

AN ARRL AFFILIATED CLUB
SINCE 1961



VOLUME 6, ISSUE 4

APRIL 2007



BRANCH SIGNALS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BRANCH COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, INC.

Club Repeaters: 147.300 + 100 Hz 443.300 + 123 Hz

SPECIAL NOTE!

Did you miss the ARES/RACES/Skywarn meeting on Saturday March 24th? A make-up session has been scheduled for Wednesday, April 11th from 7:30 to 9:00 pm in the training room at the 911 Center. Anyone interested in severe weather is encouraged to attend! Those who attended the March 24th meeting are welcome to attend — informative new slides have been added. Amateurs who wish to be issued ARES/RACES cards but have not yet had their photo taken may have them taken at this meeting.

YOUR CLUB OFFICERS

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wb8r@arrl.net

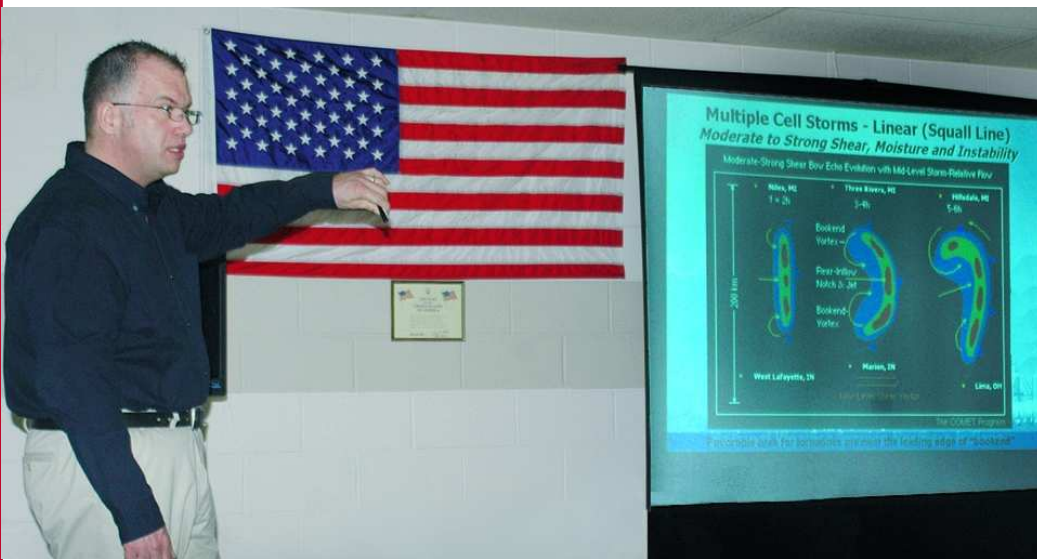
EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

Larry Camp, WB8R
517-278-0406
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Meteorologist Pat Murphy Addresses Full House

SKYWARN SESSION PACKS THE PLACE!

Empty seats were at a premium at the annual Branch County SKYWARN training session held on Tuesday, March 20th. The two hour session was held in the basement meeting room of the Dobson Insurance Agency in Coldwater. Meteorologist Pat Murphy brought this year's presentation from the National Weather Service Office in North Webster, IN. As always, it included the basics of storm construction and report and what not to report. Strangely enough, it seems that Homer Simson is playing a larger part in the show each year. Are we able to draw any specific conclusions from that? I'll leave that to you! Despite the distractions of the 'doh' man, it was an informative session laced with new photos and videos of last year's twisters and mega-storms. There were even a couple shots of a volleyball sized hailstone. (*Now if we could just get Homer out in that stuff!*) Seventy potential spotters were on hand to learn the tricks of the trade, coming from Branch and practically all the surrounding counties. Attendees will be listed as certified spotters at the North Webster office and Pat noted that, as such, they are welcome to make reports from anywhere they happen to be in the country. If attendance at this session is any indication of future participation, our county appears to be in great shape for the 2007 storm season! (*Photo courtesy of Mark Rogers*)



“Now, where did I put my cell phone?”



47 Years Ago This Month - April 1960

At the April meeting the Club Constitution was read as submitted by the ARRL. The annual business meeting was set for the first Thursday in December. A motion was made by Jim Persails to set the club dues at \$3.00 to be paid on or before July 1st. The motion was seconded by Harry Kubiak and passed.

30 Years Ago This Month – April 1977

Our club call finally arrived on Monday, April 4th, after about three months of waiting. The call is WD8KAF. Orville Otis is trustee.

Don Ayers and Orville Otis have teamed up to provide the Club with a Novice rig consisting of a National receiver (AM and CW) and a Heath DX 60B transmitter. This will be available for loan to a new novice under the Club lending policy.

Jim Conrad and Paul Herman will be at Great Exuma Island in the Bahama Chain from April 18 to April 25 on their own DX-pedition. Their call will be W8GQP/C6A,

It is reported that both Tom and Russ Megargle have passed their General Class examination and received their ‘instant’ licenses.

IDENTIFY LATELY??

The FCC's Philadelphia Field Office has issued a formal *Notice of Violation (NoV)* to a Pennsylvania radio amateur for failure to identify in a timely manner. The Commission released the *NoV* to Andrew Ban, KB3GRK, of Feasterville, on December 20th. The notice says that on September 12 and 13, 2006, an agent of the FCC's Philadelphia office monitored KB3GRK's transmissions on 439.850 MHz and observed that the operator failed to identify for nearly one hour in one instance and for more than 20 minutes in the second. §97.119(a) of the Amateur Radio Service rules requires stations to identify "at the end of each communication, and at least every 10 minutes during a communication." The FCC has advised Ban that he must submit within 20 days a written statement addressing the alleged violations and action taken to preclude recurrence. The issuance of an *NoV* appears to be a departure from the FCC Enforcement Bureau's typical practice of addressing such alleged infractions with an advisory letter rather than a formal notice. *(Thanks ARRL)*

HAMFEST CALENDAR

Saturday, April 14th

Jackson Co. Hamfest & Computer Show
James A. Rhodes Community Center
Coalton, OH
740-286-3239

Sunday, April 15th

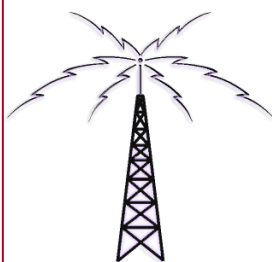
North Central Indiana Hamfest
Miami County 4H Fairgrounds
Peru, IN
<http://www.ncihamfest.com>

Sunday, April 15th

Hamfest and Computer Show
Emidio & Sons Party Center
Cuyahoga Falls, OH
www.cfarc.org/hamfest2007.html

Saturday, April 21st

Swap and Shop
Milford High School
Milford, MI
<http://www.qsl.net/w8ydk>



BRANCH SIGNALS

We received word last week that Bill Shaw, KD8CYY, who just recently upgraded to General, made his first DX contact. His introduction to the good stuff on the High Frequency bands was an amateur located in Antwerp, Belgium. Congratulations Bill!

ARRL DX REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

SWAZILAND, 3DA. Members of the Irish Radio Transmitters Society will be QRV as 3DA0EI in the CQ WPX SSB contest. QSL all calls via EI7CC.

GUINEA, 3X. Serge, UA6JR will be QRV as 3XM6JR in the CQ WPX SSB contest. QSL to home call.

GEORGIA, 4L. Mamuka, 4L2M and Gia, 4L4WW will be QRV in the CQ WPX SSB contest as Single Op/Single band entries on 20 and 40 meters, respectively. QSL 4L2M direct and 4L4WW via EA7FTR.

KUWAIT, 9K. 9K2HN, 9K2RR and 9K2YM will be QRV as 9K2HN in the CQ WPX SSB contest as a Multi/Op entry.

EAST MALAYSIA, 9M6. Peter, DJ8XW and Heinze, DL2QT are QRV as 9M6AAC until March 30. This includes an entry in the CQ WPX SSB contest. QSL this operation via DL2QT.

VE TEST SESSIONS

April 12th (7:00 pm)

Greencroft Retirement Center
Homan Building
Greencroft Blvd.
Goshen, IN
Contact: Paul F. Corey
(574) 262 4414
Email: k9mv@arrl.net
(walk-ins allowed)
Sponsor: Goshen ARC
VEC: ARRL/VEC

April 14th (12 noon)

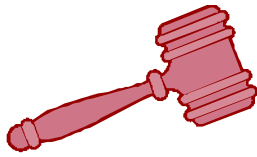
Eaton County Sheriff's Dept.—EOC
1250 Independence Blvd.
Charlotte, MI
Contact: John A. Dewey
(517) 543 0398
Email: detta@ia4u.net
(walk-ins allowed)
Sponsor: Eaton County ARC
VEC: ARRL/VEC

April 21st (9:30 am)

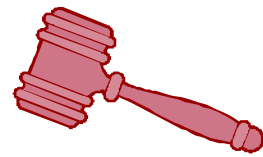
Archbold Police Department
405 Lutz Road
Archbold, OH
Contact: Howard W. Fuller
(419) 654 4044
Or (419) 825 5443
(no walk-ins allowed)
Sponsor: Fulton County ARC
VEC: ARRL/VEC

April 21st (10:00 am)

Jackson District Library
244 West Michigan
Downstairs Auditorium
Jackson, MI
Contact Richard H. McGuire
(517) 782 1430
Email: dickki8c@juno.com
(walk-ins allowed)
Sponsor: Cascades ARS
VEC: W5YI VEC



FOR SALE



Have something you'd like to buy, sell, swap or give away?
Drop an email to w8sst@arrl.net and we'll put the information
in this newsletter at no charge. No email? Call Jim @ 278-4636

CAMP AND MCCONN PRESENT ARES/RACES/SKYWARN PROGRAM



About a dozen local amateurs attended the first ARES/RACES meeting under the leadership of new Branch County Emergency Coordinator, Larry Camp, WB8R. The highlight of the morning was an outstanding power-point presentation by Assistant E.C. Brad McConn, K8BPD. *(Photo courtesy of Mark Rogers)*

Next Club Meeting - Tuesday, April 17th

Program: A double feature—a short video describing amateur operations during International Lighthouse Weekend in the Boston area. Followed by highlights of the 100th Anniversary of Marconi's first trans-Atlantic contact. Thanks to the Marconi Amateur Radio Club for providing these video presentations.

BRANCH COUNTY A.R.C.

Meeting Every Third Tuesday
 Branch County Communications Center
 At The Branch County Airport
 7:00 P.M.



WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.BRANCHCOUNTYARC.COM

Thanks, and a tip of the hat!



This month's kudos have been awarded by Dave King, KQ8R. When Dave's vehicle broke down on March 13th, Dennis, KD8EPX, was contacted and was happy to call a wrecker. When vehicle #2 blew a brake line on March 20th, Jake, KC8YUN gave Dave a ride to and from the Radio Club meeting. Once again Ham Radio comes to the rescue. Thanks Dennis and Jake!

**JOIN US ON THE WEEKLY TWO METER NET
 TUESDAY - 7:00 P.M. - 147.300 - ALL WELCOME!**



NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT



You know, some months I just don't have a lot to say, and this would be one of those months.

I hope you were all able to attend the recent Skywarn training session and the ARES/RACES meeting the following Saturday. Having attended over 25 Skywarn classes over the years I still come away with at least one new thing to add to my list of 'stuff'- and how about

that giant hailstone? Something of biblical proportions, eh? Can you imagine that coming down on your windshield, let alone on your head? Man, that's a scary thought! Fortunately, we don't see that size around this neck of the woods too often. (Mom always said, "Never say never")

Glad to hear that one of our newest General class operators has made his first DX contact. I remember mine and it was a red letter day. Congrats, Bill!

And how about that Brad, K8BPD? If you missed his Powerpoint presentation on Branch County Skywarn you need to attend the repeat session on April 11th. You won't be sorry. Brad, that was an outstanding program and I can't wait to see what you have in store for the future. Excellent job!

Thinking about the upcoming tornado season and what Brad said, I need to get out my jump kit and see what I pulled out of it during the last power outage. I always have good intentions to put the stuff back,

but you know how that goes.

I've been saving this announcement until I had a final confirmation. Former BCARC president, Jim Conrad, W8MQ, will be returning to Coldwater the evening of July 17th to present a program about his travels on the high seas with his wife and son in the family sailboat. Whether you know Jim or not, this is a program you won't want to miss from someone who decided to live his dream.

73, Jim Voss—W8SST

***No, that's not a cauliflower, it's an 8" hailstone.



Coordinator's Corner



Thanks to all who attended our annual Spotter Training session on March 20th and the ARES/RACES training session on March 24th. We had more than 70 in attendance at the Spotter Training and Pat Murphy, WX9PAT did a great job even with a weary voice from doing programs every night. Thanks Pat!

We had 18 hams at the ARES/RACES session on the 24th and Brad, K8BPD did a great job with a weather presentation that he put together. Pictures were taken for the latest versions of ARES/RACES identification cards at this training session. We are working on an encore presentation for those that missed the training session and pictures will be taken then for anyone who missed the earlier session. Watch for the announcement of date and time.

You might ask why we need both an ARES and a RACES card. The answer lies with the type of situation that has presented itself. An ARES card will get you access to the run of the mill situations. If an official emergency has been declared, then *only* amateurs with a RACES card will be allowed to participate in the relief efforts. The difference is that the declared emergency puts things on an official government standing and that means that only those with the RACES cards can participate and we can only communicate with other RACES stations while we assist with the emergency. What does this mean to us? This would restrict access to the EOC (and our club station), shelters, police and fire stations, and any disaster site in our county. As you can see, at the times when things are the most serious, we need to be properly credentialed in order to help out. And these are the times when most hams would want to be of help to their community. In order to help in the worst of circumstances we need to be prepared by making sure we have the proper credentials.

The requirements for a RACES card are:

- Ω Valid amateur license (any class)
- Ω Background Check (CSC and Criminal History)
- Ω Skywarn Training to be retaken a minimum of every 2 years
- Ω FEMA Independent Study courses IS-100 and IS-200



The FEMA classes are available at <http://training.fema.gov/>. The courses are free and can be taken completely on line. Even your certificate of completion will come to you via email. Once you have your certificates, be sure to email a copy to me at wb8r@arrl.net and I will get them to Dave Smith so your information will be in his files as well.

Brad has also developed an excellent Skywarn section for his website at www.bronsonweather.org/skywarn. You can get there via the link that is on our website at www.branchcountyar.com. Brad has included an event planner as well as a BBS for the sharing of thoughts and information. This website is quickly becoming a primary source of information for Branch County Skywarn activities. Thanks to Brad for all of his efforts.

In parting, keep an eye on the weather and check the Skywarn site often for daily updates and weather briefings.

Thanks to all who participate in our emergency preparedness activities. It is important work and valuable to your communities.

Larry Camp, WB8R
EC/RO Branch County