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# The Open Feed Line

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Volume 6 Issue 3

September 1997

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## THE MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO ALLIANCE

Post office box 670 Comstock Park MICHIGAN 49321-0670

### The Coffee Stops

By Bill N8VWI & Connie N8WKQ

the summer is unofficially over even if it wasn't much of a normal summer. But, we had three wonderful coffee stops to make up for it. Connie and I would like to thank everyone who worked to make them a success. Whether you worked a shift or any of the other things that had to be done to make this happen, we really appreciate your participation. That is what makes our club great.

Our goal for the coffee stops was to upgrade and improve our repeater. During the first week of September, Bill N8OAR installed the new controller. So we accomplished our goal, and as a bonus, the club now owns a share of the repeater. WE DID IT! These coffee stops are our major fundraiser for the club. Several people were a little disappointed with the amounts we brought in. But we all must not lose sight of the real reason we do the coffee stops.

*(Continued on page 3)*

### A HAM'S Season

By Richie K8JX

It's the middle of September, and fall has ushered in the first taste of what's coming this winter: nasty snow and cold temperatures.

But we're Ham's, and fall has always brought with it, another, special season.

A season that is full of static noises, then head phones, the sound of an antenna rotor turning against a November gale, a faint voice among a roomful of hissing, and finally, if we've done everything right, the sound of a QSL card being dropped into our mail box.

But fall also has another special season attached to it: Studying to upgrade. When you hear two or more ham's talking away on 2 meters, the conversation will eventually turn to "I'm going to study for my General class". Perhaps this is why ham clubs usually see their biggest turn out of the whole year in the fall. The member's are keenly interested in finding out what their club

has to offer them in helping them study for their goal. That brings us to this fall. MARA used to hold theory classes, but every one of the members at that time, upgraded. Then the focus changed to studying for the Code. Since we've got the new controller, new Code software, once again, MARA will be airing Morse code practice. It will be starting this month. So listen to the W8USA repeaters messages for the exact date. Is that hissing I hear?

### FCC: VANITY GATE 3 OPENS-FEE INCREASE

The ARRL has learned that when the vanity application fee jumps to \$50 on Monday, September 15, the FCC also will start requiring everyone filing a paper Form 610V Amateur Station Vanity Call Sign Request to include FCC Form 159, FCC Remittance Advice,

*(Continued on page 3)*

*(The Coffee Stops continued  
from page 1)*

To Save Lives!! This is a public service project that lets the general public see what amateur radio is really about. And many people told us how much they appreciated us being there. Now all that is left is to store the equipment and send out the thank you letters, or to have some plaques made for the businesses that have supported us so well. To let them know how much we appreciate their contribution to our coffee stops.

Next year, yes we are talking about doing all three next year, so we will have to decide on our next goal, possibly lowering the dues, adding another band to the repeater or something else. But the fact is, if we decide to keep doing them, we will have to do all three. Or we might lose what we have. Now for some gossip, and this is just rumors. The first one, is that the rest area that LARC uses, will be rebuilt in the median, so they will have access to both directions. This would be great for them. The other rumor we heard was that their rest area would be eliminated due to the new south beltline. We hope this does not happen. But it gives us all something to think about. Thank you all!

73

*Bill N8VWI & Connie  
N8WKQ*

*(FCC Opens gate 3 continued  
from page 1)*

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payment. Applications received on or after September 15 and lacking a Form 159 will not be processed and will be returned to the applicant. Previously, the FCC only required an Form 159 with a hard-copy Form 610V if the applicant was paying with a credit card or money order--or for a single remittance to cover multiple applications. The change came on very short notice, and the FCC has yet to issue a formal public notice to address it. But the FCC appears ready to stand firm on the requirement starting September 15. A spokesperson at the FCC in Gettysburg said that on or after September 15, Mellon Bank--the FCC's fiscal agent--will not cash or deposit any fees which are not accompanied by a Form 159. Applications received at Mellon Bank that lack a Form 159 will be forwarded to Gettysburg for handling (the fee will not be deposited), and Gettysburg will return the entire application and the fee to the applicant with a blank Form 159 and instructions to refile. When completing Form 159, all applicants must include a taxpayer ID number (your Social Security number) in Item 1 (FCC Account Number). In Items 14A and 14 B, Payment Type Code, applicants should write "WAVR." FCC Form 159 can be obtained by writing ARRL/VEC, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111.

An SASE is appreciated. The FCC still has given no indication of when it will begin processing Gate 3 vanity call sign applications. It's estimated that more than 1000 applicants filed on the opening day, August 6.

*( Taken from the ARRL  
Bulletin53 ARLB053-9-11-97.  
Reprinted with permission)*

## **Denny's Dungeon**

*by Denny Purtee N8OAT*

Well it's been a long summer for me and with the temperature dropping day by day, I'll be in my prime in a few weeks. Down in the dungeon, I have been going over a SB 101 rig. There is a lot of life left in the old friend and I am going to get all I can form it. Speaking of old friends, we should all keep Lee W8MLB in our prayers and hope he gets better soon. (he could not make the last MARA meeting because of his poor health). Lee has done a lot of good and helped a lot of people in the clubs he has been a member of. I rank him right up there with Mother Teresa. Good luck Lee.

Check out the new web page for MARA .The address should be in this newsletter, if not give old Richard Ranta K8JX a call .He will fill you in on the latest. Also give Bill N8OAR a call telling him about how well the new controller is working on the W8USA repeater. That's all for this time,so form down in the dungeon,  
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## V.P. Speaks

By *Connie Zaidel*  
N8WKQ

I would like to thank the club members for voting me in, as Vice President. It has been very interesting so far. I invited the original members who started MARA, that are no longer with the club, to visit our field day site to see what the club, they started, has become. A couple of them did come up for a visit, and I received calls from several others, that couldn't make it. I have been working on getting the membership cards out. If you haven't received yours, please let me know.

A while back, it was decided that the Vice President was to keep an inventory of all club property. The purpose of this, is so there is a list of all club owned property, and where it is located. That's much better than asking Rich if we have this or that, and where it's stored. So if everyone could PLEASE check around their shack for club property, then SEND me a list of everything you have belonging to the club. Just send the list, as we have enough trouble finding room for the coffee stop stuff. Our e-mail address is [bill1@cwnet.com](mailto:bill1@cwnet.com) or on the BBS, send it to SP n8wkq.

After the new controller has settled down, Lee W8MLB, our President and I will be working on a new membership kit. It will probably contain a welcome letter, a current member's list, a list of user

commands for the DVR and controller, an auto dial slot number and BBS commands. If anyone has any suggestions about this project, please let me know.

73

*Connie N8WKQ*

## Thank You

We want to give a special thanks to the following businesses that made it possible for us to have our Operation Care Coffee stops. Without their contributions, it wouldn't have happened.

- **Bill Knapp's Restaurants**
- **Greenridge Fruit**
- **McDonalds Restaurant Rockford**
- **McDonalds Restaurant Cegar Springs**
- **Pet Supplies Plus**

Please support these businesses, and when you do, tell them thank you.

## Ham Trivial

By *Mike Eiler K8OOK*

1. The highest QSO's per hour rate in a contest is 457. That is .6 QSO's per minute.
2. The highest sunspot count is 355 in December 1957.
3. One of the largest commercially built antennas has a 60-foot boom.
4. One of largest homemade antennas has a 70-foot boom.
5. There are over 75 hams that are at least 100 years old.

6. The most hams in one county is Los Angeles county California with 27 920 hams.
7. QRP miles per watt record is 218,333,333 miles.
8. The official record for the fastest CW is 75.2 wpm.

## Winterizing

By *Jim Cordes KC8FGQ*

I wanted to write something intellectual, but N8VWI inspired me to stick to a topic of which I have knowledge.

When we think of winterizing automobiles, antifreeze comes to mind. There are many different types of antifreeze on the market. If you have anything other than an antique, it will have aluminum parts, which need protection, so get antifreeze that advertises aluminum protection.

Undiluted antifreeze will freeze at about 9 degrees above zero F. A mixture of 50% antifreeze and 50% water (minus 34 degrees F.) is more than sufficient for Michigan use. Anything stronger needlessly taxes the water pump and belts, wastes antifreeze and gas, and does not transfer heat as well. Distilled water is fairly cheap, does not introduce any minerals to your cooling system, and is good for the battery also.

While you have that hood open, do not forget to look for signs of coolant leakage. Antifreeze will leak out of places that water will not.

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(Winterizing, continued from page 4)

It is also a good idea to check the condition of the hoses, belts, battery connections, etc. If that battery is getting on in years, it might be a good idea to drive on in to a battery shop and get it checked by an expert.

When were the oil and filter changed? It is a good idea to stay away from the heavier oils in winter. Lighter oil will help the car to start on those below zero mornings, and also will lubricate better on those cold starts. Besides, you can always change it again in the spring.

Good tires and brakes are important year around, but become even more critical on slippery roads.

Gas line antifreeze can be a real benefit, but you will never know for sure until you have to walk a few miles at zero degrees (I speak from experience). So now I do not take chances, I use the stuff.

Even brand new autos break down, so be sure to have warm boots along in case you have to walk. You have a radio and/or a cellular phone? How long will you have to wait for that ride? Maybe a nice warm blanket in the back seat could help replace the heater that is not working.

Hopefully we will all get through this winter without car troubles, but I doubt it. So please be prepared.

Thank-you and 73,  
KC8FGQ

## MARA NET

By Bob Wild N8JXB

It's fall once again, and with it, out comes our next schedule. To my Net Control people: A big thank you for your help and participation. Please note, the preamble and closer included here are only suggested. These are only guidelines and you may use other wording as long as it contains essentially the same content. Again, I really appreciate each one of you.

Bob wild N8JXB  
Net Director

### Net Schedule

**Sept 25: Brian KC8FUW**

**Oct 2: Wayne KB8VOZ**

**Oct 9: Club Meeting**

**Oct 16: Louie N8ZVB**

**Oct 23: Eric KC8CCA**

**Oct 30: Brian KC8FUW**

### MARA NET PREAMBLE

Good Evening. This is the Michigan Amateur Radio Alliance or MARA 2-meter net. This net meets each Thursday night on the W8USA repeater. MARA is an ARRL affiliated club and club meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at Saint Adelbert's Society Hall at the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and Davis NW. Meetings begin at 7 PM and all are welcome. You need not be a member of MARA to check-in to this net and we would appreciate announcements concerning MARA or any other local organization.

1. Is there any emergency or priority traffic?
2. Is there anyone from MARA wishing to make an announcement?
3. Are there any announcements from any of the local clubs?

My name is \_\_\_\_ and my call is \_\_\_\_

When checking into this net, please wait for me to acknowledge each check-in individually. Give your name and your call slowly. This net is now open to general check-ins.

### MARA NET CLOSER

On behalf of MARA, I would like to thank everyone: we really appreciated your participation in this net. Should you wish more information about MARA, please write: MARA P O BOX 670 Comstock Park MI 49321-0670. Please join us again next week on the W8USA repeater. I now return W8USA to regular use. 73.

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Once again, thanks to all of you who volunteer your time in making this net a reality. Should you have questions or difficulty in taking the net on a given night, please call me at: (616) 451-4380. If you have any suggestions on how to improve it, call me.

## Terrible Terry's Corner

*By Terry Francis WB8ZNO*

Much is happening in the northern woods and we only get to see a small part of it. What a joy it is to watch the rebirth of the wild animals. The fawns that romp around as if they don't have a care in the world. The squirrels that argue over everything. The turkeys and their flock of young ones and on and on. We have had a little trouble with bears this year. They had to chase one off the highway just west of town and of course that's big news up here and then they got pictures of a bear just a mile south of me that was raiding the bird feeders. They tried to tear down my friends squirrel feeder several times just down the road. They also have been on our place, but have not done any damage. We think it is because of our dogs that they stay away. It is so hard for some people to accept the fact that they come through their land, but as we tell everyone we live on their land, so we are the invaders, not them. I think that people think because they have no trespassing signs up, that the animals can read like us. Ha. Now I must admit something to the world, I have not been active in Ham radio since I have been up here. It is not as active as it is down in the "Flatlands", so I can't get too excited about it as I was before I moved up here. One of my 2-meter

radios is dead and the other one I have in the truck is hardly ever turned on. Just not the same caliber of people, I guess, so it has dropped to the wayside. Maybe when winter comes again, I will get back into it. "Time will tell".

We have another friend up here that is 1/2 Apache Indian, so have gone to a POW-Wow with them up in Sutton Bay. Had a great time and really enjoyed it all. I can now say I camped out and was surrounded by Indians and came away with my scalp. We are into Indian stuff, so I spent a little more than I should have. In fact I could have had my radio fixed for that amount of money. We plan on going to more POW-Wow's in the future. My friend is an artist and has a place back in the woods with out any electricity and so you can see he likes to live the old way.

As I told you before, I got ripped off up here of my tools; several hundred dollars worth and the insurance took care of most of it. Now they came in and removed all the gas out of the riding mower, the farm tractor and one of my trucks. I put the word out that I had a loaded gun in the house, and though I would never shoot anyone, that the next time somebody stole gas from me, that I was going to shoot the gas can and watch them burn. One young fellow I told that to, his eyes got bigger than saucers. I hope my threat got through to the ones that think I have money to

burn. Everybody I've talked to has had something stole from them. This area is very poor, and most are living on some kind of assistance. We now have locks on everything and put up some outside lights, with us being in an isolated area it does not help.

We built a swing arm roller chain hoist in my shop that will swing all the way into the shop and all the way outside to pick what ever with it. So far it has been used to work on mowers and even to work on one motorcycle. I got the parts from 3 different people. The only thing I purchased is the pipe that it is mounted on that swivels, and of course the paint. I even got a friend to help me build it. He has never welded before so it gave him a chance to learn a little about it.

The shop is really done except for a couple drawers that I still want to build and install, and it is insulated with 3 inch foam board. I've also installed a wall mounted propane heater. That means I can't sit on my duff this winter because of no heat in the shop like I did last winter. I still have not gotten rid of what I call TV weight. I think the sofa still has my body shape indented in it from last winter.

I was not planning on writing anything because I am not active in Ham radio, but Richie insisted that I write anyway. So if my articles bores you, blame him!

*(Continued on page 7)*

(Terrible. continued from page 6)

He's so easy to pick on anyway. Richie remember, we only tease the people we like. To all those that are hunters. We have an oak tree in our front yard that is full of acorns and that is a good sign for the deer. Last year Pat walked out the front door and a deer met her face to face! (But both of them turned and ran-chickens the lot). It caught both of them off guard and scared the dickens out of them. We have had a lot of deer activity now that the fawns are big enough to get around and losing their spots. But I have seen only one buck in velvet and he was a small one. Another friend I have up here raises deer in his back yard and has one buck he calls Bruce and he has 9 points. He almost looks like an elk in the horn area. Bruce will come right up to him for sugar cookies. I think he has around 30 plus deer in his pens. He sells them to others that raise deer and some even go to zoos for the public to view. He has a very large area fenced in so the deer can hide and have at least some freedom to run and play. I guess I should quit. This newsletter is supposed to be about ham radio and here I am talking about the wild side of life.

73

Terry Francis WB8ZNO

(Terry would love to hear from you all. Write him. Being over Exposed has its drawbacks))

# Scouting. Father and Son's 2nd effort

**By Mark Scholten KC8CUU**

This past summers scouting outing didn't go as planed. Seems there was a huge communications problem that failed to notify other scouts of the event. The result was about 5 boy scouts and twice that number of girl scouts. Mark KC8CUU believes in the old motto, " Never say die! "

He is planing on providing Ham communications for the scouts on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of October. This is the Jubilee On The Air. A worldwide event, that should attract scouts from all walks of life. Mark and Brian are going to be there, to show the scouts, " We care".

"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 Jamboree on the Air (JOTA). JOTA is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of October. 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." Let's all show these future Ham's what we at MARA are all about.

## Field-Day 97

This year's Field-Day event was the most exciting one we've ever had. We had more members participate, more equipment, a antenna farm that would have any self respecting ham drool: we finally got a H.F. beam mounted where it should be; on a 40 foot tower. Bill N8OAR stepped down as chairman this year, and Erik KC8CCA handily filled the role. It's an impossible task, unless you get help, and help from many hams. "How did we do?" We did have one unforeseen problem though; we had more stations that we could operate.

(Continued on page 8)

# Club News

## Field –Day

(Continued from page 7)

We also had the old standby, Len, N8NEK's chili. But it didn't last too long. Andy and Susan Cody, KC8FQE, KC8HZS took the helm of frying eggs on Sunday morning. This could be the very first Field Day where all the participants gained weight!

Thanks to our new VP's efforts, some of our old non-active members showed up, and couldn't believe their eyes. This year, thanks to Gale Scholten's N8AVQ, brother, we had a large generator, which powered everything, including the coffeepots.

Ron KC8EQT brought out his Yaesu rigs, which were used on HF and VHF. Bill N8VWI had 100 watts on both 2 meters and 6. Wayne Dowling KB8VOZ brought his new rig out to give it a good breaking in.

We even had a guest visitor this year: Steve Hickie N8FM, president of GRARA, stopped by with his son and daughter and had some popcorn with us.

While we all wait for our next QST to see where we placed, we're already making plans for next year's event.

Congratulations to all whom donated so much of their time and effort into making this Field Day the best ever.

## New Awards Manager

Citing a need to move onto other things, Chuck N8LDY stepped down as the Awards Manager. Chuck is primarily responsible for creating the "little" award that is now known throughout the world. "Thank you Chuck for your exceptional talents in maintaining and creating the award."

A search for a new Awards Manager began, and last month, Gale Scholten N8AVQ, offered to take over the helm. We will all be hearing more from Gale as he moves into his new role. "Let's all wish Chuck the best of luck, and welcome Gale into his new role."

## New Web Page

The MARA Web Master also changed this past summer, when Chuck also stepped down from that position.

Chuck "created" the beautiful web page that had people from all over the world coming to visit. Chuck had a wonderful assortment of animated objects, which had people returning daily to see what he would put up next. Chuck suggested that Richie K8JX take over the job.

Richie has been working on creating a web page for his family and dog, Yogi and this seemed like a nice fit.

Richie has already installed a new MARA Web page, and is still diligently working on it, so it will represent what MARA and its' members are really like. To this end, he's posted the latest version of this newsletter and also "The Land of a thousand links on it. He has already talked with Gale N8AVQ about putting up the Great Lakes Award, so visitors can get an application on line. Richie is open to all and any suggestions. He really wants to hear from you all on this.

## NEW WEB SITE

September 3<sup>rd</sup> was a red-letter day for MARA. Scott WD8JMF, Bill N8VWI and Richie K8JX were chatting about how they were looking for a new web site in which to house the club's web page. Dan Thompson, N8WKM broke in and said, "How about asking a ham?" Richie sent E-mail to Dan, and within 8 hours, MARA had its very own Web Page housing. The

new MARA address is

<http://www.waycom.com/mara>

A very big thank you Dan, you've solved many problems we were having with the other system.

"So what's going to be different?" We can now post how much the shipping and printing costs are for the Great Lakes Award. We can, and have, put up the entire newsletter: We don't seem to have a space problem anymore. But the best is yet to come. Just keep visiting the site, and drop Dan a note and tell him "Thanks".

## Club-News

On September 11, the MARA membership voted to give Sam Nabkey, K8SN, and Dan Thompson N8WKM lifetime memberships in MARA. This was done to show our appreciation for all the "work" that was done on our repeater, and the MARA web page hosting. "Thank you guys for all you've done to help us out!"

## Breakfast Club

September 13<sup>th</sup> saw our club start to hold the breakfast club once more. N8AFC started the ball rolling several weeks ago, when he said he was going to be there. Today's breakfast saw more members show up than we've had since last winter's breakfast. If you want to brag about the "One that got away", visit the Country Buffet, near Alpine and 4 mile rd NW. See you there.

## Corrections

Connie Zaidle's callsign is N8WKQ. Her e-mail address is [bill1@cwnet.com](mailto:bill1@cwnet.com).

Denny Purtee's e-mail address is

[buckshot@ionline.com](mailto:buckshot@ionline.com).

Do you ever get the idea, I'm picking on Connie?

If you find any other typos, please let Richie K8JX know. Thanks.