
The Open Feed Line

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THE MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO ALLIANCE

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Operation Care 99

When the last motorist left the rest area, and Ron AB8DT and Mark AB8MS had folded up our new tarp, Operation Care, 99 ended for another year. Mark AB8MS, our OpCare Chairman, reported at the September club meeting that this was the best year ever. During Labor Day itself, between noon and 4PM, Louie and Gaye White, N8ZVB, gave out more than 500 cookies, two containers of orange drink, 3 crates of apples and several huge pots of coffee! The really good news is that we didn't have anything left for next year's event!

Unlike the past 2 years, this time we had 1 goal during the event itself, one being attempting to try and

keep the site open during all of the holiday weekend. The Grand Rapids Amateur Radio Association volunteered to share the duties of keeping the site open. They operated the site on the Friday that began each of the three holidays and kept the site open through Saturday night. It was great meeting and working together with our sister club. New friendships were made during this past season and some were renewed. The most important thing was that our two club's worked together, that was a first that should, and is repeated (see SuperSwap story on page 3).

A very big thank you to all who gave up their holiday time to make this event work. You are, indeed, very special folks!

New Bylaws

After nearly 4 years, the club has finally updated their bylaws. This was a very involved process, starting back in January 1999 when Mark AB8MS and Dan N8NIJ volunteered to listen to suggestions regarding changing bylaws. Mark as well as many others, were concerned that our club has changed faster than we have updated our bylaws. It's true that a lot of our rules were written at a time when we as a whole club, weren't too sure of the direction we were going to take. But what with the repeater, our Field Day and public service events, we're pretty sure of what to expect in the foreseen future.

Every current voting member will receive a copy.

`Prez's 2 bits

By Gale Scholten N8GS

Hello from my new home away from home in Howell, MI. – just a few miles from Hell and the weather makes me think I may be closer than I care for. For those that don't know I have been assigned to the city of Howell Waste Water Treatment Plant Expansion project for the next 16 months. I am acting as the engineers (Williams and Works) on site representative and construction inspector. I have brought my motorhome here and parked it at a local campground. If you are passing through the area give a holler on the 146.68 machine (100.0 Hz PL). I am usually listening from 6:15AM to 7:30AM every morning and in the evenings after 5PM. I am still working on getting some HF equipment up and running. The screwdriver antenna has been installed but I still need to work on the grounding system

and it was too hot to do anything with that last week. I am checking my email daily so if you need to get in touch with me leave me an email at n8gs@arrl.net or if necessary try my Nextel phone 616-292-4970.

We did not have a club meeting in July because only five people showed up, but that is not surprising considering that it is summertime and it was a holiday week too.

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Field Day 99

By Jim KC8FGQ

Mara's Field Day 1999 has come and gone. I think that everyone who attended had a good time.

Riverside Park seemed to work out well as a Field Day site. I had anticipated a large crowd of the general public, but that did not happen. In fact, it was surprisingly private and secluded. The club paid out \$80.00 for the site rental, which included running water, flush toilets, the pavilion,

and picnic tables. The roofed pavilion came in handy when the rain came. The site was shaded, so we didn't bake in the sun too badly. The view of the river and lagoon was nice, and the conductivity of the ground was probably excellent.

Steve K8VOL and Sandy K8VOJ took care of feeding the crew. I remember some tasty brats for lunch, and I will not forget those hamburgers at the potluck dinner. And if you still had room after your burger, there were plenty of other fine entrees to choose from. I do not know how much the club spent on food, as I said, Steve and sandy took care of the food and did a fine job.

After dinner, Larry KC8KVR was kind enough to run home and fetch his pontoon boat and gave a river ride to all who wanted to go.

Louie N8ZVB and the 6-meter gang did well, netting contacts up and down the East Coast, into Texas and all places in between.

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Field Day was a success, nice site and good weather except for a late night storm and the food was great. Steve and Sandy did a super job with the food but they fed us so well that we all wanted to go take a nap afterwards instead of making contacts. Our contact count was down this year (Steve and Sandy's fault) but I think it was primarily due to high noise conditions on 40 and 80 meters. There were a lot of thunderstorms all over the Midwest and it hurt us. Still we had a lot of fun and it was really nice to have a site with some shade. It also gave us a chance to try some different antenna and equipment layouts. Jim found out how much work it is organizing field Day and that 83-mph past a donut shop is not a wise thing to do. By the way Jim, did the generator make it back to the "land fill" safely?

The 4th of July, Operation Care coffee stop was better than ever, another success

story for us. We took in \$600 of that, GRARA gets \$184. That is our best 4th of July ever. I think that this joint effort is working out well and everyone including the traveling public is benefiting from this venture. I must tell you that the 4AM to 8AM shift is not nearly as bad as you might think. I find it to be quite pleasant and I don't have to contend with the bugs. Although the customer flow is just a trickle, that gave me time to talk to each person that stopped by. At that time of the morning they need the mental stimulation that comes with conversation and they seemed to really appreciate our being there.

At the august meeting we will again review the proposed bylaws and submit them for review by the full membership. I believe we can vote on them in September but we will have to send out ballots to those that don't come to the meeting so the votes can't be counted until the ballots come back. We will work out the

details for voting during the august 12th meeting.

The HF remote base project continues, when we get an 80 meter antenna up I will try checking into the Thursday night nets from my motorhome in Howell. I can see that it is going to be a challenge to be club president while out of town all the time. By the way, it is time to start thinking about the club election of officers. "Who should be the prez next year? We also need a new coffee stop chairman so that mark can take a rest.

*73 from Howell
Gale N8GS*

Super Swap 99

At the August club meeting, Steve Hickel, N8FM, the President of GRARA, invited MARA and LARC to share in running the Super Swap 99. This is an exciting opportunity for us, since we had discussed several years' back, about putting on a statewide ARRL convention.

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Field Day 99)*

They had a horizontal yagi on top of a 20-foot tower, and netted 71 contacts on phone, and 4 on cw.

The other two towers were considerably taller, with tri-band yagis. One tower even had an electric rotator. We also had a dipole for 40 and a bazooka for 80, both supported by trees.

The club racked up about 2200 points. There were only two cw contacts on 10 meters, probably because of poor band conditions. There were 103 cw contacts on 15 meters, 93 on 15 SSB, 103 on 20 cw, 95 on 20 SSB, 167 on 40 cw, 73 on 40 SSB, 8 on 80 cw and 7 on 80 SSB. We would have done better if it weren't for all that nasty lightning, which has been way too common these last few field days. Field day 99 was quite a bit different those previous years, and if you weren't there, you might not know what I mean. The people that were there seemed to be having a good time, so I feel that it was a success.

Most importantly, nobody got hurt. HI hi. I hope to see you at next year's field day. Thank you, Jim KC8FGQ.

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Super Swap 99)*

But time is short, so look over the list below, and let either Steve Hickel N8FM or Tom Hansen N8DGD know that you'd like to help out. Let's make this joint venture show our community we can work together.

There is an opening for:

Doughnut sales 1
Trunk Sales 1
Table Setup 5
Talk-in 1
Main Table 1
Membership Table 1
Bake Sale Table 1

All volunteers pay for admission at pre-sign up rates \$4.00.

The Swap date is Saturday, September 18, 1999.

Location: Calendonia High School 9757 Duncan Lake Avenue SE.

Do you have some used gear (Treasure!) you would like to get rid of? Remember the trunk sales.

See you there!

Terrible Terry's Corner

*By Terry Francis
WB8ZNO*

Last week I went up to Harrison to see about joining the Clare Co Emergency Group. After all, I thought I should get back into ham radio. All I do sit here with 3 different radios. Well I got there about 3 minutes late and only 8 people showed up. It seems that the left hand did not know what the right hand was doing. The principles did not even show up. So after a half hour we gave up and went home. I was not too impressed to say the least. Maybe next month will be different. Again my favorite saying, "Time will tell".

We have had new neighbors next door well they got sick of the quite country life and moved back to the city. They put their place up for sale and are having a little trouble with the deed or something. They had hired a guy to cut the lawn but then fired him. So to be a good people we decided to help them out and cut the lawn. I was fired off the job of cutting their lawn but that would be a story all it self. Not a very stable bunch to say the least.

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Well any way we want good people to buy that place so we thought if it was cleaned up a little it would help. I am allergic to bees so while I was cutting the back lawn and going under a peach tree I turn loose a horde of bees that thought they should try and kill me for bothering them. They almost did. By the time the ambulance got to our house I was trying to pass out. I was real glad to have the oxygen they gave me because it does effect your lungs and mine were shutting down. We spent 3 hours in emergence room and went home with 9 days of pills because they told me that I could react again if I did not take them all in the time prescribe.

Friday night the flat landers as they are called up here fill the highways to the point of bumper to bumper. We try to stay off the main roads as much as possible. Every one is heading to their cabins or camping place and they are all in a great hurry to get there and relax. Can't blame them but they scare the H. out of me when I have to be out there.

My wife pat (KB8ROS) is finally on both feet. She received a very badly broken tibia when

one of her patience fell on her. They had to take out shattered bone and replace it with cadaver bone from the bone bank. Also had a large plate put in that will stay with her the rest of her live. For a while there I was called Teresa instead of terry for all the cooking, dishes, laundry, cleaning that was put on me. I now want to thank all you gays for what you do and I know you do not receive enough thanks for your efforts. So thanks from the bottom of my heart. But if Pat does this again, I will leave her. Ha. Hated going for to grocery store. Everyone was very helpful but I could not stand the giggles as I walked away. Laundry I got pretty good at though. I have been working on my hands to the point that they are sore. I want them to look like a man's hands again. Ha.

We went to my brother's place over in Pentwater for the Towns celebration. Had a great time and my poor legs were worn out. I took my bike along and did a lot of riding around town to see what it looked like. Very nice town and very clean. We really enjoyed seeing the Scottville band again. Oh yes guys they even had a beer tent. No I did not drink I am always

designated driver seems like I am every time. Maybe it is because I hardly ever drink anymore. Lots of goings on so the day was well worth it. Also this week we went over to Big Rapids, half waypoint, to have lunch with Pat's brother and wife. They are heading back down to Florida for the winter.

We have not seen as many animals so far this year as we have in the past. Why, I don't know. As far as the deer are concerned, they gave away all those doe permits last year might be the reason. This year is going to be worse from what I hear. We had two different foxes killed on our local highway and I have not seen that in quite a while. Some fawns also were killed this year. Makes you wonder if the animals are getting as crazy as us humans? Our friends from Detroit dug a larger pond, about a half-acre. We have the keys to their place so I did a lot of skinny dipping this summer. Made me feel like a kid again with a lot more fat then I used to have of course. The only good part is I can float better now then when I was a skinny kid.

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Correct Mobile Antenna Placement

By Wm Trigg Tabor-K8NIO. This appeared in the May 1999 issue of "Radiogram", the newsletter of the Capital City repeater association, Keith Chambers-WQ8H Editor. Reprinted from Amateur Radio News Service. Page 1 July 1999.

The Larsen Company, manufacturer of quality mobile and other antennas, publishes an antenna location information sheet in their product catalog. They consider ground plane availability, the antenna electrical length and the radiation pattern of each design.

Each antenna type (1/4 wave, 1/2 wave, 5/8, etc) has a very specific radiating pattern to be considered when selecting a mobile antenna. Larsen notes that " the signal radiating from a 1/4 wave antenna is directed more vertically, thus making it ideal in urban environments where buildings might obstruct the signal. The design of a 5db collinear mobile antenna is designed to direct the signal more towards the horizon. This type of antenna is ideal for geographically flat regions where the signal coverage is sparse. Using a standard automobile, there are

five possible general locations for mounting and antenna: the roof, front fender, rear fender, trunk and rear (or other) window glass. The center of the roof is always the best location for a mobile antenna. Using it as reference, here is a comparison of the other locations for different antenna mounts:

Roof Center
(permanent) 0.0db

Roof Center (magnetic
mount) -0.2db

Roof Corner (magnetic
mount) -0.2db

Trunk Center
(permanent) -2.1db

Trunk Center (magnetic
Mount) -2.8db

Trunk Lip (center)
mount -2.8db

Trunk Corner (magnetic
mount) -3.4db

Hood Corner (magnetic
mount) -2.4db

On-Glass (upper
window) -0.5db

On-Glass (midpart
window) -1.2db

On-Glass (Lower
window) -3.0db

Remember, -3.0db means that half of your antenna gain is lost. As

you can see, the placement of your antenna and the way you mount it is critical. You can lose all the benefit of that "super" antenna by putting it in the wrong spot.

Beaver Island Expedition!

During the week of September 12 - 17, several hams are journeying to Beaver Island and proceeding to put the island on the air. Included in the makeup of hams going there, are our very own president, Gale Scholten N8GS, Jerry W8MSK and Jim Cordes KC8FGQ. Some of the other hams on the expedition are Chuck W8VOM , Brian Pawlaski KC8FUW and other hams. If you would like to try and work the island, they will be working the island frequencies, around 250 kHz above the lower band edge. To be sure, try giving them a call on the 147.160MHz link system under their call, KC8MHX - The club callsign of the Michigan DX Association, which is sponsoring this event. To see photos of the event, go to MARA's web page, and go to Ham clubs. Click on MHDX. Stay tuned.

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Terrible Terry)***

The pond is 18 foot deep on one end and they have planted lots of different fish and we can now fish as long as we release them. Tried trout fishing with our Minster but did not do as good as I would have liked. Never caught a thing. What a blow to ones ego. Tom and I had planned on doing a lot of fishing this year but for some reason we just could not get together. Seems like he would get called out and I had a wife that was laid up.

We had a wild or a dropped off cat living in our barn and we thought it was tom. Well this tomcat ended up having 5 babies and I guess that might be constituted a miracle. Shows you how much we know. So far there has been only two small cats plus it's mother living there at this time. I have seen one of the others a mile up the road. So I guess it picked a different place to live. Another possibility is that they were picked up by our neighbor goshawk. The people were up over a weekend and I warned them to keep their new puppy close to them because of the hawk and eagle that fly's over our place. Well she went in the house for a minute and heard her puppy cry and came out just in time to see the goshawk carry it away. It was a sad scene for sure, and I wonder why people don't listen?

I am wondering if anyone else has noticed but the trees seem to be turning color early. Here it is only

August and it makes me wonder what is happening? Could be because we went from hotter then you know what to cooler weather. The trees just might be fooled with the sudden change. We went to an outdoor wedding over in Farwell of a friend of ours. It was a motorcycle type dress and all, and I have never been to anything like that in my life. Kinda neat. We really enjoyed ourselves. They had put up a tent and had plenty to eat and a barrel of beer to go along with it all. Before the wedding started they came and got me. She was hoping I would show up because she wanted me to give her away. I took it as an honor to say the least. I was the only one in the group that had shorts on. A little out of place but what the heck. It was fun anyway. I think they just wanted at least one gray haired person in the group to set it off. Pat went back to work after all those months off but before she did we went up to copper harbor for a few days. We took 41 up there to the fort and on the way back we took highway 26 back. If you ever go up there be sure and take that highway it is a fantastic scene to see. The lake was rough so there was a lot of wave action on the rocks. We also went through a couple of museums and one lighthouse. Great time. Lots of nice people to talk to in the campgrounds that is if you talk as much as I do.

I hope I can get someone to help this dumb old man

with some measurements for a 6-meter radio. One for the truck and one I can put on my tower?

On yes talking about old man, this one is going in to get the wax paper off his eyes. Can't read as much as I would like. Only thing I got that I can read is my bible because that is in big print. Looks like I will have to wait till sometime in December before they can get to me. Not enough doctors up this way. All are in the big city collecting larger fees.

I can say this with conviction; I miss the old gang down in the flat land. Being in the country is nice but sometimes I can get real lonesome to say the least. Oh well, typical old man.

73 Terry WB8ZNO
Flash! As of 9/13/99,
Terry has joined the Mid Michigan amateur Radio Club of Farwell. Their repeater is on 147.200MHz. Oh, Terry was elected treasurer.

New Ham Dinner

At the last club meeting, the LARC's president, Dewey KC8AMZ asked if our club as well as GRARA would be interested in joining them in welcoming new hams to the area. This would be accomplished by inviting them to a dinner where they can meet other hams as well as representatives of the area clubs. Our club voted to join in. Listen to the Thursday net for more info.