

The Open Feed Line

A Publication of the Michigan Amateur Radio Alliance (MARA)

Volume 14, Issue 1 - Friendship, Community Service & Advancement of the Hobby - Jan.-Mar. 2005

A Note from the Net Coordinator

By Chris N6CWA

I want to say Thank-you to all the folks who helped in making the MARA Net such a great success in 2004. I appreciate all the hard and loyal work you did. In no special order thanks to Wayne KB8VOZ, Carl WA8AAT, Larry KC8KVR, Jerry W8MSK, Jim KI8JD, Jack AB8ND, Russ KC8LOI, Pam KC8VUB, Gale N8GS, Ed N8UXN, Dan N8NIJ, and Richie K8JX. I am looking forward to another year of great topics and meeting new amateurs in 2005. Remember this is a club sponsored net and it will only work with your participation.**

2005 MICHIGAN QSO PARTY

Attention Michigan Amateurs. It's that time of year again! Time to start talking about the 2005 Michigan QSO Party. This is a great opportunity to get on the HF bands, have some fun, and represent the great State of Michigan. The organizers of this event would like to see as many Michigan stations on the air as possible. It is the activity of the Michigan stations that make this event a success.

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MARA M.O.T.Y Award

By Pam KC8VUB

MARA is initiating a "Member Of The Year" Award to recognize a MARA member who has distinguished themselves throughout the year within the Michigan Amateur Radio Alliance organization.

A MARA member can be nominated at any time throughout the year by any MARA member simply by completing the nomination form and submitting it to the MOTY Chairperson (yes, you can even nominate yourself). A short feature will be published on each nominee in the *Open Feed Line*, but not more than one (1) per month (or 3 per issue of the newsletter). If a member is nominated more than once in a year, he/she will be featured only once annually. A year shall be defined as the period from Award to Award.

The Award recipient will be determined by a majority club vote at the August MARA business meeting. The Award shall be presented immediately upon completion of the voting.

To nominate a candidate, please send a brief e-mail to Pam (KC8VUB) at kc8vub@aol.com. Include the name and call sign of your choice candidate and a description of why you feel this member should receive the award.**

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 31st, and club dues are due on January 1st. 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
Larry Dells KC8KVR c/o

MARA

P.O.Box 670

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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.

What's the Buzz?

By Jim ki8jd

Have you ever been on 2-meter FM chatting with a friend, when you hear a buzzing on his signal? How about when you are taking check-ins for a net, and you hear that same buzzing noise as someone is checking in? What is it about? What does it mean?

FM receivers possess a quality known as "capture effect". Only the strongest signal can be heard, while weaker ones are more or less ignored. This is quite different than AM, SSB, or CW receivers, where the weaker signals can be heard in the background.

If one signal is many times stronger than the other, nothing will be heard of the weaker signal. However, as the signals become more equal in strength, the weaker signal will cause a buzzing sound on the stronger signal. When the two signals are exactly equal in strength, neither signal will be intelligible; a buzzing sound will be the only thing that is heard.

With a little careful listening, you will be able to recognize the buzz, and be able to know that there may be someone else out there. This is good knowledge for a radio operator to have. Sometimes, it could also be some sort of interference, such as intermod.**

Attention All Hams

In case you haven't noticed, the Grand Rapids Clear Channel AM stations WTKG 1230 and WOOD 1300 have been airing public service announcements promoting Ham Radio. This has been going on for over a

month. These PSAs were produced by the ARRL. Phil Tower, program director for the stations, got them on the air in the Grand Rapids market. I want to strongly recommend you take the small effort needed to send Phil a QSL card thanking him for airing the message and his effort to help promote our service. I'll leave it at that so you can do it in your own words! Mail to the following:

WTKG-AM / WOOD-AM
ATTN: PHIL TOWER
77 MONROE CENTER, STE 1000
GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503

73 Jack NY8D

Home-brewed Contest

By Jim ki8jd

The Michigan DX Association has discontinued the Great Lakes QSO Party, and replaced it with the Great Lakes Sweepstakes. New name, new rules, new contest. This will be a 48-hour contest, starting Friday night, July 22nd, and running until Sunday night, July 24th (local time).

This contest will award extra points to those operating from a Great Lakes island and/or to those operating within 3300 feet of a G.L. lighthouse, and will also award extra points to those working G.L. islands and lighthouses. For further details, check out the rules at <http://mdxa1.org/GLSWEEPS.html>

Even if you operate from home, you will be a sought-after contact for someone, as non-Great Lakes stations may only work Great Lakes stations.**

2005 MICHIGAN QSO PARTY

Continued from page 1

As you can see from the rules listed below, this is only a 12-hour event. Please consider getting on the air for the whole thing, or any portion of the 12-hour period. You can operate from home, portable, or mobile. We again, with the support of mobile stations plan on having activity in all 83 counties.

How about making this a club event? You can submit your individual or multi-op scores under the name of the your club and maybe bring home the club plaque. Hey, why not challenge another local area club or other groups within your club? Are there others in your club that would consider a mini expedition for a portable operation in one of the Michigan counties with minimal activity?? Those of you that have been in the QSO Party, please help us get the word out and encourage other Michigan hams to participate and join the fun. The name of the game is to have fun and make Michigan "Radio Active" on April 16th. Hope to hear you on the air!

Date /Time: Michigan QSO Party, sponsored by the Mad River Radio Club, from 1600Z April 16th until 0400Z April 17th. Stations may operate the full 12 hours. (12 noon to 12 midnight local Michigan time on April 16)

Modes and Categories: Phone and CW on 80/40/20/15/10 meters. Single-op, multi-op, and mobile categories. Single-op entries are categorized by output power, QRP (5W or less), Low Power

(100W or less), and High Power (greater than 100W)

Multipliers: Work stations once per band and mode. Work other states and Michigan Stations. MI to MI QSO's are allowed. Work portables and mobiles again as they change county, state or province.

Exchange: Exchange QSO number and location (county for MI stations, state/province or "DX" for others).

Scoring: One point per phone QSO, two points per CW QSO. Count multipliers once per mode. Multipliers are MI counties for all entries, plus states & provinces for MI entries only. Final score is total QSO points times total multipliers.

Freqs: Suggested frequencies: CW-3545, 7045, 14045, 21045, 28045; Phone-3850, 7225, 14250, 21300, 28450.

Log Submittal: Mail logs no later than 30 days after the contest to: Mad River Radio Club, c/o Dave Pruett, 2727 Harris Road, Ypsilanti, MI 48198 or via e-mail to logs@miqp.org

More Information: For complete rules, along with free logging software, log and summary sheets, see <http://www.miqp.org>

73 es cu April 16th 2005... Mark NU8Z

The 2-meter Band Plan

Once upon a time, I was looking at my handy-dandy Icom wall-chart band plan, when I realized that it was incorrect for Michigan. Maybe it is just old? In the resulting research, I noticed that the ARRL band plan could also use an extremely tiny bit of tweaking for Michigan use. Well, an article was born. After all, who amongst us wants to accidentally operate simplex on a repeater frequency?

Please bear with me; I want to get the FCC's Part 97 "out of the way". To make Richie proud, I even decided to quote this important legal document. Under 97.301a, all hams except Novices are granted transmitting privileges from 144 to 148 MHz in ITU Region 2 (the Western Hemisphere). However, under 97.305c, only CW is allowed from 144 to 144.1 MHz. Also under 97.305a, "An amateur station may transmit a CW emission on any frequency authorized to the control operator."

We will stay with Part 97 for a minute. Under 97.203d, automatically controlled beacons are only allowed from 144.275 to 144.300 MHz. Under 97.205b, repeaters are prohibited from 144 to 144.5 MHz, and from 145.5 to 146.0 MHz. Of course, FCC rules are law.

Next, we have information provided by the Michigan Area Repeater Council. Here in Michigan, we have 59 repeater pairs. We have repeater input frequencies from 144.510 to 144.890, with the corresponding outputs up 600 KHz, from 145.110 to 145.490 MHz. These "channels" (get out your dictionary) are spaced 20 KHz from each other. There are more inputs from 146.020 to 146.380, with the corresponding outputs up 600 KHz, from 146.620 to 146.980 MHz. Finally there are inputs from 147.600 to 147.980, with the outputs down 600 KHz, from 147.000 to 147.380 MHz. When running FM simplex, we should stay 20 KHz away from these "channels", lest we cause interference.

I tried to make a graph-type chart, but it was too much work to make it look nice. So I just modified the ARRL's band plan a tiny bit. Maybe someone who feels artistic with his or her computer can make a graph-type wall-chart for a later issue of this newsletter.

144.000 to 144.050_CW only - EME
144.050 to 144.100_CW only – General use
144.103 to 144.200_SSB-EME & weak signal
144.200_ National SSB Calling Frequency
144.200 to 144.275_General SSB operations
144.275 to 144.300_Propagation Beacons
144.300 to 144.500_New OSCAR sub-band
144.510 to 144.890_FM Repeater Inputs
144.910 to 145.090_FM Packet, etc.
145.110 to 145.490_FM Repeater Outputs
145.510 to 145.800_Misc. & Experimental
145.800 to 146.000_ OSCAR sub-band
146.020 to 146.380_FM Repeater Inputs
146.400 to 146.600_FM Simplex
146.520_National FM Calling Frequency
146.620 to 147.380_FM Repeater outputs
147.400 to 147.580_FM Simplex
147.600 to 147.980_FM Repeater Inputs
148.000_ End of 2-meter amateur band

Many people requested the suggested simplex channels, so here they are, only slightly modified from the ARRL band plan. It would have made more sense in Michigan to move the 147 MHz channels down 5 KHz, but many are already using the ARRL-suggested frequencies as shown below. Of course, these are only suggested frequencies.

146.400, 146.415, 146.430, 146.445,
146.460, 146.475, 146.490, 146.505,
146.520, 146.535, 146.550, 146.565,
146.580, 146.595
147.405, 147.420, 147.435, 147.450,
147.465, 147.480, 147.495, 147.510,
147.525, 147.540, 147.555, 147.570

73, Jim ki8jd

(Editor's note: This was submitted by Wayne KB8VOZ, it originated on the ARRL club president's e-mail reflector. It seems to be about getting people interested in Amateur Radio. We have Kevin's permission to print this in our newsletter.)

Now my 5 points.....

Emergency communications.....in Oklahoma it's an easy sell....with all the severe weather/tornadoes.....everyone is very keen on emcomm....in fact a large portion of the community that have scanners, monitor our repeater frequencies during severe weather because they know they will probably hear about any problems quicker and with more accuracy from us than from the local media....remember, keep it local...where does your group fit into the emcomm structure..are you storm spotters....or work with a particular agency....a lot of folks get licensed in our area just to participate in severe weather spotting.

World wide communications.....i explain that on the internet, you can talk to someone on the other side of the world....but that is a WIRED service and that can be very limiting when talking about remote areas....with amateur radio, I can carry on a conversation with someone in some remote part of the world without the wires....i also bring some DX QSL card from exotic locations....if you are speaking to a group of adults 40 and older.....telling them that you chatted with a guy in Moscow or Beijing really gets them to listening.....they still remember Radio Free Europe and VOA, when no one knew what went on behind the iron curtain....so chatting with eastern block folks interests them....or chatting with someplace in todays news.....i got lots of WOW's recently with a QSL from Kuwait City.

Amateur radio is the ultimate in high tech...we not only utilize existing and proven technology, we are some of the leaders in developing the

communications technologies that everyone will be using tomorrow...you don't have to get too technical here.....just point this out.

Education.....the most important lesson that our children have to learn today is the ability to communicate their thoughts and ideas in a coherent fashion....we use good basic technology and rules that help teach people how to do that....if you are in emergency communications....you have to communicate the information quickly and correctly....if you are speaking with a foreign ham, you have to use basic communications skills to be understood.....

Also in the education area.....most of what we do is fundamental communications technology and techniques.....any good teacher or coach will tell you that you can't teach an advanced skill (high tech communications) without first learning the fundamentals.....

And last but not least, I always close by explaining how anyone in the audience can go about getting a license....i tell them about our license classes and that you don't have to learn code to get on the air....i stress how much they can enjoy it then I tell them about the 68 year old lady that took my last class and passed the test the first try and is on the air and having a ball....and is working on the code and studying for her general to get on HF....if she can do it.....then they can too!

That's my 5.....

This is a great idea guys.....i'll be looking forward to the other posts....

Take care

Kevin O'Dell N0IRW
PIO Oklahoma Section
OES Oklahoma Section

Something is in the Closet

By Jim ki8jd

There is a dark secret hiding in the closet. Not many wish to speak of it. We don't mention it in polite company. Some hams are unaware of its existence, while others don't want to admit its existence, even to themselves.

It is an unspoken fact that many of us were users of the Citizens Band radio service before we graduated to the Amateur Service. It is difficult to deny that fact.

The big secret is, well, I'm just going to go ahead and say it, "CB-phobia". Whew, I feel better already! Yes, some hams have a problem with CB-phobia. These CB-phobes sometimes lie awake at night worrying that their neighbors might think that they are CB-ers. This phobia is an unhealthy condition that, if untreated, can lead to the abuse of fellow hams, and other undesirable outcomes.

The symptoms of CB-phobia vary with the severity of the malady. It starts with a fear of any language associated with the Citizens Band, including the widely accepted 10-code. In some cases, a fear of "channelization" is exhibited, and the afflicted becomes angry at the mention of the word "channel".

In the later stages of the sickness, mild insanity becomes a symptom of the phobia. Sometimes the unfortunate individual will listen to repeaters, just waiting to jump on a

new ham that accidentally uses words perceived to be associated with the Citizens Band. Judgment becomes impaired to the point that the afflicted person believes that they are doing Amateur Radio a favor by correcting those who use phrases like "the personal here is", or "the handle here is". It is not their fault that they do not realize that they may be chasing away a new ham by embarrassing him or her over the airwaves. In their confused state, they have assumed the role of "repeater cop".

Sadly, there is no sure-fire cure for this malady, however the afflicted can recover to a large degree. Of course, admitting that you have a problem is always the first step towards recovery. Drinking large quantities of water and chicken soup couldn't hurt. Mostly, it requires a large amount of self-control, and a constant effort on the part of the afflicted to avoid criticizing others for perceived CB-like behavior. Vigilance is very important, because the ailment will play with your mind, and cause you to rationalize your actions and thoughts.

We should show compassion for those afflicted with CB-phobia. We should realize that we cannot change their behavior; they must choose to change their own behavior.**

Items for Sale



Uniden Bearcat Scanner BC185XL
16 Channel Programmable
9.5"W X 2.5"H X 7"D
Covers; 29 – 54 MHz FM, 118 – 140
MHz AM, 136 – 174 MHz FM, 406 –
512 MHz FM
Wood grain finish, excellent
condition, owner's manual, \$50. Call
Carl WA8AAT at 677-1174

Kenwood TS 930 Transceiver with
tuner - \$800
Icom IC751 Transceiver - \$700
32 ft. steel tower - \$150
QST magazines - \$5 for 1 full year.
Many other items for sale. Will
dicker. Call Leonard W8SPX at 791-
9190

I have an ICOM IC-735 HF
Transceiver with ICOM mic (no
manual or power supply). Does
\$375 look right for this transceiver? I
purchased it about 10 years ago in

Hawaii from a ham and watched him
use it at the time, but I've never used
it, to this day. It's been in storage,
ever since. He mentioned at the
time that he had just put some extra
things into it, but I'm not sure what
those things were anymore. I think
that they were some kind of filters,
but I could be wrong. It's been about
10 years since then.

I also have a MFJ Versa Tuner II
Model MFJ-945C (again no manual)
for sale. Does \$60 look right for the
tuner? I purchased it from the same
guy at the same time that I
purchased the transceiver listed
above. I watched him use the tuner
at the time too, but I never used this
item either. I can use the money to
purchase things to complete a
portable 2-meter Packet station and
home station, and still make it a
pretty good deal for a local ham.
Thanks in advance.

73,
John Vander Stel WH6LY
j_vanderstel@juno.com

Rigblaster Plus - \$100.
(2) Kenwood MJ88 mic adapters for
hooking a modular mic to an 8-pin
radio - \$15.00 each. Call Chris
N6CWA at 887-5772

Your Ad Could Be Here



Al Eckman WW8WW declared Great Lakes Division Ham of the Year.

Since 1993, Al has served two terms as president of the Lowell Amateur Radio Club. In his “off duty” hours he conducted Amateur Radio licensing classes for students from Lowell High and other schools. This effort resulted in a group of new amateurs in the area and the formation of the ARGYL Club in 1994. Today, thanks to his efforts, over sixty young people have been licensed into Amateur radio. Many are in college and beyond. Presently the club has twenty-six licensed members.

Under Al’s guidance, the ARGYL club has evolved into a well-structured organization with officers and members that plan their own events and activities. One example is the annual ARGYL swap shop at the Lowell High School. Thanks to the support of area amateurs, the swap has been a wonderful success. Proceeds from the event provide funding for

equipment and club activities. ARGYL members have held field day at several unique and interesting sites such as the lighthouse on the pier in Grand Haven, Beaver Island, Mackinac Island, Fallasburg Park and aboard the submarine USS Silverside. They enjoy other activities such as building antennas, transmitter hunts and attending the annual Dayton HamVention®. The group owns and operates a VHF repeater which features Echo-link® internet access. Plans for a remote receiver and a UHF repeater are on the drawing board.

Al has been a leader, mentor and friend to many Michigan hams. His selfless investment in our young people continues to sow the seed of Amateur Radio’s future.

Michigan Amateur Radio Alliance

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