

# The Open Feed Line

Volume 6 Issue 1

March 1997

## THE MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO ALLIANCE

Post office box 670 Comstock Park MICHIGAN 49321-0670

### ARRL Proposes New Ham Classes

By *Richie Ranta K8JX*

**O**N January 31,1997, W1AW sent a bulletin that will be the hot topic of conversation for the rest of the year. The ARRL is proposing eliminating the Novice class, creating a new class of license and dropping the 13 word per minute code speed to 10 WPM. The Details of their proposal are in the March 1997 issue of QST and I have included the text from that bulletin in this issue. "Don't all put your boxing gloves on yet!" This is simply a proposal, and we all have the responsibility of not only talking about this, but actually writing the ARRL and express to them whether your for or against it. Now is not the time to lose one's head. Take your time, read over the bulletin and then decide.

*(Continued on Page 4)*

### Scouting.A Father and Son's effort

By *Mark Scholten KC8CUU*

As some of you may know, I have wanted to start some activities in this area to help introduce Amateur radio to the young people. I am now working with the Boy and Girl Scouts to organize a station for the Boy Scout National convention starting on July 28,1997 through August 8<sup>th</sup>. I have talked to Ray Moyers at Fort A.P.Hill in Virginia about both the convention and Jamboree on the air. He has been very helpful to me as this is the first time for me being involved with this project. We are going to set up a radio station at the Boy/Girl Scout headquarters on Walker Avenue, just north of I-96. Following is the list of frequencies set aside for this event.

80M CW 3590MHz  
PH 3940MHz

40M CW 7030MHz  
PH 7290MHz

20M CW 14070MHz  
PH 14290MHz

17M CW 18080MHz  
PH 18140MHz

15M CW 21140MHz  
PH 21360MHz

12M CW 24910MHz  
PH 24960MHz

10M CW 28190MHz  
PH 28350MHz

I hope everyone keeps this list for the week of the convention so contacts can be made if all else fails. The same frequencies will be used for the Jamboree on the Air (JOTA). JOTA is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of October and a station will be set up then also. Let's get the youth movement on the move and get these kids interested at an early age. Any volunteers? Please give me a call on the W8USA machine or on the packet system. Radio equipment and antennas are needed, but nothing sophisticated, just wires.

*(Mark KC8CUU has finally achieved his goal of starting something for the youth in the West Mi.area. read about his son's involvement-Page3))*

# Listen UP

By Wayne Dowling  
KB8VOZ

It has been somewhat of a rocky start to the beginning of the New Year with the meeting's being canceled, so I have been working behind the scene to keep everything on schedule. Asked Chuck N8LDY at the first of the year if he might come up with some new awards for the club and bingo, he was Johnny on the spot. MARA now has 5 awards!!!! Thanks Chuck.

Scott WD8JMF, Laurie & Mark KC8CUU are working on starting a youth group and have heard from both the boy and girl scouts. Fantastic!!!!

Connie N8WKQ is organizing a women's group.....Way to go Connie!!!!

Bill N8VWI has sent our application in for our coffee stops... thanks Bill.

Bill N8OAR is getting the permit for Field-Day....thanks Bill!!!!

I have asked Richie K8JX to act as historian for the club....thanks Richie!!!!

Lee W8MLB is looking into holding our own swap...go for it Lee!!!!

A local bicycle club has asked me if we could help them with communications for a race they have in July.

At Ease!!!!  
73 Wayne

# Brians Plan

By Brian Scholten KC8DOC

On May 1, 1997, I will have had my license for one year, and in this short time, I have been trying to accomplish some goals. First, I have wanted to upgrade, but I haven't studied CW since this summer. Second, I have been trying to find more young hams to start a youth club. There are not too many youths that I know about, and the few that I do know, I haven't talked to in quite awhile. Third, and final, for now, is that I will be involved in the Jamboree on the Air for the Boy and Girl Scouts, so I will be able to work with them.

So until next month, 73 and I'll be talking with you on the radio.

*(Brian is doing what a lot of us only dream about. Lets help make this a reality, for all of us)*

# From our shack to yours

By Bill Zaidel N8VWI & Connie Zaidel N8WKQ

Connie N8WKQ has been asked by Wayne KB8VOZ, our club president, to start a ladies only net. With her core group, Mary Nester

KC8EGF, Lori Rowe KC8EKG and Sarah KB8UNO, they decided to have it on Tuesdays at 8PM for the start. Then Connie got a cold and sore throat, which took most of her voice. So when she gets her voice back, they will be getting started. She wants all YL's and XYL's to please join them. You don't have to be a member of MARA to join in.

I have been working on finding a campground for our MARA club campout. I have found a place that sounds good. River Pines Campground looks like it might be a good place to have it. They have a fishpond, flat sites, and hopefully they will have a boat basin, for our boating members. They have some sort of pavilion for our use. Also if we have enough members coming, there shouldn't be a charge for the rest of the club members to come out for a day of fun. They do charge non-campers for use of the pool. There will be no problems with us having several stations setup. Both of River Pines managers have told me, they are very interested in working with groups, and looking forward to having our club enjoy their facility. If anyone has any idea when this campout should happen, please let me know. We will have to make advance reservations and the site fee will have to be sent in at the time the reservations are made.

73  
Bill N8VWI & Connie N8WKQ

*(ARRL Proposes New license structures; continued from page 1)*

From ARRL Headquarters

Newington CT January 31, 1997

To all radio amateurs

## **SB QST ARL ARLB005**

### ***ARLB005 ARRL members asked to comment***

ARRL members are being invited to add their ideas, comments and recommendations to those of the ARRL WRC-99 Planning Committee, which has suggested sweeping—and potentially controversial—changes to the Amateur Radio licensing structure in the US. On the table for open discussion and debate are proposals that include:

- Elimination of the Novice license
- Creation of a new Intermediate license to replace the Technician Plus
- Greater H.F. privileges for intermediate licensees than for the
- Existing technician plus, including phone on 160, 75 and 15 meters
- A 10-wpm General CW test (with more stringent testing standards for
- All CW exams)
- Expanded phone privileges for General-class and higher licensees

Details of the plan, discussed during the recent ARRL Board of Directors meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico, will appear in March QST. The Board says it seeks comments from members to ensure that before any plan goes forward, it enjoys broad support from the amateur community. The Board will not act on the issue at least until its July meeting.

After its research revealed that as many as three Novices in four are inactive, the committee concluded that the Novice license is no longer useful. Although the committee would end the Novice license, its plan provides current Novices with an easy means to upgrade (via an open-book test) to the new Intermediate class license, which would replace the current Technician Plus. All present Tech Plus licensees would become Intermediate licensees. The Basic license would supplant the Technician license—now the hobby's most-popular entry-level ticket—with no changes in privileges. In addition, the committee's plan would phase out the current Novice and Tech Plus bands on 80, 40 and 15 meters, and replace them with new Intermediate-class allocations. The committee's consensus plan for Intermediate-class licensees calls for new CW bands on 80, 40 and 15 meters starting 25 kHz up from the lower band edge, digital and phone-band privileges on 75 and 15 meters and a 50-kHz phone or CW segment at the top end of 160 meters, plus expanded Novice and Tech Plus CW and phone allocations on 10 meters.

According to the proposal, Intermediate CW bands would be 3525 to 3700 kHz, 7025 to 7050 kHz, 21025 to 21150 kHz and 28050 to 28300 kHz. Digital operation was suggested for 3600 to 3625, 21100 to 21125 and 28100 to 28189 kHz. Phone privileges would include 1950 to 2000, 3900 to 4000, 21350 to 21450, SSB from 28300 to 28500 and FM from 29500 to 29700 kHz. Transmitter power for Intermediate-class licensees would be limited to 200 W PEP output (other licensees using these bands would not be limited to 200 W, however).

General-class and higher amateurs also would benefit from the plan, if it's adopted according to the committee's outlines. General-class hams would get additional phone privileges 3800 to 3850, 7200 to 7225, and 21250 to 21300

Exams for all classes would include a return to a sending test and the requirement for one minute of solid copy during a five-minute test—instead of the current method that tests on the content of the CW text.

Right now, these major changes are only in the talking stage. “Let us be very clear about this,” said ARRL Executive Vice President David Sumner, K1ZZ, who characterized the committee’s proposals as a starting point for discussion, not a done deal. “The changes are not ARRL policy; nothing has been proposed to, or by, the FCC, and the ARRL Board is committed to making no decision before its July 1997 meeting.” Sumner said there is no timetable to complete the process. Only after there is an opportunity for in-depth consideration and discussion by the membership will the ARRL Board consider taking the next step—to approach the FCC with a rulemaking proposal—a process that automatically invites additional comments and suggestions.

Between the time they receive March QST and the end of May, members are asked to voice their opinions on the committee’s suggestions to their directors, whose postal and e-mail addresses are listed on page 10 of QST. All suggestions and comments—positive and negative—are welcome.

The preceding was reprinted from The ARRL Letter, Volume 16, Number 5 (January 31,1997), printed with permission of the American Radio Relay League.

## On the Net

By Bob Wild N8JXB

Following, is the NET schedule for the next 3 months. Note my new phone number is 451-4380. Many thanks to those who have served as my Net Control over the past months. Your cooperation has made my job as Net Director a lot easier.

March 13	Meeting
March 20	Louie N8ZVB
March 27	Andy N8HUB
April 3	Richie K8JX
April 10	Meeting
April 17	Wayne KB8VOZ
April 24	Louie N8ZVB
May 1	Andy N8HUB
May 8	Meeting
May 15	Richie K8JX

73 Bob N8JB

## Think Safety!

## MARA Awards Program

By Chuck Lemarbre N8LDY

We now have 2 new awards to offer! The Friendship Award is issued to new and old members who represent the true “spirit of Amateur Radio”, they are friendly-Helpful and they are Active in the hobby. We also have the New Field Day “Top Operator Award”. This award is earned by making the most CW and/or Phone contacts during Field Day. Only 2 of our members will achieve this award per year and it will be a framed award and issued in person at one of our meetings. It is our hope that the above award will encourage more activity on Field Day and help to promote the event within our membership. The Great Lakes Award remains popular around the world! This week alone, we have issued it to Japan, Germany and an

Argentine station. There is a little more work for this award but it has been earned in less than 24 hours by one station and another station has earned it on all ham bands! What is the point of all this award stuff? One reason is that it promotes activity on the bands. There are many services that are eyeballing our ham bands and they claim we do not use them enough to warrant so much spectrum—even 2 meters is not used that much in this area, repeaters are where the action is and simplex is hardly ever used. It is possible we may loose a portion of the 2-meter band just because we don’t use it. Another reason for award chasing is that it is just plain fun. And for most, it is a good way to sharpen one’s operating skills. We also make a nice piece of change from the GLA: our club has earned hundreds of dollars from this award and it has given us worldwide recognition. Join us on the air and protect our frequencies for now and the future.

73 Chuck N8LDY

# Club news

The 1997 club year got off to a rocky start: the first club business meeting was cancelled due to a snowstorm. Finally, in February, the weather and 11 members cooperated, and we started rolling along. As you have read in Wayne's opening letter, all that needs to be done to keep us on track has been done. We've started everything in order to keep Field Day 97 and the coffee stops going. In fact, in no other time in this club's history, has so much been started as this year. A lady's Net, involvement with the youth in Western Michigan area, a club campout, the MARA Breakfast Club, (the folks are trying to hold it every Saturday now: 10:30AM at the Country buffet), personalized coffee mugs, tee-shirts for either the Field Day event, or just with the club's logo and callsign. The jacket orders haven't been coming in. If you'd like to order one, call Bud Owen KG8BK for the old style jacket or Lee Burgess W8MLB for the newer jacket that features the club's callsign. Richie K8JX is handling the orders for the coffee mugs and is almost ready to place another order. Give him a call today! We also have some surprises for you members in the coming months. Stay tuned.

## Dues

(Didn't you just know I'd bring this up!)  
Yes, it's that time of year once again, when our club dues are due. For 4 years, this club got along on the lowest dues in Western Michigan. But with insurance for our public events, utility bills, the assorted costs in putting out this newsletter, the dues were raised back in October 1995 to the present level of \$20.00. But that amount only covers the every month expenses. Any

improvements we need to make must come from the other club raising function, the coffee stops. That's why you paying your dues are so important. This issue of the newsletter couldn't be printed with the dues expiration date. The hardware was willing, but the software wasn't. So please take this moment to check to see if you have paid your dues for 1997.

Remember that this is your club. It can only follow your lead.

## Terrible Terry's Corner Or Northern over Exposure

By Terry Francis  
WB8ZNO

I'm sorry to say I have to use the 147.160 machine, not that it is bad, but I miss talking to the old group. I'm not too sure they miss me, but that's my goal in life. Hi.

I'm sure I am going to have new antenna projects coming up this summer. The 5-element beam I made is really doing me a good job, but now I think I would like to have one that would reach down there so I could get to our club's repeater. That just might be impossible but I will have to try anyway. Mark, KC8CUU can make it up here to the Farwell repeater with no problem, so there just might be hope for me. I have been too busy to check into the local club. So one of these days I will have to try and meet the local group. So far all I have talked to have been a nice bunch of people. I can hit Big Rapids, Cadillac and Houghton Lake, so my antenna seems to be doing the job.

We are going to be a little bare out back of our place. I could not turn down the money that they offered me for the Aspen I have on our land. I checked out back today and they have cut most of it down. From what I have heard, it will not hurt the deer thing. In fact it should bring in more because they have more browse. So maybe I can one next year. After all my bragging about seeing so many deer on our road, they all seemed to go into hiding after the first shot went off. I have seen 3 deer since then and one of them was after dark. Poor Richie seems like every time I talk to him he has his computer in pieces all over his work table. I think with all his knowledge with taking them apart he should know all about them. But I think it would be smarter if a club project would be to collect enough money to buy him something decent for all the work he does for the club on a computer. Now that is a thought that I said in kidding, but now think it would really be a good idea. Later-I have been informed that some of the club members did help him out. I think that was very special. Good going people. Wayne let me know that he missed my articles, but I was under the understanding that until Richie got his computer going, I would have plenty of time. Well, I did have an article done so here I go just adding to it. Sorry folks. Suffer. Hi. I would like to see more people come up with some weird style antennas and pass them on to everyone. I saw one that used parts off an old TV antenna and that is recycling to the most. Also, to write some interesting articles on anything, such as vacations, home projects, ect. I still get the newsletter up north here and I just like to know what is going on.

*(Continued on page 7)*

*(Terrible Terry, continued from page 6)*

After reading the last newsletter, I see that Richie asked the club members to do exactly the same. So there you go. Two of us are nagging you. Just think, if I can get my stuff printed, you sure ought to.

All you X-11 meter people will be glad to hear this. This area is 11-meter country and I listen to them gripe about the same things I used to hear a few years ago. Lots of radio fighting and talk of pining coax. Lots of kickers being used and interfering with neighbors TV and bleed over on other people's radios. Ha. Remind you of old times? Nice being away from that stuff. They want me to join them, but so far I can't get too excited about it all. I wonder why?

Coyotes across the road last night. Really upsets my dogs to say the least. We just might have to see if we could scare them away from this area. I don't think they are in much danger of me hitting them with gunfire. Hi. We hear them just about every night. What an eerie sound they make. Makes you think that some dog is in trouble. Hi. We ran across a trapper that traps them along with other animals and he told us that there are Bobcats around here. He has caught a couple or so in his coyote traps. He wanted to warn us because we travel the area with our dogs in tow and did not want them to get into his traps by accident. Whole different way of living up here.

I think I told you about the bear dung that the dogs found out in back of my barn in the woods. The dogs thought they had gone to heaven as they rolled in it. But they were a little upset with me giving them baths. They could not understand me ruining a good thing, so they thought.

I think I am the trouble that caused this weather. I think it stems from the holes I shot in the sky when trying to hit some bats. Wow, they sure are fast and it seems like this old man has slowed down somewhat.

Wayne, I think you will make a great prez. I hope you did not take the job with the thought of all the things that you can change. My nephew down in Louisville, Kentucky ran for city council with that thought and found out that politics was a thing that he was over his head in. Since then he does not complain about them as much. Hi. In fact he did not run at the next session. Hope you know I am just having fun with you?

I have finally gotten into e-mail. I still don't understand it all but have received a couple messages, from friends down in the Flatland. Anybody that lives south of this area is called Flatlanders. Oh yes, if you would like to write and complain about my writings, you can contact me by writing TFRANCIS. That should get to me. Please no swearing. Well I guess I might as well do it for you. I have since gotten a note to say the 800 number is being turned off. The cost was a little deep for them. Well the only one I can connect into cost around \$89.00 to set up and \$20.00 per month from there on. That is a little steep for this retired old man. So just a quick as I was on e-mail I am now off. I still have my fax, but unless we can get my phone bill down with a decent fax switch, so we can use just one line that also will go by the way side. Oh the trouble of living in the North Country.

Even though we have not had the snow we did down near the lake, we have still had enough to make the spring weather seem far away. I have lots of plans for the warmer weather. I wonder if I will be able to get any time for the work part?

We have the deer come right out side our kitchen window. We were going through a lot of bird feed and found the deer were cleaning it up every night so now we add corn and throw out some hay with it. So far we have a doe and her two fawns coming every night but this morning we saw 4 out there so the word must be out that you can free load at the Francis's place. Ha.

Last night there was just one there so they must come at different times during the night. I would like to put one of those large round bales of hay out there, but with the cost of hay this year; it was a little too much for us to do. Maybe we will have a good hay year coming up so that we can do it for them. It is good for them, but I think it is very good for us. We really enjoy the wild life and there seems to be plenty of that around here. That is except for deer season. We have venison but for the goodness of a new friend up here that would not be otherwise. Hi.

Well, I have been long winded this time, and maybe a little boring, so to offset my notes, please send in yours rather enjoy this but I know there are many of you out there that can really write interesting articles. Richie said that if he could get others to write, he could discard mine and put in some really interesting articles. Hi. So get off your duffs and make a report.

*73 Terry Francis & Bambi*

(Terry may not have an e-mail working, but he has informed me he bought a new fax machine. To use it, have it dial his listed number. He will fax you back with the facts. ED)

# Coax Tuning

*By Victor Miske Jr. KC8CKZ*

Spring is near! Your going to get out and clean up that antenna, check all your connections for them green monsters that eat up your signal and retune your antenna. But how about tuning that coax? Tune that coax you say? Well, I said the same. I thought that long black snake was just that. You feed one end to the radio and the other to the antenna. But after a bit of research, I found that for best performance, the length should be cut in exact multiples of one half of the electrical wavelength at the operating frequency. Now to figure out this formula, we'll need to know a few things. Obviously, we'll need to know the operating frequency; I'll use 145.070 MHz. Also, we need to know what type of coax we have to find the velocity factor of that coax. The velocity factor can be found in most distributor and manufactures catalogs. In our case, we'll use the popular Belden 9913 coax. The 9913 has a velocity factor of 84%. So here is the formula we'll use, with F=frequency, in megahertz. L= length in feet and V= the velocity factor.

$$L \text{ (ft)} = \frac{492 \text{ V}}{F \text{ (MHz)}}$$

$$L \text{ (ft)} = \frac{492 \times .84}{145.07 \text{ MHz}}$$

$$= 2.85 \text{ ft.}$$

Now that we know that 2.85 feet is one half of the electrical wavelength, we can calculate the proper length for our installation. Let's say we need about 40 feet to reach our antenna. We would then use the above to figure to come close to that, which would give us either 39.9 feet or 42.75 feet (2.85 multiplied 14 and 15 times to come up with those resonate lengths).

Well, good luck there, and remember this goes for both the car and home.

73 Vic KC8CKZ

## WEB PAGE

[WWW.geocities.com/capecanaveral/3176](http://WWW.geocities.com/capecanaveral/3176)

No, that is not the club's social security number. That's the new WEB PAGE, that our very own WEB MASTER, Chuck N8LDY has created for the club. On it, you will find current information on happenings in the club, links to callbook servers, information on the Great Lakes Award program and other links to other ham related areas. The last time I dropped by, over 1000 connects had been made! Not bad for a web page that has only been up for about 3 months!

Chuck has talked about putting a short form of our club's newsletter on it, perhaps a graphical display of frequencies allocations us hams can use, or maybe something to grab the attention of passerby's. However it develops, visit the site and drop Chuck N8LDY a note and tell him what you think about it. He has put in many, many hours creating this site, and it is truly a club asset.

We all thank you Chuck for your untiring efforts and creativity in bringing this idea to reality.

Thank you Chuck!

# Lastly...

This issue of the Open Feed Line is special. The articles that appear in this issue traveled via packet radio, both phone and VHF, the US Mail, e-mail and Fax. The only two modes not here are CW and Phone. Is this a hint at what we can expect in the future?

As you surely noticed, the Open Feed Line has changed. After 3 years of "trying out" Microsoft's Word, I finally bought the latest version. This means, fewer errors with spelling, better grammar and perhaps even a difference in type. The next issue will be different, so get out your pencils and get ready to let me know how to improve this rag. We just got back our results from the Newsletter contest: we placed higher than at any other time. This year, by golly, we're going to place within the top ten, or I'll move in with Terrible Terry. As editor of this rag, I need your help. I would like to include a cartoon character in each issue. "Any ideas?" I need to know what you would like. "What kind of character will it be?" Give me the suggestions, and I'll try to bring it to life within these pages.

The next issue will also include the first installment on understanding basic radio. You asked for it, you got it. We're also going to get a glimpse of ham radio history with Carl Thompson's first article on the Civil Air Patrol. You won't believe what these dedicated individuals accomplished.

1997 is looking to be a great year for our members. Lets share our ideas: write an article.  
73 Richie K8JX editor

kHz; Advanced-class hams would add 3725 to 3775, 7125 to 7150 and 21175 to 21225 kHz; Extra-class hams would also have 3700 to 3750, 7125 to 7150 and 21150 to 21200 kHz.

With the exception of 40 meters, where Novice and Tech Plus licensees already have privileges, the committee suggested no changes on the hobby's narrowest and most crowded bands—including 20 meters and the narrow WARC bands at 30, 17 and 12 meters.

The Intermediate CW test would be 5 words per minute (the same as the current Tech Plus requirement), but the committee proposed that the General class CW requirement be set at 10 wpm. There still would be no additional CW exam for the Advanced ticket, nor would there be any change in the 20-wpm requirement for the Extra.