



Branch Signals

Newsletter of the Branch County Amateur Radio Club, Inc.
Vol. III Number 3 March 2004
An ARRL Affiliated Club Since 1961

Severe Weather Training Planned



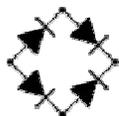
Photo by KI8BM

Representatives from the NWS station at North Webster, Indiana will be at the March meeting of the BCARC to conduct our annual SKYWARN training. There will be no business meeting in March because of this special training session.

This is a training session that is important to us all on a personal level for the safety of our families and ourselves as well as important to us as SKYWARN spotters for our communities. You won't want to miss this meeting. See you there!

Survey Sez...

At the February meeting a survey form was distributed to determine the most popular and least popular programs of 2003. The results have been tabulated and can be found elsewhere in this issue. See how your opinion compares with everyone else's.



Raffle 2004 Tickets Now Available



Our raffle license has arrived and so have the tickets. Steve, N8CTI has distributed a few blocks of tickets at the February club meeting, but there remains lots to do if this raffle is going to be successful.

We are asking club 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. Even if we sell all 500 tickets, the odds of winning are 500 to 1, and any way you slice it, those are good odds!

If you want to help, you can contact Steve at 369-7194 or via email at: shadowman405@charter.net

New Morse Character Added

Morse code has been modernized by the ARRL. In response to the need to have the ability to send in Morse the "AT" sign (@) that we

WD8KAF Club Repeaters

147.300 + 100 Hz PL
443.300 + 123 Hz PL

Club Website:
www.qsl.net/wd8kaf

March BCARC Meeting Notice:
Mar. 16 7:00 PM at 911 Communications Center



all use in our email addresses, the ARRL has come up with a new character. This character is the letter A and C sent together as one letter. This should make things easier for the CW crowd.

2004 Meeting Programs

April:

Liar's Club - Our panel of accomplished deception experts will try to fool you again with three versions of what various objects are used for. We deceive, you decide!

May:

Joe Turner, K8CQF, Michigan Section Traffic Manager

June:

Foxhunt – See if you can find our elusive Fox!

July:

Ft. Wayne DX Association – Carl and Vicky from Ft. Wayne visit to tell us about their trip to Albania.

August:

Coffee, Cookies & Tall Tales

September:

Dick Mondro, W8FQT, ARRL Division Vice-Director tells us what is happening in the ARRL

October:

Club Auction with Jim Voss as our auctioneer extraordinaire!

November:

Annual Business Meeting

December:

Christmas Dinner & Gift Exchange – We are looking for new ideas for this annual event.

Jim Voss, W8SST



Emergency Coordinator

Well, here it is, barely hours from the month of March, and you know what that means. All of you who have been involved in storm spotting in the past know that we could be called out any time now. Are you prepared? Let's go down the checklist.

- Did you actually get around to putting that jump kit together last fall? Even an abbreviated kit like we saw when the LoTeam visited is better than none at all. There are many websites where you can get ideas for what to put into yours, but the basics should include: handi-talky, spare batteries (alkalines), quarter wave antenna, power adapter, earphone, cigarette lighter plug, message forms. Jr. legal pad and pen. Add to your kit from there.
- Have you mastered the use of all your commonly used radios? Yours truly has finally come to the point where he can program both mobile radios he uses. I hope you can say the same.
- Another item for the jump kit would be a list of surrounding repeaters and access tones, especially those used for Skywarn nets.
- If you don't already have one, consider purchasing a weather radio with SAME programming. It allows you to sleep soundly even though there may be the possibility of an approaching storm.

- Plan on attending the annual Skywarn training on March 16th at 7:00 p.m. at the Branch County 911 Center.
- The next couple weeks provide time to do a little internet surfing for Skywarn, National Weather Service and other weather related sites to brush up on storm spotting tips.

This year we will be working on implementing the three color-coded levels of net activation. I'll detail that in the next column along with other net procedures we all need to observe.

At our last club meeting I think I promised to include some websites where one could find training on how to better understand what we're seeing on the radar displays. Originally, I approached the NWS concerning some training to help us better read radar information, but after a long discussion we decided that hams would be storm spotters and the weather service guys would read the radar. That being said, here are a few sites where one can read up on the fine art of interpreting radar:

<http://www.crh.noaa.gov/iwx/outreach/wsr88d/88dinfo.html> – this one is the most basic.
[http://ww2010.atmos.uiuc.edu/\(Gh\)/guides/rs/rad/home.rxml](http://ww2010.atmos.uiuc.edu/(Gh)/guides/rs/rad/home.rxml) – a bit more advanced.
<http://www.skywarn.ampr.org/radartut.htm#contents> – this one is for the serious radar enthusiast.

I'll see you on the air.

Jim Voss, W8SST - E. C. Branch County



VE Test Session Schedule



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
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

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

VEC: [ARRL/VEC](#)

Location: Kalamazoo County Sheriff Dept.

1500 Lamont Ave (Off Lake St)
Basement Meeting Room
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

April 8

Sponsor: Goshen ARC

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

Contact: Lyle L Long
(574) 875-8455

Email: N1LL@JUNO.COM

VEC: ARRL/VEC

Location: Greencroft Retirement Center

Homan Building
Greencroft Blvd
Greencroft Retirement Center
Goshen, IN 46525

April 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
43502

Pre-registration preferred
Leave message on machine

April 17

Sponsor: Cascades ARS

Time: 10:00AM

(Walk-ins allowed)

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

Email: DICKKI8C@JUNO.COM

VEC: W5YI VEC

Location: Jackson Library,
Jackson, MI 49204

April 28

Sponsor: SMARS

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

Contact: Richard F Holcomb
(269) 969-3026

VEC: [ARRL/VEC](#)

Location: American Red Cross
162 Van Buren ST W
Battle Creek, MI 49017

Michigan Scanner Law

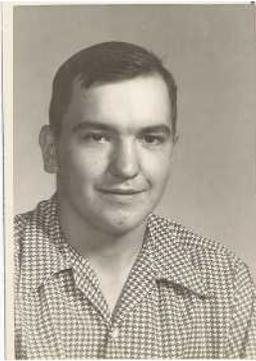
Most modern 2-meter rigs can be programmed with your favorite police and fire frequencies so you can listen on the go. This is an

illegal activity for most people, but the law 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 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 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)

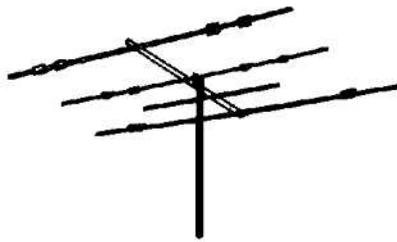
Sec. 508. Any person who shall equip a vehicle with a radio receiving set that will receive signals sent on frequencies assigned by the Federal Communications Commission of the United States of America for police purposes, or use the same in this state unless such vehicle is used or owned by a peace 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.





Phil Sattler W8ARM

Phil was correctly identified by Jim Voss, W8SST. This picture was taken in 1951. What a handsome devil!



DX on the Bands

TANZANIA, 5H.

Hans, HB9BXE will be QRV as 5H1BP from Zanzibar, IOTA AF-032, from March 1 to 6. He plans to be active on 80 to 10 meters using CW, SSB and PSK31. QSL to home call.

NIGER, 5U.

Bull, 5U7JB will be QRV in the CQ 160 Meter SSB contest. Of late, he has been active on 80, 40, 17 and 12 meters at various times. QSL via ON5NT.

WEST MALAYSIA, 9M2. Rich, PA0RRS is QRV as 9M2/PA0RRS from Penang Island, IOTA AS-015, until March 2. He has been active on 20 and 30 meters using CW. QSL to home call.

BURUNDI, 9U.

Michael, PA5M is QRV as 9U5M in Bujumbura until March 17. He is active on 40 to 10 meters using CW and SSB in his spare time, usually after 1600z. QSL via PA7FM.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, A6.

Robert, S53R will be QRV as A61AJ in the CQ 160 Meter SSB contest as a Single-Op/High Power entry. QSL via operator's instructions.

BAHAMAS, C6.

Bill, NE1B is QRV as C6AWB. Both he and Tom, C6ANM are active from the islands of Eleuthera, IOTA NA-001, and New Providence, IOTA NA-001, until March 8. This includes an entry in the CQ 160 Meter SSB contest and the upcoming ARRL DX contest. They may make a side trip to the Berry Islands, IOTA NA-054. QSL both calls via WA2IYO.

MOROCCO, CN.

Jim, W7EJ will be QRV as CN2R in the CQ 160 Meter SSB contest. He also plans to be active in the upcoming ARRL DX contest as well as the upcoming WPX SSB contest. QSL to home call.

HONDURAS, HR.

Rich, N0HJZ will be QRV as HR9/N0HJZ from Roatan Island, IOTA NA-057, from March 3 to 9. Activity will be on all HF band. This includes an entry in the upcoming ARRL DX contest. QSL to home call.

SAN MARINO, T7.

IV3JVJ, IV3TDM and IV3OWC will be QRV as T77C in the CQ 160 Meter SSB contest as a Multi Op entry. QSL via T77C.

EUROPEAN RUSSIA, UA. Alex, RX3AJL is QRV as RX3AJL/1 from several White Sea islands until March 6. He is active on 20 meter QRP. QSL to home call.

NAMIBIA, V5.

Klaus, DJ4SO is QRV as V51/DJ4SO until March 15. Activity is on 160 to 6 meters, using mostly CW with some SSB, RTTY and PSK31. QSL to home call. Meanwhile, look for V51/DL5XL and V51/DH3FBS to be QRV until mid April. QSL to home calls.

REVILLAGIGEDO, XE4. A number of amateurs will be QRV as XF4IH from Socorro Island, IOTA NA-030, from March 3 to 20. Activity will be on all HF bands, including 6 and 2 meters, 70 cm and a number of satellites, using CW, SSB, RTTY, SSTV, PSK31 and JT44. QSL via XE1IH.

BURMA, XZ.

Conny, DL1DA and Abo, DK6ST are QRV as XZ1DA and XZ6ST, respectively. Of late, they have been active on 30, 20 and 17 meters. QSL to home calls.

SYRIA, YK.

Omar, YK1AO is generally QRV on 40 meters between 0330 and 0500z. He has also been active on 160

2004 Club Contacts

Officers

President:

Larry Camp, WB8R
278-0406 wb8r@arrl.net

Secy/Treasurer:

Bill Kubiak, KB8VWI
639-4390
banjonut@yahoo.com

Board of Directors

Jim Voss, W8SST
278-4636 w8sst@arrl.net

Arnie Hayward, NS8T
278-8507 ns8t@arrl.net

Steve Williams, N8CTI
369-7194
shadowman405@charter.net

Emergency Coordinator:

Jim Voss, W8SST
278-4636 w8sst@arrl.net

meters using CW just before 0400z. QSL direct.

SOUTH AFRICA, ZS. Etienne, ZS6Y is QRV with the special callsign ZS10RSA until mid May. QSL via KK3S.

2003 Program Survey Results

The results from the survey taken to determine the most popular and least popular club programs from 2003 have been tabulated and are as follows:

1. Liars Club
2. Club Auction
3. Debbie Kirkbride, KA8YKK (MI ARRL Section Manager)
4. Skywarn Training
5. Fox Hunt
6. Chat and Chew
7. Dick Mondro, W8FQT (ARRL Great Lakes Vice Director)
8. Ft. Wayne DX Assn (1st visit)
9. Christmas Meeting
10. Ft. Wayne DX Assn (2nd Visit)
11. Larry Wheeler, W9QR (Feedlines)
12. Annual Business Meeting (No surprise here)

Thanks to those who took the time to complete their survey forms to tell us what they liked and didn't like.

Note Received from WA8EFK

The following note was received from Dale Williams, WA8EFK shortly after he visited our club meeting in February:

Larry,

Just a short note to let you know how much I appreciated the opportunity to speak at the February meeting of the Branch County Amateur Radio Club.

Please pass my personal thanks along to your membership. I returned with several valuable suggestions for improving our Michigan Section web page, the collection of field reports and a suggestion of a discount for ARRL membership to new licensees. I hope your group was able to gather from me a little better understanding of the League and it's operation as well as our plans for Michigan.

I found the kind of enthusiasm in Branch County that we need to spread through all clubs to make them strong and viable. It was refreshing.

Keep up the great work.

Regards,

Dale Williams WA8EFK
ARRL Section Manager –
Michigan

Where to find Help

Subject Area and Who Can Help

Antennas: K18BM, NS8T, WB8R, K8CHS, W8SST, N8NG

Buying First Radio: K18BM, NS8T, WB8R, N8NG, W8SST

Code Practice: W8SST, K8CHS, WB8R, NS8T, K18BN

Computers: K8SST, W8WU

Contests, County Hunting
K8CHS

DXCC Awards: K8CHS

DX: K8CHS, W8WU

FM: K18BM

Homebrew (Do It Yourself)
WA8LGO

License Testing: W8SST, NS8T, WB8R, N8JWC, KC8RYF, K8CHS, K18BM

Packet Radio: N8CTI, K18BM, W8SST

Public Service: W8SST, WB8R, N8CTI

Rag Chewers Club: WB8R, W8SST

Technical Questions/Electronics:
K8CHS, K18BM, WB8R

Traffic (Message Handling)
WB8R, W8SST, N8CTI

Tube Type Radios: WA8LGO

WAS (Worked All States):
WB8R, W8SST

Random Thoughts (Filler Material)

Finagle's First Law: If an experiment works, something has gone wrong.

Finagle's Second Law: No matter what the experiment's result, there will always be someone eager to: (a) misinterpret it. (b) fake it. or (c) believe it supports his own pet theory.

Finagle's Third Law: In any collection of data, the figure most obviously correct, beyond all need of checking, is the mistake.

Finagle's Fourth Law: Once a job is fouled up, anything done to improve it only makes it worse.

Non-Reciprocal Law of Expectations:

Negative expectations yield negative results.
Positive expectations yield negative results.

Jones' Motto: Friends come and go but enemies accumulate.