

Branch Signals



An ARRL Affiliated Club
Since 1961



Your 2010 Club Officers

PRESIDENT

Arnie Hayward, NS8T
517.278.8507
ns8t@arrl.net

SECRETARY/TREASURER

Bill Kubiak, KB8VWI
517.639.4390
bhkubiak@cbpu.com

BOARD

MEMBERS

Larry Camp, WB8R
517.278.0406
wb8r@arrl.net

Jim King, KC8UGV
517.227.4321
finnigan2580@gmail.com

Jim Voss, WV0SS
517.278.4636
wvoss@charter.net

EMERGENCY

COORDINATOR

Larry Camp, WB8R
517.278.0406
wb8r@arrl.net



Ken Has Left The Building!

in this issue

Club Activities **P.1**

Emergency Coordinator's Report **P.2**

A Word from the President **P.3**

Got Spectrum? **P.4**

Flashback Photo **P.5**

March and April Busy Months for the Club

We have applied for our raffle license from the State and are anxiously awaiting its arrival. As quickly as it is received, we will get the tickets printed and will begin distribution to the membership for sales. As a reminder, the purpose of the raffle is to raise funds for a new 2M repeater.

The plan is to sell each ticket for \$5.00 and we will give away \$500 cash to the winner. In order to raise \$1500 in funds and pay the winner \$500 we need to sell 400 tickets. To do this will take a lot of help from a lot of people. We are giving away cash in order to better appeal to hams and non hams alike. Everyone likes cash, right? These tickets can be sold to family, friends, coworkers or even strangers. The only way this is successful is for the club to get behind it and make it happen!

The Marshall Hamfest is Saturday, March 20 from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Please note that the Hamfest is being held in a **NEW LOCATION** this year. It will take place at the Marshall Activity Center, 15325 W. Michigan Ave in Marshall. This new location is just west of I69 on Michigan Avenue on the north side. It is across from the Chrysler dealership. There will be a talk in on 146.66. Please note that this repeater has recently added a 94.8 Hz tone access requirement. You can get additional information at www.w8df.com.

The BCARC's One day Technician Class is on for April 10 from 8:00 AM to 1:30 PM. Currently there are six students registered and their books have been delivered to them or will be in the next few days. Each student is responsible for studying on their own, taking practice tests online, and asking questions when necessary. We will get together on April 10 to cover the more

difficult parts of the course and to answer questions. We will do a working lunch and break at 1:30 after which we will transition into Test Mode.

VE Testing Session for all license classes will begin at 2:30 pm. All hams that would like to upgrade are welcome at our test session. The VE test fee is \$15 and we will have two versions of each level of test so that in the event of a failure, we will be able to administer another test version. We must charge another \$15 fee for taking a second test if the first test is failed.

If an applicant passes their test, they can take the next level test at no charge. You can continue to take tests until you fail at no additional charge. It is possible to walk in the door without a license and walk out as an Extra Class ham!

Our March club meeting program will feature our own Brad McConn, K8BPD who will present a Skywarn training program that will focus on spotter procedures and reporting protocol - rather than meteorology. I am pretty sure that we will see a few radar scans in the process. This will be a very good program and will complement some of the training opportunities mentioned elsewhere in this issue. All hams should acquaint themselves with spotter procedures and proper reporting practices because you never know what you might run into during your daily travels.

As a reminder, we have another hot program scheduled for April: Carl Leutzelschwab, K9LA from Ft. Wayne will be in town with his lovely wife Vicky to discuss HF propagation, Sunspots, and Cycle 24. This will be a good one, so bring a friend!

Upcoming Hamfests

March 20, 2010
Michigan Crossroads
Marshall Activities Center
www.w8df.com/hamfest.html

April 3, 2010
Lowell Hamfest
Lowell High School
www.argyl.org

April 17, 2010
Milford Swap and Shop
Milford High School
www.gsl.net/w8ydk

May 23, 2010
Michiana ARC
South Bend Elks Club
www.community.michigan.org/marcsite/

June 5, 2010
Hudsonville Hamfest
Chelsea, MI Fairgrounds
www.wd8iel.net

June 6, 2010
Chelsea Hamfest
Hudsonville, MI Fairgrounds
www.w8hgv.org

June 20, 2010
Monroe Hamfest
Monroe Cty. Fairgrounds
www.mcrca.org



EmComm Corner

This month's notes from
Branch County's Emergency
Coordinator, Larry Camp, WB8R.

Spring is nearly here and you can certainly tell that by the number of training sessions that are scheduled for this month and early April.

- March 8, 2010: Skywarn Training presented by the National Weather Service Office from North Webster, Indiana. The training will take place at the Reading Emergency Unit Training Center located at 30 Monroe Street in Hillsdale. Presentations will be given at: 2:00 PM and 7:00 PM. All are welcome.
- March 16, 2010: BCARC Meeting. Brad McConn, K8BPD will present a spotter training program which will focus on spotters and reporting methodology. This is sure to be good information for all of us. Open to all interested persons. Meeting begins at 7:00 pm in the basement training room of the 911 Communications Center near the airport in Coldwater.

- March 27, 2010: Calhoun County Skywarn Training will be held at 9:00 AM at Lakeview Middle School 300 South 28th Street, Battle Creek, MI 49015.
- April 3, 2010: Indiana, will be held at 317 South Wayne Street in Angola, IN at 8:30 AM. Enter on the east side of the building. Brad, K8BPD will be presenting there as well.

There are plenty of chances to get some updated training to make sure that we are all on the same page. Refresher training is important and all are encouraged to attend some or even all of the training sessions. Of particular interest is that the Calhoun County session will be conducted by the folks from the Grand Rapids Weather Service office. It is guaranteed that they will have a different view of things than the folks from IWX do and a different look at the same thing can often be helpful.

We are continuing to assist

the Coldwater Public Safety Department with verification of proper Tornado siren operation on the first Saturday of every month. Now that Severe Weather Season (March 1) is on us, proper siren operation takes on a new importance. I certainly appreciate all who have helped out in the past 14 months since we took on the task, but there is always room for more folks to take a turn. Volunteering is not a contract to participate every month, but whenever you can help us. The more people that get involved spreads the task out so the same people don't have to do it every month. The whole process takes less than an hour. Come join us!

Keep your eyes on the sky, turn your weather radio back on and set it to accept watches and warnings and come to some or all training sessions. See you soon!

*Larry Camp, WB8R
Emergency Coordinator/
RACES Officer
Branch County Amateur Radio
Club, Incorporated*

CLUBMEETING NOTICE

The March meeting of the Branch County Amateur Radio Club will be held on Tuesday, the 16th at 7:30 p.m. in the basement meeting room of the Branch County Communications Center (911). Our own Brad McConn will be presenting annual SKYWARN training.

BOARD MEETING INVITATION

Got an idea? Got a gripe? Got nothing to do the first Tuesday night of the month? Club members are always welcome to attend the monthly board meeting at 7:30 pm at Bob Evans in Coldwater.

MONTHLY WEBSITE PICK

www.gigaparts.com

This month's website was submitted to us by Bob Worley, thanks, Bob!

Gigaparts is not only a great place to find radio and computer gear but each quarter throughout the year they give away a radio! You can go online and enter every day. Be sure you thank Bob if you win, though!

From The Desk of the President

Hello All,

This month has passed so fast for me that my comments are going to be short and sweet.

Our last business meeting was short and to the point too, and we got it out of the way so we could watch a very interesting program. Many thanks to Bill and Nancy Slade for introducing us to Ken Bates. His program on radio controlled gliders was very interesting.

We have six people signed up for the one day tech

class on April 10th. We are really hoping to get six new hams for Branch County. Thanks to Larry for putting this all together. If you want something done fast, just look for the busiest guy around, and load it on him. It will get done in record time.

Don't forget our next meeting on April 16th. Brad McConn is going to present a severe weather program. Brad does a very good job. Thanks for your support of the club.

Arnie NS8T



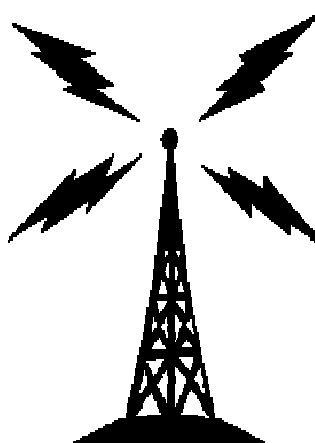
Arnie Hayward

Current Status of House Bill 5556

The Michigan Proposed Tower Law (*previously referred to as the Michigan Emergency Communications Preservation Act — PRB-1*) is currently in Michigan's House of Representatives' Committee on Intergovernmental and Regional Affairs. Representative Lindberg, the Bill's original Sponsor, is asking the Committee Chairperson to move on the Bill. This is the normal

practice to get the Committee to function on a bill. Once a bill is accepted or modified and accepted by the Committee, it moves to the House Floor for discussion and/or vote. The Bill can also be rejected by the Committee. Once on the House Floor, if there are enough supporting Representatives, the bill passes the floor vote. A copy of the Draft Bill can be found at:

<http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?2009-HB-5556>



Ed Trombley, N8DCC, feted.

Broadcast engineers work diligently to ensure the integrity of our airwaves. For those who have exercised their skills and innovations for the advancement of technology, this is our opportunity to say "you're outstanding". Two awards are given each year - one to a radio engineer and one to a television engineer.

Candidates for the Carl E. Lee Broadcast Engineering Excellence Award must have been an employee, officer, or owner of any company, subsidiary or division whose primary business is broadcasting, or is directly in support of radio or television station in Michigan.

One award for radio engineering and one award for television engineering will be awarded. The size of the organization with which each candidate is affiliated is not a determining factor. The merits of the contributions to broadcast engineering are the sole factors to be taken into account.

Radio Winner: Ed Trombley, Field Engineer/RF Expert, Munn-Reese, Inc, Coldwater, Michigan. Ed Trombley is the Field Engineer and RF Expert Extraordinaire at Munn-Reese, Inc. He began his broadcasting career as a student at Lake Superior State College in the Electronic Engineering Technology program. Upon graduating Ed worked as a contract engineer for several years at numerous stations across Lower Michigan.

In 1984 Ed took on the position of Chief Engineer and Technical Director of Telecommunications at WSAE/KTGG at Spring Arbor College. After a decade of service at Spring Arbor College, Ed made the move to Munn-Reese, Inc. in Coldwater, MI to work as a field engineer conquering the most complex of radio engineering issues.

Since his move to Munn-Reese, Ed has become quite the Engineering celebrity throughout the state known for his problem solving and uncanny way of communicating with the finickiest of machinery.

In addition to his professional work, Ed is known for his garage full of old broadcast parts and equipment supplying the local theatre with period props not to mention the numerous Engineers who have been helped in a pinch because of his garage full of goodies. Ed is married to his lovely wife Mary and the couple has four children

House Panel Looks For More Mobile Spectrum

The U.S. Congress needs to find new wireless spectrum -- and new ways to share spectrum -- to avoid a pending spectrum shortage brought on by growing numbers of mobile subscribers and increased mobile data use, witnesses told a House of Representatives subcommittee.

The mobile voice and data industry is facing a significant shortage of spectrum in coming years, and there's little new spectrum in the federal auction pipeline, said Steve Largent, president and CEO of CTIA, a trade group representing mobile carriers. Mobile carriers are not now using all their spectrum capacity, he said, but CTIA has asked for an additional 800MHz of spectrum within six years.

The past two major spectrum auctions at the U.S. Federal Communications Commission each took more than 10 years from start to finish, Largent told the House Energy and Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Communications, Technology and the Internet. "We simply can't wait until 2020 or beyond," he said.

Largent, other witnesses and most lawmakers generally voiced support for two bills that attempt to deal with the predicted wireless spectrum shortage. The [Radio Spectrum Inventory Act](#) would require the FCC and the U.S. National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to inventory the wireless spectrum available in the U.S. and issue a public report on the government and private uses of the spectrum.

The [Spectrum Relocation Improvement Act](#) would streamline the process for federal agencies to turn over spectrum that could be auctioned to private bidders. CTIA and other critics have said federal agencies have been slow to move off spectrum sold in the advanced wireless spectrum auction completed in September 2006.

There is no comprehensive inventory of spectrum use in the U.S., lawmakers said. "Before we can start identifying bands of spectrum that might be made available for these new services, however, we need to understand how existing spectrum is allocated and utilized," said Representative Henry Waxman, committee chairman and a California Democrat. "In simple terms, we need better information about spectrum usage by federal and nonfederal entities."

Two witnesses raised concerns about the bills, however. The National Association of Broadcasters, a trade group, supports the bills, but is worried that broadcasters could get pushed out of the spectrum they're currently using to provide over-the-air service, said Gordon Smith, NAB president and CEO.

Stuart Benjamin, a new distinguished scholar in residence at the FCC, wrote a [paper](#) this year advocating that broadcast spectrum be turned over to mobile carriers, Smith told lawmakers. The Duke University law professor has said the paper wasn't "entirely" serious, but "that society would

benefit if the wireless frequencies currently devoted to broadcast could be used for other services."

"Our national priorities should recognize the value that free over-the-air broadcasting brings to every American," said Smith, a former Republican senator. "Broadcasting and broadband are not either/or propositions as some have suggested; that's a false choice."

It doesn't make sense to eliminate over-the-air television, given that broadcasters, consumers and the U.S. government have spent billions of dollars this year to be able to receive digital TV signals, Smith said. U.S. television switched from over-the-air analog to digital broadcasting early this year, with freed-up spectrum going to commercial and public safety users.

New services will also merge traditional television and broadband services, and broadcasting is a good use of spectrum, Smith said.

"Broadcasting's ability to serve one-to-many in small bandwidth segments realizes tremendous efficiencies that cannot be achieved by any other service," he said. "At moments of national significance or tragedy, when millions of Americans are seeking information, broadcasting is the most efficient delivery system."

Ray Johnson, senior vice president and CTO at security contractor Lockheed Martin, also raised concerns about the spectrum inventory bill. The legislation would require the FCC and NTIA to disclose information about classified wireless test beds run by the company on behalf of U.S. agencies, he said. The bill should be amended to not require the disclosure of this classified information, he added.

But the spectrum inventory would be a helpful first step toward discovering what spectrum can be better used, said Michael Calabrese, director of the Wireless Future Program at the New America Foundation, a Washington, D.C., think tank. While there's an exploding demand for mobile services, in many areas, large swaths of spectrum aren't used or are used for brief periods of time, he said.

"In reality, the only scarcity is government permission to use spectrum," he said. "Spectrum capacity itself is very abundant."

Thanks to PC World and a heads-up from Pat, N8VM.

I'M FROM THE
GOVERNMENT,
I'M HERE
TO HELP



THE K7RA SOLAR UPDATE

Two new sunspot groups -- 1050 and 1051 -- appeared on February 23 and 24. We've now seen 38 continuous days with sun-spots (including Feb. 26th), and the last time there were no sunspots for two or more days in a row was back on November 23 through December 8 when we saw 16 days with no sunspots. Until the past few days, the NOAA/USAF forecast showed solar flux dipping below 80 around now, which we have not seen since January 26 through February 5, eleven days when the average sunspot number was 16.2. Note that the average sunspot number reported for the seven days through Wednesday, February 24 was 23, the previous seven days was 38.7 and 43.3 the week before that. The latest forecast shows solar flux at 82 for today, 80 over the weekend, 84 on March 1-4, 85 on March 5-6, and 90 on March 7-13. But the February 22 forecast showed solar flux below 80 beginning yesterday, February 25 through March 2, going as low as 75 on March 1.

(Thank you, ARRL.org)



Calling All Rookies -- and Non-Rookies, Too!

The ARRL Rookie Roundup is designed to help newly licensed amateurs build their operating skills on HF. It is a contest specifically for those new to Amateur Radio, similar to the ARRL Novice Roundup that ran from 1952 until 1995. The Rookie Roundup brings the fun and Elmering of the old Novice Roundup into the 21st century. Three Rookie Roundups will be held each calendar year: SSB in April, RTTY in August and CW in December.

The Rookie Roundup will be scored 100 percent in real time through the www.getscores.org scoring system. There are three ways to participate: by using your favorite logging software with the real time scoring support, by downloading a simple logging program from the www.getscores.org Web site or by logging your contacts directly into a www.getscores.org Web page. No separate logs are required -- it all happens online in real time and final scores will be available online within hours of the end of the contest! More information is available on all of these options at www.getscores.org. Of course, you can get on the air and make contacts without logging them, but you won't have as much fun!

Who Can Participate?

Any ham licensed for 3 years or less qualifies as a

Rookie. If you were licensed in 2008, 2009 or 2010, you can compete in the 2010 Rookie Roundup. Non-Rookies may only work Rookies, while Rookies may work everybody. A major part of the success of this contest will be non-Rookies getting on the air and working the Rookies, just as in the Novice Roundup. Just like in the Novice Roundups of years past (when Novices could work anyone and non-Novices could only work Novices), Rookies may work anyone, be they Rookie or non-Rookie; however, non-Rookies are limited to only working Rookies.

Entry Categories

Single Operator Rookie, limited to a maximum of 100 W. Spotting assistance or using call sign and frequency alerting systems is allowed, but self-spotting or asking somebody to spot you is not. All Rookies must identify themselves as a rookie. Example: "Kilo Bravo One Quebec Alfa Whiskey, Rookie." Non-Rookies only need give their call; no designation is needed.

Awards

Certificates will be available for all participants to download. The top five high scores from each US call area, Canadian province and Mexican call area will be recognized on their certificate. No national winners will be recognized.

Thanks to ARRL.org

Flashback Quiz



Can You Name

The Year?

The Event?

The Hams?

Tech Class Question

What must every amateur station have when transmitting?

- A frequency measuring device
- A control operator
- A beacon transmitter
- A third party operator