



# The Open Feed Line

Volume 4. Number 4



Friendship, Community Service & Advancement of the Hobby



## Happy Holidays

"Tis that time of year once again". The shopping is done, the packages are wrapped, mom and dad relax, while the kids try to peek through the brightly colored paper. Ah yes, Christmas is that special time of the year when we think of the needs of others, and try to give what we can. As Ham's, we should use this season as one of showing how thoughtful, kind and caring we are to those who are needing: all of the people who have lost their house to floods, fires and other natural disasters. That's when we really shine. Make this holiday season a little brighter: light up someone else's star.

From all of us at the Open Feed Line,

*MERRY CHRISTMAS &  
HAPPY NEW YEAR.*



## CLUB NEWS

While we're out celebrating all that this season has to offer, our club is celebrating a new group of officers for the 1996 year. On December 14th, MARA held their elections. N8NU Dan Markowski is our new president, as well as still serving as treasurer, NF8P John Visser is the vice president, WB8HJX Richie Ranta is the secretary, N8LDY Chuck Lemarbre is now taking up the helm as the awards manager once again, while N8JXB Bob Wild is net director and N8OAR Bill Wisneski is club trusty. Let's all help these folks in the coming year.

CONGRATULATIONS  
NEW BOARD MEMBERS

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## FCC 610V

On Friday, December 8th, the FCC finally made available the long awaited vanity call sign form. It isn't available from their main form address, but if you send in a S.A.S.E requesting 610V to the ARRL, they have a supply on hand. "New Club Call-Sign?" Maybe before next field day.

At the December meeting, we watched a video from the Kenwood company on it's new hf rig, the TS-870. It was a very informative video and got the whole membership discussing what new rig they would like to get for Christmas. Dan N8NU said he was going to have videos at every meeting, so folks would have something to look forward to besides club business. Everybody felt this was a good direction for our club to take, since members do drive a good distance to attend the meetings. Look forward to more surprises in the coming year.

While the wind gusts hammer our houses, another sound can be heard on 146.460 MHz. Our own Tom Hansen N8DGD is sending code practice to Louie N8ZVB. Louie has been involved with VHF contests lately, and wants to give the hf bands a try. Good going guys, and remember, there are more folks listening to you than you know.

This past December 11th, MARA's first meeting place, TJ manufacturing, became history. TJ closed it's doors to pursue other interests. TJ is where we held our first club meetings, and offered classes to interested folks. We know it holds pleasant memories for all the folks who were there at the start.

## Terrible Terry's Corner

I would like to say a few things about how some of the people I talk to feel. I have heard there are a few that kind of overdo in their attitude towards others and make them feel unwelcome. We are all human and do error in just how great we are, but ham radio is not the place to show it. I think that we should welcome all and let it be a learning experience no matter who you are. There is always something to learn from our fellow man. Think back to your childhood. Did you know all there was to know about the world? NO. There was that growing up experiences you had along the way. "Why let it stop

now?" Plus, look what you can pass on from your vast knowledge to others.

I have had people jump in and help me when I have had a problem that overwhelming to me, but to them it was a simple thing to do. Like one time I could not figure out how to change the time on my computer and I got help from two very nice hams that told me to go to my DOS prompt and simply type in time and it would come up for me to change. That's all there was to it, very simple and it worked. Now that's how it should be, but then I have those that say they are monitoring and when I went back to them they would not answer. But when another ham came on, they answered them. Gee Whiz, I thought everyone liked to talk with me. What a let down. Hi.

In closing, just remember what would we do without the garbage man, the milk man, the bus driver, the doctor, the truck driver, the telephone man etc. Oh yes, I should have written persons not man. For that, I am sorry. What would we do without our gals?

I also almost forgot this. I have to say this for the benefit of those who just might make the same mistake I have made. "Don't send any faxes that just might offend anyone". I have done just that. I passed on a drawing that I thought was very funny, but did not know their kids used the computer and the fax. So, I was

told on 2 meters that it was not appreciated. So to those that think they want to send something like that, think twice about it and then just forget it.

OK, heres a favorite of mine.  
Read on.

## RISK

To laugh is to risk appearing a fool.  
To weep is to risk appearing sentimental.

To reach out for another is to risk involvement.

To expose your feelings is to risk exposing your true self.

To place your ideas, your dreams before the crowd is to risk their loss.

To love is to risk not being loved in return. To live is to risk dying. To hope is to risk despair. To try is to risk failure. But risks must be taken because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing. The person who risk nothing, does nothing, has nothing, is nothing. He may learn to avoid suffering and sorrow, but he simply cannot learn to feel, change, grow, love...live.

chained by his sureness, he is always a slave, he has forfeited freedom, only a person who risks is free.

Author unknown

Terry Francis WB8ZNO

## FOR SALE dept.

1- U.S. military 25 amp. Cont. 12 v. Supply, will trade for HT., except HTX-202. Call WL7PI 452-7326.

1- Ten-Tec Rec. Dalton \$25.00  
Call Elbert Pierce 451-4742.

If any of you folks want to sell, trade, swap or what have you, write it out and mail it to us.

## BBS Commands

The BBS system is running smoothly, and while we do have several new and exciting files to tell you about, we feel it's more important for you, the MARA BBS users, to know how to use the system's neat commands. For simplicity sake, we ask all new users to Down load the file, USERMAN.DOC. This is the file that contains all of the MSYS commands. However, because of all the new folks using it, we're printing this command list for your benefit. "Any questions?" feel free to ask any of the members, or leave either N8OAR or WB8HJX a note, and we will get back to you. Enjoy, after all, this is YOUR packet system. Thank you members!

COMMAND	MEANING	EXAMPLE
L>WB8HJX	List all messages going to WB8HJX	L> MARA
L<WB8HJX	List all messages coming from WB8HJX	L<ALLUS
R #	Read Message number #	R 117890
RM	Read all of my messages:the system knows who you are, you do not have to enter your call.	
D filename	The Down load command. Downloads a whole file at once. D USERMAN.DOC	
W	This commands causes the system to display what we have in our File area for downloading.	
U	By itself, this causes the system to show who is on-line and how many messages the system has.	
UP filename	The UPLOAD command. You upload a file into the file area. UP PART97.DOC	
YW	This is the YAPP File area listing command: shows what Ziped files we have.	
J	MSYS keeps track of what it hears. Enter this to see who has been on the board.	
PC callsign	We have a callbook server on line. Gives address and class.	PC WB8HJX
P callsign	Want to know when a station was last on the board?	P WB8HJX
SP callsign	The send message command. The P means, send Private: it is hidden. SP WB8HJX	
SB area	The send bulletin commnad. Be careful how you use this. It works. ( remember, SB isn't just for our system, it will be sent to ALL systems!)	SB HAMS
K #	The Kill message command. Kills your message number.	K 117890

There exist many variations on these commands, thats why you should Download USERMAN.DOC. If you forget to kill your read messages, MSYS will automatically kill Read Mail in 48 hours. Don't be concerned about having messages that contain swear words in them. MSYS also checks ALL incoming/outgoing mail for Bad words and holds them for the sysop's inspection. Below is a partial listing of the neat files we have in the file area and the YAPP file area. Remember, YAPP can only be used over the phone, since a lot of the files are shareware.

FILE-NAME	DESCRIPTION	FILE AREA
PART97.DOC	The latest and complete FCC amateur rules. Dated 11/12/95.	Download area
STSPLUS.ZIP	The latest version of STSPLUS for satelite and space shuttle tracking.	YAPP area
DXCC.DOC	The latest listing of countries added deleted for DXCC. Dated 12/9/95	Download area
NETDIR95.DOC	Complete ARRL NET directory. Dated 11/12/95	Download area
APRS##.ZIP	We will try to maintain the latest version of APRS. Check the YAPP area for name.	
CLUB-NAME.ARC	A short history on ALL the local Ham clubs. Grara.arc,MARA.arc.	Download area
DECMIN.DOC	MARA will always post on the message area, their club meeting minutes. L> MARA	

# MERRY CHRISTMASS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

\*\*\* WORD SEARCH PUZZLE \*\*\*

	MARAX	Q F Y E M X X L Z X Q M M U F L G N C E F F
		C Q J S Y A E S U B B Z V D P L R I M L A W Z W
		F M X V K V O B N H W D K M A G G O A P J T D
		E V I E W S X Z C C T U S P A G G O A P J T D
ARRL	YAESU	F I E L D D A Y W R D G A Y K V S U S S Y H
NARA	LAFAYETTE	N T M X A A T H E S C J F N A T C I N H C E
ZRA	DIPOLE	R T T R O W E C N A T I C A P A C Y I L U K B
LARC	DIODE	C P D A Z D E A D V A N C E D W D Y V M N
GRARA	YAGI	N C P Q W I F A R E S I S T A N C E V Y N O
GENERAL	MERRY CHRISTMAS	M T A U V M M X T U B I J P E Y V R T I W H
EXTRA	HAPPY NEW YEAR	G R Z E A L A F A Y E T T E I Z R S R T A U
NOVICE	OM	A A R R M V X E P W L G H Q T H I N A P N M
TECHNICIAN	WATT	D N A S N E Y P I B H E V N B K T K P M O A
ADVANCED	OHM	I S I L E K E X U O P N I V P K B Y K O M N
RECEIVER	RESISTANCE	O M M E U I R M W X T E H N I S N S B I A F
TRANSMITTER	CAPACITANCE	D I O P W J R N C G T R R T T E A E W R K H
GONSET	HENRIES	E T B O X Y N N A M V A K E W D L B T N P X
HEATHKIT	OO	L T X B Z C Y S E I G L S Y T O Y X I O G A
KNIGHTKIT	FIELD DAY	W E S C S L R R A H D N E Y P O E T F V I
		P R H E A T H K I T O A I I M H A N D I F J
		X P T T Y O X G G O R O D H X M S V U C E
		P R K T T D U O O O R T J A O O X D E E Z

THE WORDS HIDDEN IN THIS GRID MAY RUN:

HORIZONTALLY FROM LEFT TO RIGHT AND VERTICALLY FROM TOP TO BOTTOM

HORIZONTALLY FROM RIGHT TO LEFT AND VERTICALLY FROM BOTTOM TO TOP

DIAGONALLY IN ALL DIRECTIONS.

dB or not dB?—The antenna question.

*By Dale Hunt WB3TCU*

No antenna topic gets more distortion of the truth, intentional and otherwise, than gain.

Advertisers and popular writers mislead many an unwary ham despite the best efforts of W7WL, "Kurt N Sturba" and others.

How can you know the truth? Start by accepting that until the laws of physics are repealed, they will dictate the maximum gain of any particular size or configuration of antenna.

Unfortunately, more than a few manufacturers base their claims instead on the Barnum and Bailey law of human nature. "There's a sucker born every minute."

Consider vertically polarized antennas for two meters that are omnidirectional in the horizontal plane. Let's say you have a vertical dipole high and in the clear. What is its gain?

First, gain is relative. In antennas, it is a measure of how much stronger (or weaker) the signal from one antenna is relative to another antenna, when you drive both with the same power. So before a gain figure means anything, you must know what "reference" antenna was used. A common reference antenna is the "ideal" dipole—one with no losses.

So what is the gain of your real dipole? If your dipole's losses are negligible, its gain is ZERO decibels over an ideal reference dipole, or 0 dBd.

But a 0 dB gain figure might not sell antennas. So some call it "unity gain." Others inflate the figure. But actually, 0 dB gain isn't bad; it sure beats some antennas—a rubber duck, for instance.

If we want more gain, we must add elements. But to maintain horizontal omnidirectionality, we must "stack" the elements vertically, along a single axis—an arrangement called "colinear." On two meters, a dipole is about three feet long. A second half-wave dipole stacked end-on makes a six-foot antenna, and increases gain to about

2 dBd (2dB better than a single dipole).

We can increase the gain to about 3 dBd by separating the elements by two feet, making the antenna eight feet long. That 3dB increase has the same effect at a remote receiver as increasing transmitter power by a factor of two. To add another 3 dB to the gain requires again doubling the number of elements, to four, extending overall antenna length to 18 feet.

How about adding elements off to the side, as in a Yagi? You can, but doing so produces a nonuniform horizontal pattern; the antenna is no longer omnidirectional. Arrangements that use the mast as a reflector are of this type. They can increase gain in a favored direction, but at the cost of weaker performance in other direction. There's no free lunch.

You can easily estimate the gain of an omnidirectional two-meter antenna; you only need to know its length. Then, when you see a ten-foot antenna that claims 6dB gain over a dipole, or a three-foot antenna with a 3.75dB claim, you can say, "fertilizer"—or words to that effect.

### REAL ANTENNAS

Here are some approximate real gain categories, and popular antennas that fall into them:

- 3dB Groundplane Vertical
- 0dBd: dipole, J-pole, AEA Hotrod, AR-2
- 3 dBd: Isopole, Ringo Ranger ARX-2B, Diamond X200, Hustler G6-114BA.

Note that some antennas in the 3-dBd group have parts that don't radiate—decoupling stubs, radials, the J-pole's matching stub, for instance. To estimate gain correctly, you must exclude these from the length.

And remember that all such figures are the maximum possible gain. Losses in the antenna or feedline, or radiation from the feedline, can further reduce actual gain.

*Reprinted from the Amateur Radio News Service, December 1992, p. 5  
from the December 92 Santa Barbara ARC "Key-Kill" Low Durrhammer, N6ZKJ, Editor (technical corrections and editing by AF65)*

### Code a go-go

*By Judy Roush, AA7TC*

It was frustrating. I knew that to pass code tests I had to eat, drink, and sleep—code, but I couldn't take "Morse tutor" with me everywhere. Now you can. Meet the Pocket Morse Trainer from Computer Aided Technology. The company offers several variations ranging in price from 29 to 99 dollars.

I recently had an opportunity to "play with" the deluxe model, whose internal program supports six modes.

MODE 1 plays continuous random code speeds from 3 to 29 WPM.

MODE 2 provides a random code test that you can check against an answer sheet.

MODE 3. Provides QSO's similar to actual code tests—from 3 to 31 WPM.

MODE 4. Allows you to test your accuracy by providing a QSO you can check against an answer key.

MODE 5 is interactive. You tell it what to play the next character or to repeat the last one.

MODE 6 plays continuous random word groups.

What makes the trainer great is that it fits in your shirt pocket. Using the earphones, you can review your code while doing chores, driving, workout at the gym, or just about anything else.

Drawbacks are that the continuous QSO mode becomes predictable as your proficiency advances, and the random word groups stop after a few minutes. (Most modes play continuously, without limit.)

The 1 x 2-1/4 x 3-3/4 unit weighs 2 ounces (not including the 9-volt battery that runs it for 70 hours).

Whether you are a Morse beginner or you just want to polish your code, this device is ideal. You can order Pocket Morse Trainer from Computer Aided Technology, 101 Monroe Drive, Dallas, TX 75229.

*Reprinted from Amateur Radio News Service, December 1992, p. 11, from the Sep/Oct '93 Kachina ARC (John Love, a "Kachina QSO" AA7TC editor.*

And...

Lloyd Hansen AASPW moved. His new address and phone are, 151 Franklin SE, GR MI 49506. 776-1281.

# MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO ALLIANCE

Membership Roster as of December 15, 1995

CALL	NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE
KBSMNI	HAROLD ALLEN	56 Washington Street Sparta MI. 49345	887-8131
KBSMZK	LARRY AMBRUZ	2288 Olde Farm Dr Jenison MI.49428	669-9211
N8YZM	DOUG APPLGATE	4792 Hunsberger NE Grand Rapids MI 49505	361-9856
N8XHH	JIM BENTZ	641 Cott St NE Grand Rapids MI. 49503	380-8969
K5MRO	BERT BOUMA	1610 Stilesgate SE Grand Rapids MI.49508	245-8511
WC80	LEE BURGESS	46 Indiana SW Grand Rapids MI. 49504	458-9297
N8KVX	STEVE BURNS	1485 A3 Preston Ridge Grand Rapids MI.49506	791 2294
WD8KWT	ROBERT DANIELS	3924 Flamingo Wyoming MI. 49509	532-8392
KG8PI	BILL DELLS	3531 Briggs Bly NE Grand Rapids MI. 49505	361-2498
K88WJW	SUE DELLS	3531 Briggs Bly NE Grand Rapids MI.49505	361-2498
K88VOZ	WAYNE DOWLING	2442 West Collier Ave Kentwood MI.49546-6115	957-4641
K800K	MIKE EILERS	3565 4 Mile RD NE Grand Rapids MI.49505-9714	
WB8ZNO	TERRY FRANCIS	9731 Stanton Zeeland MI.49464	895-7075
WSKQM	GLENN GIBBONS	1035 Kentwood DR NE Grand Rapids MI. 49505	363 9515
N8NEK	LEN GONGALSKI	214 Richards NW Grand Rapids MI.49504	235-9735
KB8EHM	LYLE GRIFFIN	3846 Hazelwood SW Wyoming MI.49509	538-1171
W7PG	ANDY GUSACK	1852 Ranch DR NW Grand Rapids MI.49504	791-0451
N8XIA	BOB HAMMOND	0-461 Port Shelton Grandville.MI.49418	457-3554
AA8PW	LLOYD HANSEN	P O Box 678 Nashville MI.49073-0678	
N8DGD	TOM HANSEN	1302 Walker NW Grand Rapids MI.49504	454-0630
K88UKD	SKIP KONDRAAKI	3321 West River DR NW Grand Rapids MI.49504	
N8LDY	CHUCK LEMARBRE	17295 Algoma Road Cedar Springs MI.49319	696-4399
N8NFZ	SERGE LISK	307 Auror SE Grand Rapids MI.49507	241-2488
W8NZW	EDMUND LOMASIEWICZ	271 Lenora NW Grand Rapids MI.49504	453-0451
N8NIJ	DAN MARKOWSKI	343 Brandywyne NW Comstock Park MI.49321	784-5973
KG8BK	BUD OWEN	7685 Chickadee SW Jenison MI.49428	
K88QAT	TOM PIKAART	2187 Lee SW Wyoming MI.49509	
N8OAT	DENNY PURTEE	362 Gardener Sparta MI.49345	
WB8HJX	RICHARD RANTA	812 Graceland NE Grand Rapids MI.49505-4363	361-3975
WD8JMF	SCOTT ROWE	2206 Horton SE Grand Rapids MI.49507	
W8SPX	LEONARD SCHAAFSMA	2243 Lake MI DR NW Grand Rapids MI.49504	791-9190
K88AN	COLUMBUS STEWART	P O Box 88273 Kentwood MI.49518	
KG8QQ	MIKE TIMMERMAN	334 Holister SE APT #1 Grand Rapids MI.49506	
K88ZAZ	PETER VANDUIVENDYK	2840 Knapp NE Grand Rapids MI.49505	361 0853
N88P	JOHN VISSER	4897 Gretchen NW Comstock Park MI.49321	785-0523
N8ZVB	LOUIE WHITE	1713 Vincroft NW Grand Rapids MI.49504	785-1189
N8JXB	BOB WILD	1354 Eastern Pl. NE Grand Rapids MI.49505	363-9631
N8OAR	BILL WISNESKI	1845 Herrick Ave NE Grand Rapids MI.49505-4866	361-6349
N8VWI	BILL ZAIDEL	1660 Elizabeth NW Grand Rapids MI.49504-2002	363-5536
N8WKQ	CONNIE ZAIDEL	1660 Elizabeth NW Grand Rapids MI.49504-2002	
N8LUF	PERRY ZIMONICK	823 Veto NW Grand Rapids MI.49504	456-8660

*Season Greetings from the Open Feed Line*

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