



AN ARRL AFFILIATED CLUB
SINCE 1961



VOLUME 8, ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2009



BRANCH SIGNALS

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

Club Repeaters: 147.300 + 100 Hz 443.300 + 123 Hz

WHAT'S INSIDE?

- Handy Ref. Sheet - p. 2
- Hamfest Calendar - p. 3
- VEC Test Sessions - p. 3
- January Program - p. 4
- President's Notes - p. 4
- EC's Corner - p. 5



YOUR CLUB OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Andrew Glenn, W8CSS
517-767-3397
w8css@arrl.net

SECRETARY/TREASURER

Bill Kubiak, KB8VWI
517-639-4390
bhkubiak@charter.net

BOARD MEMBERS

Arnie Hayward, NS8T
517-278-8507
ns8t@arrl.net

Dan Sprow, KC8RYF
517-437-1410
dsprow@comcast.net

Jim Voss, WV0SS
517-278-4636
wvoss@charter.net

EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

Larry Camp, WB8R
517-278-0406
wb8r@arrl.net

2009 Club Meeting Schedule.

Another year has arrived, and it's time to layout the plan for 2009!

Here's the tentative program schedule for this year.

January — Brainstorming for '09 / Cookies Coffee and Conversation.

February — *To Be Announced*

March — Severe Weather Training (No Business Meeting)

April — *To Be Announced*

May — Competitive Foxhunt! (No Business Meeting)

June — A look at past Field Days

July — Foxhunting: Your tips, tricks and pointers.

August — Collaborative Foxhunt! (No Business Meeting)

September — Liar's Club

October — Dale Williams, WA8EFK

November — Elections

December — Annual Christmas gathering

This list is certainly open for suggestions, so if you'd like something added, feel free to give me a call.

ARRL Offers Handy Reference Sheet

For those of you that are not aware, the ARRL is now offering a nice reference sheet filled with data!. Quoted from the ARRL'S website

"How much current will AWG 14 wire handle? How many turns does it take to get a 140 mH inductor? What is the pinout for a TO-220 transistor?"

While I don't know the answers to these (and other) questions, it's nice to know where to look for help! If you get a minute, be sure to check it out!

**Have You Earned It Yet?
(Hopefully not!)**

Recently our own Brad K8BPD gained membership into the exclusive I've-Hit-A-Deer-Now Amateur Radio Club. The "club" was formed a few years back by our own WB8R. One deer gains membership. Also, Larry leads the pack with 3 kills!

(On a serious note: Please be careful while driving—deer don't play well with vehicles. Watch out for the four-legged variety!)

(Images Courtesy of WWMT.com)



Have Material will Travel!

Do you have material you would like to see in the newsletter? I'll take it!! If you have an extra minute or two, take a look through your archives for newsletter-worthy material.

Also, if there's something you'd like to see here, drop me a line as well!



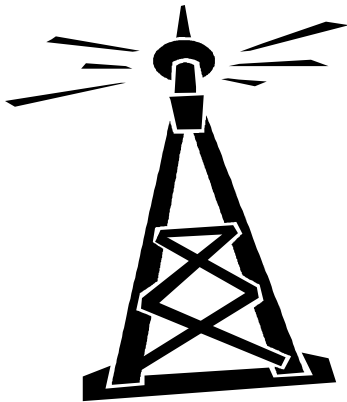
HAMFEST CALENDAR

Saturday, January 18th.

43rd Annual Hamfest
 Hazel Park ARC
 Hazel Park, MI
<http://www.hparc.org>

Editor's Note: Several Hamfests are scheduled in January in Indiana and Ohio. Although they are scheduled, they are not local to our region. (One was in Bloomington, IN for example.)

If you would like to see them appear here, let me know. Thanks



CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS PICTURE??

This picture came from somewhere. It's your turn to find that place!
 The first person to email me (w8css@arrl.net) with the correct answer will have their name stuck right here in the next newsletter! I'll keep a running total throughout the year. Happy Hunting!!

(The Fine Print: If you took this picture, you're not eligible!)

VEC TEST SESSIONS

January 3rd
 Mount Clemens, MI

January 6th
 Lansing, MI

January 9th
 Grand Rapids, MI

January 10th
 Gladstone, MI
 Wyandotte, MI

January 17th
 Fenton, MI

January 19th
 Mount Clemens, MI

February 3rd
 Lansing, MI

For details about any of the above see:
<http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/examsearch.phtml?State=MI>



Next Club Meeting - Tuesday, January 20th

Program: Join us as we Brainstorm Club ideas and Activities for 2009, along with Cookies, Coffee and General Conversation. Hope to see you there! Bring a friend!

BRANCH COUNTY A.R.C.

Meeting Every Third Tuesday - 7:00pm

Basement Training Room.

Branch County Communications Center

At The Branch County Airport



WE'RE ON THE WEB!

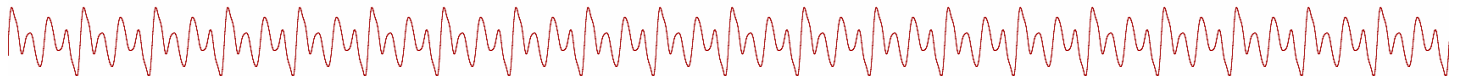
WWW.BRANCHCOUNTYARC.COM



Thanks, and a tip of the hat!

This month's kudos go to Dan Sprow, KC8RYF and Larry Camp, WB8R for their assistance with the transition into the new year. Thanks guys!

**JOIN US ON THE WEEKLY TWO METER NET
TUESDAYS AT 7:00 P.M. ON 147.300 & THE
70CM NET RIGHT AFTER ON 443.300**



NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well, here we go folks! Another year has turned the page and it's time to hit the ground running! I'm naturally excited for the opportunity to serve the club as president. If you've been paying attention you'll notice that this newsletter looks strangely similar to the January 2007 edition. Thanks to Jim Voss and Dan Sprow to sending over the templates for me to sit down and tinker with. I just didn't see the need to reinvent the wheel.

However, I need your help!

This is where you come in.

I purposefully chose January as the ideal month to

brainstorm about 2009 Club Activities. This is an opportunity for the membership to decide what we do in the next 12 months. Don't be discouraged by the schedule on page one. That is certainly subject to revision! So, grab a sheet of paper and jot down some ideas. I'd love to hear them.

As a hobby we can't escape the fact that we need more youth in the club. Yes, I realize I'm 19, but... there's only a handful of us. Take a look around at the club meeting and it won't take long to see what I'm talking about. If you have ideas on how to get more youth involved into the club, I'm all

ears!

Another note I'd like to touch upon in my little corner of the newsletter is dues. Yes, I know, even I can forget about them. Please make an effort to pay your club dues as soon as possible. The dues provide needed income to the club and allow us to do what we can. We all enjoy the benefits of membership, lets make a contribution back to the club.

In closing, I think this will be a great year for the club. Let's work together to make sure that happens!

Andrew Glenn, W8CSS

Antenna of the Month!

From: <http://www.hamuniverse.com/antennas.html>

This month's antenna of the month is the "440 Slingshot" by N9YBP. Using ordinary copper tubing and solder, the author provides an interesting-looking antenna with a nice SWR reading.

A 2 meter version is also available. Details are located at:

<http://www.hamuniverse.com/440Slingshot.html>



Coordinator's Corner



Happy New Year to all who read this. I extend to each of you my best wishes for the upcoming year.

2008 was a good year for Branch County ARES/RACES. Some of the areas of our progress are as follows:

Our relationship with the Office of Emergency Management has continued to blossom and improve through mutual cooperation and training.

K8BPD and WB8R were able to attend the Michigan Homeland Security Conference in Grand Rapids.

The ARES/RACES group was instrumental in assisting Branch County to achieve status as a Storm Ready County. Branch County was the tenth county out of 83 in Michigan to be so rated.

Our RACES group entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Coldwater Police and Coldwater Fire Departments to provide them with emergency communications when needed.

Our role as communicators assisting various governmental entities has continued to expand. The Office of Emergency Management is actively working on funding for two VHF/UHF D-Star stations for service at the Coldwater Police/Fire Department Building and 911 Central Dispatch.

We have been able to add sophisticated radar capability at the EOC for use during severe weather activations.

ARES/RACES will have equipment in and a spot in a communications trailer that is being developed for use at remote locations.

The RACES proposal to assist the City of Coldwater with verification of proper operation of the city's tornado sirens was accepted and will be in effect beginning in January, 2009.

Our severe weather activations continue to be reasonably well manned and the number of trained spotters has increased.

Our efforts to get Public Service personnel to attend NWS spotter training classes (jointly sponsored by BCARC and OEM) was a success and we will build on this success in 2009.

Areas that continue to fall short of what we would like to see are:

Skywarn Activations - We seem to always have fewer spotters than we need

Skywarn Training - We need to get more people to attend our training.

Volunteers - Everyone can contribute. We need more folks to help a few carry the load.

Being prepared is training ahead of the event. This is no longer a luxury. Our participation with OEM demands that we be trained in advance rather than trying to learn it on the fly. There is a lot of training available that can be done on the internet and other training in a classroom setting is available as well.

In February I will cover our plans and goals for 2009. In the meantime, stay warm, think Spring and be careful on the slippery roads. See you at the January Club meeting.

Larry Camp, WB8R
Emergency Coordinator/RACES Officer