

The Open Feed Line

A Publication of the Michigan Amateur Radio Alliance (MARA)

Volume 17, Issue 1 - Friendship, Community Service & Advancement of the Hobby - Jan.-Mar. 2008

The Welcome New Hams Dinner

On behalf of the West Michigan Amateur Radio community, we warmly welcome you to our hobby and/or area. We, the Grand Rapids Amateur Radio Association, the Lowell Amateur Radio Club and the Michigan Amateur Radio Alliance, are providing you with this opportunity to meet us and also have a great evening out. The "Welcome New Hams Dinner" was started 13 years ago in order to provide an event for the newly licensed hams, as well as New Hams to our area, to come together and have a great dinner and meet other hams. We hope you will enjoy your evening.

To help you become acquainted with all that our Ham community has to offer, we have created this special issue of our club's newsletter. In it, we have tried to provide some of the information you will need to help make your Ham Radio experience in our area fun and exciting. The fun will come as you meet new Hams and also see how the different clubs operate. You will also discover many opportunities to learn more about our hobby, from Amateur TV, to packet, to our new digital repeaters. You'll find more than you could ever imagine occurring right here in the West Michigan area. We encourage you to attend our clubs' meetings, and see for yourself what each club has to offer. We'll look forward to seeing you.

The dinner will be Saturday, February 16th, at 6:00 p.m. at the Fire Mountain Restaurant on Alpine Avenue. Cost is \$13.65, which includes the meal, drink, and gratuity fee.

(Buy one- Get one Free coupon good for Fire Mountain. Requires 48 hours before you can receive it and print it out. Go to <http://www.RYANS.COM/ECLUB>)

Repeater Etiquette

For Newly-Licensed Hams

It won't be long till you decide on using one of our area's repeaters. The West Michigan area is blessed with repeaters of all shapes and sizes. From a 150-watt regional coverage repeater, to a linked system that covers from the northern part of Indiana to across the Mackinaw Bridge. We've got them! While we've only listed the local machines, you can also discover other repeaters that provide Echo link, internet linking and other new options by going to club meetings and asking. Here are two hints to help you use a repeater.

"How to use a repeater!"

1. It's always best to just listen to the repeater frequency first, before calling. If you hear nothing going on, just put your call sign out. Like "WD8ABC Listening". If somebody is there and they wish to talk, they'll come back to you. Putting your call sign out every 4 minutes isn't going to accomplish anything.
2. If there is already a conversation going on, join only if you can contribute something to what is being said. It's always best to ask if you can join. Hams are a friendly bunch, but even they require privacy now and then.

Also, remember to ID your station every 10 minutes, and at the end of your conversation. That's the law. There is more information on repeaters towards the end of this 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.

Publisher

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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
Comstock Park MI 49321-0670
E-mail- LLDGRD@netscape.net

MARA Club Officers

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Appointed Positions

Awards Manager

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Mike Eilers K8OOK
3565 4-Mile Rd. NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49505
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jamescordes@sbcglobal.net

Education Director

James Cordes KI8JD
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Grand Rapids MI 49504
616-459-1195 or 459-5415

Bereavement Director

Jerry Wittkoski W8MSK
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Field Day Chairperson

Mike Eilers K8OOK
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Coopersville MI 49404
616-837-8895
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Webmaster -- Richard M. Ranta K8JX

812 Graceland NE, Grand Rapids, MI, 49505 616-361-5975
K8JX@MIARTS.ORG

* 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.

Here is some information about the three clubs that sponsor the Welcome New Hams Dinner.

Lowell Amateur Radio Club

The Lowell ARC holds their monthly club meeting on the second Saturday of the month (for exact meeting dates, checkout our 2008 minutes page) at our NEW SHACK. It is located at 11535 East Fulton-Lowell. It is just east of the Key Heights Mobile Home Park on the north side of the road, or just west of Lowell Lanes bowling alley, on the opposite side of the road. There is a sign in front of the building that reads "Flat River Outreach Ministries". Park on the west side of the building and enter at the southwest corner of the building.

The LARC has a weekly open radio room every Thursday, 7PM until ?, except on holidays. Talk-in 145.270 MHz (P.L. 94.8Hz)

The repeater site is about 5 miles north of the city of Lowell at 2900 Lincoln Lake Ave NE, between 3 and 4 mile road on the east side of Lincoln Lake Road.

Interested in becoming a member? Just come to a second Saturday morning meeting of each month and our treasurer KA8WGF Stu, will be glad to receive your membership dues and sign you up. Memberships help cover operating and maintenance expenses of our repeater, plus the three receive links and various LARC projects.

Web site; [Http://www.w8lrc.org](http://www.w8lrc.org)
Mailto; w8lrc@k8sn.org

The Grand Rapids Amateur Radio Association

GRARA meets on the first Friday of the month, start time is 6:30PM at the American Red Cross Building, 1/2 block south of Leonard on Fuller NE. Their meeting schedule is 6:30PM social gathering, 7:00PM Business meeting.

GRARA maintains several repeaters, from 6 meters to 440 MHz and is also constructing a D-Star digital repeater system.

They also have a multi-tier membership system that covers all ages and family members.

They also hold an Open Radio Room, on Wednesday nights, at 7:15PM. Check with the club if they're going to have one.

GRARA has also started a 2-meter net on Wednesday night, at 8PM.

GRARA also has a yearly swap-n-shop during the fall. Check with GRARA for actual date and location.

Web site; <http://www.w8dc.org/>

Michigan Amateur Radio Alliance

MARA holds their monthly club meeting on the second Wednesday of the month, at 7:30PM at the Steepletown Building, on the southwest corner of 5th street and Davis NW, in Grand Rapids. They also have a social gathering after the club meeting, usually at Steak-N-Shake, on Alpine Ave.

They also get together on Saturday morning at 9AM for breakfast at the Breakfast Nook, corner of Plainfield Ave NE and Fuller Ave.

Web site; <http://www.w8usa.org>

The Prez's two bits

By Richie K8JX

While this newsletter is specially put together by our editor for the new hams in the area, it is also our first newsletter of the year. I want to say that I've been involved with the New Hams Dinner since its' inception, 13 years ago. It has been a great personal joy for me, since not only do I get to meet New Hams, but also renew old friendships with folks I normally wouldn't see during the year. We also have used this occasion to present the West Michigan Ham of the Year award. This was started way back in 1998 and became a reality shortly after 1999. This award is really an acknowledgement of an individual's personal achievement in Ham Radio, either over the past year, or over their lifetime. The list of nominated individuals grows each year.

Our club's yearly events have already started with the After-Christmas Dinner party at Branns. It seems we have something going on during each month of the year! Field Day is just around the corner and already we're looking for operators. Please let Mike, K8OOK know if you're interested in operating. We are also planning on holding another Veteran's Day special event at the Grand Rapids Home For Veterans. This is a great way to introduce our veterans to Amateur Radio. This has gone from being just a single event, to almost a yearly occasion.

The Great Lakes Award is still being worked and there has been talk about offering special endorsements.

Our public service events are fast approaching and this year, we'll need to replace all of the materials. Remember to try and keep at least one of the summer holidays open for our public service, Operation CARE (Combined Accident Reduction Effort). Another great way of demonstrating Amateur Radio to the public.

With the warmer weather coming, we'll need to form clean-up-the-repeater-site crews. Larry

KC8KVR, Mike K8OOK and Wayne KB8VOZ have done an excellent job in the past, for this thankless job.

We will also be assembling the control system, so we will have to experience some on-the-air tests.

We have something for everybody. Hope to see you there.

AN INVITATION TO JOIN MARA

By Mike K8OOK

What is MARA? Is it a ham radio club, a social club, or an eating club? It is some of each. MARA meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:30 PM. The location is the Steepleton Building at the SW corner of 5th and Davis NW in Grand Rapids. Enter at the SW corner of the building. The meetings are usually over within an hour. After the meeting, some members go to the Steak & Shake on Alpine NW for treats and pleasant conversation.

Never passing up a chance to eat, a group of members and their spouses meet at the Breakfast Nook, corner of Plainfield Ave. and Fuller at 9 AM every Saturday for breakfast and more pleasant conversation. From 2 to almost 20 people have shown up.

The club participates in the ARRL Field Day during the last full weekend in June. The Saturday evening dinner and Sunday morning breakfast are hard to beat. Plus you have a chance to operate at your own speed in a contest simulating an emergency in the field without AC power available. Great fun and food is had by all who attend.

Our public service consists of a coffee stop held at a local rest area during the 3 major summer holidays. Our goal is to help travelers arrive at their destination safely and hopefully through donations, add some money to our bank account. More fun than work, keeping the coffee pots going and chatting with the travelers. People can be so interesting.

(Continued on page 5)

AN INVITATION TO JOIN MARA

(Continued from page 5)

Ever been on a Fox Hunt?? The hunt consists of trying to find a hidden transmitter (the fox) with portable equipment. It can be fun and very confusing at times. Sometimes the terrain and/or a building can bend the signal path. Usually afterwards, here is the food thing again, a picnic or get-together of some sort is held with great food.

This will be the fourth year (2008) that we will have held a special events station at the Grand Rapids Veteran's Home on Monroe Ave. NW around Veterans Day in November. The residents really enjoy what we are doing and it exposes them to ham radio. Last year, the facility, you guessed it, bought us lunch and what a lunch it was!!!!!!!

We have a repeater on 145.230-, PL 94.8. A 2-meter net is held each Thursday at 8 PM. No food is served. Also check out our web site at www.w8usa.org. Membership dues are \$20 per year. Five dollars is charged for spouses or seniors over 70 years old. Membership is free to students under 21.

If finances permit, we have an "After Christmas" Christmas party at a popular Grand Rapids restaurant in January or February. Another great time with great food.

SO---what is MARA?? No, it is not an eating club. It is a group of very friendly people intent on having a good time with a "side dish" of ham radio (the food thing one more time). You are invited to stop by and find out for yourself.

Mike Eilers K8OOK
Membership Director

Volunteer Exam Sessions

VE exams, for getting your first license, or upgrading, are held at the American Red Cross Building, on the second Friday of the month at 6:30PM. Please check with GRARA for exam information and what ID is required.

Several clubs have held upgrade classes and even a license in a day course! The Morse code has also been taught over 2 meters. We accommodate needs from all prospective as well as currently licensed Hams. West Michigan is a great place to live if you're a Ham!

Volunteering

If volunteering interests you, Amateur Radio has many opportunities. From Sky-Warn, weather spotting training, to helping the Scouts of America earn their merit badges by participating in Jamboree-On-The-Air, ham radio has something for every interest. KCRACES, Fifth Third River Bank Run support team and many other opportunities are available in this area. You can get more information by attending club meetings or by visiting the clubs on line through their Internet presence.

Visit the clubs on line

The internet has allowed clubs to develop their very own home pages. If you want to put a face to a club, you can visit many clubs, both locally, and around the world by checking the link section of each club's web page.

Here are some local sites;
LARC's <http://www.qsl.net/w8lrc/>
GRARA's <http://www.w8dc.org/>
MARA's <http://www.w8usa.org>
I.R.A.'s <http://www.w8hvg.org/>
MDXA's <http://mdxa1.org/>

Upcoming Events

By Jim ki8jd

The New Hams Dinner is this Saturday!

The SkyWarn severe weather spotter training is Thursday, Feb. 21st, from 7:00 PM until 9:00 PM. It will be held at Grandville Middle School auditorium, at 3535 Wilson Ave., in Grandville. Admission is free, but they ask that you RSVP at <http://www.kcraces.net/signup/skywarn.php> Or at spotterinfo@kcraces.net

Also, the IRA swap is coming up June 7th. The theme this year is "Good Old Days", and features FREE tables and trunk spaces. Of course, you need to reserve your spaces, and buy an admission ticket. In addition, there will be other special attractions, such as forums and exhibits. We didn't have room for the flyer in this issue, but it will be in the May issue.

Waves

By Jim ki8jd

This is Richie's annual "New Ham's" issue of the newsletter. He likes to focus this issue on topics that may interest or benefit the new ham. The ham radio service (hobby?) is constantly changing, and the new ham's interests could be emergency communications, electronics, chasing DX, audio quality, radio wave propagation, antenna theory, etc. It is difficult to know which topics will be well received by our readers. Many of these topics are part of the test that we must pass to get our license, but passing the test does not guarantee that we understand these topics.

I enjoy antenna, feed-line, and propagation theory. We can't see, hear, touch, or taste the signals that leave our radios, and that is what makes these topics challenging and fun.

Picture for a moment a still pond. You toss a rock high in the air, and it drops straight down into the center of the pond. Most of the

rock's kinetic energy is transferred to the water upon impact. You can see this energy as waves emanating from the spot where the rock hit the water. The waves travel to the edges of the pond, and then bounce back towards the center. Radio waves are similar in behavior.

Let's say a cork was floating somewhere in the pond. As the wave energy passed the cork, it would bob up and down, but after the waves had passed, it would remain in about the same spot as it was before. Electrons, in the case of alternating current (AC), behave like the cork.

People usually begin to learn about electricity by studying direct-current (DC). With DC, the electrons are pumped through conductors like water through a garden hose. They end up being far from where they once were. With AC however, the electrons merely move back and forth, and don't travel great distances.

When you operate a transmitter at 14 MHz, you are causing the electrons in your antenna system, which includes the feed-line, to pulse back and forth at 14 million times per second, similar to the cork bobbing up and down. This rapid movement of these electrons disturbs the fields around the electrons, and causes radiation energy to occur.

With feed-line, you should have an equal, but opposite, movement in each conductor. The conductors are closely spaced, and as a result, the equal but opposite radiation cancels, and your feed-line does not radiate much energy. There are other factors that often do cause feed-line to radiate, but we won't mention them here.

You could build an antenna that does not radiate, but then it would really be a dummy-load, and not an antenna at all.

If this article gave you more questions than answers, then I have accomplished my mission.

73 Jim ki8jd

Grand Rapids Area Repeater List

(Thanks to the Michigan Area Repeater Council for this data)

Frequency	Call-Sign	PL. Tone	Sponsor
52.720	NW8J	136.5	NW8J
52.760	W8DC	94.8	GRARA
145.110	NW8J	94.8	Kent Co. Emg. Mgmt.
145.230	W8USA	94.8	MARA
145.270	W8LRC	94.8	LARC
145.450	KB8IFE	94.8	KB8IFE
145.490	W8CSO	94.8	NOAC
146.620	K8LHS	94.8	ARGYL
146.760	W8DC	94.8	GRARA
146.880	NW8J	141.3	NW8J
146.940	W8ZHO	94.8	MAARC
147.060	K8DAA	94.8	HARC
147.160	W8HVG	94.8	IRA
147.260	W8DC	94.8	GRARA
223.920	N8JPR	94.8	N8JPR
224.140	NW8J	167.9	NW8J
224.440	WB8VOJ		IRA
224.640	W8DC	94.8	GRARA
224.760	K8SN	open	K8SN
442.175	K8SN	103.5	K8SN
443.075	NW8J	94.8	NW8J
443.775	W8GVK		W8GVK
443.800	KA8YSM	94.8	KA8YSM
443.850	K8LHS	94.8	K8LHS
444.100	N8NET	94.8	N8NET
444.400	W8DC	94.8	W8DC
444.625	KD8CP	94.8	KD8CP
444.900	K8IHY	94.8	K8IHY

The repeaters listed above may have scheduled nets or other events occurring, either weekly, or at other times. It is always best to listen first before using a repeater. The above list contains only those repeaters that are either listed as being open, or have given permission for open use. As of January 1, 2008, there also exist several D-Star digital repeaters in our area. For more information, please contact any of the area clubs.

Hamfests 2008

Date	Events	Location
Feb 17, 2008	37 th Annual swap n shop Livonia ARC 734-427-3934	Livonia, MI Civic Park seniors center
March 15, 2008	48 th annual MI crossorads Hamsfest Southern MI ARS & Marshall H S 269-966-0770	Marshall MI Marshall H S
April 5, 2008	ARGYL Hamfest AR Group of Youth in Lowell Contact Al 616-897-7659	11700 Vergennes St
April 19, 2008	Milford swap n swap Milford ARC Contact Rose 810-632-5174	Highland MI Milford HS 2380 Milford RD
May 3, 2008	Wexaukee ARC Contact Alton 231-862-3774	Cadillac MI Cadillac jr. HS 500 Chestnut st
June 7, 2008	The I.R.A. 'Good old Days' Hamfestival Contact Kathy 616-698-6627	Hudsonville, MI Hudsonville Fairgrounds
June 28, 2008	NMARES Tailgate swap Northern MI AR Emergency services Contact Jim KC8NTE@arrl.net	Elmira MI Davis Tree farm Field Day Site 8378 VanTyle RD
September 14, 2008	Adrian ARC Contact Marjie 517-467-6303	Adrian MI Lenawee county fairgrounds 602 N Dean
Fall 2008 (Tenatively scheduled)	Hamfest 2008 GRARA Contact: Jack 616-897-6885	Lowell, MI Lowell High School

(The Ham Swap Data is taken from the ARRL's Ham Festival database and also locally announced swaps.

Local Nets

Day	Time	Freq	Sponsor	Mode
Sunday	8:00AM	50.4	Informal	AM
Sunday	8:00PM	145.270	LARC	FM
Monday	8:00PM	147.160	IRA-Newsline	FM
Monday	9:00PM	146.620	ARGYL	FM
Tuesday	9:00PM	145.270	MDXA	FM
Wednesday	8:00PM	147.260	GRARA	FM
Thursday	8:00PM	145.230	MARA	FM
Thursday	9:00PM	144.185	MDXA	USB

MARA Membership Roster as of 11-25-2007

CALL	NAME	ADDRESS	E-MAIL	PHONE
W8ZP	LEE BURGESS	46 Indiana SW Grand Rapids MI 49504	miltburge@aol.com	458-9297
KI8JD	JAMES M CORDES	1235 Morgan Grand Rapids MI 49504	jamescordes@sbcglobal.net	459-1195
KC8OTW	CINDY CORDES	1235 Morgan Grand Rapids MI 49504		459-1195
KC8KVR	PEG DELLS	4317 Willow DR NE Grand Rapids MI 49525	moppiepeg@netscape.net	363-8235
KG8PI	LARRY DELLS	4317 Willow DR NE Grand Rapids MI 49525	Lldgrd@Netscape.net	363-8235
KB8WJW	BILL DELLS	3531 Briggs BLV NE Grand Rapids MI 49505		361-2498
KC8NKA	SUE DELLS	3531 Briggs BLV NE Grand Rapids MI 49505		361-2498
KD8EMI	RICH DOUGLAS	3903 Oriole Ave SW Wyoming MI 49509	KC8NKA@ARRL.NET	531-6218
KB8VOZ	JOYCE DOUGLAS	3903 Oriole Ave SW Wyoming MI 49509		531-6218
N4SC	MARIAN DOWLING	2442 West Collier Ave Kentwood MI 49546-6115		957-4641
KC8FQK	WAYNE DOWLING	2442 West Collier Ave Kentwood MI.49546	waynedowl@realeasynet.com	957-4641
K8OOK	ROMAN DOWNER	2110 Shawnee DR SE Grand Rapids MI 49506		
N8IPG	KEITH EADIE jr	10506 Morning Star Way NE Rockford MI 49341		866-2459
KC8RSE	MIKE EILERS	3565 4 Mile RD NE Grand Rapids MI.49525-9714	K8OOK@comcast.net	363-4998
N8SJH	NANCY EILERS	3565 4 Mile RD NE Grand Rapids MI 49525-9714	K8OOK@comcast.net	363-4998
N8UXN	GENE HOLIDAY	10461 Kalamazoo AVE Caledonia MI 49316		
K8JX	STEVE HOLIDAY	812 Royal Oak Wyoming MI 49509		
WD8KPQ	SERGE LISK	307 Aurora SE Grand Rapids MI 49507	SLISKONE@HOTMAIL.COM	241-2488
WD8LGN	EDMUND LOMASIEWICZ	271 Lenora NW Grand Rapids MI 49504		453-0451
W8SPX	DAN MARKOWSKI	343 Brandywyne NW Comstock Park MI.49321	danmarco@sbcglobal.net	784-5973
N8GS	SAMUEL NABKEY	5790 East Fulton Ada MI 49301	k8sn@k8sn.org	
KB8MFH	EDWARD NOVAKOWSKI jr	1547 Quarry NW Grand Rapids MI 40504	n8uxn@aol.com	458-9029
N8WKM	RICHARD RANTA	812 Graceland NE Grand Rapids MI 49505	k8ix@miarts.org	361-5975
WA8AAT	BRUCE REFFEUR	718 Ridgefield DR Coopersville MI 49404	refbc@verizon.net	837-8895
KB8ILI	CHAR REFFEUR	718 Ridgefield DR Coopersville MI 49404	refbc@verizon.net	837-8895
WD8RER	LEONARD SCHAAFSMA	2243 Lake MI DR NW Grand Rapids MI.49504		791-9190
NF8P	GALE SCHOLTE	8530 Peach Ridge NW Sparta MI 49345	n8qs-1@peoplepc.com	887-1820
N8ZVB	DAL SCHULKE	9099 Ramsdell Rockford MI 49341		334-8372
WC8O	DAN THOMPSON	1824 126 TH AVE Hopkins MI 49328	dan@waycom.com	
W8MSK	CARL THOMPSON	0-12657 8 th NW Grand Rapids MI 49504	WA8AAT@aol.com	677-1174
N8VWI	EVELYN THOMPSON	0-12657 8 th NW Grand Rapids MI 49504	WA8AAT@aol.com	677-1174
N8WKQ	TOM UPDIKE	5834 Rollaway DR Comstock Park MI 49321		
	JOHN VISSER	4897 Gretchen NW Comstock Park MI 49321	nf8p@sbcglobal.net	785-0523
	LOUIE WHITE	1713 Vinecroft NW Grand Rapids MI.49504	white914@netpenny.net	647-2215
	BOB WILD	1008 Leonard ST NE Grand Rapids MI 49503		
	JERRY WITTKOSKI	1025 Kendalwood ST NE Grand Rapids MI 49505	jeromeW551@aol.com	363-6146
	BILL ZAIDEL	1660 Elizabeth NW Grand Rapids MI 49504	Greathounder@aol.com	363-5536
	CONNIE ZAIDEL	1660 Elizabeth NW Grand Rapids MI 49504	Greathounder@aol.com	363-5536

Great effort has been made to keep this roster up-to-date. If you see any changes that need to be made, please fill out the below form, or contact the club Secretary. This roster will not appear on the internet, however, if you want any personal information left off this roster, please contact the Editor.

Membership Information / Application Form - Please circle any info you want kept private! Please mail this form to MARA's P.O. Box, bring it to a meeting, or e-mail information to Secretary. See pg. 2

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 ____/____/____