

# The Open Feed Line

A Publication of the Michigan Amateur Radio Alliance (MARA)

Volume 14, Issue 4 - Friendship, Community Service & Advancement of the Hobby - Oct.-Dec. 2005



From left to right, Bruce WD8KPQ works voice, Jerry W8MSK works CW with the headphones unplugged, and a veteran and Larry KC8KVR look and listen.

## Mara's Veteran's Day Special Event Station

*By Jim ki8jd*

Mara members worked together to make this Special Event Station a grand success. The event took place on Veteran's Day, November 11th 2005, at The Grand Rapids Home for Veterans, located at 3000 Monroe Avenue, on the city's northwest side. In addition to the veterans and Amateur Radio operators, there were many other visitors present on that special day, and many other activities taking place.

Dozens of vets visited the "radio room". There were a few veterans who showed great interest in Amateur Radio. There was even talk of helping to get some of the vets licensed, and getting a permanent Amateur Radio station set up at the home. There will be more information on this effort in the next issue.

Chris N6CWA and Larry KC8KVR organized this event. Nine hams participated, eight of which were Mara members.

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## 2005 What a year!

*By Richie K8JX*

This club certainly has had a very productive year. Starting in January, we started out with the need of moving the repeater from its Sparta location to the North End of Grand Rapids. On May 14<sup>th</sup>, it signed on at its new location. We can now access the repeater using our handi-talkies from the Grand Rapids area.

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## Ham Radio License Class

*By Jim ki8jd*

The Grand Rapids Amateur Radio Association is going to start their yearly Technician license class on January 3rd, 2006. They will be held every Tuesday, from 7 to 9 PM at the Kent County Red Cross, right up until the March 10th VE testing session.

The book "Now You're Talking" will be furnished with the class. There is a \$25 fee to cover the cost of the book, etc.

To sign up, or for further information, contact the instructor, Dave KF8QL, at [devosd@hotmail.com](mailto:devosd@hotmail.com). I also have his phone number, but I chose not to put it in the newsletter.

## ***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.

## Thank you

By Chris N6CWA

It is hard for me to believe that another year has gone by so quickly. As the Net Coordinator for 2005, I appreciate the loyalty and time that has been taken to help make sure that the MARA net takes place each week. I look forward to participating in future nets. I would like to thank in no specific order all of you who made my job so easy once again. Wayne KB8VOZ, Carl WA8AAT, Larry KC8KVR, Jim KI8JD, Jack AB8ND, Richie K8JX, Alan W8LOJ, Louie N8ZVB, Jerry W8MSK, and Bruce WD8KPQ. With all the great topics, interests, and ideas that make up such great nets I hope to hear more people get involved. And remember you do not need to be a member of our club to join in on the fun, as we say, "all are welcome".

## From Our Field Day Chairman

By Mike K800K

Field Day 2005 is history and the results are out. According to QST, 33,000 people participated, activating 2200 stations, which made 1.2 million contacts. W8USA placed 317th in 2A class, which is the most popular. W8DC placed 285th. Hopefully that will not happen again. There are many contests between now and June. Even if you do not like contesting, you can practice by trying to copy as many stations as you can thru the QRM. This will sharpen your mind. Mark your calendars NOW, the 2006 FD will be on June 23/24.

## Member News

By Richie K8JX

Harold Allen, KB8MNI, one of the original Mara founding members, is recuperating from a nasty fall he took a couple of months ago. He still reads through this Newsletter and if you would like to write to him, write care of:

Metron Forest Hills, RM # 58,  
1095 Medical Park Land Dr.  
Grand Rapids MI 49546

Leonard Schaafsma, W8SPX, has a lot of radios, parts and just about everything else you can think of, for sale. If you need it, he probably has it. Contact Len at 616-791-9190.

Richie Ranta K8JX, our web master, has been creating a safe site, so we won't have to worry about the wrong person getting personal information about us. He has contacted several professional web designers and security engineers and has lots of ways to prevent identity theft. They will be incorporated in the present site as well as the new site he has been working on.

## Ham of the Year Award

By Richie K8JX

Starting now, we're accepting nominations for Mara's "Ham of the Year" award, which will be presented at the "New Hams Dinner". The New Hams Dinner is scheduled for Saturday, February 18, 2006. It will be held at the Old Country Buffet off Alpine in Walker. Be there at 6PM.

To nominate someone for the "Ham of the Year" award, simply write out a brief statement on why you feel the candidate should get the award. Please be specific and give examples of what he has accomplished. If you want examples of what others have done to be awarded H.O.T.Y., go to Mara's web site <http://www.w8usa.org> and click on Ham of the year. To submit a candidate, please send your submission to: MARA, HOTY, PO BOX 670, Comstock Park, MI. 49321

Or e-mail either Jim, KI8JD at [jamescordes@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jamescordes@sbcglobal.net) or Rich K8JX at [K8JX@MIARTS.org](mailto:K8JX@MIARTS.org)

Let's show how much we all appreciate our "special" Hams.

## Mara's Veteran's Day Special Event Station

*Continued from page 1*

We used our club's call sign, W8USA, which was perfect for this event. With the portable radio stations, the group was able to make 127 contacts, all in North America. So far, 29 QSL cards have been received and already answered. Not many VHF/UHF contacts were made, as there was a very high noise level inside the building on these bands.

A special thank-you is in order to World Radio and the ARRL's QST for running announcements on very short notice. I did not see it, but I am told that World Radio ran a piece on the front page!

A big thank-you is also in order to The Grand Rapids Home For Veterans for their wonderful hospitality. In particular, we would like to thank Tom Armock, director of Public Relations, and Jan Rosochacki, community and volunteer specialist.

Chris and Larry set up some of the equipment on Thursday evening, and the job was finished beginning at 7:30 Friday morning. On-air operations commenced at 9:30 AM, and finished at 3:30 PM, as the "radio room" was needed for a different activity.

Hams on hand included; Chris N6CWA, Larry KC8KVR, Jack AB8ND, Bruce WD8KPQ, Jerry W8MSK, Mike K8OOK, Carl WA8AAT, Tom N8DGD, and Rich KD8BGQ. From what I heard, everyone had a very enjoyable day. At the December meeting, it was agreed that we should do this again next year.

### An Extra Word

(To take up space)

Having, and using, a tube of rosin-type soldering flux makes soldering easy. It is available at Radio Shack.

## 2005 What a year!

*Continued from page 1*

We also upgraded the repeater with a brand new antenna. Testing of its range and lobe placement will begin shortly, weather permitting.

The ever-popular FOX HUNT, returned with some new hunters joining the event. Char WD8LGN and Bruce WD8KPQ not only got into the spirit of the hunt, but found the Fox too! We also had the Dream Team show their stuff by finding the Fox on the last hunt of the season. Once again, the Hunts were followed up by a tasty dinner provided by the Foxes! The meals were so good; we actually included member's favorite recipes in one of our Newsletters. More will be included in the coming year.

Mara's busy season begins in May, with the Memorial Day Operation Care Coffee Stop. All three events ran without a hitch, and it is a testimony to all the hard work and commitment of the members that this Public Service has been in operation since 1995! A big thank you to all involved! It was also the year that Gaye and Louie White, N8ZVB volunteered over 144 hours over all three Operation Care Coffee stops.

Just when Operation Care is getting started, and the I.R.A. swap has gone by, we're up and running with Field Day. Once again we held the event at the same location and had lots of fun, making lots of new friends as well as taking the time to get re-acquainted with old friends. Field Day is always fun!

In August we held our end of season Picnic at Peg and Larry Dells, KC8KVR. It always is great to end the summer season relaxing with our friends.

2005 also was the year that the Mara Member of the Year Award came into being. The first nomination was made and we're hoping for more nominations before the August vote.

*Continued on page 5.*

## 2005 What a year!

*Continued from page 4*

It's time to think about nominating a club member for our new "Mara Member of the Year". For more information on how to nominate a fellow club member for this award, visit our web site, [www.w8usa.org](http://www.w8usa.org) and click on MMOTY.

The By-Laws committee, after a little more than 2 years of going over the needs of the club and receiving suggestions from members, presented its recommendations to the club. The document will be gone over this coming year.

Our Ham of the Year program was very special in that the person who was awarded it, AI, WW8WW, also received the MDXA's Pillars of Society award and then, the ARRL's Great Lakes Ham of the year award.

We had to change where we ate breakfast a couple of times this past year, due to a business changing hands and just trying out new places to hold our breakfast. Presently, The International House of Pancakes is where we meet every Saturday at 9AM. Yum.

2005 also saw the F.C.C. recommend removing the Morse code requirement for getting an Amateur License. How this will affect the club and its members is yet to be seen. But as I write this, not one person has asked if Mara will be holding an On-The-Air Morse Code class. Mara has been putting on Morse code classes since 1994, when we used G.R.A.R.A.'s 146.760 repeater.

At the close of this great year, we held elections and have two new faces on the board. James Cordes KI8JD was elected president and Lee Burgess W8ZP was elected Vice President for 2006.

January not only chairs our new executive board, but also provides the opportunity for members to volunteer for the various functions the club has. A partial list is always printed on page 2 of our Newsletter, "The Open Feed Line".

But, if you see something that you think needs doing, speak up! You'd be surprised at how many great ideas have started that way. For further information on existing appointments, you can look at our club's By-Laws, available either at our clubs' monthly meeting, or download it at our web site. Just click on Club Library and then By-Laws. Still not sure? Give a call to one of the board members and discuss what idea you have.

There's only one way to make YOUR club better. Get involved. It doesn't matter if it's only helping out during one of our Operation Care Coffee Stops, or simply writing up an article to share with the rest of the club. It all helps. Lets all help to make Mara a bigger, better club in 2006. "Get involved!"

But while ushering in the new folks, we didn't forget all the great efforts made by last year's board members. The club presented Marian and Wayne Dowling, KB8VOZ, president and Peg and Larry Dell's KC8KVR, vice president, with Special Service plaques, acknowledging their outstanding contributions they have made during this past year. "Thank you again".

The kazooos haven't even been put away yet, and we're already getting ready for our winter 2006 events. First, we'll be holding our Christmas party later this month. All the members will be contacted with the information on the time, date and place.

In trying to announce all the great events and contributions made by members this past year, I know I have omitted somebody. Please accept my heart felt apology for that. You see, all the members in this club do so many wonderful things; it is hard to keep track of them all.

**Thank you all for a wonderful 2005!**

## Cowboy Stew

*Submitted by Ed N8UXN*

HERE IS A GOOD COLD WEATHER FOOD.  
HERE IS WHAT YOU NEED FOR COWBOY  
STEW:

2-3 CUPS DICED AND PEELED POTATOES  
1 MEDIUM ONION--CHOPPED  
1/2 GREEN PEPPER---CHOPPED  
1 GARLIC CLOVE, PEELED AND MINCED,  
OR 1/2 TEASPOON OF GARLIC SALT  
1 CAN (11-1/2 ONCES) TOMATO JUICE ---V8  
IS THE BEST--TRUST ME  
1 1/2--2 POUNDS LEAN GROUND BEEF  
1 TABLESPOON CHILI POWDER, OR TO  
TASTE  
1 TABLESPOON WORCESTERSHIRE  
SAUCE  
2 CANS (11 OUNCES, EACH) WHOLE  
KERNEL CORN  
2 CANS (15 OUNCES EACH) RED KIDNEY  
BEANS --DRAINED  
1 CAN (14-1/2 OUNCES) DICED TOMATOES  
SALT TO TASTE  
PEPPER TO TASTE  
SHREDDED CHEDDAR CHEESE IF  
DESIRED

IN A 6 QT. POT, COOK DICED POTATOES,  
ONION, GREEN PEPPERS, AND GARLIC  
WITH TOMATO JUICE OVER MEDIUM HEAT.  
ADD A CUP OF WATER IF NEEDED. IN A  
SEPARATE SKILLET, CRUMBLE GROUND  
AND BROWN OVER MEDIUM HEAT. DRAIN  
OFF FAT. ADD BROWNED MEAT TO  
POTATO MIXTURE. STIR IN CHILI POWDER  
AND WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE. SIMMER,  
UNCOVERED, OVER MEDIUM LOW HEAT  
UNTIL POTATOES ARE TENDER. ADD  
CORN, KIDNEY BEANS AND DICED  
TOMATOES. SIMMER FOR ABOUT 20  
MINUTES OVER LOW HEAT. SEASON TO  
TASTE WITH SALT AND PEPPER. SERVE IN  
BOWLS AND TOP WITH THE SHREDDED  
CHEESE IF DESIRED. ---MAKES 8 TO 10  
SERVINGS

ED----N8UXN

## Jim's Fried Potatoes

*Submitted by Jim ki8jd*

Ingredients needed;

Potatoes  
Butter or margarine  
Lawry's Seasoned Salt  
1 or 2 onions

Wash enough potatoes to feed your crowd,  
then wash 2 or 3 more – do not peel. Cut  
potatoes into pieces about the size of a  
checker game piece. (How about a game of  
checkers?)

Dice an onion or two, depending upon size  
and personal preference. Put a dollop or two of  
butter or margarine into a frying pan large  
enough to hold the potatoes with about a 2-  
inch depth or less, and slowly melt the butter  
without burning it. Put potatoes into pan, and  
sprinkle lightly (enough so that you can see it)  
with the Lawry's Seasoned Salt. Add the  
onions, turn up the heat, and start mixing the  
ingredients by sliding a spatula under the  
potatoes, and gently flipping them over. When  
mixed, sprinkle again with Lawry's. Do not use  
too much, as the potatoes will get too spicy.  
Use as much heat as you can, without getting  
spatter. Continue turning potatoes (as outlined  
previously) to keep them from burning. By the  
time the potatoes are done, the onions will  
probably be black. Don't worry; serve them  
anyway. You won't need catsup.

Simple, but tasty. Some practice may be  
necessary.

## Late Breaking News!

Mara is having an after Christmas dinner  
party on February 4th, 2006 at Brann's  
Steakhouse on 5510 28th Street SE. RSVP's  
will be mailed to all members who paid dues in  
2005.

All the other pages were already printed, so  
this announcement appears here.