

# The Open Feed Line

A Publication of the Michigan Amateur Radio Alliance (MARA)

Volume 13, Issue 3 - Friendship, Community Service & Advancement of the Hobby - July-Sept 2004

## Upcoming Hamfests

*By Jim ki8jd*

The 22<sup>nd</sup> annual Kalamazoo Hamfest will be held Sunday October 10<sup>th</sup>, from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the Kalamazoo Fairgrounds. Talk-in on 147.040. Further information can be had on the website, [www.KalamazooHamfest.com](http://www.KalamazooHamfest.com) or by calling 269-665-6421.

Great Lakeshore Super Swap & ARRL Michigan Section Convention starts in Holland Friday evening, November 5, and continues through the Saturday. [www.hollandarc.org](http://www.hollandarc.org)

There will be a Mini-Swap at the Red Cross on Friday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2004. This is also VE testing night. Both events start at 6:30, with the swap running until about 8:30. Com-Dac will be there, so if you want something, it pays to contact them, so they can bring it for you. [www.comdac.com](http://www.comdac.com)

The ARGYL (Amateur Radio Group of Youth in Lowell) Hamfest will be held at the Lowell High School on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

## All different and yet all the same

*By Ed KC8PCK*

We all read the threads on E-ham and various forums exhibiting a wide variety of disagreement within our ranks. The contester can be found at odds with the anti-contester, those loving CW argue with those that seem to hate it, and want it abolished as a licensing requirement. High Fidelity SSB enthusiasts are attacked by those who feel that they occupy unnecessary bandwidth. The list just goes on and on. Dissension in the hobby may not be a new development but it is clearly on the rise. *Continued on page 4.*

## MARA Club News Briefs

*By Jim ki8jd*

Operation Care Coffee Stop is finished for this year. Many travelers expressed their appreciation to the club for providing this free service. Still more showed their appreciation by making donations to the club. Not only is this a fine public service, but it is also the main source of income for the club. Last but certainly not least; we will never know how many lives we have saved.

MARA would like to thank all who helped the club make this operation a success.

The August MARA meeting was held at Larry KC8KVR's home again this year, on the banks of the Grand River. This was a picnic meeting, with a potluck dinner. If you really enjoy great food, you need to attend a MARA potluck. We eat extremely well.

MARA updated its By-Laws at the September meeting. The updated By-Laws should be available soon. A big thank-you to Pam KC8VUB and Richie K8JX for the work they did on the proposed changes.

MARA has been having foxhunts this summer. Chris N6CWA was the first fox, with Carl WA8AAT and Jim KI8JD winning the hunt. Jim was the fox for the second hunt, with Mike K8OOK and Nancy N8IPG winning the hunt. Mike was the fox for the third hunt, with Chris and Jack AB8ND winning the hunt. Jack was the fox for the fourth hunt, with Chris winning the hunt. All who participated had a good time.

We have just enough room left to thank the officers and others who have been so busy this year on the various club projects, etc. Many hands make for a better club.\*\*\*\*\*

## ***The Open Feed Line***

The Open Feed Line is published quarterly. It is the official journal of the Michigan Amateur Radio Alliance, or MARA for short.

MARA, an American Radio Relay League affiliated club, was created to provide opportunities for friendship, community service, increasing technical knowledge, and upgrading our skills in the hobby of Amateur Radio.

You may freely reprint any material in the Open Feed Line, but please credit the Open Feed Line, the original author, and the original publication, if given.

Everybody is encouraged to submit original articles on topics relevant to the hobby of Amateur Radio to the editor. The deadline for submission is the end of January, April, July, and October, and the newsletter will be published within the following month.

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### ***Membership Information***

Annual dues to MARA are \$20. Family memberships are an additional \$5. Persons aged 70 and over - \$5.00. Membership is free to students under 21. Memberships expire on December 31<sup>st</sup>, and club dues are due on January 1<sup>st</sup>. MARA membership is open to all interested persons.

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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\* Some of these positions become open occasionally. If you'd like to volunteer, contact one of the board members and let them know what your interested in. \*

## **Club activities**

MARA holds their weekly 2-meter Net, every Thursday, at 8 PM on the MARA W8USA repeater, 145.230 MHz -600Khz PL. 94.8. MARA holds their monthly meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:30PM, at the Steepletown Building, located on the SW corner of 5th street and Davis NW, in Grand Rapids. This site is handicap accessible, with additional parking on the West side of the building. All are welcome to attend our meetings.

## Bud Owen KG8BK SK

By Jim ki8jd

Bud KG8BK passed away suddenly at home on Friday, September 17, 2004.

Bud was a husband, father, and grandfather. He worked for his family, his church, his friends, and Amateur radio. Bud worked for years to try to get the ARRL's prestigious Honor Roll Award. I don't know if he achieved this difficult goal or not, but it appears his work was done, because the Lord called His spirit home.

Bud was one of the MARA members who invested his own money to buy the 541 repeater for our club. In more recent years, he was very active with the Independent Repeater Association, and also enjoyed Echo-Link.

Bud was only 62 years old, but wise beyond his years. He always treated others very well, and seemed to love everyone. He was a fine man, a fine ham, and will be missed by many.

## Allison Hansen SK

By Jim ki8jd

Tom Hansen's (N8DGD) wife passed away unexpectedly over Labor Day weekend.

I wish I had known Allison better, but she always seemed like a nice lady to me, and treated others with respect and kindness. She was only 39 years old.

I do not have the exact details, but I know that Allison suffered from scoliosis, and underwent more than one surgery to treat this condition. She died on September 4<sup>th</sup> while recovering from surgery in New York. There was an obituary in September 9<sup>th</sup>'s G.R. Press. Allison's funeral was on September 11<sup>th</sup>.

I do not believe that I am out-of-line when I say that the entire Ham community sends their deepest heartfelt condolences to Tom during this great time of loss. I am also sure that our thoughts and prayers are with him.

## Nancy N8IPG pulls through

By Jim ki8jd

Nancy had to have surgery recently. There were problems, and many of us were quite worried. But within a week, she was digging in her garden.

## Letter from the Editor

Written 9-8-04

It has been a very busy summer for me, preceded by a very busy spring. I want to think it is still summer, but all the indicators say otherwise. The kids are back in school, the leaves are starting to exhibit colors other than green, etc. But the weather is still very nice, in my opinion. Spring and fall are my favorite seasons.

This newsletter is late; it should have been out in August. I still don't have anything ready; I am starting right here. The only submissions we currently have are those left over from other issues. They were 'left over' because we ran out of room. We will need them for this issue.

This issue will probably be 'different'. Perhaps all the issues are 'different'?

The Grand Rapids Area Hamfest is this Saturday. It will probably be history by the time you get this newsletter, so I don't plan to include a flyer. Besides, the annual issue of QRM (GRARA's newsletter) just came out, and had a flyer on the front page. I heard that they mailed it out to 1500 hams. I did not submit an article because I use everything I have in this newsletter. If you haven't read the QRM, you should.

Speaking of upcoming events, I sure wish we could find someone to do an 'Upcoming Events' column for each newsletter.

Just rambling here: I always enjoyed this newsletter. Kudos to Richie for being the Editor from the beginning up until a year and a half ago. I still remember, as a new ham, the excitement of getting the local Ham Radio newsletters in my mailbox. At one time, I got newsletters from 4 of the local clubs, and enjoyed them all. I would read them from cover to cover with no delay. Now I am down to one or two newsletters per year, since I don't waste postage by mailing myself a copy of this one.

Speaking of Richie, he still helps immensely. He does the printing, the collating, the stapling, the address labels, etc. Not only that, but when we are short on material, he is the first one I call.

*Continued on page 4*

## All different and yet all the same

By Ed KC8PCK

*Continued from page 1*

Clubs are at odds with other clubs, there are more territorial frequency battles, and the prevailing disrespect for one another on certain bands is commonplace. I find this trend self-destructive, it lessens the enjoyment of all Amateurs and dampens the recruitment efforts of all Amateur organizations.

Has anyone ever asked you about your radio hobby? After you explained Ham Radio to them did they look at you as if you were a throwback to a time of record players and rotary dial phones? Do your antennas ever attract that all too familiar "look at the goofball with the big antenna Marge" look from the non-hamming public? Lets face it, most people don't consider your equipment to be quite as efficient as the latest NEXTEL, and wonder why you go to all the bother. Many old timers tell me that the auto-patch would create a few wows prior to every 15-year-old kid having a cell phone, and a PC wired to the Internet.

I think most of us love Ham Radio; we all have a favorite band and mode. There is excitement and gratification in a rare contact that most people cannot appreciate because most people are not Hams. You hear an old friend and work them, or you just tune in to your favorite net with its invisible radio waves traveling at the speed of light to and from your antenna. As Amateurs we have a common interest, the art of radio communications. We make up a tiny minority in the world, as a percentage of the total population I would assume we make up less than 1 percent, and we are often misunderstood. Naturally, as a radio experimenter I enjoy talking with fellow Amateurs about our mutual interests. Our common interest transcends most of life's minor disagreements; part of the fascination is that you are talking with someone different than yourself. You may work a King or you may work a Hobo, both equally interesting. You may not share the same political views, perhaps they are from a different culture; you see, there are no cookie cutter Hams. Occasionally, someone may make you angry, and that is OK

because it makes you think of how you can see

issues from the other person's perspective. You see all Hams are different and yet all Hams are the same. Rather than our differences dividing us we should all endeavor to appreciate those differences as part of Amateur Radio's greatest attraction. I have made friends with people I know I would have never met had it not been for Amateur Radio, all different and yet all the same. We even have our own secret language almost no one else understands. It makes my hobby particularly interesting, and no, I don't own a NEXTEL. Build up your fellow Amateur, there really are not that many of us. We should value each and every one.

Wishing you additional enjoyment in your radio hobby es 73 fer now de Ed KC8PCK

## Letter from the Editor

*Continued from page 3*

My personal opinion is that this newsletter is one of the things that makes MARA a great club. I would not want to see it go by the wayside, like so many other great newsletters have. One feature that makes this newsletter especially great is the fact that it is available to anyone, via the Internet. I have never seen the winner of last year's Michigan Newsletter Contest, because I am not a member of their club. Their newsletter is on the Internet, but you need a password to access it. I am guessing that they do this to encourage membership. I can certainly understand this line of thinking, however, in my mind; the free exchange of information takes precedence. Evidently, MARA's membership feels the same way, since the club pays good money to mail this to non-members, and the club allows free access via the Internet.

In closing, I ask anyone, member or not, to type out their thoughts, and e-mail them to me. Even a brand-new ham could give opinions. You don't need to be an expert on any subject; in fact, you don't even need to know how to spell. That is what we have an Editor for.

73, Jim ki8jd

## CW Abbreviations, Prosigns, etc.

By Jim ki8jd

*This is the final part of an article, which was started in the May 2004 issue.*

There are also many Q-signals, so we will only cover the most popular. There is even a whole set of special Q-signals that are used in CW nets, and they are called QN-signals. As this article is geared towards the beginner, we will not cover the QN-signals at this time.

Q-signals, when used properly, replace an entire sentence, or at least most of a sentence. However, it is fairly common nowadays to hear Q-signals used as nouns instead of as sentences.

**QRL** - with no question mark, this means, "The frequency is in use"

**QRL?** - Means "Is the frequency in use?" or "Are you busy?" You should always use this one before tuning up or calling CQ. You do not use it to answer someone else's CQ.

**QRM** - Means "I am being interfered with" or, as a noun, "man-made noise" (from a nearby station)

**QRM?** - Means "Are you being interfered with?"

**QRN** - Means "I have static", or as a noun, "natural noise", such as lightning crashes.

**QRN?** - Means "Do you have much natural noise on your end?"

**QRO** - Means "Please increase power", or, as a noun, refers to a high-powered station

**QRO?** - Means "Should I increase power?"

**QRP** - Means "Please decrease power", or, as a noun, refers to a station of low power, often under 5 watts.

**QRP?** - Means "May I decrease power?"

**QRS** - Means "Send slower", often sent "PSE QRS" (please send slower) This one is a must-know for the beginner!

**QRS?** - Means "Should I send slower?"

**QRT** - Means "stop sending", or "shutting down", sometimes used as "I must QRT for dinner".

**QRZ** - Means "you are being called by \_\_\_\_\_", but, in contests, etc, means "please call me"

**QRZ?** - Means "who is calling me?"

**QSB** - Means "your signal is fading", often due to changes in the ionosphere.

**QSB?** - Means "is my signal fading?"

**QSL** - Means "I copy your message", but also can refer to a QSL card.

**QSL?** - Means "Did you copy my transmission?", but is rarely used as "do you QSL?" (as in QSL cards)

**QSO** - Means "I can communicate with \_\_\_\_\_", however, it is usually used as a noun, and means "conversation" or "contact", as in "TNX FER QSO"

**QSO?** - Means "can you communicate with \_\_\_\_\_?"

**QSY** - Means "change frequency to \_\_\_\_\_"

**QSY?** - "Shall I change frequency to \_\_\_\_\_"

**QTH** - Means "My location is \_\_\_\_\_", and is sent "QTH GRAND RAPIDS, MI" Often you will hear "MY QTH IS...", which is a waste of words, but acceptable nowadays.

**QTH?** - Means "What is your location?" You could send "What is your QTH?", but again, it is a waste of words.

Well, enough for now, have fun.

73 Jim ki8jd

For further information; see

<http://home.alltel.net/johnshan/lists.txt>

(Chris N6CWA submitted this; I don't know where he got it from. Pretty funny stuff, Thanks Chris)

Simply follow these guidelines, and you will insure your status as a lid, GUARANTEED!!

- 1.) For a stateside contact, be sure to use phonetics for your name, especially if you have a simple name such as Ed or Bob. The person you are talking to knows enough to get a license, but is severely lacking mental faculties in other areas.
- 2.) For a stateside, non-contest contact, ALWAYS use Q signals. As a matter of fact, just the other day, I was walking down the street, somebody shouted out my name, I turned around and said "QR ZED?!?!?."
- 3.) When breaking into a roundtable, immediately keydown upon acknowledgement and go on and on for minutes about something that has nothing to do with what is being discussed. This is tremendously endearing to a group that you have never spoken with before.
- 4.) In said roundtable, use push-to-talk. This will guarantee one becoming the center of attention, and keep your agenda on the table.
- 5.) If you are given a weak signal report, try to keep the conversation going anyway. That way, the others will have a chance to evaluate the performance of their receiver. You are doing them a tremendous favor.
- 6.) On the occasion that you are very readable, at the end of your thought, odds are that the other station can't assemble your train of thought, so say "OVER OVER!!"
- 7.) If you happen across a roundtable with discussion that you find objectionable, stay riveted to that frequency, let the blood boil, jump in, call everybody a CB'er, and whatever you do, DON'T identify.
- 8.) When it IS time to identify, add "for ID" to the end of your call. You're right, other amateurs not as swift as you have no idea what a callsign is.
- 9.) Also, when identifying, give the time. Really, the other guy may think that your call could change within the next ten minutes, or it was something else ten minutes previous.
- 10.) When calling CQ, always tell the prospective contact which band you are on. They may be confused.
- 11.) When it comes to DX, tell the DX that you called to say hello, you won't hold it, and that there are many stations calling. It could very well be that the poor DX station was wondering if you were going to die soon, if you are gracious, and if his receiver has problems.
- 12.) For a bonus, remind the especially rare DX working a pile-up that you have worked them several times. Mention the last several times specifically, and fill them in on your wife, new car, new rig, new dog, and your gallbladder surgery. Take your time doing this.
- 13.) When trying to bust the pileup, pay no heed to what the DX operator is asking for. Keep shouting. He probably either screwed up your call, or other people weren't listening for what he was asking for.
- 14.) If the DX is running split, jump on his transmitting frequency and ask the pileup what his call is. If you can hear him or not is of no consequence.
- 15.) Don't have any fun. Get on the local repeater and gossip about how the local club is all about money.
- 16.) Don't buy a dummy load, just tune up on a busy frequency. The efficiency of your station will be determined by how much the people on frequency talk about how well their auto-notch filters work.

## MARA Membership Roster as of 8-22-04

Harold R	Allen	KB8MNI
Chris	Anderson	N6CWA
Pam	Anderson	KC8VUB
Sandy	Biziorek	K8VOJ
Steve	Biziorek	K8VOL
Cindy	Cordes	KC8OTW
James M.	Cordes	KI8JD
Larry L.	Dells	KC8KVR
William C	Dells	KG8PI
Richard	Douglas	KC8NKA
Wayne M.	Dowling	KB8VOZ
Keith Jr	Eadie	KC8FQK
Mike	Eilers	K8OOK
Alan	Gittins	W8LOJ
Tom	Hansen	N8DGD
Gene	Holiday	KC8RSE
Steve J	Holiday	N8SJH
Jack	Kunnen	AB8ND
Serge	Lisk	N8NFZ
Edmund	Lomasiewicz	W8NZW
Dan	Markowski	N8NIJ
Marion	Mikula	KC8NVX
Phillip J.	Mikula	N8ITY
Samuel T.	Nabkey	K8SN
Thomas	Parker	KC8YOE
Russ	Povenz	KC8LOI
Richard R.	Ranta	K8JX
Leonard	Schaafsma	W8SPX
Gale A.	Scholten	N8GS
Carl	Thompson	WA8AAT
Dan	Thompson	N8WKM
Evelyn	Thompson	KB8ILI
Gaye	White	
Louie	White	N8ZVB
Jerome V.	Wittkoski	W8MSK
Bill	Zaidel	N8VWI
Connie	Zaidel	N8WKQ

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**Membership Information / Application Form - Please circle any info you want kept private !**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Spouse's name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Call** \_\_\_\_\_ **Previous call** \_\_\_\_\_ **License Class** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone #** \_\_\_\_\_ **OR** \_\_\_\_\_

**e-mail Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Current ARRL member?** Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ **Your Birthday** \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL:** I enclose my dues for the next year. Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

**Have you ever been a member of MARA before?** Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_