



Branch Signals

Newsletter of the Branch County Amateur Radio Club, Inc.
Vol. III Number 4 April 2004
An ARRL Affiliated Club Since 1961

Club Website Moved

The BCARC website has a new home and it's own domain name. You can now find the current newsletter and various other pictures and information about club activities and club members at www.branchcountyarc.com

Out thanks to Jon Voss, K8SST for his efforts to create and maintain our web site and for his patience when dealing with those of us who know little or nothing about websites other than how to access them.

New Hams Receive Callsigns

The five hams that successfully passed their Technician tests at the BCARC VE Session on Mar. 6 received their new calls on Mar. 11.

The new calls are:

KC8ZFP	Bill Acock
KC8ZFQ	Bob Worley
KC8ZFR	David Smith
KC8ZFS	Tammy Brauker
KC8ZFT	Denny Brauker

Bill and Bob are from Coldwater, Dave is from Quincy, and the Brauker's are from Bronson.

Our congratulations go to all five of them! Be sure to say hello and welcome them to Branch County ham radio when you hear them on the air.

Raffle 2004 Tickets Still Available



If you have not gotten your tickets from Steve, please be sure to do so at the April club meeting.

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. Selling 10 tickets is considered to be a reasonable expectation for each member. If you can sell more than 10, by all means ask for another batch. If we want this raffle to be successful, we need to have the help of the membership.

The drawing is scheduled for May 18, 2004.

You can contact Steve at 369-7194 or via email at: shadowman405@charter.net

April Program Note

The program for the April meeting will be another session of the infamous "Liar's Club" at which our panel of convincing authorities will present 3 versions of what various curious items are used for. The task of the audience will be to determine which of the three panelists are telling the truth. A valuable prize will be awarded to the winning "Master-Sleuth."

WD8KAF Club Repeaters

147.300 + 100 Hz PL

443.300 + 123 Hz PL



Club Website:

www.branchcountyarc.com



April BCARC Meeting Notice:

Apr. 20 7:00 PM at 911 Communications Center



Jim Voss, W8SST Emergency Coordinator



As promised last time, here is the scoop on Color Codes used to describe the activity level of our Skywarn Net.

We will use three levels – **Green, Yellow and Red**. This is easy to remember, just like a traffic light.

The lowest level of activity will be **Condition Green**. This is a standby net. This Condition will be announced when severe weather is possible, but not imminent. This condition should be set during all watches. Normal repeater use may continue as usual, but general weather announcements will likely be made as time progresses. Skywarn spotters should be aware that there is the possibility of severe weather and they should be prepared to take action if necessary, as well as monitoring the repeater or a reliable news/weather source. Net control stations should be alerting liaison stations that they may be called upon for service. If you are a liaison to an upstream area you should begin to monitor the upstream repeater at this time.

Condition Yellow indicates that the net is in session (a directed net) and spotters have been or will be called out. The NCS will be accepting reports of severe weather. Those reports, unless otherwise requested, will be **only** the following:

- Damaging straight line winds
- Hail of any size
- Wall Cloud
- Funnel Cloud
- Tornado
- Flash Flooding

Remember, silence is golden when it comes to these reports. If your report doesn't meet the above criteria - don't report it. Don't clutter up the net with reports of non-severe conditions. Net control stations – be sure you have put liaison stations in place by this time, upstream and downstream if possible.

Condition Red will be set any time severe weather is occurring in the county. Transmissions should be kept brief and concise. If you have not checked in at this point do not do so unless you have severe conditions to report. Reporting criteria remains the same as in Condition Yellow.

Spotters, stay where you are placed unless you request permission from Net Control to move. Keep the NCS apprised of where you are. Always give the following details in your reports:

- Time the event occurred
- Exactly what the event was
- Location of observation

Liaison stations – the National Weather Service has asked that we use cities and towns as reference points. For instance, use “Approximately 6 miles west south west of Coldwater” rather than the corner of Snow Prairie and US 12”.

Net control stations – please keep track of the running time of all nets and number of checkins. This information is needed by your E.C. to report to the District E.C.

See you in the field.

Jim Voss, W8SST - E. C. Branch
County



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 will discuss amateur communications.

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. Remember, Dick's program was recently voted as the 7th most popular program of 2003 at the BCARC. And he hasn't visited our club since 2002. Now that is staying power!

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.

VE Test Session Schedule



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
May 8
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

May 15

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

May 22

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

Who is This Ham?

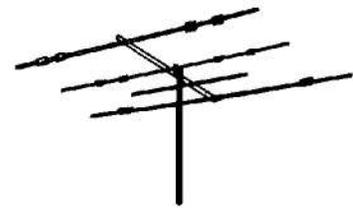


Send a note to wb8r@arrl.net if you think you know.

News Flash!



Dave King, **KC8WVV** recently passed his Extra Class test at the Hillsdale VE Session. Word has it that a vanity call sign is in order. Congratulations, Dave!!!



DX on the Bands

FIJI, 3D2. Brian, N6IZ will be active as 3D2IZ from Namotu Island, IOTA OC-121, from March 28 to April 3. His activity is limited, but he may be QRV on 80 to 10 meters, including 30 meters, using CW and SSB. QSL to home call.

SAMOA, 5W. Udo, DL9HCU is QRV as 5W1VE and has been active on 20 meters around 0800 to 0900z. QSL to home call.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, A6. Gene, N2AA and Dave, K2GM will be QRV as A61AJ during the CQ WPX contest. Before and after the contest, they will be QRV on all bands, including 160 meters. North and South American stations QSL via K2UO. All others QSL via DJ2MX.

CHINA, BY. Pertti, OH2PM will be QRV as BY1DX during the CQ WPX contest. He is also active using CW until March 26. QSL via operator's instructions.

GERMANY, DA. A number of German operators will be QRV as DA0WPX during the CQ WPX contest. They plan to be a Multi Op/All Band operation. QSL via the bureau.

CANARY ISLANDS, EA8. Pekka, OH1RY and Olli, OH0XX will be QRV as AN8AH and ED8ZS, on 40 meters and 15 meters, respectively, during the CQ WPX contest. QSL via operators' instructions.

GUADELOUPE, FG. FG/F6GWV and FG/F6HMQ are QRV until April 2. They will be active as TO7T during the CQ WPX contest. QSL contest call via F6HMQ and all others to home calls.

FRENCH GUIANA, FY. Didier, FY5FY will be QRV in the CQ WPX contest as Single Op/All Band/High Power entry. He may also be QRV on 160 meters. QSL direct to home call.

ITALY, I. IZ1CCE, I1RB, IK1MJG, IK1QLD, IZ1CQY, IK1ZNN, IZ1ESH and others plan to be QRV as I1ID in the CQ WPX contest. Activity will be on 80 to 10 meters. QSL via IZ1CCE.

JAPAN, JA. Samy, JR8KJR is QRV as JR8KJR/8 from Rishiri Island, IOTA AS-147, until March 31. He is active on 80 to 15 meters using SSB. QSL direct to home call.

LUXEMBOURG, LX. Philippe, LX2AJ will be QRV as LX7I in the CQ WPX contest as Single Op/Single Band entry. QSL to home call.

ARUBA, P4. Andy, AE6Y will be QRV as P40Y until March 30. This includes an entry in the CQ WPX contest. QSL to home call.

WESTERN SAHARA, S0. Karl, DK2WV is QRV as S07V and will be here for about 9 days. Activity is on all bands using CW, SSB and RTTY. This includes 6 meters. QSL to home call.

POLAND, SP. Krzysztof, SP6DVP will be QRV using the special call 3Z6V in the CQ WPX contest. QSL to home call.

WEST KIRIBATI, T30. Dave, K3LP will be QRV as T30DC as a Single Op/Low Power entry in the CQ WPX contest. QSL via K5KV.

TRISTAN DA CUNHA AND GOUGH ISLAND, ZD9. Andy, ZD9BV has been QRV on 12 meters around 1800z. QSL direct to home call.

SOUTH COOK ISLANDS, ZK1. Victor, ZK1CG will participate in the CQ WPX contest as an All Band entry. QSL direct to home call.



The following is reprinted from the ARRL Website:

Here's to the Control Operators

By Murray Green, K3BEQ

March 24, 2004

Most hams who use Amateur Radio repeaters typically operate while driving to and from work for short periods of time, and from home when not involved in raising kids, doing taxes and performing household chores. Repeater licensees, trustees and control operators, however, follow a different path. As volunteers, they monitor their respective repeaters most of the day and throughout the night. This is not as easy as one might think because they are placed in a unique position of having to hear everything that occurs on the repeater, including interference. Sometimes this gets taken for granted and some are not fully aware of what is involved in this daily volunteer service.

Some may think that there is a certain prestigious aspect to being a control operator for a repeater; it requires a lot of patience, time and discretion. Control operators, by virtue of continuous monitoring, become very attuned to subtle

changes in the repeater's operation, a definite plus for those maintaining the equipment. They also listen to all types of exchanges and have to make decisions on illegal and poor operating practices. Sanctions, if required, must be diplomatically applied by a control operator, while making certain that they are not censoring speech or causing ill feelings.

As a control operator, the last thing one wants to do is create an atmosphere of self-importance or come down too hard on a fellow ham. That's the way to lose a member or potential club member, and create an atmosphere of unfriendliness that is not in the best interests of a repeater organization. Hams like to talk and word gets around! Control operators must have that rare combination of being assertive, straightforward, sensitive to the feelings of others and sincere in wanting to help. Not everyone is suited for that, so control operators must be selected wisely.

No "Off" Switch

Monitoring repeaters can be a frustrating and irritating exercise when one has to continuously listen to all sorts of interference that the average operator does not experience or has the option of turning off. A control operator has to stick it out. Some of the interference is of short duration, attributable to conditions or simply inexplicable, while others--such as open microphones or extended interference from unknown sources--require coordination and corrective action. Add that to the equation and it's easy to see how difficult the job can be. Call it dedication, a strong desire to help, to be involved, to want "their repeater" and its users to be the best, or just plain old *stick-to-it-iveness*. In any event, control operators get the job done. But, they do have some help from the FCC.

Part 97 of Title 47 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, the section that defines the rules for the

Amateur Radio Service, provides for three types of controls for repeaters--local, remote and automatic--and latter gives some form of temporary relief for the control operators. Part 97 defines Automatic Control as *The use of devices and procedures for control of a station when it is transmitting so that compliance with the FCC Rules is achieved without the control operator being present at a control point (97.3(a)(6))*. I believe that the FCC rule makers, in their wisdom, realized that it is unrealistic to monitor a repeater every hour of every day continuously. *However, there must be a responsible control operator available to bring the station into compliance with FCC rules, even if that means he or she is woken up at 3 AM!*

Minding the Store

".....Automatic control must cease upon notification by an FCC District Director that the station is transmitting improperly or causing harmful interference to other stations..." (97.109(d)). The FCC is not bashful about issuing this notification. Why? Because in certain instances, the abuse most likely extended to a repeater operating without any designated control operators or control operators who did not monitor for lengthy, unacceptable periods of time. Essentially, no one was minding the store, and user exchanges or interference got out of hand with no corrective action taken. Still, the number of issued notifications is minimal when compared to the large number of repeaters in the US, most used in a manner that reflects the highest standard of amateur operating practices. A final note on a control operator's dedication: every repeater has a station licensee or trustee (for repeaters using club call signs) who is the principal party responsible for the proper operation of the repeater. If the FCC calls a trustee to task for a violation, the control operator shares the responsibility with the trustee. It takes a special level of

commitment to assume that kind of responsibility.

The next time you talk to a repeater control operator on the air, thank him or her for their work, or send an e-mail. Most repeater clubs list their names, call signs and e-mail in newsletters or Web pages, or simply ask a club officer. It's the right thing to do.

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

What is WWV?

NIST radio station WWV broadcasts time and frequency information 24 hours per day, 7 days per week to millions of listeners worldwide. WWV is located in Fort Collins, Colorado, about 100 kilometers north of Denver. The broadcast information includes time announcements, standard time intervals, standard frequencies, UT1 time corrections, a BCD time code, geophysical alerts, marine storm

warnings, and Global Positioning System (GPS) status reports.



Broadcast Frequencies

WWV operates in the high frequency (HF) portion of the radio spectrum. The station radiates 10,000 W on 5, 10, and 15 MHz; and 2500 W on 2.5 and 20 MHz. Each frequency is broadcast from a separate transmitter. Although each frequency carries the same information, multiple frequencies are used because the quality of HF reception depends on many factors such as location, time of year, time of day, the frequency being used, and atmospheric and ionospheric propagation conditions. The variety of frequencies makes it likely that at least one frequency will be usable at all times.

Antennas

The WWV antennas are half-wave vertical antennas that radiate omnidirectional patterns. There are actually 5 antennas at the station site, one for each frequency. Each antenna is connected to a single transmitter using a rigid coaxial line, and the site is designed so that no two coaxial lines cross. Each antenna is mounted on a tower that is approximately one half-wavelength tall. The tallest tower, for 2.5 MHz, is about 60 m tall. The shortest tower, for 20 MHz, is about 7.5 m tall. The top half of each antenna is a quarter-wavelength radiating element. The bottom half of each antenna consists of 9 quarter-wavelength wires that connect to the center of the tower and slope downwards to the ground at a 45 degree angle. This sloping skirt functions as the lower half of the radiating system and also guys the antenna.