



Branch Signals

January 2012

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Branch Signals is published monthly by the Branch County Amateur Radio Club. This publication is posted to our website, www.branchcountyar.com, but can be conveniently emailed to you as well. To subscribe, email the editor, Justin Lopshire, at skywave21@hotmail.com.

Well, here we are. It is official, I received my email from ARRL on December 23rd congratulating me on being appointed as the Emergency Coordinator for Branch County and I sit here typing out my first column for the club's newsletter, *Branch Signals*.



hampered the rest of the Net. I have high hopes for a better performance this month.

I would first like to say congratulations to Larry for his appointment to Section Manager for Michigan and thank you to all of the club's members for the support in my taking over the position of Emergency Coordinator.

On the following Wednesday, the Michigan 5th District Hospital Net was held. This was the "Trial by Fire" test of the new GP-9 antenna that was put up by Larry (WB8R) and myself during the month of November. Initial reports from the Net proved promising, but as with all things, new variables

On December 9th, Larry (WB8R) and myself were invited to participate in a "Table Top Exercise" involving all of Branch County's services and select civiian entities. This exercise was based upon one that was done in Battle Creek and then continued to 'what if' for us here. It was very enlightening for all involved!

December found us busy. We started out the month with our monthly Siren Test on the 3rd.

I have now ventured into the world of HF radio. I got my ticket in 2006 and never moved out of VHF/UHF banding. I was comfortable
see EMCOMM, Page 4

Notes from the President

Justin Lopshire, KD8JEL

Club Calendar

January

3-BCARC Emergency Net, 7PM, 147.300+, 100Hz PL, & 443.300+, 123Hz PL

7-Club Breakfast, 8:30-10AM, Stoagies Family Room Café, 91 East Chicago St., Coldwater

7-Monthly Siren Test, 1PM, throughout Coldwater

10-BCARC Emergency Net, 7PM

17-BCARC Club Meeting, 7PM, basement of Branch County 911 Building, 141 East Chicago Rd., Coldwater

24-BCARC Emergency Net, 7PM

31-BCARC Emergency Net, 7PM

MY FIRST TERM

As I enter my second term being your president of the BCARC, I would like to give my sincere thanks to several people who have been instrumental in showing me the ropes of how to run a successful Club. Year in and year out, we have excellent leadership that really cares about the growth of our organization.

Our Secretary/Treasurer, Bill Kubiak, KB8VWI, makes sure that the books always balance out, plus keeps tabs on the official Club records from our monthly meetings.

Our Board Members are very dedicated to their efforts they

put forth for the rest of the Club. I'd like to take this time to honor everybody who has spent countless hours at the monthly Board meetings, plus at other special events that we have hosted throughout the years.

Arnie Hayward, NS8T, sat in the one-year term seat this past year, since he was the outgoing president from 2010.

Jim King, KC8UGV, served the second year of his two-year term in 2011.

In addition to being our Net Control Station for the Tuesday evening Branch County Emergency Net, Bill Slade, WD8MGF, also sat on the board for the first year of



this two-year term in 2011. Because our Board meetings occur on the first Tuesday of the month at the same time as our weekly Net, we often rely on backup NCS's to fill in for Bill. If you have filled in for Bill recently, give yourself a pat on the back. You certainly deserve it!

Allow me to also welcome to
see TERM, Page 4

Roger Tepfer, WW8C, Silent Key

Roger Tepfer, who was a staunch supporter of the Branch County Amateur Radio Club for several years in the 1980s, passed away May 10, 2011 at his home.



Roger was born on September 23, 1946 in Coldwater, a son of the late George Mack and Mildred Lee Etta (Lovell) Tepfer. Roger had resided in White Pigeon since 1975. His early life was lived in Sturgis where he graduated from Sturgis High School with the class of 1964. He furthered his education at Tri-State University in Angola, IN, where

he received his Bachelor Degree in Business. He had been employed by the Kirsch Company in Sturgis for 30 years until the time of the closing of the company. He had also worked for five years at Parma Tube in Sturgis. On March 14, 1980 he married Beverly Bowser-

Vinton in White Pigeon. Roger was a member of the First Baptist Church of Newberg and was an amateur radio enthusiast. He loved most all sports and was an avid and devoted fan of the University of Michigan, Detroit Tigers, Lions and Red Wings.

He is survived by his loving wife Beverly, two step-daughters, three grandchildren, three great grandchildren, one brother, and two nephews.

Funeral services were held on May 16, 2011 at the Hackman Funeral Home in Sturgis, with interment following, at Oak Lawn Cemetery in Sturgis.

Jim Voss, WVOSS, Hands Over Newsletter Duties to Club President

Just as the beginning of the year signals a changing in the leadership of the BCARC, so have the duties of publishing this award-winning newsletter. Effective with this edition, the outgoing editor, Jim Voss, WVOSS, has handed over the keys to *Branch Signals* to our Club President, Justin Lopshire, KD8JEL. During Voss's tenure as editor, he has netted a second-place Michigan ARRL Newsletter of the Year award.

Voss's most recent tenure as Newsletter Editor spanned five

years. Voss also served as editor in the days of spirit duplicating and countless uses of scissors, and recalls having to make monthly trips to the Post Office to mail out the publication to the members. In 1978, Voss became a member of the BCARC, and quickly became involved in Club duties, including holding the president, secretary/treasurer, and board member positions, some for several terms. He also assumed duties as Emergency Coordinator on three occasions, with the most recent occurring in the early 2000s.

Voss is particularly pleased at

the Club's continued participation and growth of the Weather Nets.

So, what is next for Jim?

"(I) Have to admit that I've been missing from most bands for the past few years", says Voss, "but with the solar cycle coming around, who knows... you might run in to me on HF one of these days - you know, I'm the guy with the weird call."



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Area Nets

Hillsdale County-

Ragchewer's Roundup Net: Every Monday, except the second Monday of the month, at 7PM, on 147.06, with a 179.9PL.

Skywarn Net: The second Monday of the month, at 7PM, on the frequency listed above.

DeKalb County-

Tri-State Two-Meter Net: Daily, at 7PM, on 147.015. (Repeater is 350' up, and transmits at 90W, so those who live along and south of US 12 stand the best chance to get checked in!)

Birthday Club

Calling all readers of *Branch Signals!*

We are currently looking for brave individuals to occupy this portion of the newsletter! Just send your date of birth to editor, Justin Lopshire, at skywave21@hotmail.com,

and we'll make sure to let the rest of our readers know when you're getting ready to blow out another candle on your birthday cake!

EMCOMM (from page 2)

there, I knew the people I was talking too. Part of what I now have taken on with being Emergency Coordinator requires me to be able to communicate on the other bands as well. So, I now have a Yaesu FT-950 sitting downstairs on a card table connected to a G5RV antenna that I won at the Kalamazoo Hamfest. My next goal is to earn my Extra ticket before they change the question pool in June of 2012.

I would like to remind all that every Tuesday evening except for the third Tuesday of the month at 7pm is the Branch County ARES/RACES Net. It is a good place to meet and talk for a bit every week.

Please mark your calendars for February 28th for Skywarn training to be held at 2:00pm and 6:00pm at the PCHC Conference Center, 370 East Chicago Street, Coldwater. Please feel free to attend either session, we look forward to seeing you there!!

We will always need more people that are willing to give some of their time to be of assistance for their fellow neighbors and citizens. We have a core group of well trained individual volunteers that stand ready to help when the call arises. No matter how busy it gets, there will be a place for you! 73, Jan, KD8CYW



IT'S DUES TIME!

If you haven't already done so, please be sure to renew your Club Membership for 2012! It only costs \$15 to join, which allows you to have club privileges, and opportunities to vote at Club Meetings! For more information, see Bill Kubiak, KBSWI, at the next Club meeting.

Upcoming Meeting Programs

January's monthly meeting will be all about you! After the business meeting, and our monthly 50/50 drawing, be sure to stick around, and voice your opinions as to what you believe we, as a club, should do for 2012. It can be as routine as an idea or two you would like us to try for a meeting program, or something a little more elaborate, like a public service activity. So get those ideas together, and bring them to the meeting on the 17th!

TERM (from page 2)

Gary Moeller, KD8MFJ, and Jan Hayden, KD8CYW, as the incoming Board members for one-year and two-year terms respectfully.

One of our regular visitors at our Board meetings over the past year was Jim Voss, WVOSS, who is prominently on display on our new front cover. Jim's past club president and Emergency Coordinator status has made him a valued asset to this organization. I will further expand on his accomplishments on Page 3.

Last, but not least, I'd like to thank Larry Camp, WB8R, for his many years of Club

leadership, and extending his knowledge and expertise to help me become a better leader.

In closing, I look forward to another year of leading the BCARC, and continuing to get our word out to the general public, that Amateur Radio is not a dying breed, but rather a blossoming hobby for young and old alike!



BREAKFAST!

Join us every Saturday morning, from 8:30-10AM, at Stoogie's Family Room Café, at the corner of East Chicago and Jefferson Street in Coldwater, for some great food and fellowship!

Tim Allen Stars in New Sitcom, with Ham Radio Connections (courtesy ARRL News)

Tim Allen, star of [Home Improvement](#), [Toy Story](#), [The Santa Clause](#) and [Galaxy Quest](#), just to name a few -- stars in [Last Man Standing](#), an ABC comedy airing at 8 PM (EST) on Tuesday nights. Allen plays Mike Baxter, KAOXTT, a married father of three and the director of marketing at an outdoor sporting goods store in Colorado whose life is dominated by women. While Amateur Radio has not been prominently featured in the first episodes, according to John Amodeo, NN6JA -- the producer of *Last Man Standing* -- it is a part of the show and an important part of Mike's character. The episode that will establish Mike as a radio amateur is currently scheduled to air later this month.

"Tim's character, Mike, is involved in creating the sales strategy for the store, including their catalog and Internet identity," Amodeo told the ARRL. "The store is like Bass Pro Shops or Cabelas. There is a strong self-sufficiency overtone to Mike's approach to life. Ham radio fits in the story as a means of emergency communication. It's not directly featured in the foreground story, but at the moment, it's a background element on the home set. Once I allow something to be put on the set, there's a chance the writers will feature it. Now that we have actually established Mike Baxter as KAOXTT, we can do more things featuring Amateur Radio."

To make Mike a ham, Amodeo needed Mike to have a call sign. So he contacted ARRL Media and Public Relations Manager Allen Pitts, W1AGP, to help him out. "In film and TV, we create fictitious telephone numbers, addresses and brands," Amodeo explained. "We do this mostly to avoid being sued by real brands and to avoid complications with advertisers. As a producer and a ham, I was torn between wanting the show to be accurate and needing to keep my studios out of trouble. An accurate and positive portrayal of ham radio on TV would be a good thing." Many TV shows and movies use telephone numbers with a 555 exchange (such as 555-1212), as that exchange is not valid.

Together with Pitts, and with input from Tim Allen, Amodeo created a call sign for Mike Baxter: KAOXTT. Since the show is set in Colorado, they wanted Mike to have a call sign with a 0 in it. "We wanted a call sign that sounded real, but was not valid," Amodeo said. "The call sign is a 2x3 format with an X suffix. A call sign in this format is an experimental call sign and is not assignable to a radio amateur except in special circumstances. We especially liked the suffix, as it is a play on Tim's character from his former show, *Home Improvement*: 'ex-Tim Taylor.'"

Amodeo told the ARRL that both his studio (Fox) and ABC

were "delighted to have a useable call sign. In the past, TV shows just made up some crazy call or used someone else's without permission. And because we've had so much talk about Amateur Radio here on the show, a few of my production assistants took their Technician exam." Amodeo applied to be an ARRL Volunteer Examiner so he could help administer the exams. On October 6, Amodeo and two other ARRL VEs administered the Technician exam to seven prospective hams. All seven passed, with two making perfect scores.

Since Mike Baxter is a ham, he needed a shack. So Amodeo and the set designers installed an Amateur Radio station in the corner of Mike's set office. Allen, as Baxter, uses an ICOM IC-9100 HF/6 meter/2 meter transceiver and an IC-92AD handheld transceiver, both provided to the show courtesy of ICOM America. Amodeo told the ARRL that he has plans to add vintage equipment to the shack in

the future. "The radio equipment was originally intended to be used as props and set dressing items," Amodeo told the ARRL. "But since eight of the show's staff members are radio amateurs, it didn't take long before we made the radio equipment 'practical,' which is to say, actually capable of making radio calls live from the stage when we're not shooting." He said that radios will always be on and lit whenever they are shooting scenes in the office.

Pitts and ARRL News Editor S. Khrystyne Keane, K1SFA, have been working with Amodeo to make sure that Amateur Radio is correctly portrayed in the show. Keane also provided ARRL and Amateur Radio-related materials that are used on the set, such as issues of [QST](#), [NCJ](#) and [QEX](#), as well as a call sign map, a [2012 ARRL Handbook](#), a 2012 ARRL calendar and various ARRL stickers (look for one on the HF rig). "We also sent fake versions of [DXCC](#),
see ALLEN, page 6



ALLEN (from page 5)

[Worked All States](#) and [Worked All Continents](#) certificates, as well as a [Morse Code Proficiency Certificate](#),”

Keane explained. “Each certificate bears the name Mike Baxter and has KAOXTT as the call sign. All the certificates have issue dates of

December 25, playing upon Tim Allen’s role in *The Santa Clause* movie series.”

Amodeo told the ARRL that he also installed a Comet CHV-5X HF dipole and GP-1 antenna for 2 meters and 70 cm (courtesy of NCG/Comet) “up

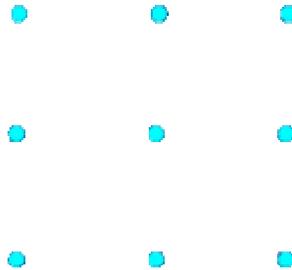
high, about 50 feet, inside the sound stage. The ultimate goal is to have the hams on our staff make contacts from our stage during down times.”

Last Man Standing also stars Nancy Travis (*Three Men and*

a Baby) as Mike’s wife and Hector Elizondo (*Pretty Woman*, *The Princess Diaries*, *Monk*) as Mike’s boss. Amodeo also produced the critically acclaimed *Sports Night* and *Arrested Development*.

Monthly Mindbenders

- 1 Without lifting pen from paper join these nine dots with four straight lines



- 2 A man and his son were admitted unconscious to a local Casualty (Accident and Emergency) department after a car crash. The Casualty Doctor on duty took one look at them and said that they although they were the most qualified somebody else would have to deal with them. Why was this?
- 3 You have nine ball-bearings, all of the same size but one slightly heavier than the others, though not enough to be detected by holding them. You have some balance scales and are allowed to do only two weighings of any number of ball bearings. How do you find the heavy one?
- 4 So you can spell coke, joke, poke but how do you spell the white of an egg?
- 5 Name a commonly used used four-letter word ending in E-N-Y (If you find this easy it is because you are seeing it writing. Try it on someone verbally and see them suffer)
- 6 A farmer has to transport a fox, a goose and a sack of grain across a river. The boat is so small that there is room only for him and one of the others at a time, but if he leaves the fox and goose together the fox will kill the goose, and if the goose and the sack of grain are left together the goose will eat the grain. How does he get them all over?

Answers will be printed in next month’s *BRANCH SIGNALS!*