

The Open Feed Line

Volume 10, Issue 2 Friendship, Community service & Advancement of the Hobby

Mar-Apr 2001

Summers Here

By Rich Ranta K8JX

It's our busy time of year once again. First off, we start off with Operation Care Coffee Stop during the Memorial Day weekend. One week later, the Independent Repeater Association holds it Shop-N-Swap on June 2, 2001. For information on how to get there, listen to the IRA net on Monday night at 8PM, or ask for instructions on the 147.160MHz repeater, W8HVG. Two weeks later, we'll hold our club meeting, where we'll discuss the upcoming Field Day 2001, which will be on June 23 and 24th at Gale Scholtens N8GS's area. The very next weekend, its back to operating Operation Care Coffee Stop. To sign up for a shift, go to either GRARA's web page, at www.W8DC.org or MARA's web page, WWW.Waycom.com/mara, click on Operation Care button. You can sign up right on the Internet, thanks to the very talented Graham Merrill KB8SEW and Dave Mortensen N8TKM's web work. You can also call Dan Markowski N8NIJ at 784-5973. Hey, we're not through yet, we have the July club meeting, then, we can all enjoy summer Now, where did I put that lawn mower?

This is the MARA repeater, W8USA

On January 12, 2001 at 5:10 PM, a dream that started 6 years before, became a reality. Our club put on the air, it's very own repeater. But not just a repeater. We have what might be the only completely brand new repeater any club in Michigan has ever, till now, put on the air. This has not been an easy road to travel. We gave up our summers so we could operate the coffee stop, we increased our club dues and some of us volunteered to learn more about repeaters, just so we could finish what the club started. As of this past Memorial Day weekend, the repeater, with its' brand new, Hi-Tech Controller, is fully operational. We are testing OUR understanding of how to operate a repeater, but for the most part, the Machine is working. We have moved the location, which will explain why its signal has changed, and in some cases, dropped right off. Presently, it's on the North East Side of the city and is running 25 watts while we become familiar with operating it. The present location is ideal for the testing, and setting up of the repeater. No long and repeated drives over to the repeater site: it's accessible within 3 feet of our new club trustee. We are, however, searching for a new location, but may still utilize our old NW site. The old site needs oodles of work and a new antenna support structure would be required. While the search continues, the features of the new controller and repeater are being tested and learned by our repeater team. We are dividing up the responsibilities of maintaining the repeater into several groups. If you're interested, please let the board know . Some of you have been aware that our club has gone through "difficulties" in achieving this goal. That is over now. Our whole clubs goal right now, is how to get more people involved with 1. Field Day 2001 2. Ham Radio in general and 3. just have fun with our friends!

UP COMING HAMFESTS

- 6/2/01 IRA Kathy Werkema KB8KZH 616-698-6627
6/3/01 Chelsea ARC Bill WB8HSN 734-475-7938
6/16/01 Midland ARC Eldon N8STF 517-643-5101

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Membership information

The Michigan Amateur Radio Alliance, an American Radio Relay League affiliated club, was created to provide opportunities for friendship, community service, increase technical knowledge and upgrading our skills in the hobby of amateur radio. Annual dues to MARA are \$20. Family memberships are also available. Persons aged 70 and over have the rate of \$5.00. Memberships expire on December 31 and club dues are due on January 1st. MARA membership is open to all interested persons.

Everybody is encouraged to submit original articles, on topics relevant to the hobby of Ham Radio, to the editor on disk, fax or by mail. The deadline for submission is the end of the 2nd week of February, April, June, August, October and December. Please send change of address information and membership applications to the club secretary.

Great Lakes Award

Send inquiries regarding the Great Lakes Award to the Awards Manager
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Operation Care Coffee Stop

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Super Swap

Chairman MARA

*

Club activities

MARA holds their weekly 2 meter Net on the MARA W8USA repeater, 145.410 MHz -600Khz PL. 94.8., every Thursday, at 8 PM, except the 2nd Thursday of the month. MARA holds their monthly meetings on the 2nd Thursday of the month at Saint Adalberts Benevolent Society Aid Hall, located at 5th Street and Davis NW. We meet at 7:30PM upstairs. All are welcome.

*Some of these offices are still open. If you'd like to volunteer, contact one of the board members and let them know what your interested in.

The Prez's 2 bits

Well the dispute over the frequency coordination has finally come to closure. On March 12, 2001 MARA received a ruling from the Michigan Area Repeater Council stating that " Since the sponsor of the coordinated frequency was transferred to MARA, and we did not receive any paper work from MARA relinquishing the frequency to 541 INC., MARC Inc reverses its earlier ruling and recognizes MARA to be the holder of the coordination of 145.410 frequency". This ended a long and agonizing dispute over the coordination. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who supported MARA throughout this ordeal. I think we all have learned some very important lessons from this and hopefully now we can proceed with our other business agenda. The repeater we have on line is very basic and we will need to

make some improvements as time and finances permit. We are planning to add a new controller in the near future, which will increase the capabilities of our repeater tremendously. We are currently running an output of 25 watts and in the future we may have to take a look at increasing that output. As you all know, the coffee stops provide necessary funding for club projects. Obviously we need volunteers to work the coffee stops. If this sounds like a solicitation that's because it is. Please look at your schedules and see if you can find four hours to devote to working a shift at the coffee stops during the summer months. The benefits derived from your efforts will be yours. The MARA website has a link (Operation Care) on which you can put your name down for a time slot of your choice. Its not too early to volunteer, in fact now you can pretty much pick and choose. Please consider helping your

club and the community.

*Dan Markowski N8NIJ
President MARA*

A Busy Spring For volunteering

I must apologize to my faithful readers; I do not have a homogenous article for this issue, so I will just ramble.

Firstly, I am happy to report that the club has been contacted to help a local school with the SAREX program. SAREX is short for Space Amateur Radio Experiment. I understand that a certain curriculum is involved, and of course, a scheduled contact with the International Space Station. I do not know a whole lot about this program at this time, but look for an article in the fall, after it is over. If you want to help with this project, let me know.

Secondly, I am looking forward to working a few shifts at the coffee stop. It really is a lot of fun.

(Continued on page 4)

Of course, I always try to sign up for the busiest times. I like to watch all the people come and go.

Thirdly, I am looking forward to MARA's Field Day festivities. Field Day will be June 23rd and 24th this year. Please don't be shy, if you want to operate, let Gale or myself know, and we will get you in the operator's seat ASAP. This is the granddaddy of contests, in my opinion.

Fourthly, I am looking forward to this year's island trip with the MDXA. We will be going to the Drummond Island area, and will be activating several islands. We plan to activate some islands that have never been activated under the US Islands Award Program. We will be operating several modes, and all the popular bands. I plan to operate mostly CW. We will be up there from July 9th through July 15th, and will be on the air as soon as we get the stations set up. Give us a call.

And finally, I would like to chastise those

who write irresponsibly. I have personally witnessed newsworthy incidents, only to find these incidents sensationalized by the media. Unfortunately, this type of nonsense occurs even in Amateur Radio publications.

73 de Jim ki8jd

Terrible Terry's Corner WB8ZNO

Much has happened up here in the North Country, or should I say nothing has happened. The much part is that we resolved the local club because of lack of interest. So much for that, and with me being treasurer. Surprise: The books balanced!

The weather has turned nice for a change, we lost all our snow in a couple weeks compared to G.R.. We had to go down and found that there was no snow on the ground and we still had around 12 inches. What a downer! I sold one of my 2 meter radios and shortly after that the one I have in the house died on me. So I have my hand held in place of it. I have hopes of building a bigger beam antenna so that I can try and get your repeater again. I sure hope so because the local repeater we have up here is useless. I can have it on all day and not one call will come over it. So you can see it is a little lonesome

around here. It is used during storm watches so maybe it is not completely useless. With Turkey hunting open there is much more traffic so I have at least something to look out the window at. We have a fellow up from G.R. that is hunting around here. He is a fireman for the GR Fire dept. We met him and his wife up in Vanderbilt, while they were looking for elk. He was going to camp out back of my place, but opted to go farther back into the woods. Lots of turkeys and deer. I am surprised after all the deer they got out of here last year. Our deer that we called Milly, with 3 legs, did not show up this year so we think the snow got too deep and the coyotes got her. We have another one that has lost a hoof off her front leg and we have not seen her in a long while. I guess the wild coyotes are doing fine this year.

I have written twice to the local TV station about the deer and about how they do not pick up the deer killed along the road. I had questioned about TB being passed on to the wild animals and birds that feed off those deer and maybe spreading TB. No answer. The next thing we hear over the TV is that they found TB in a coyote. I think I should give up because I only have some college credits so I am not as smart as they are, and I should not question them. Pat is getting ready for her yearly ride across MI. she and her friend ride Linda's Morgans.

(Terrible Terry continued from page 4)

I am hoping on meeting them in Vanderbilt. Linda's husband does the cooking and moving the rig. Pat will be riding his horse. My friend the minister moved down to Georgia and we finally made contact with him through the E-mail. He has a bigger church down there. The only good thing about it is he will not show me up when we go fishing by catching more than me. Of course, he had to tell me how many fish he and his boys got the other day. We plan on going for a visit this summer, if all goes right. I have been using my CB more up here. They are 20 years behind, so at least I have some way of getting a hold of someone. Well, I will make this one shorter than normal. Ha. Love to all

God Bless

Terrible Terry

(WB8ZNO writes about his Golden years of retirement)

NEWS

Well, the State of MI finally did it. If you plan on carrying either

a portable or permanently installed radio, capable of receiving police frequencies, you will need to fill out the form on the other side of this page, and mail it to the State police.

Our 10th Birthday

Starting with the next issue of our newsletter, we will be introducing the hams that founded MARA. We are also looking for somebody who is willing to take charge of the celebration and figure out what would be a good way to celebrate our 10th year.

Field Day 2001 Tee Shirts

The club president received approval to order ARRL Field Day 2001 tee shirts. All but the extra-large size has come in so far, but we expect the rest before Field Day is upon us.

Talking about merchandize, what do you think about starting up the search for a cheap, but quality coffee mug?

As some of you know, we used to be able to order MARA coffee mugs, with each

individual' callsign and a choice of either a mike or CW key emblem. But our sources artist and president got sick and closed up his shop. I have looked, but so far, all I've found is a mug with a person's callsign, but no mike or CW key. The price is \$25.00 each! That's \$15.00 more than the other source. But members keep inquiring about when we're going to start getting them again. I'll keep the search up, but it would help if you folks would start looking too. Many hands make light work, unless you're cooking that is.

Repeater Commands

Since we're programming our own repeater with user commands, we thought it a good time to ask you what you'd like the commands printed on. A combination plastic membership card with commands on it? Or just a paper card? What would you like? Let us know at the next meeting.