

THE OPEN FEED LINE

CHRISTMAS Issue Volume 3 Number 4 December 22, 1994

"TIS THE SEASON..." The tree is cut and trimmed, placed with just enough water to keep it fresh throughout the coming weeks. Mom and Dad string colorful lights, while sis, hangs tinsel, just right. Yes, it is that wonderful time of year again, When the accumulation of joy and excitement from the past year, shines forth through little children's eyes. No matter what you get them, the surprise and wonder of Christmas is never surpassed. So it is with our friendships we have made during this last year. We at MARA can be extra joyous this Christmas, for we have fulfilled a need that the Amateur Radio community had, up until this past March 11, 1994. That's when this club voted to construct a Packet BBS system, with telephone access. The design was simple: it's open to all! We also have fond memories of Field-Day, in which we actually placed within the ranks (somewhere in the middle. hi). It is easy to look at where we are at this moment, and think we haven't done anything. But think of the running dialog between our club's president and GRARA 's Dave DeVos KF8QL. The code practice that you folks voted on sponsoring for the first time and the truly first time this newsletter has ever been out consistently. So, as you sit in your easy chair, gazing on your beautiful Christmas tree, remember that this is also the time of year when we joyously honor another LIGHT that came into this old world. That shine shall never dim. It shall always be lit, by love and caring. From all of us at the Open Feed Line,

MERRY CHRISTMAS+

Richie Ranta WB8HJX

BBS SYSTEM OPERATOR

Well, by now everyone has stuffed themselves with plenty of Holiday cheer, and if you've found anytime to take a look at the MARA packet BBS, we've moved to a new location. The phone was changed over on November 18th to (616) 363-2289 and was only down for a couple of hours. We did experience some problems on MABELLs end, but that was taken care of. The new location is at Knapp and Fuller next to the water tower. We're planing some tower work this spring to get

the antenna set at around 60 feet along with a 2 meter, 10 element beam to get mail and traffic faster. Watch for details later on this and other projects this spring.

If you have a computer but don't have a modem please contact me or Rich. We have access to some 1200 baud modems. Yes, they are slow, but the price is right: "Nothing!". This should help some people get on the system and start sending mail to your friends. I'm currently very busy getting my shack back in order, but if you happen to be in the NE. side of town, give me a call and I'll give you a tour of the system. My new number is (616) 361-6349. Well, that's all for now. If you have any questions concerning the BBS please feel free to call me or Richie anytime. With the new site in mind, I think we will have full county coverage and then some. So keep those packets rolling. 73 Bill N8OAR.

CLUB-NEWS

This past December 1st, MARA held their elections for the coming year. Elected were, Bob Wild N8JXB Not Director. Dan Markowski N8NLJ, Treasurer. Lee Burgess WC8O Vice-president. John Visser NF8P Awards Manager and (you folks will never learn!! hi) Richie Ranta WB8HJX President. But while we warmly welcome these folks coming in, lets not forget Steve Ireland N8SVU, who kicked off the Field-Day 94 effort. Bill Wisneski N8OAR who was the trusty secretary and carried through with Field-Day 94. Chuck Lemarbre N8LDY who carried the Net project through, when nobody else thought it would survive one month! " A BIG HEART FELT THANKS GUYS, FOR ALL THAT YOU HAVE CONTRIBUTED IN THE PAST YEAR. Some of these folks will be missed, due to moving out of state, but they shall never be forgotten for all they have accomplished

MARA CHRISTMAS DINNER

On December 22th, MARA held their Christmas dinner at Old Country Buffet. It was a pleasure to see the XYL's instead of just the 'OLD' club members. We also had a guest, kind of. Alan Scott W8KIZ sat at our table and started talking about the "GOOD OLD DAYS". Alan taught Richie WB8HJX the Morse Code way back when Tyrannosaurus Rex was roaming the country side. In those "DAYS", we used something called a Morse-O-Matic: a device that was paper tape fed. The Good Old Days???

Present during this festive occasion, was Harold Allan KB8MNI, John Visser NF8P, Louie White N8ZVB, Larry Ambruz KB8MZR, Lee Burgess WC8O, Dan Markowski N8NIJ and Richie WB8HJX. The food was good, the company better! We also had the drawing for the prizes for the club ticket sale. There are now 4 happy folks who will be receiving surprises in the mail later this week. Next year, we talked about holding our dinner at Larry Ambruz's house, and getting him to cook for us. What a treat that shall be! (surprise is more like it HI).

MEMBER-NEWS

Pete Vap KA8ZAZ and his lovely wife Jeani, couldn't attend, since he is helping her get over a bone spur. Ouch. But while Peter couldn't get out, Tom Hansen N8DGD got in, and helped Peter erect his new 135 foot aerial. Now Peter can get out on all the bands! Evidently, he is preparing his station for the CW NET we are about to start. Eddy Mr. CW W8NZW and Mike KB8PQV have been suggesting that, along with the code practice on the GRARA 146.760 Metro repeater, we start a 40 meter CW NET. This would be to help those folks who are continually troubled by passing the 13 WPM test. Stay tuned. It is going to happen!

Talking about the code, the following is from the ARRL Letter, volume 13, No.23 Dec.14,1994. According to the Canadian Press (A news service.), electromagnetic interference from the North Pole knocked out voice transmissions by both radio and satellite telephone from both the Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker Louis St Laurent and the US Coast

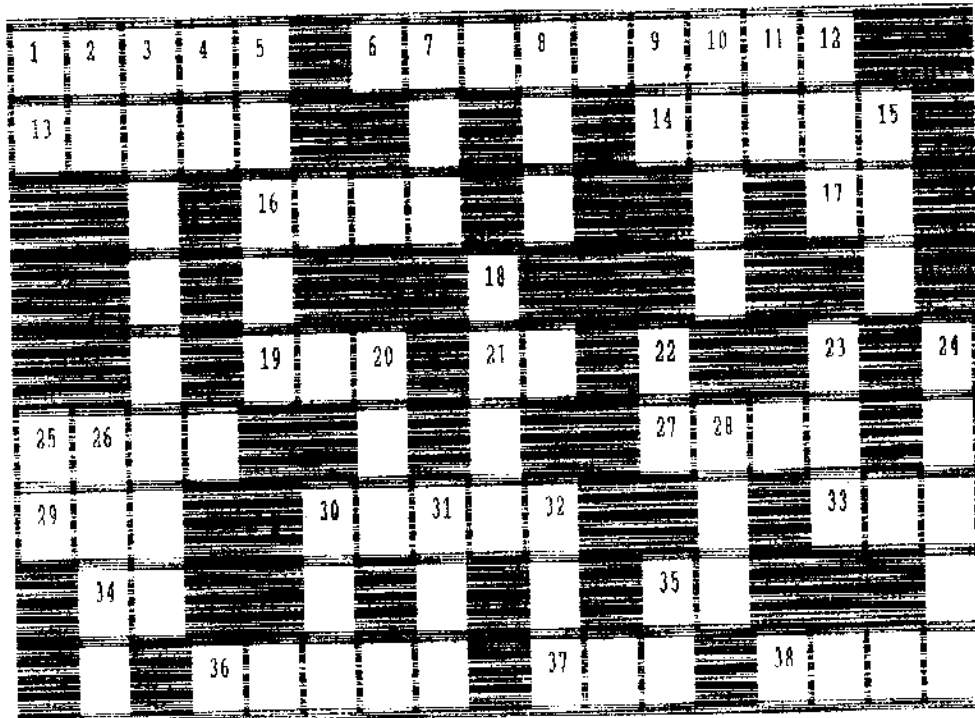
Guard icebreaker Polar Sea, both of which had reached the Pole. "For most of Monday, the report said, "the only communications with the two ships was by Morse Code...." Still think we should throw out the baby with the bath water??? (printed with permission of the ARRL).

STRAIGHT KEY NIGHT

On December 31th,1994, a old tradition that some of you might not even know about is about to take place in our area: STRAIGHT KEY NIGHT! On New Years Eve, instead of fighting the traffic, hunt for your trusty J-38 or other similar key, and join us on the Novice bands (80,40,15 and 10). Our club talked about getting together with GRARA's membership, and hold a friendly competition between our two clubs. We at that time talked about seeing who could work WAS the fastest, within a one months time. Events, and just being way too busy has taken that off the burner for right now, but not the future. But on New Years Eve, give a listen, and don't be surprised at how many local folks you hear.

As some of you know, Richie WB8HJX has once again provided Morse code practice, with the cooperation of GRARA, on their Metro repeater: 146.760 MHz. We have about 4 weeks to go, and the speeds are 30, 20, 13 and 5 WPM. This time, since MARA voted to sponsor Richie's efforts, the 5 WPM practice is radically different. As the code is introduced in the Monday night class (by our Lee WC8O), it is also reintroduced on each of the sessions. It is possible for one to learn the Morse code just by listening Sunday and Wednesday night, at 8:00 PM. These code practice sessions have been encouraged and supported by Tom Werkama KA8YSM, president of IRA, Steve Hinkel AA8OO & Dave DeVos KF8QL, past & present presidents of GRARA and of course, MARA. " Does anybody use it?" Lee WC8O stopped by and told me how one of his students had gone out and bought a scanner just to hear it. Enough said

SEASONS GREETINGS



ACROSS

1. With 6 across.
6. With 1 across.
13. Local Club.
14. Ham gear company.
16. What to take to upgrade.
17. Before CD's.
19. Time abbrv.
21. Current X Resistance.
25. Radio company.
27. Capitol of Norway.
29. Grade school group.
30. Aerials need this?
33. our XYL sees our rig as this!
34. Replacement for LP's?
35. Moniker for 11 meter user?
36. with 37 across.
37. with 38 across.
38. see 36 & 37 across.

DOWN

1. Small car ?
2. Hospital room.
3. Amtrack is one.
4. Abbrv. for Amtrack?
5. Radio company.
7. What we are called?
8. Local club.
9. Tango-Delta
10. Local Club.
11. Alpha-India.
12. One who listens to the BBC.
15. What a GI is, overseas?
18. K8EX's first name.
20. Navy grade, abbrv.
22. Radio part abbrv.
23. A little kid?
24. It sends CW?
25. Current X Power.
26. What IRA & GRARA are using?
28. Opposite of CW.
30. Abbrv. for power meas.
31. "There's NO-___!"
32. "See Spot ___"
35. Transmission mode.

CLUB-EVENTS 95

If there is one thing that keeps a club's business meeting interesting, it is not doing business! This past fall, we started setting interesting activities to have during our business meetings. The one that most folks seem to like the most, was showing the videos the ARRL has to loan. We have just received their latest catalog and below are the new videos we are going to try to get this coming winter. Following is the first choice of videos we have requested: "Signal to Noise Story", "Spark Gap", Loaded Antennas" and "ARRL Headquarters = 1935". Please keep in mind, that there are many other requests for these videos and we won't know till the middle of January what is available. Listen to our Net on Thursday night for more information.

MARA-NET

This past fall, Chuck Lemarbre N8LDY said he was stepping down as Net Director. Chuck carried the Net and scheduling for the past year and a half, and kept it going when nobody seemed the least interested in putting energy into it. "Thank You Chuck for a wonderful job!!".

To fill the vacancy, Bob Wild, N8JXB was nominated and elected to the Net Director office. Bob, not one to waste any time, has already started by contacting folks who are willing to be alternative Net Control Operators. Following, is the schedule for the next 3 months.

Jan. 12,1995	KB8PQV	MIKE
Jan. 19,1995	N8DGD	TOM
Jan. 26,1995	NF8P	John
Feb. 2,1995	KB8MZR	Larry
Feb. 9,1995	N8JXB	Bob
Feb. 16,1995	WB8HJX	Rich
Feb. 23,1995	KB8PQV	Mike
Mar 2, 1995	KB8MZR	Larry
Mar 9,1995	N8JXB	Bob
Mar 16,1995	WB8HJX	Rich
Mar 23,1995	KB8PQV	Mike
Mar 30,1995	N8JXB	Bob

Bob, after talking it over with the present Net Control operators, has elected to move the Thursday night net back to 8:00 PM. We at MARA have tried to accommodate the folks who check in, and during the summer, it was felt a net would serve more folks if it was held earlier. But, dependability seems to carry more weight. If any of you are interested in more than just checking in, and would like to try your hand at Net controlling, give old Bob a call at 363-9631. Let's all share our views and opinions and check into the MARA NET. January 5ths NET will start at the new time of 8:00 PM.

MARA 1994-1995

It's that time once again, when at the end of the year, we look back to where we've been, and try to get a idea of where we want to be. This year, that's not difficult. 1995 will see no less than what we had in 1994. Field Day 95, friendlier meetings, with interesting stuff for hams. Maybe, a club call sign ("What should MARA's on-the-air call sign be?"), creation of our very own club station and maybe if the interest is there, a Advanced + Extra theory class. A newsletter that is sent out every 4 months, with out fall (hi hi). The big question in looking over what we've done, is to come up with things we would like to do. While our treasury isn't that great, the energy and dedication YOU, the members have contributed, is! Everything that got done this past year, without fail, came to completion because you were willing to get it done. No money in the world can buy that kind of effort (just look at our congress!). So, on behalf of the new board you have elected for 1995, we promise, not to do any less than you, yourselves have done this past year. The agenda for 1995 is simple then, "Keep our friendships fed, make new friends and increase our knowledge of our wonderful hobby!" See you in 1995! Your New Board.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

1995 SWAPS

Following, is a list of HAM SWAPS happening in the first 3 months of 1995. This list has been made available from Mike Pearsall, KA8YNJ, the Affiliated Club Coordinator.

January 8,1995. South Bend IND. MI. Valley Hamfest Assn. talk in 145.29 Century Ctr.Convention Hall. Info: Denny KA8WNR (219) 291-0252.

January 22,1995. southfield MI. Southfield HS ARC Swap-n-Shop.

January 28,1995. Flint MI. AR & Youth/SW Academy RC. talkdn 147.260. Info:Bob Britt N8DYS (810)635-9602.

February 18,1995. Traverse City MI. Cherryland ARC. Swap-n-shop. Immaculate Conception Middle school. 2nd St. near Division. INFO: Chuck W8SGR (616) 946-5312.

February 26,1995. Dearborn MI. Livonia ARC. Silver 25th swapshop. talkin 145.350. Dearborn Civic center. VE exams by appointment. INFO: (313) 261-5486.

March 18,1995. Marshall MI. Southern MI ARA. MI crossroads Hamfest. INFO: Wes Chaney N8BOM (616) 979-3443.

"What better way to start the new year, than by planing to meet your friends at a local SWAP."

WE GOT GIFTS!

What better way to start off the New Year than by getting presents, especially gifts that will make this Newsletter easier to read. Thanks to a gift from Serge Lisk N8NEZ, the Newsletter is now being composed on Microsoft WORD.

What a difference. As I type, our picture composer(that's Dan N8NLI!), is importing the ARRI logo and a slightly new version of our favorite character " THE GREEN MAN". We have incorporated some of the changes in this issue, but due to the increase in postage within the week, we had to get this out fast. There is just too much going on at once during this season.

Talking about the Green Man, we didn't realize what a monster we had created when we suggested you guys name him. I had a dozen or so calls suggesting what his name might be. So, here is the list of names you have proposed. " Mr.MARA" "Mr.Livingston", "Dr.Watson", "Sherlock Homes (?)". These are the finalists. You pick out who you think he is, and in the very next issue, we'll announce who won.

PUZZLE SOLUTION

Across: 1. Merry 6. Christmas 13.GRARA 14.Daiwa
16.Exam 17.I.P 19. UTC 21.IR 25.ICOM 27. OSLO 29
PTA 30.Power 33. TOY 34. CD 35. CB 36. Happy 37.
New 38. Year
DOWN: 1. MG 2.EM 3. Railroad 4.RR 5. Yaayu 7. HAM
8. IRA 9. TD 10.MARA 11. AI 12.SWL 15.APO
18.MIKE 20. CPO 22. LO 23. TOT 24. KEYER 25. IP
26. CTCN 28.SSB 30. PEP 31.WAY 32. RUN 35.CW

"Do you have a particular topic or area of interest that you would like to see created into a puzzle?" If so, let Richie know. Do you think a Ham newsletter is the place for a puzzle? It's time to get a idea of just what you folks think about the newsletter. Within the next 4 months, we plan on giving this old rag a face lift. New software, new (to us!) clipart and many more new things will be installed in the Spring issue. So now is the time for you folks to put your input into what your reading. Give Richie a call at (616) 361-5975 or write him c/o MARA (Address on inside cover). See you in the Spring.

HAM TIPS

This is a new column we are trying out in this issue. We hope you find it useful.

CW KEYS/KEYERS. Never use a file to clean the contacts on a CW device. A clean, lint free clothe is the best way, but if the contacts are burnt, use the finest nail file(Emery paper) available, and then very gently. Use the clothe afterwards to remove the fillings. Remember, this is a delicate instrument: treat it as such. Replace wore contacts whenever they get beyond cleaning.

DOS/PC USERS. If you folks use MS DOS 6.2, there is a undocumented switch in the SCANDISK utility. SCANDISK/TIME. This will cause Scandisk to actually measure the time it takes to write/read to the surface on the disk. If there is any variance, it will move data and mark it bad. You should do this once a month.

Do you have any questions you would like to put to the test? Call or write c/o the editor.

It's that time of year again. Membership renewal time. (you knew this was coming hi). The Michigan Amateur Radio Alliance publishes the Open-Feed-Line 4 times a year, and as January 1, 1995, postage is going up. In order to increase the quality of the Newsletter, and not leave anybody out, we are asking you to join MARA. Your membership will: 1. enroll in MARA and allow you to vote at our monthly club meetings. 2. Get you a "NEAT" MARA membership card, which you can trade with your friends. 3. Support West Michigan's newest & fastest Packet BBS/w telephone access. 4. Receive by mail, the Open-Feed-Line 4 times a year. The other benefits to joining MARA are of course, meeting some swell hams, who share the fun and adventure of hamming and meeting new hams, as they come into the hobby.

The dues for membership in MARA is \$12.00 per year. Become a part of one of West Michigan's finest clubs. To join, it would really help if we had the following information.

CALL: NAME ADDRESS CITY	CLASS	PHONE	STATE	ZIP
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WEEKLY HAM EVENTS 1995

MONDAYS; 8:00 PM. Newsline on the W8HVG Repeater 147.160+ MHz

8:15 PM KCARPSC Net, on the W8DC repeater 147.206+ MHz

TUESDAY: 8:00 PM North-Ottawa ARC NET 145.490- MHz.

THURSDAY: First Thursday of the month, MARA club meeting. American Legion Hall.

THURSDAY: 8:00 PM MARA NET on W8JLJ repeater 145.410 MHz.

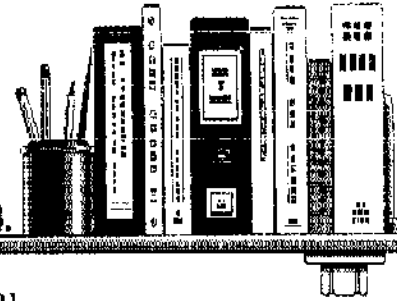
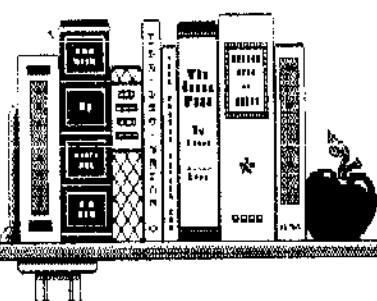
FRIDAY: First Friday of the month, GRARA club meeting. American Red cross. Buse.mt.

FRIDAY: Second Friday of the month, VE EXAMS, 6:00PM American Red Cross Bldg.

FRIDAY: Third Friday of the month GRARA social mt.

LAST MINUTE NEWS

Some time either in mid January, or early February, the FCC will implement the new VANITY CALL-SIGN program. Stay tuned to your favorite net for latest information. The new form for this may be 606-V.



MEMBERSHIP LIST

DECEMBER 22, 1994 Volume 3, Number 4.

MARA, a ARRL affiliated club since 1991

CALL	CLASS	NAME	PHONE
KB8MNI	GENERAL	HAROLD ALLEN	887-8131
KB8MZR	TECHNICIAN	LARRY AMBRUZ	669-9211
K5MRO	ADVANCED	BERT BOUMA	245-8511
WC80	EXTRA	LEE BURGESS	458-9297
WB8ZNO	TECHNICIAN	TERREL FRANCIS	895-7075
W7PG	EXTRA	MISTER ANDY GUSACK	791-0451
N8XIA	TECHNICIAN	BOB HAMMOND	457-3554
N8DGD	ADVANCED	TOM HANSEN	454-0630
KB8OYK	TECHNICIAN	JEFF HERNANDEZ	795-9845
KB8RFY	TECHNICIAN	PAUL HERNANDEZ	795-9845
KB8OYI	TECHNICIAN	TONY HERNANDEZ	795-9845
N8SVU	TECHNICIAN	STEVE IRELAND	
N8LDY	GENERAL	CHUCK LEMARBRE	365-8015
N8NFZ	TECHNICIAN	SERGE "SPARKEY" LISK	241-2488
W8NZW	GENERAL	EDDY LOMASIEWICZ	453-0451
N8NIJ	GENERAL	DAN MARKOWSKI	784-5973
KG8BK	ADVANCED	BUD OWEN	
WB8HJX	EXTRA	RICHE RANTA	361-5975
W8SPX	GENERAL	LEONARD SCHAAFSMA	791-9190
KB8OYH	TECHNICIAN	TONY SCIAFNI	795-7033
WA8AAT	GENERAL	CARL THOMPSON	
KA8ZAZ	GENERAL	PETER VAN DUIVENDYK	361-0853
NF8P	EXTRA	JOHN VISSER	785-0523
N8ZVB	TECHNICIAN	LOUIE WHITE	785-1189
N8JXB	GENERAL	BOB WILD	363-9631
KB8OYJ	TECHNICIAN	TIM WILKINS	
N8OAR	ADVANCED	BILL WISNESKI	361-6349

The MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO ALLIANCE holds their monthly club meeting on the First Thursday of every month, at the American Legion Hall, corner of 4 Mile RD NW and Westriver DR NW. 7:00 PM. All are welcome!

For more information about joining MARA write MARA P.O.Box 670 Comstock Park MI 49321.

MARA NET 145.410 MHz every Thursday at 8:00 PM.

Packet BBS N8OAR 145.070MHz. Phone port (616) 363-2289

The Open Feed Line is the Official Newsletter of the Michigan Amateur Radio Alliance and is published 4 times a year. Comments or suggestions are welcome. Mail to above address c/o Editor

" HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM ALL OF US"