



The OPEN - FEED - LINE

Volume 4. Number 1 May 30, 1995

JUNE 24,25TH F-D!

CLUB NEWS

"On February 1, 1995, at 12:01 AM, the 145.410 MHz repeater identified W8JLJ for the last time. At 12:03 AM, the repeater identified MARA N8OAR REPEATER." Finally, after 4 years of talking, discussing, planing and then some more talking, we finally acquired the 145.410 repeater. This came about from the unselfish motives of 6 individuals, who took it upon themselves to actually purchase the repeater. These folks have come to be known as the MARA Repeater Group. All of us at MARA thank you for your willingness to promote MARA through this considerate venture. "THANK YOU".

But more about the repeater and it's commands later on.

Since our last issue, December 1994, (Yes, we're late! sorry) we've been busy with other club matters.

Our dream of getting a FCC club call-sign became a reality on March 24, 1995. That's when the FCC opened up the club call-sign program again, after nearly 2 decades of being closed. We received one of the first club call-signs in the Western MI area: KB8YTM. At the April club meeting, the members voted to go for a vanity club call-sign. So, between now and about July, start thinking about what call-sign you would like for a club call. Currently, we're staying with N8OAR, since changing a club call-sign when you have both a repeater and a packet BBS is a very involved and time consuming job. One that we should only do once. So what call would you like to see our club have? We've got about 2 more meetings till it will be time to submit our call-sign list.

MARA also has taken on a fresh face with many new members. Sue & Bill Dells, KB8WTW & KG8PI, Jim Bentz, N8XHH, Steve Burns, N8KVV,

"Terrible" Terry, WB8ZNO, Len Gongalski N8NEK, Lloyd Hansen AA8PW, Con KB8UKD, Denny Purtee N8OAT, Perry Zimonick N8LUF and Bob Daniels WD8KWT. "Let's all make the time to welcome these new members and make them feel special!"

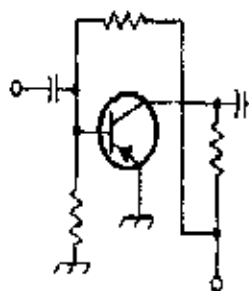
Talking about members, we can also share with you that several of our members have upgraded since our last issue. KB8PQV Mike Timmerman is now KG8QQ. Tech+ to Advanced within 3 months! Good going Mike. Bill Wisneski N8OAR has passed the written Extra exam and is busy studying for the 20WPM test. Bob Wild N8JXB, our Net Director, is going for his Advanced, and beyond.

But upgrading isn't all our members have been doing. Chuck Lemarbre N8LDY, our Secretary, finally has bought a new home. On Fisk Nob no less! Look (listen is more like it!) for Chuck's strong signal On any band!

Peter Vanduiwendyk KA8ZAZ, Tom Hansen N8DGD and Louie White N8XVB have been busy helping Pete finally get his all band dipole up and running. The last report is a flat swr across all the HF bands! Good going you Three Musketeers!

Pete, not satisfied with getting a strong HF signal going, also had his picture in the May, June issue of The Amateur Radio Beacon (p. 7 & 8). Good job Pete!

We also wish to congratulate Lee Burgess WC8O, our very own Vice President, upon being appointed the ARRL Emergency Coordinator for Kent County. Finally, if during one of these nice warm Summer nights, you see a guy riding a bicycle with a Icom Handie, Wave. It's probably Glenn W8KQM out riding. That's what we should all do more of; watch Glenn exercise!



The Truth About NICADS

by
N8LDY

I don't know about you, but I have heard a lot of conflicting stories about those neat little power packs known as NiCads. They sure are far less expensive than Alkaline! I will attempt to put to rest some confusion that seems to exist about them.

1. Rapid charging causes a decline in cell capacity!
<FALSE> As long as the charge is terminated at a safe point.

2. You can't charge a partially charged cell!
<FALSE> You need not discharge before charging! Repeated partial charging gives an increase in the number of charge/discharge cycles compared with full discharge!

3. My NiCad won't take a charge so I junked it!
You Dummy! Just charge a capacitor to about 30 volts and then discharge it through the faulty cell several times.

4. I must replace my NiCad because it has reversed polarity.

<FALSE> After re-polarizing the cell, it can be recharged in the normal way. You will regain FULL capacity after about five cycles!

I hope you will find the above helpful and save yourself a few bucks and a lot of grief. If you still want to toss that cell out, I will be glad to take it off your hands!

73 Chuck Lemarbre N8LDY



The Repeater Status

The 145.410 "Machine" is made up of, a Motorola transmitter, with linear. A General Electric Master Pro receiver, with a optional pre-amp, all controlled by a ACC computer controller. RC-850 series. A Duplexer keeps the receive signal separate from the transmitter, and yes, it does use private line, but only after 10:00 PM. The transmitter sends out a private line signal with every transmission, so it is possible to listen to it without hearing Chicago when we have a band opening. There is also a outside temperature probe, that reads the temp every hour. We also have limited speech capabilities, but enough to keep the average listener informed about any activity we may be having. I tried to have a picture of the machine in this issue, but even though Chuck N8LDY took some real snappy photos, it would cost us too much to include them. For now, anyway. Our main responsibility and goal at this time, is to 1. improve the repeaters performance. 2. Make only very small changes. (you should have heard the traffic on the machine the very first day the new call-sign was on! There were many shocked Ham's in the area to say the least!).

The history on the 145.410 rpt is that it was first put on the air by WA8URE, then sold to Ray W8JLJ and John McNay. It stayed in the present ownership till this past February 1st. you know the rest.

Our present ways of improving the system will require that we have some volunteers who are familiar with tower work: we want to bring everything up to factory specifications, where practical and possible. The very first thing you should have noticed is the absence of the " Snow Static" as it had been referred to. With Bill N8OAR and Dick W8SHJX initially inspecting the receiver, we found we needed to bench test it. Bill fulfilled that part last weekend, 5/20/95. We still are planing to check everything out, just as if we were just putting it on the air for the first time.

You can help out! There are many facets of the repeater that need work. Listen to our Net for further announcements on when work groups may be forming. Come and join us in learning more about our wonderful hobby!

The Commands for using the repeater's features are relatively simple:

COMMANDS

AUTO-PATCH * PHONE NUMBER
SLOT-NUMBER * SLOT-NUMBER
OUTSIDE TEMPERATURE 77
THE CURRENT TIME 70
Power Transformer temp 712
Heat Sink Temp 711
AC Line voltage 74

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- ***1 Kent county Sheriff Dept.
- ***2 State Police, Rockford post
- ***3 Grand Rapids Fire dept.
- ***4 Kentwood Police dept.
- ***5 Wyoming Police dept.
- ***6 East Grand Rapids Police dept.
- ***7 Poison Control
- ***8 Grand Rapids Police dept.
- ***9 911 Grand Rapids Area
- ***0 Ottawa Sheriff dept.

The repeater currently is using the Private Line frequency of 94.8. It is only On-Line between 10:30 PM and 7:00 AM. The repeater's transmitter has the PL on each and every of it's transmissions, so you can turn on your Tone Decode unit and listen without hearing any interference from across the Lake.

RULES

While MARA has elected not to change the day to day operation of the repeater, you should know there are some "Good Habits" that are required in using ANY repeater. * PLEASE, PLEASE, USE YOUR CALL-SIGN BEFORE, AND AFTER YOU HAVE MADE A AUTO-PATCH. Our System Operator has no idea if a valid phone patch is being made or not. If you decide to "Check" out the features of the repeater, Use your CALL-SIGN, so we know your a valid, FCC licensed operator.

"ENJOY OUR NEW REPEATER!"



THE INTERNET ??

"If life is change, then we've really been living!" Between February 10, 1995 and now, our BBS has been forwarding packets to WA8URE! With the cooperation of GRARA's Packeteers, our system is now enjoying a direct link to Detroit MI! We're getting Packet traffic 3 days faster than before, and, we now have a indirect INTERNET connection through W8D N8RAW, Mike, was kind enough to dedicate a whole packet station, just so we can connect to W8DC and get all the new stuff! Thank you Sam WJ8T, Dan N8WKM and Mike N8RAW! we really appreciate your kind, generous efforts!

YOU, the MARA members, can take joy in knowing that during this past March, Bill N8OAR, had to manually reset our message identifiers on the BBS. What this means is that from last March 11th, 1994, when our BBS first came on-line, we have handled over 100,000 messages! Seem hard to believe? Just within the last 4 days, our system has received over 400 messages. This certainly is a long way from just one year ago, when you, the adventurous MARA membership, voted to create this system. At that time (I still have the log), the system had two messages on it.

In celebrating the first year of operation of our BBS, we are coming out with a general history of the club and everything you could possibly want to know about this BBS pamphlet. This is our way of having a open-house with the BBS without getting Mrs. Wisneski chained to the kitchen for hours! hi . Watch your mailbox.

MARA 145.410 REPEATER ENJOY



THE MARA VHF & HF NETS

Bob Wild N8JXB, our Net Director, reports a increase in the number of folks expressing a interest in being Net Control. Below is the Net Control list through fall. One ham asked the question why we even bother to have nets. It's hard to get volunteers, and it seems like it's always the same folks running the nets each month. MARA started having their net solely as a means of having one time, per week, where we could all meet, if we had the time, and talk with each other and also share what has happened in our lives, as well as providing a setting where new and emergency information could be transmitted. Back then, we had more folks show up on the 10 meter HF net than we did on the 2 meter net. Times change. At our April club meeting, several members voiced concern that we haven't had any HF activity, especially as a whole club. It was suggested that we start having a 10 meter SSB Net, followed quickly by a 10 meter CW net. This isn't the first time members have requested we start up the old CW round table. So.... after each MARA Thursday night VHF net, give a listen to 28.350 MHz. You just might be surprised at what you hear.

MARA NET CONTROL SCHEDULE

June 20th through September 15th

June 22th	N8JGD Tom
June 29th	KG8QQ Mike
July 6th	N8ZVB Lou
July 13th	MARA CLUB MEETING
July 20th	KB8VOZ Wayne
July 27th	KB8MZR Larry
Aug. 3th	WB8HJX Richie
Aug. 10th	MARA CLUB MEETING
Aug. 17th	N8DGD Tom
Aug. 24th	KG8QQ Mike
Aug. 31th	N8JXB Bob
Sept. 7th	KB8VOZ Wayne
Sept. 14th	MARA CLUB MEETING.

If for any reason, you can't make your volunteered time, please give Bob Wild N8JXB a call at 363-9631.

Also, there have been some really Great topics on the Nets lately. Can you think of a good topic? Share it.

73 Bob Wild N8JXB

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FIELD-DAY 1995

" Starting on Saturday morning, sometime between 9:00 AM and Noon, a trailer, antenna's, wire, tables, generators, rigs, PC's, will be set up, waiting for the golden hour, when Field-Day 95 starts!". Yes, it doesn't seem like it's been a whole year since we last held our Field-Day excitement, but within the next 29 days, we will have to following through with the plans we have all been talking about since the cold, icy winter months of January 1995. While last year, we all agreed that we should do it merely as a exercise in having fun, having fun placed us within the middle of our division! This year we're going to have fun, and win our division. But, saying this on paper won't make it happen. If you one of the lucky Ham's who turned out last year for F-D, you know how great it is to be with your friends and operate in a contest at the same time. So plan on participating on June 24 & 25 at Belknap Park. Our Field-Day location is the same as last years. We're just North of the old Lovers Lane on top of the hill. Talk in will be on 145.410 MHz.

" How can I help?" Gosh, we're glad you asked. Bill Wisneski N8OAR & Dan Markowski N8NIJ are Field-Day chairmen this year. This year we really need help in setting Everything up. Last year, it fell to a couple of big hearted individuals, and that's not fair! This year, lets ALL contribute something to the total effort. Look over the below list and see where you're willing, and able, to contribute. Let's make this F-D the best we've ever had!

WHAT WE HAVE

Lee WC8O's Kenwood TS-520 & tuner
Bill's N8OAR's Ten-Tec whole HF station.
Bob's WD8KWT's Drake TR-7 (if we have enough power-hi!)
Bill's Dads Hunting trailer & generator.
Richie's All Band wire antenna
Len's N8NEK & Eddy's W8NZW's Keyers
Perry's N8LUF's portable VHF Packet station
ARRL's Field-Day package.

This list is being added to as I make it up. But we still need equipment.

WHAT WE STILL NEED

Folks to volunteer for the initial Set-Up part of FD.
Tables, folding chairs, plastic covers in case of rain (it wouldn't dare!)

A tentative schedule of Who will be operating what, when and who will be keeping the logs.

We already have Len N8NEK, Chuck N8LDY, Eddy W8NZW, Richie WB8HJX and Dan N8NIJ who have signed up to operate the CW table. Last year, we didn't. We need somebody to get the groceries, pop, coffee.

Advanced Publicity of our event.

Equipment desired: 2 meter all-mode, a PC for logging, and other stuff that Bill and Dan can suggest to you when you give them a call.

A videographer/or photographer for recording the event.

Many responsible individuals who are willing to help with the massive cleanup we expect to deal with afterwards.

Minor roofing repair work on the trailer: We need to keep us dry too!

A good portable antenna for VHF work, if we get the use of a 2 meter all mode unit.

Of course, the most important thing we need most of all is YOU! In any manner available to us. We'd lose out if YOU didn't participate in this event.

So, re-read this list, it's incomplete, but I'm sure it will get fuller as the time goes by. You can reach Bill at 363-6349 and Dan at 784-5973. We're all waiting to hear from you!



MASTHEAD

As you read through this issue of the Newsletter, you will notice we're missing a masthead at the very top of Page 1. This is traditionally the place where the club's purpose of the newsletter's existence is placed. Such as "Serving The West MICHIGAN AREA-MARA"

Well, we seem to have forgotten to put one up there. So, it's contest time once again. First, if you remember, we had name the Little Green Man contest (No, it isn't Richie WB8HJX!), and now we want YOUR ideas and impressions on just what this club and newsletter mean

to you, the faithful reader. But this time, we won't be giving away a year's subscription to the Open-Feed-Line. How about a shiny new copy of the ARRL's Radio Amateur Handbook?? I bet I've got your interest now. So between now and September 1st, 1995, think what this club means to you, what you get out of it, and just what this Newsletter is truly all about. Send your ideas care of the Editor, Richie WB8HJX

MARA

P. O. BOX 670

Comstock Park MI 49321

I will only collect them. The club, at the September meeting will decide which one is the more accurate Mast Head for our club.

I also want to let you know, that this issue is late due to a upgrading which allowed us to put all these neat graphics in the newsletter. Thanks goes again, to Sparkey N8NFZ, for the neat svga video card which allows this all to happen! Thank you!



On March 14th, 1995, The MARA Newsletter, The Open-Feed-Line, placed GOOD in the Amateur Radio News Service World wide Ham Radio Newsletter contest. We placed within the top 20 in our division. The interesting review they provided me, indicated that there wasn't anything missing from the writing part. What held the rag from a higher place was all technical. Heavier paper stock, use of different type styles, graphics, photographs. So with their review of our newsletter to guide us, this newsletter will be changing in the coming months. This issue reflects that striving. You can read this type without using a magnifying glass hi hi I have no intention of changing what we report here. Cause that is all about YOU. It is such a joy to be able to share with others, what you have all been doing to as well as have a formal club newsletter. A Big Hearty Thank You!

73 Richie WB8HJX
The Editor

SWAPS- SUMMER 1995

The following list of Ham Swaps comes from the QRV BULLETIN, The Official events Newsletter of MICHIGAN Amateurs, Vol. 6 No. 3. Thanks to Mike Pearsall KA8YNI, MI ACC.

DAY	DATE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TYPE	INF.
SAT	JUNE 3RD	Grand Rapids MI	IRA Rptr Assn 15th Ann	HamFest/val	Kathy 616-698-6627
SUN	JUNE 4TH	Chelsea MI	Chelsea ARC	Swap-N-Shop	Gary 313-428-9398
SAT	JUNE 17TH	Midland MI	Midland ARC	HamFest	Dan 517-832-3053
SUN	JUNE 18TH	Monroe MI	Monroe Co R/C A	Hamfest	Tom 513-847-6549
SAT	JULY 8TH	Petosky MI	Straits Area ARC	Hamfest	Harry 616-347-6610
SUN	JULY 9TH	Jackson MI	Cascades ARS	Hamfest	Terry 517-784-2398
SAT	JULY 22ND	Mio MI	Ausable Valley ARC	Swap	inf. 517-848-5996
SAT	JULY 29TH	Iron Mountain MI	Mich-A-Con ARC	L.P.Fest	Scott 906-774-9409
SUN	JULY 30TH	Port Huron MI	Eastern Mich ARC	Swap-95	inf.810-982-7088
SUN	AUG 13TH	Paulding,OH	Paulding Co ARC	Hamfest	no contact person given
SUN	AUG 27TH	Fowlerville,MI	Livingston ARC	Hamfest	John 517-548-1412
SUN	AUG 27TH	Owosso,MI	5-County Radio & PC show		Jan 517-893-2475
SAT	SEPT 9TH	Fort Wayne Ind	Pt Wayne RC	Hamfest	Cliff 219-483-7576
SAT	SEPT 16TH	Hudsonville,MI	GRARA's Swap	Hamfest	Jeff N8RWS

WEEKLY EVENTS : SUMMER 1995

DAY	TIME	EVENT	SUBJECT	FREQUENCY
MONDAY	8:00 PM	NEWSLINE	HAM RADIO EVENTS	147.160 -
MONDAY	8:15 PM	KCARPSC	Weekly ARES NET & Topics	147.260 + PL 94.8
TUESDAY	8:00 PM	NOARC	North Ottawa ARC's weekly net	145.490 + PL 94.8
TUESDAY	8:00 PM	Local Net	Flat River free-for-all	146.580 simplex
THURSDAY	8:00 PM	MARA NET	MARA's club Net	145.410 - PL off
FRIDAY	9:00 PM	LIARC	United Amateur Radio Club local net	145.720 (?) simplex

AWAY TEAM?

Recently, a ham friend shared with me, that he knew of a another ham, who needed some work done at his house, but couldn't find anybody willing to help him do the work. Being on a very tight budget, he couldn't have a contractor do the work. So he simply went without. I was just told that his family came to his rescue and everything worked out fine. How many friends of yours need some sort of work done around their home, but either because of disability or on a tight budget, can't get the work done? Maybe, if we get together with who we know, and of course, what we're willing to do, we can put our heads and hearts together and solve some of their problems. I'm not talking about completely dry walling a house here, more along the lines of helping those who need really need the help. Putting in a ramp for easier access, mending things, or simply finding someone who can provide the help.

Think about it, and let us know at the O-F-L.

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Special Service Club

At our March club meeting, both W8ATV Norm and Lee WC8O, gave presentations on their involvement in the local Emergency Services areas. The whole membership voted at that time for our club to get involved with the local community services. There are locally, ARES, KCARPSC, HOSCOM, SKY-WARN areas of formation in which we can all become involved with. The club at this time, has written up a plan and will shortly submit it to the Great Lakes Section Manager. This was the easy part. Now the time to act has arrived. Between now and our July Club meeting, please take a few moments to think about what you would be willing to get involved with. We Ham's have technical skills that could prove the difference between chaos and helping to save many lives. See you at the July meeting.

HAVE A WONDERFUL SUMMER



THE OPEN FREQUENCIES

MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO ALLIANCE



851. 8

851. 1

MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO ALLIANCE
PO BOX 670
COMSTOCK PARK MI 49321



ARS: NF8F dues exp:3/1/96
JOHN VISSER
4897 GREICHEN NW
COMSTOCK PARK MI 49321