



Branch Signals

August 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.branchcountyarc.com, but can be conveniently emailed to you as well. To subscribe, email the editor, Justin Lopshire, at skywave21@hotmail.com.

I am writing this column for Jan, KD8CYW as he is undergoing treatment for his illness. I ask all to keep Jan and his family in your thoughts and prayers as he goes through this lengthy process and recovery.

July has been another slow Skywarn month and obviously a pretty dry month as well. Recently we have received some rain, but still need a lot more to begin to undo all of the damage done. Much of the crops (particularly corn) are in serious trouble.

We once again conducted the Tornado Siren test on the first Saturday of July. Thanks to NS8T, KX8R, KC8UGV, KC8SHD and N8VM for their fine help. This is an incredibly important event that we do each and

every month. It is a simple task, but we are always in need of operators to help out. The entire task takes about 30 minutes or less and is painless. If you have not yet volunteered, please consider joining us. See WB8R for details.

While Jan is recovering, I will be handling the day to day EmComm activities including Skywarn activations. Please direct all questions, comments and concerns to me.

Thank you for your continuing support.

73,

Larry, WB8R



Notes from the President

Justin Lopshire, KD8JEL

Club Calendar

August

4, 11, 18 & 25-Club Breakfast, 8:30-10AM, Stoagies Family Room Café, 91 East Chicago St., Coldwater

4-Monthly Siren Test, 1PM, throughout Coldwater

7, 14, & 28-BCARC Emergency Net, 7PM, 147.300+, 100Hz PL, & 443.300+, 123Hz PL

21-BCARC COLLABORATIVE FOXHUNT! 6:45PM, Branch County 911 Center

IT'S VACATION TIME, PART DEUX!

Hello, fellow *Branch Signals* readers! Since I got back from my July vacation, I've had a tough time transitioning back into a regular routine. Maybe it's because the weather has been so nice that I've wanted to get out and do everything that I know I can't do when January comes around. Maybe it's because our area has had a lack of precipitation, and therefore, we have not had to exercise our Skywarn operations as much as usual. Whatever the reason, it is that time of the year where many people are starting to realize that their summer project time is waning. Thankfully, I didn't have much to accomplish, so it's been a summer of resting and relaxing.



Calling all foxhunt fanatics! Our August Collaborative Foxhunt is fast approaching! We will be meeting at the Branch County 911 Building on Tuesday, August 24th, at 6:45PM, for the official rules, and to assemble our foxhunting teams. Because this is a collaborative hunt, usage of the 147.300 repeater is encouraged between teams. However, in years past, I've noticed a certain competitive-

ness amongst the participating teams, which adds a little mystery to the event. Yours truly will once again be in charge of hiding the Foxbox. I have another site that is bound to be a great hiding place. For those who participated in the May Competitive Foxhunt, don't worry. We have implemented some new rules that will make this hunt way easier than the one in Spring.

Thanks to everybody who came out and took part in the Club Picnic, on Tuesday, July 17th. Even though the mercury topped out at 98 that day, that didn't stop 19 of us from meeting at the Gilead Lake Park for great eats! Speaking of great eats, we'll have a recipe from Roy McCloud's XYL published in this month's newsletter that many of you requested.

73, Justin

PRB-1 News from Larry

I have some exciting and good news concerning the ARRL Michigan Section's struggle to get the Federal Regulation known as PRB-1 codified into Michigan law.

As you know, we have had a bill (HB-5027) in the Michigan House for several months sitting in Committee. We have not been able to get the bill onto the floor for a vote and the advice received from a veteran Michigan Congressman, we were told that the House Bill would most likely never see the light of day as we are rapidly approaching a "lame duck" session in the House.

Fortunately, we have been working on other ways to accomplish

our mission. That is to say that we have been working on getting a Senate Bill prepared and introduced on the floor of the Senate. Senator Jones from the 24th District (Lansing area) has agreed to sponsor our bill and as this is being written our proposed bill is being put into the proper format. The schedule, as planned, is for the bill to be introduced on August 16. At that time, the bill will be assigned a number and placed in the hands of the appropriate committee for further action. This kinda sounds like where this story started, doesn't it?

Senator Jones is a powerful, persuasive Legislator and we have been assured that this bill will make it to the Senate Floor. Once

the bill is introduced, we are going to open the flood gates and will be asking the hams of Michigan to send letters to their Senators asking them to co-sponsor and support the bill. I have the form letter prepared and will distribute it locally (and across the entire Michigan Section) so that everyone can complete the letter and forward to their Senator.

I will have the latest news as soon as it is available. Keep those pens in your hands and ready to go!

Larry, WB8R

Michigan ARRL Section Manager



CATCH ME, IF YOU CAN!

Collaborative Foxhunt is on Tuesday, August 21st, at 6:45PM, at the Branch County 911 Center.

BE THERE!

Recipe Corner



Deb McCloud's Oriental Cole Slaw

You'll need...

24 oz. (2 bags) Cole Slaw

1 bunch Green Onion (sliced)

1 c. sliced almonds

1 c. sunflower seeds

2 pkgs. Ramen Noodles (Oriental)

1/3 C. White Vinegar

3/4 C. Oil (vegetable)

1 C. Sugar (I use Equal) to taste

2 T. Soy Sauce

1/2 C. Cranberries or Raisins (optional)

Mix the Vinegar, (sugar) sweetener, Soy Sauce & the packets from the Ramen Noodles until dissolved. Break apart the Noodles & toss with cabbage, onion (I use the whole onion) sunflower seed, & Cranberries. Mix the oil with the dressing and toss with cabbage mix. Before serving add the almonds & toss.

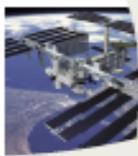
If you have any questions, Email Deb, at dmcccloud51@frontiernet.net.

Area Nets

Don't forget that the BCARC holds a weekly net on the 2M and 70cm bands! Join us for the Branch County Emergency Net every Tuesday night, with the exception of the Third Tuesday, at 7PM, on the WD8KAF 2M repeater. It's a great way to find out how your 2M/70cm rig is operating, and to check in with other area hams and see what's happening in their ham-shacks. Every once in a while, our Net Control Station will have a trivia question, usually related to Amateur Radio, for participants to attempt to answer. If you haven't checked in lately, please consider doing so the next time you have a chance!



▶ JOIN OTHER HAMS IN PROVIDING EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS IN A VARIETY OF CIRCUMSTANCES



▶ TRY YOUR HAND AT CONTACTING AMATEURS MANNING THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION.



▶ ENJOY THE FUN OF COMMUNICATING WITH HAMS DOWN THE BLOCK OR ACROSS THE WORLD.

www.branchcountyarc.com

One Day Ham Radio Class

Open the door to an exciting new hobby on Saturday, October 27th

Whether you've always dreamed of carrying on a conversation over the airwaves with someone half way around the globe, being an integral part of a communications team in a major emergency, reporting the approach of severe weather or just spending drive time talking with friends on your mobile radio—this is your opportunity to realize that dream. The Branch County Amateur Radio Club invites you to join with almost three quarters of a million others in the USA who are enjoying this timeless and constantly changing pastime. By the way—though it is the preferred mode of many operators, Morse code is no longer a licensing requirement. Note these important details:

- ✓ All activities held at the Branch County 911 Communications Center near the Branch County Memorial Airport.
- ✓ Thursday, August 23rd, 7:30—8:30 p.m. Class orientation and fee collection, distribution of class schedule and expectations.
- ✓ Tuesday, September 11th, 7:30—8:30 p.m. Book distribution with class expectations and lesson plan.
- ✓ Saturday, October 27th, 8:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m. One Day Ham Class followed by Test Session. (Morning snack and lunch provided by BCARC)
- ✓ Class/Material fee—\$29.95 due August 23rd. Testing fee—\$15 due October 27th. (Cash only please.)
- ✓ For more information email Larry Camp at wb8r@arrl.net or call him at 517-278-0406.
- ✓ Instructors: Larry Camp, WB8R and Pat Beeman, N8VM.



YOUR LOCAL RADIO CLUB

This class and subsequent Volunteer Examiner test session are sponsored by the Branch County Amateur Radio Club. The BCARC was founded in 1960 and became an American Radio Relay League affiliated club the following year. The Club meets the third Tuesday of every month at 7:00 pm in the basement meeting room of the 911 Communications Center located at the Branch County Memorial Airport. Every meeting is followed by a time of informal conversation and refreshments. The meetings are open to anyone with an interest in Amateur Radio. Please come and join us!

Area Weather Radars See More Than Just Precipitation

On Thursday, August 2nd, observers of the National Weather Service's network of Doppler Radars had lots to view, and much of it had to do with non-precipitation events.

The only precipitation on the radar was two storm complexes, one in Southern Wisconsin and another in Northern Michigan. The rest of the circles, lines, and general clutter on the radar were all non-meteorological phenomena.

Sunrise Spikes

There are lines pointing to the northeast from the Quad Cities, IA, St. Louis, MO, and Paducah, KY radars. These lines are called sunrise spikes and occur when the radar antenna is pointed directly at the sun. Since the sun emits some microwave energy (same as a weather radar,) the radar receives the energy and displays it as light precipitation for the entire radial beam. These features are only visible for a few radar scans early and late in the day when the sun is low in the sky and directly in line with the radar beam.

Birds

In the morning, birds take off from lakes at the same time and are so numerous that they reflect the radar's energy which is interpreted as precipitation and displayed as concentric rings. A doppler radar only displays the energy it receives and has no way to decipher whether the echoes were a result of precipitation or something else (although dual-polarization radar will allow this distinction). These rings expand and become fainter through

time as the birds disperse and the reflected energy decreases.

Wind Farms

Many nights, when the nocturnal thermal inversion sets in and causes the radar beam to [superrefract](#), doppler radars will detect area wind farms. Due to the density of these farms and the refractive properties of the wind turbines, they can show up as significant reflectivity which somewhat resembles heavy rain or a thunderstorm. These "blobs" of reflectivity do not move and may vary greatly in intensity from one scan to the next. They will typically disappear shortly after sunrise once warming allows the inversion to

begin to erode although this same phenomenon can be seen anytime the radar beam superrefracts (warm layer aloft, after/during precipitation, etc...).

General Clutter

Additional clutter across Northern Indiana and Southern Michigan was caused by second-trip echoes from the Evansville, Indiana radar. This occurs when precipitation beyond the maximum unambiguous range is detected by a radar and plotted closer to the radar site because it took too long to return to the radar and is assumed to be data received from the following pulse.

