte, MI 48813

### **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:** 10:00AM

(Walk-ins allowed)

**Contact:** Richard H. McGuire

(517) 782-1430

Email: [DICKKI8C@JUNO.COM](mailto:DICKKI8C@JUNO.COM)

**VEC:** W5YI VEC

**Location:** Jackson Library,

Jackson, MI 49204

### **March 6**

**Sponsor:** Branch County ARC

**Time:** 10:00 AM

(Walk-ins Welcome)

**Contact:** Jim Voss 517-278-4636

**VEC:** ARRL

**Location:** 911 Communications

Center, Coldwater, MI

### **March 13**

**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

43502

Pre-registration preferred

Leave message on machine

### **March 13**

**Sponsor:** Cascades ARS

**Time:** 10:00AM

(Walk-ins allowed)

**Contact:** Richard H. McGuire

(517) 782-1430

Email: [DICKKI8C@JUNO.COM](mailto:DICKKI8C@JUNO.COM)

**VEC:** W5YI VEC

**Location:** Jackson Library,

Jackson, MI 49204

### **March 27**

**Sponsor:** Kalamazoo ARC

**Time:** 9:00 AM (Walk-ins

allowed)

**Contact:** John D Tucker  
(269) 324-9085

**Email:** [john.tucker@wmich.edu](mailto:john.tucker@wmich.edu)

**VEC:** [ARRL/VEC](#)

**Location:** Kalamazoo County Sheriff Dept.

1500 Lamont Ave (Off Lake St)

Basement Meeting Room

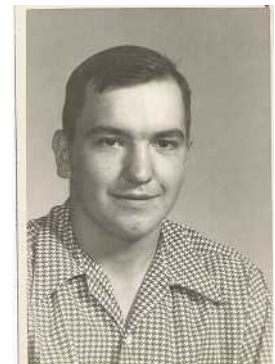
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

## Youngest Extra Class Licensee?



Mattie Clauson, AD7BL

7 year old Mattie Clauson from Oregon successfully passed her amateur extra exam on January 14 and was issued her extra ticket on January 29, 2004. It is believed that Mattie is the youngest extra class licensee in the U.S. Her dad is also a ham. Mattie earned her Technician license at age 5 and her General ticket at age 6. Do you feel old? I do.



Identify This Ham

Do you know who this local ham is? Send an email to [wb8r@arrl.net](mailto:wb8r@arrl.net) if you think you know the answer.



## 2004 Club Contacts

### Officers

#### **President:**

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

#### **Secy/Treasurer:**

Bill Kubiak, KB8VWI  
639-4390  
[banjonut@yahoo.com](mailto:banjonut@yahoo.com)

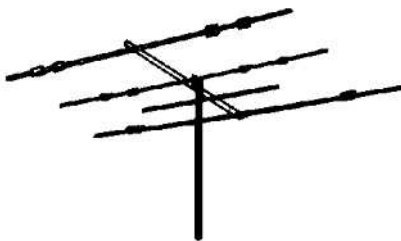
### Board of Directors

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

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

Steve Williams, N8CTI  
369-7194  
[shadowman405@charter.net](mailto:shadowman405@charter.net)

**Emergency Coordinator:**  
**Jim Voss, W8SST**  
**278-4636 [w8sst@arrl.net](mailto:w8sst@arrl.net)**



## DX on the Bands

### United Nations HQ, 4U UN.

Bernie, W3UR, Christa, KB3JIU, Steve, KU9C and Henry, KT1J will

be QRV from 4U1UN beginning 1400z on January 30. Planned activity will be on 80 to 10 meters using CW, SSB, RTTY and PSK. QSL via operators' instructions.

### Trinidad And Tobago, 9Y.

Walter, DL8JS, Ulla, DF6QP, Alfons, DJ8VC, Eberhard, DJ8OT and Hannelore, DH5JR are QRV as 9Y4/homecall from Tobago, IOTA SA-009, until February 14. Activity is generally on 20, 15 and 10 meters. QSL to home calls.

### THE GAMBIA, C5.

Andy, C56/G0VUH has been QRV on 15 meters between 1700 and 1800z. QSL to home call.

### PHILIPPINES, DU.

Jon, DU9/N0NM is usually QRV on 160 meters around 1000z. QSL via W4DR.

### KYRGYZSTAN, EX.

Bek, EX8AB has been QRV on 40 meters CW around 0200z.

### SCOTLAND, GM.

Hans, DJ6AU is QRV as MM0XAU from the Shetland Islands, IOTA EU-012, until the end of March. He is generally QRV on 20 and 17 meters SSB. QSL to home call.

### SOLOMON ISLANDS, H4.

Bernhard, DL2GAC is QRV as H44MS from Honiara, IOTA OC-047, until the end of April. It is not very likely that he will visit other island groups. QSL to home call.

### DOMINICA, J7.

Lars, SM0CCM will be QRV as J73CCM from February 5 to March 4. Activity will be on 160 to 6 meters using mostly CW, with some RTTY and PSK. QSL to home call.

### FAROE ISLANDS, OY.

Caen, OY1CT has been QRV on 160 meters around 2300z and 17 meters around 1400 to 1530z. QSL direct.

### INDIA, VU.

Ram, VU3DJQ may be QRV as either AT0D or AT0DJQ until March 31. He plans to be QRV in a few of the upcoming contests. QSL via EA7FTR.

### MEXICO, XE.

Hector, XE2K and others will be QRV as XF1K from the Sonora State South Group, IOTA NA-166, from February 5 to 9. They plan to be active with three stations using CW and SSB on 80 to 10 meters, and possibly 160 meters. QSL via N6AWD.

### CAMBODIA, XU.

Peter, NO2R is QRV as XU7ACY from Sihanoukville from Feb. 2 to 8. Activity will mainly be on 160 meters. QSL via K2NJ.

## **CLUB RAFFLE**

## **2004 PLANNED**

Our 2004 raffle chairman Steve Williams, N8CTI has applied for the Raffle License from the State and we expect to receive it in the next couple of weeks. Once the license has been received, the tickets will be ordered. We are hopeful that we may have tickets available at the February club meeting, but that may not happen.

One thing is for sure and that is that we are going to depend upon the membership to sell the raffle tickets this year. The prize will be \$500 Cash. We decided to give away cash because it has universal appeal to hams and non-hams. Everyone can use cash. The ticket price will be \$5.00 and you need not be present to win.

We are expecting members to take a block of ten tickets and sell them to friends, relatives and anyone else that is interested in taking a shot at winning \$500. If 25 members sell ten tickets each and we are able to sell another 100 at the Marshall hamfest and other club meetings, our potential earnings could be in excess of \$1000 after all expenses are paid.

The proceeds of the raffle will benefit the club's emergency equipment fund. We would like to purchase a HF radio for the club station.

We need the help of our members to make this happen. Start saving your pennies now!

## Program Notes



Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA

Recently I received the February issue of World Radio and while reading it, I came across an article that was about a group of amateurs from various places in the world who had journeyed to Albania (ZA) as part of "Operation Goodwill Albania 2003" to teach a group of engineering students at the Polytechnic University of Tirana about amateur radio.

As I read the article and looked at the pictures, I was surprised to recognize two people who have attended BCARC club meetings in a picture in the magazine. Sure enough, there was a picture of Carl, K9LA and Vicky, AE9YL from Ft. Wayne standing in front of a hotel in Tirana, Albania. My first thought was "they are at it again!" And I was right.

It seems that Carl and Vicky were invited to be part of a teaching expedition to Albania as part of an effort to generate hams from the engineering college at the Polytechnic University in Tirana.

In July both Carl and Vicky will be at our meeting to tell us all about this trip. Based on the two past programs that they have presented,

this one will be great as well. You won't want to miss it.



## BPL Update

(Excerpts taken from ARRL "It Seems to Us" written by David Sumner, K1ZZ, February, 2004)

After giving the (BPL) matter careful study, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which is now part of the Department of Homeland Security, concluded that BPL could not be implemented in the HF radio spectrum without significant detriment to national security and emergency preparedness requirements. FEMA has advised the FCC accordingly, in comments filed in response to the Notice of Inquiry in ET Docket 03-104.

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), which already has expressed concerns about potential BPL interference to the FCC, has taken measurements at BPL test sites and is expected to issue a report sometime early in 2004. While the FCC is rumored to be working on a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on BPL, surely it's better for that to await publication of the NTIA's results.

Another encouraging turn was the clarification by FCC Commissioner Abernathy's Senior Legal Adviser, reported in January "Happenings," of earlier remarks the Commissioner had made that appeared to be an uncritical endorsement of BPL. In fact, we and others were assured, "Ensuring that BPL and all new technologies avoid causing harmful interference to licensed RF users is a bedrock

position [emphasis added] for Commissioner Abernathy." She did not intend to suggest, we were told, that BPL "necessarily will emerge as a viable platform or that it does not present interference issues."

On the other hand, distressing evidence that BPL is a growing problem worldwide news arrived from Zaragoza, Spain, where PLC (the European term for BPL) has been documented to be causing extremely serious interference.....

Apparently, we are about to see a similar situation arise in Manassas, Virginia, where a very small-scale pilot program is about to be extended to four subdivisions of 2100 residences. Fortunately, in this country the regulations are clear: BPL is not allowed to cause harmful interference to over-the-air radio-communication services, including the amateur service. To quote from §15.5 of the FCC Rules, "The operator of a radio frequency device shall be required to cease operating the device upon notification by a Commission representative that the device is causing harmful interference. Operation shall not resume until the condition causing the harmful interference has been corrected." Manassas is just down the road from the FCC's Washington headquarters. We'll make sure that Commission enforcement personnel know what's going on in Manassas if we have to drive them there ourselves.

