



# Branch Signals

The Official Newsletter of the Branch County Amateur Radio Club, Inc.  
Founded in 1960. An ARRL Affiliated Club since 1961

[www.branchcountyarc.com](http://www.branchcountyarc.com)

Club Repeaters: 2M 147.300 100 Hz 440 443.300 123 Hz

August, 2005

Volume 4, Number 8

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## Val Rose, N8EXV Speaks at July BCARC Meeting



Our guest speaker at the July BCARC meeting was Val Rose, N8EXV. Val is the recently appointed Michigan Coordinator for the ARRL Great Lakes Division's political activism effort.

As much as we all dislike the fact that nearly everything that touches us is political in nature, we have found that the only way to protect our beloved hobby is to play the political game. This will be done as

a grassroots effort and will involve each and every one of us as our voices need to be heard by our elected officials.

Val asked for volunteers to head up the efforts in Branch County. Jim Voss, W8SST and Larry Camp, WB8R volunteered and will be the Local Area Coordinators for this effort and will be calling on all county hams to write their elected officials. This campaign will be a coordinated effort that will focus on emailing our representatives in congress to explain why they should vote in particular ways on issues that affect ham radio and public service. The initial effort will concentrate on House Resolution 230 which asks the FCC to restudy their approach to BPL.

We will be able to guide each of you to compose letters that address the proper points in the proper way to achieve the desired effect. We will probably ask that the letters be sent to a central point and our Local Coordinators will gather all responses and forward them to the League where emails from all over the country will be put in the hands of our lobbyists who will take printed letters in to the various congressmen's offices in Washington. This method of consolidation of responses assures maximum impact at the congressional level.

In addition to letter writing campaigns, Jim and Larry are planning visits to our U.S. Representative and Congressmen's offices to discuss the effects that BPL would potentially have on amateur radio, law enforcement, Homeland Security, and the military. They also will meet with local law enforcement officials such as the County Sheriff, Public Safety Director, and the county Emergency Management leadership.

You will all hear much more about this in the near future.

## 2005 FD Publicity

THE DAILY REPORTER COLDWATER, MI



Above, BCARC Club president, Larry Camp, WB8R, right, explains some of the details of Ham Radio Emergency Communication to Rep. Bruce Caswell (R-Pittsford). Below, John Sistanich, KE8LV, mans the Branch County Amateur Radio Club Station during Field Day '05.

### Field Day '05 takes place

BRANCH COUNTY — On Saturday, June 25 and Sunday June 26, the radio airways of Branch County exploded with action as the Branch County Amateur Radio Club (BCARC) fired up their club station at the 911 Communications Center, along with three portable stations, as part of the annual American Radio Relay League (ARRL) nationwide Field Day exercise.

A total of 27 individuals participated through the course of the event. Among those were 15 hams and 12 non-hams interested parties, including State Rep. Bruce Caswell (R-Pittsford) from Hillsdale County, who represents the 58th District.

The ideal of the contest is to contact as many other stations as possible in a 24-hour period. The ARRL sponsors the yearly event to give operators a chance to utilize their emergency stations to be prepared for any communications emergency. During this year's event, a total of 278 single sideband contacts were made in 43 states, four provinces of Canada, and the Virgin Islands.

This year's effort was heated up by Bruce Wilson, WB8ZSK.

The BCARC meets the third Tuesday of every month at the 911 Center at 7:30 p.m. For more information about the hobby contact BCARC President Larry Camp, WB8R, at (517) 278-0406.



### Area Hamfests

- Aug 7 Angola, In
- Aug 13 Jackson, MI
- Aug 21 Lapeer, MI
- Sep 10 Grand Rapids, MI
- Sep 11 Findlay, OH
- Sep 18 Adrian, MI
- Oct 9 Kalamazoo



## FCC Proposes to Drop Morse Code Requirement for All License Classes

NEWINGTON, CT, July 20, 2005--The FCC has proposed dropping the 5 WPM Morse code element as a requirement to obtain an Amateur Radio license of any class. The Commission recommended the change to its Part 97 Amateur Service rules in a *Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM)* in

WT Docket 05-235. Any rule changes proposed in the *NPRM* would *not* become final until the FCC gathers additional public comments, formally adopts any changes to its rules and concludes the proceeding by issuing a *Report and Order (R&O)* spelling out the changes and specifying an effective date. That's not likely to happen for several months. The FCC declined in its *NPRM* to go forward with any other suggested changes to Amateur Service licensing rules or operating privileges beyond elimination of the Morse requirement.

"Based upon the petitions and comments, we propose to amend our amateur service rules to eliminate the requirement that individuals pass a telegraphy examination in order to qualify for any amateur radio operator license," the FCC said in its *NPRM*, released July 19. This week's *NPRM* consolidated 18 petitions for rule making from the amateur community--including one from the ARRL--that proposed a wide range of additional changes to the amateur rules. The FCC said the various petitions had attracted 6200 comments from the amateur community, which soon will have the opportunity to comment again--this time on the FCC's proposals in response to those petitions.

The Commission said it believes dropping Element 1--the 5 WPM Morse examination--would "encourage individuals who are interested in communications technology, or who are able to contribute to the advancement of the radio art, to become amateur radio operators." The FCC said it also would eliminate a requirement it believes "is now unnecessary and that may discourage" current licensees from advancing their skills, and that it would "promote more efficient use" of current Amateur Radio spectrum.

The FCC cited changes in Article 25 of the international *Radio Regulations* adopted at World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 as the primary reason to go forward with eliminating Morse code as an Amateur Radio licensing requirement in the future. Among other changes, WRC-03 deleted the Morse testing requirement for amateur applicants seeking HF privileges, leaving it up to individual countries to determine whether or not they want to mandate Morse testing. Several countries already have dropped their Morse requirements.

ARRL CEO David Sumner, K1ZZ, said he was not surprised that the FCC proposed altogether scrapping the Morse code requirement. The League and others had called for retaining the 5 WPM requirement only for Amateur Extra class applicants. Sumner expressed dismay, however, that the FCC turned away proposals from the League and other petitioners to

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### Board of Directors:

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### Emergency Coordinator:

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w8sst@arrl.net



create a new entry-level Amateur Radio license class.

"We're disappointed that the Commission prefers to deny an opportunity to give Amateur Radio the restructuring it needs for the 21st century," he said. "It appears that the Commission is taking the easy road, but the easy road is seldom the right road."

Sumner said ARRL officials and the Board of Directors would closely study the 30-page *NPRM* and plan to comment further after they've had the opportunity to consider the Commission's stated rationales for its proposals.

In 2004, the ARRL filed a *Petition for Rule Making* asking the FCC to amend Part 97 to complete the Amateur Service restructuring begun in 1999 but "left unfinished." The League called on the FCC to create a new entry-level license, reduce the number of actual license classes to three and drop the Morse code testing requirement for all classes except for Amateur Extra. Among other recommendations, the League asked the FCC to automatically upgrade Technician licensees to General and Advanced licensees to Amateur Extra. In this week's *NPRM*, the FCC said it was not persuaded such automatic upgrades were in the public interest.

The FCC said it did not believe a new entry-level license class was warranted because current Novice and Tech Plus licensees already can easily upgrade to General. "We also note that, if our proposal to eliminate telegraphy testing in the amateur service is adopted," the FCC continued, "a person who is not a licensee will be able to qualify for a General Class operator license by passing two written examinations, and that a person who is a Technician Class licensee will be able to qualify for a General Class operator license by passing one written examination." The FCC said it does not believe either path to be unreasonable.

*Information courtesy of ARRL.*

## August 16 Collaborative Fox Hunt Rules

- The purpose of a Collaborative Fox Hunt is to allow teams to share information such as beam headings, signal strengths, locations, etc to better simulate the efforts and actions that would take place while searching for a downed aircraft or missing person with a transmitter.
- Teams are encouraged to have a county map, compass, straight edge, flat writing surface, pencils, and erasers with them in addition to the usual Fox Hunt radio and antenna gear. County maps will be available at the starting point.
- The FOX will hide only in an area that is accessible to the public without the payment of an admission fee.
- The hunt will begin as a mobile hunt and may require foot travel to locate the Fox. Sturdy footwear and long pants and sleeves may be a good idea.
- The starting frequency, on which the FOX will transmit and the coordination frequency(s) will be made known to all participants before the start of the event.
- Any hunt will have a Maximum Time Limit.
- When the allotted time has expired, an announcement will be



## VE Test Session Schedule

### Aug 20

**Sponsor:** Fulton County R. C.

**Time:** 10:00AM (Walk-ins ok)

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

**VEC:** ARRL/VEC

**Location:** Archbold PD

405 E Lutz RD

Pre-Registration Preferred

Leave message on machine

Archbold, OH 43502

### Sep 17

**Sponsor:** Cascades ARS

**Time:** 10:00AM (Walk-ins ok)

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

**VEC:** W5YI VEC

**Location:** Jackson District

Library

244 West Michigan

Jackson, MI 49204

### Sep 17

**Sponsor:** Fulton County R. C.

**Time:** 10:00AM (Walk-ins ok)

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

**VEC:** ARRL/VEC

**Location:** Archbold Police

Department, 405 E Lutz RD

Pre-Registration Preferred

Leave message on machine

Archbold, OH 43502

### Oct 13

**Sponsor:** Goshen ARC

**Time:** 7:00 PM (Walk-ins ok)

**Contact:** Paul F Corey  
(574)262-4414

**VEC:** ARRL/VEC

**Location:** Greencroft Retirement

Center, Homan Building

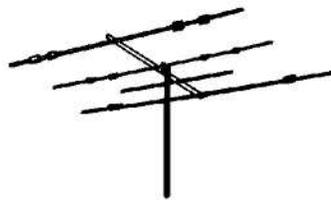
Greencroft Blvd

Goshen, IN 46525

made on the Fox frequency that the hunt has concluded and that all stations should return to the starting point.

## Rules Specific to August 2005 Fox Hunt

- The hunt will commence from the parking lot of the 911 Center on the west side of Coldwater near the airport at 7:15 PM.
- Hunt timeframe will be a maximum of 1 hour 30 minutes
- The fox will be hidden within a 10-mile radius of the intersection of Marshall and Chicago streets in Coldwater.
- The Fox will be transmitting on 147.550 MHz.
- The Fox will transmit for one minute followed by 4 minutes of silence. All transmissions will take place at 5-minute intervals beginning at 7:15, followed by 7:20, 7:25, etc.
- The Fox may change power settings during the hunt.
- Time synchronization will be available from the Hunt Master prior to the start of the hunt.
- Hunters will utilize the 147.300 + 100 Hz PL repeater for coordination. The 443.300 + repeater will be available as well.
- When and if the Fox is found, an announcement will be made on the Fox frequency to that effect and all participants and the Fox will return to the starting point.
- Our primary concern during the hunt is for the safety of all participants.
- We will notify the authorities that we are conducting a hunt.
- If you drive slowly or stop your car in or near the roadway, remember to turn on your 4-way flashers in your vehicle.
- If you exit your vehicle, be sure to park in a safe place and lock the vehicle to protect your belongings while you are traipsing all over creation looking for the Fox.
- Think safety all the time.



## DX on the Bands

*(info courtesy of ARRL)*

### **CROATIA, 9A.**

Sanyi, HA7JJS, Zsolt, HA6PS and Laci, HA6NL are QRV as 9A/homecalls and 9A6HL, respectively, until August 1 using mainly CW. This includes being active in the IOTA contest from Pasman Island, IOTA EU-170. QSL to home calls.

### **SABLE ISLAND, CYO.**

Joe, W8GEX, Wayne, K8LEE and Phil, W9IXX are QRV as CY0AA until August 3. Activity is on 160 to 6 meters, including the newer bands, using CW, SSB, RTTY and PSK. They will have a 6-meter beacon on 50107 kHz. They also plan to be QRV in the IOTA contest. QSL via K8LEE.

### **ST. PIERRE AND MIQUELON, FP.**

Paul, K9OT and Peg, KB9LIE will be QRV as FP/home calls from Miquelon,

Oct 15

**Sponsor:** Fulton County R. C.  
**Time:** 10:00AM (Walk-ins ok)  
**Contact:** Howard W Fuller  
(419)825-5443  
**VEC:** ARRL/VEC  
**Location:** Archbold PD  
405 E Lutz RD  
Pre-Registration Preferred  
Leave message on machine  
Archbold, OH 43502

Oct 15

**Sponsor:** Cascades ARS  
**Time:** 10:00AM (Walk-ins ok)  
**Contact:** Richard H McGuire  
(517)782-1430  
**VEC:** W5YI VEC  
**Location:** Jackson District  
Library  
244 West Michigan  
Jackson, MI 49204

Nov 19

**Sponsor:** Fulton County R. C.  
**Time:** 10:00AM (Walk-ins ok)  
**Contact:** Howard W Fuller  
(419)825-5443  
**VEC:** ARRL/VEC  
**Location:** Archbold Police  
Department, 405 E Lutz RD  
Pre-Registration Preferred  
Leave message on machine

Nov 19

**Sponsor:** Cascades ARS  
**Time:** 10:00AM (Walk-ins ok)  
**Contact:** Richard H McGuire  
(517)782-1430  
**VEC:** W5YI VEC  
**Location:** Jackson District  
Library  
244 West Michigan  
Jackson, MI 49204

IOTA NA-032, from July 30 to August 7. Activity will be on 160 to 6 meters, plus 30 and 17 meters, using CW and SSB. They plan to be active in the IOTA contest as single operators. QSL to home calls.

**THAILAND, HS.**

E20HHK, E21IZC, HS0GBI, HS1CKC and HS6NDK will be QRV as E20HHK/p from Si Chang Island, IOTA AS-107, from July 30 to August 1. This includes an entry in the IOTA contest. QSL via E21EIC.

**SVALBARD, JW.**

Stations EI2GX, EI3HA, EI5IQ, EI6FR, EI7HF and EI7DSB are QRV as JW/home calls until August 3. They will be active as JW/EI7HF in the IOTA contest. QSL to home calls. QSL contest call via operators' instructions.

**ARGENTINA, LU.**

Look for LU/DH4PB/S, LU1DZ/S, LU6UO/S and LW2DX/S to be QRV from La Rioja Island from August 4 to 10. Activity will be on all HF bands using mostly CW with some SSB. QSL via operators' instructions.

**GREENLAND, OX.**

Hector, EA3EKS will be QRV as OX/EA3EKS from August 2 to 5. Activity will be on all HF bands. QSL direct to home call.

**FERNANDO DE NORONHA ISLAND, PY0F.**

Look for Marq, CT1BWW and Juanca, EA2RC to be QRV as PY0F/homecalls from August 1 to 14. QSL via operators' instructions.

**MALYJ VYSOTSKIJ ISLAND, R1MV.**

A group of operators from Russia and Finland are QRV as R1MVC and R1MVW until August 1. This includes activity in the IOTA contest. QSL direct to DK4VW.

**EUROPEAN RUSSIA, UA.**

Look for Wasilij, RU3SD and others to be QRV during August as UE3SFF/6 from the Bogdinsko-Baskunchakskij Natural Reserve. They may also be active from islands in the Caspian Sea. QSL via DL8KAC.

