

The Open Feed Line

A Publication of the Michigan Amateur Radio Alliance (MARA)

Volume 23, Issue 1 - Friendship, Community Service & Advancement of the Hobby - Jan-March-2014

“Welcome New Hams!”

We Hams of Western Michigan, greet you, the new hams and new to our area! Some of you are patiently waiting for your licenses, and others are nervously sitting in front of your rig building up your nerve to make that all important first contact. Still others are thinking about studying for their exam. We all go through this, it's a passage of going from being a non-Ham to becoming a Ham. With that in mind, this issue of our newsletter is being put together to help you enjoy your first time as an Amateur Radio Operator.

Inside, you will find some helpful information that should make your journey into Ham Radio more interesting. We've included a list of repeaters, a local net schedule where you can meet other hams and a list of Ham Radio club's where you can meet your fellow Ham's face to face. We're also going to bring back an old trusted friend of ours, “Ask the Professor” column, where you can ask any question you want more information on and we'll do the leg work for you.

Of course, we at MARA think our club is special, so we will focus on some of the events we hold. Be sure to check out our new web site and all that is in it. We think we've done a pretty good job of covering everything that our members are interested in. If you don't see what interests you, bring it up at one of our club meetings and we'll see if we can get it going.

Once again, Welcome to Amateur Radio.

Christmas Dinner 2014



(Here, L to R, Linda and Tom KC8YOE Parker, Jerry W8MSK)

Our club started a tradition several years back that you might be interested in participating with. After the Christmas Holiday was over with, we decided to get together and have a nice quiet dinner and spend time with our friends.



(Barton N8XQH, Erin KD8NSU, W8MSK's XYL, Mik K8OOK, Nancy N8IPG, from row L to R, Jerry W8MSK, Tom KC8YOE and his XYL Linda)

A great evening is had by all. Look for announcements about this in early January 2015.

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 - \$20.00. 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

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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 Plainfield Township Fire Dept. Training Building, located on the SW corner of 5 Mile RD and Plainfield Ave NE, in Grand Rapids. This site is handicap accessible.

All are welcome to attend our meetings.

How to use a Repeater

This may seem like a nonsensical topic. All one needs to do to use a repeater is pick the mic up and talk. Right? Well, yes, but there is a lot one needs to be aware of before all that takes place. For one thing, speak in clear, plain English. The use of Ten-Code or Q-signals are not used. It's easier to simply say what you mean. Ten-codes are used in the public service bands to expedite communications between units. On the Ham Bands, Q- signals can be used on the HF bands for both phone and CW. If you hear a fading station, you'll understand why one might chose to use these signals. A repeater usually uses Frequency Modulation, and that makes for a quiet, communication between people. One should also be aware that all repeaters have a time limit on transmissions. Usually, between 2 to 3 minutes. This is in case a mic gets hung up, the repeater will not be on all the time. The FCC also has rules governing the operation of repeaters.

Repeaters are expensive devices to buy and operate. While there are some non-club repeaters in service around West Michigan, most are operated by clubs. This is a great way for the individual clubs to participate in public service areas, such as RACES, Saturn and Sky Warn, to name only a few. Most clubs also have scheduled nets, where topics maybe presented at each session for participants to comment on. A friendly exchange is a good way to meet new Hams. A good friend once suggested that FM repeaters were a local inter-com between Hams. That's a good use for them!

Does one have to donate money in order to use a repeater? No. Repeaters are put into operation to support the efforts of the club creating them and also provide a communications system for local hams to use... The repeater should facilitate the clubs goals and Ham Radio in general.

A repeater should be quiet till it's being used. When a band opening occurs, it can cause the repeater to trigger and re-transmit another area's traffic. Not very desirable if you're listening for local traffic. To help reduce this unwanted traffic, repeaters' use "PL" tones. These sub-audible tones are inserted at the mobile or base radio's transmitter and decoded at the repeater. If a signal arrives at the repeaters receiver that does not have the right PL, the repeater will ignore it. Inside this newsletter, you will find a list of local repeaters and their respective PL tones. If you're new to both Ham Radio and your own VHF/UHF transceiver, you might decide to go to a local Ham Radio club meeting and ask for help in programming your radio. They can be quite challenging.

When you have your radio set up, you might consider volunteering either being a Net Control on one of the VHF/UHF nets, or be an active participant in a function such as Sky-Warn, the 5/3 River Bank Run. If you're willing, there are many events you can put your talents to good use. This article has only just scratched the surface of what Radio is like. We hope to hear on our nets, and meet you face to face at one of our meetings.

Welcome to Amateur Radio

Grand Rapids Area Repeater List

(Thanks to the Michigan Area Repeater Council for this data- 3-31-2014)

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	W8IRA	94.8	IRA
147.260	W8DC	94.8	GRARA
223.920	N8JPR	94.8	N8JPR
224.140	NW8J	167.9	NW8J
224.440	KB8YNC		KB8YNC
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
444.250	KC8EST	114.8	KCEST
444.325	N8WKN		N8WKN
444.400	W8DC	94.8	W8DC
444.625	KR8T	94.8	KR8T
444.775	K8WM	94.8	K8WM
444.900	K8IHY	94.8	K8IHY
927.4875	KB8ZGL	131.8	KB8ZGL

(While all of these repeaters are open for public use, it's best to inquire if it has changed to a closed repeater system)

It is always best to listen first before using a repeater. A lot of them have nets scheduled.

Local Net List

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	FM
Monday	9:00PM	146.620	ARGYL	FM
Wednesday	8:00PM	147.160	SATERN	FM
Thursday	8:00PM	145.230	MARA	FM

(The above list may change. Check with each sponsor)

Local Ham Club's Web sites.

Following is a list of the web sites of local clubs. You can see what they're up to and gather more information on what they're doing is of any interest to you.

The Big Rapids Amateur Radio club. <http://www.braarc.net/>

The Grand Rapids Amateur Radio Association. <http://www.w8dc.org/>

The Holland Amateur Radio Club. <http://www.k8daa.net/>

Independent Repeater Association. <http://www.w8hvg.org/>

The Lowell Amateur Radio Club. <http://w8lrc.org/>

The Michigan Fox Hunter. <http://www.michiganfoxhunter.com/michiganfoxhunter/default.htm>

The Michigan Amateur Radio Alliance. <http://www.w8usa.org/>

Any of the above club's also have links to National associations, like The ARRL.

Meet our areas Volunteer Examiners



If you're new to ham radio, it's a safe bet you probably have come into contact with these guys. They're the Volunteer Examiners. These folks give selflessly of their time and energy by providing a monthly opportunity to take one of the Amateur Radio Service Exams.

Before we had the volunteer program, we prospective hams would have to mail in an application to take the test, which usually was given 3 times a year here in Grand Rapids. Or one could drive to Detroit and take the exam in front of an FCC engineer. That all ended when the new Volunteer program became real. Now, once a month, rain or shine, you can take your Amateur Radio exam at either a local club, or a ham swap-n-shop. It's become very flexible to take your test.

Locally, Amateur radio license examinations are given on the second Friday of each month at the Red Cross building (1050 Fuller Avenue NE, just South of Leonard Street.) The Volunteer Examiner (VE) Team is led by Rich Douglas, KC8NKA. Each session begins promptly at 6:30 PM in the lower level of the building. An elevator is available for access.

The team leader is Rich Douglas, KC8NKA. Team members also include Jack Kunnen AB8ND, Mike Bottema K8EX, Peter Helder W8PD and Don Hoover AC8EG. They've been doing this for a long time. I asked Rich D KC8NKA why he keeps doing this. This is a means of contributing to Ham radio in a meaningful way. We keep offering a monthly time to take an exam, each and every month.

Rich KC8NKA keeps the exams going and suggests to take an exam, please bring with you;

One piece of ID with your picture on it OR two pieces of ID.

If you already have a license, bring it and a copy of the license to submit with the application.

Any CSCE's if applicable. (You'll need both the original, and a copy)

A check for \$15.00 (made out to ARRL/VEC) or exact change.

Please note: fee is now \$15.00 starting in January 2009.

For more information on what you need to take an exam, please contact Rich, KC8NKA

kc8nka@arrl.net

1-616-531-6218

When Rich KC8NKA isn't conducting exams, he's involved in computers and classical music. He also is invested in scouting, as is his wife, Joyce.

The next time you're at a local swap, stop by and say Hi to Rich.

W8KIZ Alan Scott

S.K.

Alan was my Elmer. For 6 months, in 1970, I was taught Morse code and learned electronic theory. Alan used many different devices to help me learn the code and increase his speed so he could regain his W8KIZ callsign. He had let it expire and wanted to get it back. Al worked for Fetzer Broadcasting by installing Muzak systems in stores. He later worked for what now is the Amway Grand Hotel. He then moved to Consumers Power as a line man. Al loved his family and friends and would do anything to help them. I can't count the hours he spent teaching me the Morse code. All this teaching paid off when I passed my Novice exam and Al, he got his Advanced license and the W8KIZ call sign. Al was a past president of GRARA where his wife was the secretary. He enjoyed ham radio and equipped his station with all homemade Heathkit radios. He provided phone patches to missionaries when he had the time. He will be missed.

Club Events

We're starting 2014 off by having our successful Christmas dinner. Good company

and good food. What more can you ask for. We're following this up by starting our fund raising event "Build Your Burger" this coming April 25th. If you haven't been to this event, make plans now to attend. We can use volunteers too.

At our next club meeting we will be discussing where to hold our Field Day 2014. We move the location around every few years, so we don't get set in a habit of one location. Remember, this is to help us prepare for emergency operations.

We also have our Education event, which is still in the planning stage. This is the time to pull your thinking hats on and see what ideas you can come up with to get younger people interested in Amateur Radio. While we already have one event planed, we should keep an open mind. The Ham Swap season is fast approaching and with it, the opportunity to promote our club. The I.R.A. has provided a few tables for area clubs. All we need to do is person them. I have been talking about having a MARA Banner made, so we could promote our club at every event we're at.

Jim K18JD, is getting excited about creating the "Ask the Professor" column. This was a fun column to operate since everybody had the opportunity to learn from it. We just have to line up the text books and get the citations ready so you'll know we really do know what we're talking about.

That about does it for this month. Submit your questions or comments to

W8USA@ARRL.NET.



**Build Your Own
Burger
Friday April 25th 2014
5:00 PM to 8:00 PM
\$6.00 For All**

Burger , Chips, Coleslaw, Coffee and Dessert

**At 5th St. Hall
Located on the Northwest Corner of
5th and Davis Sts.
Grand Rapids, MI 49504**

Visit our web page www.w8usa.org

Milford Amateur Radio Club

Swap-N-Shop



Saturday, April 12, 2014 - 8:00 AM – 12 Noon

Buy or Sell Amateur Radio Gear,
Computers, & Electronic Equipment

MILFORD HIGH SCHOOL
2380 South Milford Road
Highland, MI

(About 1 Mile North of Milford)

Tables: \$1.50 per Foot. Electrical Outlet: \$2.00

Food Concession & Door Prizes



Tickets: By Mail \$5.00 or \$6.00 at the Door.

Under 12 – FREE. Set-Up: After 3:30 PM Friday and 6:00 AM Saturday

For Information
Visit us Online at:

<http://www.qsl.net/w8ydk>

Talk-In: 145.490 – (67 Hz PL)
(N8BIT Repeater – White Lake)

146.52 Simplex – Back-Up Freq.

To Purchase Tickets, Tables
or More Information
CONTACT:

Rose Mary Moore
KC8NQJ
810-632-5174

Send To: Rose Mary Moore, KC8NQJ, 1383 Sylvan Dr, Hartland, MI 48353

NAME _____ CALL _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

HOW MANY TICKETS? _____ x (\$5.00) \$ _____

HOW MANY FEET/TABLE? _____ FEET X (\$1.50) ... \$ _____

NEED ELECTRICITY? _____ (ADD \$2.00) \$ _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____ MAKE CHECK OUT TO: M.A.R.C.



Independent Repeater Association, Inc.

2014 IRA Grand Rapids Hamfest



Hudsonville Fairground, 5235 Park Avenue, Hudsonville, MI 49426

Saturday, June 7, 2014 -- 8 AM until Noon

West Michigan's Largest Hamfest and Computer Fair !

Proceeds Support the W8IRA/R Linked Repeater System

◆ **DEALERS - HAMS - COMPUTER HOBBYISTS**
◆ **SHOW - TRADE - SELL**

- ◆ All ham equipment, radios, coax, antennas, accessories, software, hardware, books, parts, alternate energy equipment, ham related clothing, and all other ham related gear.

MULTIPLE DOOR PRIZES !!

- ◆ Convenient, spacious facilities at the Hudsonville Fairgrounds
- ◆ Indoor Sales Floor with 22,000 Sq Foot of Display Area
- ◆ Convenient Access and Free Parking - Handicapped Parking and Access
- ◆ Children under 12 admitted FREE (when accompanied by a paying adult)
- ◆ Food and drinks available in comfortable indoor facilities
- ◆ Interesting and Informative Forums and Seminars
- ◆ VE Amateur Radio License Exams - All Levels Offered

Admission Fee: \$5 in Advance / \$7 on June 7

Ray's Road Kill Chili and Potluck Dinner
6:30 PM Friday Night

Bring a dish to pass and join in the fun Friday at 6:30 P.M. after helping with setup. Enjoy "Eye-ball QSOs," entertainment, awards, and surprises. This will be the last opportunity to purchase reduced-price Hamfest tickets.

Don't miss this fun, exciting and well-attended social event!

For Reservations

Complete Reservation Form on Reverse and Send with your Payment

Questions ??? Call 616-541-4090

or

E-Mail -- hamfest@W8IRA.org