

# The Open Feed Line

Volume 11, Issue 2 Friendship, Community service & Advancement of the Hobby

Mar-Apr 2002

## Ham of the Year

### Jim Jaworowicz AA8JR

At the "New Hams Dinner", February 16<sup>th</sup>, MARA's Secretary, Jim Cordes, KI8JD, announced that Jim Jaworowicz AA8JR had been voted "Ham of the Year". Jim is the primary designer and builder of the Lowell ARC repeater, 145.270MHz. He has also helped and supported the Lowell Weather station, and other Amateur Radio organizations with technical support. He has also provided much design and installation support for the Lowell High School "shack", which is becoming the communications center for the Lowell area as well as training for the youth members striving for their ham tickets. Congratulations Jim. "Thank you for contributing so much for so many." While Jim couldn't make the dinner due to a bad cold, I talked with him later and he was just excited about being honored. If you have any suggestions for "Ham of the Year", send them to Jim Cordes KI8JD c/o MARA, PO Box 670, Comstock Park, Mi. 49321-0670.

## Ham Fests

5/4/02 Wexaukee ARC Cadillac BOB WD8RZL  
231-775-0085  
6/1/02 IRA ( see page 6 in this issue for info)  
6/2/02 Chelsea ARC Jeff Cowall N8KPA  
734-475-2424  
6/15/02 Midland ARC Eldon Hall N8STF  
989-643-5101  
6/16/02 Monroe County RCA Fred Van Daela KA8EBI  
734-242-9487 ( after 5PM)  
6/22/02 Barry ARA Jack Hill K8YPW  
POBOX 370 Hastings MI 49058

## SKYWARN-KCEST

*By Jim Cordes KI8JD*

I am happy to report that I was able to attend the SkyWarn training class this year. It was held at the Kent Intermediate School District center on the East Beltline on March 20, 2002 at 7:00 PM. The class was free. I had never been to one of these classes, and found it to be very interesting, and of course, informative.

Lieutenant Jim Van Bendegom, of the Kent County Sheriff's department, opened the class. He is the Emergency Management Coordinator for Kent County. Meteorologists from Wood TV-8, WXMI TV-17, and WZZM TV-13 each made a 10 minute presentation. At 7:35, Mike Heathfield of the National Weather Service began the class. The class ran until 10 o'clock, with a 10-minute break at 8:30.

The purpose of the class is to train people to be weather spotters. Even with Doppler radar, weather spotters are still a very important part of the severe weather warning system.

Primarily, it had to do with severe thunderstorms. Thunderstorms occur almost everywhere on earth, and we certainly get our share of them here in West Michigan. We basically grow up with thunderstorms, but not many of us are called to investigate the mechanics of these storms. Luckily, they gave out lots of printed information, including 2 books. With these books, I will be able to study and review much of the information that was presented in the class.

*(continued on page 4)*

## The Open Feed Line

### Editor

Richie Ranta K8JX  
812 Graceland NE  
Grand Rapids MI 49505-4363  
h&w 616-361-5975  
Internet rranta@worldnet.att.net

### Publisher

Michigan Amateur Radio Alliance  
Post Office Box 670  
Comstock Park MI 49321-0670  
packet W8USA.#SWMI.MI.USA.NOAM  
<http://www.w8usa.org>

### W8USA@arrl.net

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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 1<sup>st</sup>. 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  
Larry Dells KC8KVR c/o  
MARA  
P.O.Box 670  
Comstock Park MI 49321-0670  
internet W8USA@ARRL.NET

## MARA club officers

### President

**Dan Markowski N8NIJ**  
343 Brandywyne NW  
Comstock Park MI 49321  
616-784-5973

[N8NIJ@ARRL.NET](mailto:N8NIJ@ARRL.NET) [wdow126686@msn.com](mailto:wdow126686@msn.com)

### Secretary

**James M Cordes KI8JD**  
1235 Morgan  
Grand Rapids MI 49504  
616-459-1195

[jcordes@iserv.net](mailto:jcordes@iserv.net)

### Vice President

**Wayne Dowling KB8VOZ**  
2442 West Collier ave  
Kentwood MI 49546  
616-957-4641

### Treasurer

**Gale Scholten N8GS**  
8530 Peach Ridge NW  
Sparta MI 49345  
616-887-1820

[N8GS@ARRL.NET](mailto:N8GS@ARRL.NET)

## Appointed

### Awards Manager

**Larry Dells KC8KVR**  
4317 Willow DR NE  
Grand Rapids MI 49525  
616-363-8235

[Lldgr@Netscape.net](mailto:Lldgr@Netscape.net)

### Club Trustee

**Richard Ranta K8JX**  
812 Graceland NE  
Grand Rapids MI 49505  
616-361-5975

[K8JX@arrl.net](mailto:K8JX@arrl.net)

### Membership Director

**Wayne Dowling KB8VOZ**  
2442 West Collier ave  
Kentwood MI 49546  
616-957-4641  
wdow126686@aol.com

### Education

**James Cordes KI8JD**  
1235 Morgan  
Grand Rapids MI 49504  
616-459-1195  
[jcordes@iserv.net](mailto:jcordes@iserv.net)

### Bereavement

**Jerry Wittkoski W8MSK**  
1025 Kendalwood St NE  
Grand Rapids MI 49505  
616-363-6146

[jeromeW551@aol.com](mailto:jeromeW551@aol.com)

### Field Day

**Gale Scholten N8GS**  
8530 Peach Ridge NW  
Sparta MI 49345  
616-887-1820

[N8GS@ARRL.net](mailto:N8GS@ARRL.net)

### Operation Care Coffee Stop

\*

### 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.

## **Prez's 2 Bits**

*By Dan Markowski N8NIJ*

Well winter is finally over and we can now think about outside projects again. This is the time when Hams erect antennas and towers and think about camping and other outdoor activities. This is also the time of year when our club makes plans for field day and the coffee stops. We are approaching the time when our Memorial Day coffee stop is almost upon us. Obviously as in the past we need people to fill spots for the weekend. This year we have decided that we will run our Memorial Day event from 4:00 PM on Saturday May 25<sup>th</sup> through Monday May 27<sup>th</sup>. This means that we will have less time slots to fill. Please make plans to spend a shift. You will be providing a public service and contributing to your club at the same time. We again will be working with GRARA on this event. Please visit the GRARA website and look over the sign-up form. Pick

a time slot that fits your needs. It's as easy as that. Your contribution will be appreciated by many.

The club has made the decision to move the repeater to our former site. We have the approval from the management of the building and will be making the move in the near future. We will be purchasing a new antenna and a few other necessary items prior to the move. Returning to the former site will improve coverage. We also will be looking into the possibility of providing phone patch capabilities. When the time comes to make the move we will need help in moving and installing the equipment. Information will be made available prior to the move concerning dates and times.

If you haven't noticed, our website has been updated. I would like to express my thanks to Rich Ranta K8JX for all the hard work involved in the updating. If you plan on attending

Field Day this year please attend the next club meeting so that we can formulate plans for this event. The event will take place at a site on Four-mile and Fruitridge. We will be looking forward to seeing you there.

*Dan Markowski N8NIJ  
President MARA*

## **Repeater Status**

Phase two of our system is going through its paces. Preparing it for the move and installation at the old site. This involves observing the controller, the repeater itself and checking everything out so we get no surprises when we move it up there. As you may know, Rich Douglas KC8NKA is also sharing in ALL the responsibilities of maintaining the system. There will be two people watching the system at various times, so if anything does happen, we're covered. We all can sleep better at night.

*(Continued on page 4)*

*(Repeater Status continued from page 3)*  
What we can use right now is your involvement. If you hear anything strange issuing forth from the repeater, please let any of the board members or either Richard know. We want an efficient and clean machine. But we need your ear. Thanks again, and we'll be seeing you at the coffee stops.

*(SkyWarn continued from page 1)*

The class included some impressive videos. The video of the F-5 tornadoes sent chills up my spine. These F-5 tornadoes are a worst-case situation, and account for most of the storm-related deaths here in West Michigan over the last 50 years. And there were only 2 cases of them! The tornadoes of 1956 and 1965 (Palm Sunday) were F-5 tornadoes. Given the increase in population and urban sprawl since 1965, I can imagine that the death toll from a single F-5 tornado could rise into the

thousands. Of course, I am not an expert.

However, it is important to know that tornadoes are not the only cause for concern. Flash flooding is also a major killer. Two feet of moving water can carry away most automobiles. If water is moving across the road, do not drive through it, because it is hard to know how deep it really is. Almost half of the flash flood deaths are vehicle related.

Lightning is also dangerous, and occurs in all thunderstorms. Lightning tends to strike the tallest object, make sure that object is not you. Golf courses, lakes, hilltops, and under trees are all bad places to be when lightning is nearby. If you get caught outside during a thunderstorm, crouch down, but do not lie flat on the ground. Lying flat increases your chances of being shocked by currents flowing through the earth. And again, stay away from tall objects, such as trees. Ham radio operators are

more at risk from lightning than the general population, due to our antennas and towers. Your best defense is to have a way of unhooking your feed lines from your house, to keep the lightning from entering the home. In the event of a lightning strike, be on the lookout for fire!!! There is not enough room here to cover everything that a ham should know about lightning. The best source of information is probably the Internet. If you don't have a computer, you can go to the library and use theirs. Start at the ARRL web site, and follow the links from there.

(Picture this: you are checking in to the severe weather net with your outside antenna. You are wearing headphones, and have the mike in your hand. You could fry your brain.)

Hail and high winds are also dangerous, but are associated more with property damage than fatalities.

*(Continue on page 5)*

A few years ago, there was major wind damage in Walker. Now, the sirens will sound anytime winds over 70 mph are expected, whether or not there is tornado.

Another point that was stressed was that the sirens are effective only for people who are outside. Our homes now have insulation, air conditioning, etc. If you really want to be safe, you need to get a weather alert radio. The National Weather Service would like to see one in every home. They cost about \$30.00.

In conclusion; the class was worth the effort, and if I can, I will attend again next year. During the break, I joined the Kent County Emergency Services Team (KCEST). By the end of the class, they presented me with 2 laminated ID cards, with my picture on them. I was impressed! As a brand-new member of KCEST, I don't have much to say right now. I will check it out and let you know.

There will be a Damage Assessment

program on Thursday, April 25<sup>th</sup> at The Red Cross Building, near Fuller Ave NE and Leonard St NE. Be there by 7PM. This is close to being called a "required" course. Dave DeVos, KF8QL will be teaching it.

If you ever need help gathering information about topics such as these, feel free to contact our Education Director. He is willing to help. 73, Jim ki8jd

## Club News, Events...SK

Spring and summer are always a busy time for us hams. This year is no exception. On April 27, 2002, **The March of Dimes** can use your talents in volunteering to help them out. For further information, contact Gram Merrill KB8SEW at 284-0280. Of course, what would late spring be without the **River Bank Run**. If you'd like to put your good Amateur talents to use there, give Christine Nabkey a call at 676-2310. The race will take place on May 11, 2002. Let's show Western

Michigan what us Hams are made of. One of our original members, **Harold Allen, KB8MNI**, just got married. He's 86 and I can't say how young she is. We wish you two the best.

**Andy Gusack W7PG**, is now living at Shore Haven Living Center, in Grand Haven. Andy would love to here from you. Write him or give him a call. He's going to be 95 years young this year.

**Gale Scholten N8GS**, is learning to use a Microchip programming unit he just got. He said he is learning to make and develop circuits that can be very handy for us hams. We should all look for Gale to bring his latest invention with him when he goes to breakfast on Saturday

We send our condolences to Lee Burgess W8ZP, on the passing of his 33 year old daughter this past month, due to cancer.

We also send our sympathy to the Sam Nabkey K8SN family, on the passing of his dad. We all share your great loses.

# GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN I.R.A. ANNUAL HAMFESTIVAL

## West Michigan's Largest Hamfest & Computer Fair

Saturday, June 1, 2002.....8 A.M. until it's over.

Convenient location with great facilities at the spacious Hudsonville Fairgrounds. It's bigger and better every year!  
14 miles west of Grand Rapids, two miles north of I-196 exit 62.

HUGE INDOOR FACILITIES with CONVENIENT ACCESS and FREE PARKING.  
OVER 22,000 SQUARE-FEET INDOORS, 8' tables for sellers and dealers, \$8 ea.  
Friday night set-up available after 7 P.M. or 6:00 A.M. start on Saturday.  
Trunk sales spaces, 10' @ \$6 ea. CAMPING available, \$10 fee. Showers and electricity available for camping. Plenty of electrical outlets available inside and outdoors.  
Table & space rental not an admission to Hamfest; tickets are required.  
All reservations with SASE please. Reservations held until 8 A.M. Saturday.  
Food and drinks available in comfortable indoor sit-down eating facilities.  
Children under 12 years admitted free accompanying an adult.  
Handicapped parking and access.

### - FAMOUS "ROADKILL-CHILI" POTLUCK FRIDAY EVENING

Bring a dish to pass and join-in the fun @ 7:00 P.M. after setup.  
Bring your musical instrument and join in the entertainment.

### - FOUR MAJOR PRIZES PLUS DOZENS MORE!

### - FORUMS AND DEMONSTRATIONS ON

#### "ALTERNATIVE ENERGY CONCEPTS."

For ham radio, Field Day, and home-use involving solar, wind, and generators that can save you money with the new regs.

### - MICHIGAN / FLORIDA HAMS MEET-9:00 A.M.

### - VINTAGE HAM EQUIPMENT EXHIBITS

### - VE AMATEUR EXAMS - 10:30 A.M. START

All walk-ins. Technician, General and Extra Class. Please bring original and a copy of your license, any C.S.C.E.'s with some form of photo ID and a check made out to "ARRL / VEC".

### - MICHIGAN AREA REPEATER COUNCIL MTG.

Meeting at 1 P.M. Repeater owners / Trustees are invited.

DEALERS: BRING YOUR HAM EQUIPMENT, COAX, COMPUTER EQUIPMENT, SOFTWARE, ALTERNATIVE ENERGY EQUIPMENT, WIRE, BOOKS, PARTS, JEWELRY, SWEAT-SHIRTS, CAPS, ETC., TO SELL.....BE THERE!

HAMS: BRING YOUR USED EQUIPMENT TO TRADE OR SELL.....BE THERE!

COMPUTER HOBBYISTS: BRING YOUR EXCESS HARDWARE, SOFTWARE, BOOKS, ETC., TO TRADE OR SELL.....BE THERE!

Write for table reservations to:  
Independent Rptr. Assoc., Inc.  
562 92nd Street S.E.  
Byron Center, MI 49315

TICKETS: \$5.00 ea.  
Tables: \$8.00 ea.  
Trunk spaces: \$6.00 ea.  
Camping fee: \$10.00

INFO: Call Kathy at (616) 698-6627 after 4 P.M. (E.D.S.T.) for info / reservations.  
Check out the IRA Web-site at:  
[www.w8hvg.org](http://www.w8hvg.org) for more info.

TALK-IN ON 147.16 LINK-SYSTEM