



FEEDBACK

November 2020

Do you have a story, humorous or otherwise, about amateur radio? If so, please contact the newsletter editor (w8kdb@arrl.net) and get it published in **FEEDBACK!**

If you would like to place a classified ad to sell, purchase or swap amateur radio related items, please contact the editor.

Board of Directors:

President

Kyle Brown, W8KDB
w8kdb@arrl.net

Vice President

Thomas Worthington, KE8GDN
tomcworth@aol.com

Secretary

John Davidson, W8JRD
w8jrd@arrl.net

Treasurer

Ivan Rhodes, W8IDR
idrhomdes@aol.com

Member At Large

Glenn "Smokey" McCray, N5MKY
n5mky@arrl.net

Inside this issue:

Lead article.....	1
Supplemental article.....	1
Upcoming Radio Contests.....	2
Upcoming Hamfests & Conventions.....	3
Meeting Minutes	5
Club Repeaters.....	6
Nets & Upcoming Events.....	6

Club News

Cornoavirus (COVID-19) Update

With the new restrictions, recently announced and going in affect the day before the meeting, we have decided to do an On Air club meeting Thursday November 19th. The meeting will be held on the W8DF 2 Meter repeater (similar to when we had the first shutdown). We are not sure what December will bring.

Also due to the pandemic that is going on, the board has decided to cancel the Christmas Party. As for the 50/50, we are still working on the details for that. We might do the drawing at the December meeting with the requirement to be present dropped. Again, this is something we are looking info and will keep you up to date on what is decided.

We are all done for the year for Test Sessions. The last one, which is cancelled, would fall on Christmas Eve. It was decided that it would be best to just cancel that one. I know Kalamazoo is trying to still put theirs on, but with the new restrictions it might be be possible.

Other News

ARRL Petitions FCC for Reconsideration of Order Removing 3.4 GHz Amateur Allocation

ARRL has petitioned the FCC to reconsider its order removing the secondary amateur allocation at 3.3 – 3.5 GHz and requiring that amateur operations in the 3.450 – 3.500 GHz band cease “on a date consistent with the first possible grant of flexible use authorizations to new users.”

“The amateur services in this band long have been operated on a secondary allocation status, functionally similar to the de facto secondary status of Part 5 experimental licenses, whose continued operation was (correctly) approved in the same proceeding,” ARRL told the FCC. “Continued operation of amateur stations similarly should be permitted in the vacant portions of this spectrum that otherwise will go unused.”

ARRL said the public interest is in using the spectrum, not in leaving it

Upcoming Radio Contests

Looking for a little action on the airwaves? You might want to check out these upcoming contests!

ARRL November Sweepstakes

Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 Meters

Mode: Phone

Date: 11/21 – 11/23

URL: <http://www.arrl.org/sweepstakes>

EME Contest

Bands: All Authorized Bands above 6 Meters

Mode: Phone, Digital, CW

Date: 11-28 – 11/29

URL: <http://www.arrl.org/eme-contest>

160 Meter

Bands: 160 Meter

Mode: CW

Date: 12/4 – 12/6

URL: <http://www.arrl.org/160-meter>

10 Meter

Bands: 10 Meter

Mode: Phone, Digital, CW

Date: 12/12 – 12/13

URL: <http://www.arrl.org/10-meter>

Rookie Roundup-CW

Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 Meters

Mode: CW

Date: 12/20 (6 Hours)

URL: <http://www.arrl.org/rookie-roundup>

**A more thorough listing of upcoming Contests can be found on the ARRL's web page [ContestCalendar](http://www.arrl.org/contest-calendar), <http://www.arrl.org/contest-calendar>*

vacant waiting for some future application. "The Commission's decision in this proceeding undermines its long-standing policy objective to provide for and encourage more intensive use of spectrum." ARRL said.

"The Commission's decision to remove the amateur secondary allocation throughout the 3300 – 3500 MHz band," ARRL said, "appears to be based upon a mistaken conclusion that amateur secondary 'sharing' of this spectrum is equivalent to the type of 'sharing' that occurs with primary government and other primary commercial users, when in fact amateur secondary operations are quite different in usage, scope and signal range."

ARRL outlined a number of ways radio amateurs use the band.

ARRL said that weak-signal point-to-point amateur communication often applies new technologies, methodologies, and coding to improve the communications capability of equipment. "Since the purpose of this type of activity is to hear or decode weak signals, operators use every possible means to avoid frequencies with other signals."

Amateurs also operate radio beacons to study propagation, contributing to a better understanding of propagation in the 3.4 GHz range, ARRL said. "Amateur beacons are fixed and low power, and therefore relatively easy to engineer into the environment if other users initiate operations, or to relocate or shut down if they cannot be 'engineered in.'"

ARRL's petition also cited moonbounce as another aspect of amateur operation. "This field of activity has led to a chain of improvements in antennas and equipment design in the 3.4 GHz spectrum," ARRL asserted, and is extremely unlikely to interfere with terrestrial services.

Amateur satellites also could use the 3.4 – 3.41 GHz band with minimal likelihood to present interference concerns due to the signals' low power and narrow antenna beamwidths. Plus uplinks employ antenna that point skyward, further minimizing any possible area of concern. "Other frequencies will not necessarily be available when needed, and this limitation threatens to constrain future experiments with space communications technologies as the number of amateur satellite experiments increase in number and purpose," ARRL said. The 3.3 – 3.5 GHz band also is used for digital high-speed data mesh networks and for amateur TV repeaters. "Design of and work with mesh networks has attracted an ongoing stream of computer-literate youth to the amateur ranks," ARRL contended. "The networks themselves are commonly employed for digital experimentation with a wide range of technologies and services, with a bedrock purpose of emergency readiness and availability during actual emergencies. ARRL noted that the greater the number of available band choices, the more likely that a suitable link could be engineered for a specific path.

ARRL said that these and other amateur experimental activities make

Upcoming Hamfests & Conventions

NOTE - All ARRL Hamfest in November and December near our location have been Cancelled. There is a possibility that future Hamfest listed here might also be cancelled. Please remember to make sure to verify that the Hamfest hasn't been cancelled before traveling to a Hamfest.

good use of the spectrum, "and should be permitted to continue on a secondary basis unless and until a new primary licensee is ready to operate in a geographic area where interference would result."

Article courtesy of <http://www.arrl.org/news/arrl-petitions-fcc-for-reconsideration-of-order-removing-3-4-ghz-amateur-allocation>

What good is the ARRL?

Travis, KB1ZPP, sent the following to me and about 40 others yesterday. I'm posting it here with his permission:

"I've been quietly sitting in the shadows for the past few years watching the ARRL and trying to decide what, if any good, they do with the membership dues they collect each year. With the recent loss of the 3.5 GHz band I feel like it's time for me to now say my piece and ask what, exactly, does the \$6.77 million in dues and \$1.7 million in donations from 2019 do to benefit the hobby? And what the hell kind of assets does the ARRL possess that total nearly \$37 million? Did the ARRL open a banking division I don't know about?

"Of these totals, cash and investments totaled approximately \$33.1 million at year end" -2019 ARRL annual report.

After doing some research in preparing to go to battle with the ARRL, I now find myself wondering if they are at all suited to provide spectrum defense for the amateur community. I feel that they have become just another political ruse to line the pockets of board members and lobbyists / politicians. They no longer care about what their member base is concerned with and refuse to grow with the times. The world is changing rapidly with new technology every day. The ARRL is still stuck in the 60's trying to get everyone to talk on 40 or 80 meters CW or sideband. There is a time and a place for 'old reliable,' but to continue to gain membership and be successful, the League has, needs to upgrade their ways. We're coming up on 2021, guys. Get with it.

That being said I want to ask you all a couple questions.

Do you think it's worth the effort to try and steer the ARRL in the directions we as amateurs find important or do we start a whole new organization with the sole purpose of protecting our bands? And, if you think it is possible to get the League back on track, what would be your first step?

What good is the ARRL to the amateur radio community as a whole? Jerry (KG6HQD) asked this on one of Jason's (KC5HWB) YouTuber's Bunch videos, and I present the same question here. Can anyone tell me one time the ARRL was successful in regards to political battles, such as the 3.5 GHz sale and subsequent call for amateur radio ops to "sunset?" When was the last time the league stood up for us, an amateur radio community?

I encourage all of you to voice your opinions, whether you agree with me or not, I want to know what you have to say. Thank you, 73 -

KB1ZPP”

First off, let me say that I DON'T THINK the ARRL board or staff are lining their pockets with the membership dues. There's really not enough money there to make it worthwhile. :)

I think that if you go back in time, there have been issues on which the ARRL has prevailed, but certainly their efforts lately have not been all that successful. I think that the problem may be two-fold:

1. The FCC is seeing amateur radio as less relevant in the total scheme of things.
2. The ARRL is becoming less relevant to the amateur radio community as a whole. Membership is declining, not only as a percentage of licensed amateurs, but in actual numbers. Unless the ARRL can do something to boost membership, it's going to continue to be less and less relevant, and it's going to continue to lose influence with the FCC.

Having said that, the question about the best course going forward is a good one. The problem with trying to “steer the ARRL” is that in order to do so, you have to get organized politically. First, you have to find candidates who are passionate enough to run for the board of directors and have time to do so. A start was made two years ago with the election of N2RJ and W7VO, but the opposition seemed to fizzle out after that. I might be wrong because I got a little weary of the politics, but I don't think that there were any candidates in this year's election that were calling for widespread change.

There is a MyARRLVoice Facebook page where ARRL issues are discussed. I don't really do Facebook myself, but I just took a peek, and it seems to still be fairly active.

Once you have the candidates, you have to convince the members to vote for them. Unfortunately, I think that many hams who have become disenchanted with the way the ARRL has been doing things are no longer members. So, even if you find the candidates, there may not be enough like-minded hams out there to vote for them.

Even so, my gut reaction is that working within the ARRL is the best way to go. Starting a new organization is a huge endeavor. I'm not saying that it's impossible, or shouldn't be done, but it's probably more work than trying to get more progressive candidates elected to the ARRL board.

What say all of you? Should be be looking for and promoting more “progressive” candidates? How would we go about that?

Article courtesy of <https://www.kb6nu.com/what-good-is-the-arrrl/>

Meeting Minutes 10/15/2020

Called to Order: 7:09 PM

Officers Present: Kyle W8KDB John W8JRD Ivan W8IDR Tom W. KE8GDN

Pledge of Allegiance

Introductions

Greetings to new members: none this month

Secretary's Report as published in Feedback:
Motion Jay N8ARR Second Rick W8RCF Approved

Treasurer's Report as distributed at the meeting:
Motion Rick W8RCF Second Jay N8ARR Approved

Committee Reports:

- Hamfest: No report. The rise in COVID cases leaves things uncertain.
- Skywarn: Most of the sirens were covered. The sirens at Beckley and Washington were tested today. The American Legion Post has officially purchased the building on Beckley Road. Skywarn is going to hold all future meetings there. There is a new W8IRA repeater on 147470 PL 94.8 in Kalamazoo. The SET was held on October 10 on simplex. Calhoun County finished #3, Kent was #1.
- FieldDay: The work on the trailers is on hold. We're looking for donations for cabinets and tabletops. Jay has a cabinet to donate. Winter Field Day is the last weekend in January, location TBA. Kyld has the rotors from all 3 trailers for maintainance.
- VE: Next session is October 22. Terry N8LN and Mike KQ8N have another class running. The session for December would fall on Christmas Eve and so has been cancelled.
- Repeaters: Don W8RVT reported no problems.

Old Business:

- The Fox Hunt from September held at Bailey Park had some interesting issues, mostly from the chainlink fencing causing odd reflections. The next hunt is scheduled for October 17 at Leila Arboretum. The starting point will be the parking lot at the Kingman Museum at 9am.

New Business:

- Dr. Fong is willing to do another presentation.
- Elections were held with the current board re-elected with Stephanie W8AEZ replacing W8JRD as Secretary.

Presentation: Don W8RVT did a talk on Echolink.

Adjourned: 8:50 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

John Davidson W8JRD
SMARS Secretary

Board Meeting Minutes (MM/DD/YYYY)

Called to Order: 5:34 PM

Officers present: Kyle W8KDB John W8JRD Tom KE8GDN Smokey N5MKY

Topics:

- Christmas party is on hold for now, due to restrictions on meeting size and table limits. Where to hold the 50/50 drawing is still under consideration. It could be at the November meeting, December Board meeting, etc.. The requirement to be present will be dropped.
- No VE session in December as that is Christmas Eve. A special session could be held based on demand on some other date. All the callsigns for the October session have been posted.
- At the October Skywarn session, it was suggested that SMARS and the WX8BTL groups set up a station at the American Legion Post. There was some discussion of what equipment and antennas could be used. There was also some discussion on the matters of access and security for this station. The possibility of holding Field Day at the Post was also discussed, as the status of Fort Custer is still unknown.
- N8ARR Jay sent pictures of the cabinet he is willing to donate. Tom W. KE8GDN will retrieve at a mutually agreed time.

Adjourned: 6:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

John Davidson W8JRD
SMARS Secretary

SOUTHERN MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY FEEDBACK

S.M.A.R.S. W8DF Club Repeaters

2m Repeater 146.66MHz, -600KHz offset, CTCSS 94.8Hz

2m DStar 146.79 MHz, -600 KHz offset

*1.25m Repeater 224.240 MHz, -1.6 MHz offset

APRS Digipeater/Igate, 144.39 MHz

*70cm Repeater 443.950 MHz, +5 MHz offset, CTCSS 94.8 Hz

70cm DStar Repeater 442.7625 MHz, +5 MHz offset

***Note:** 70cm & 1.25 meter repeaters are linked, and also available via Echolink.

Other Repeaters

2m Repeater 147.120 MHz, +600 KHz offset, CTCSS 186.2 Hz

70cm Repeater 442.350 MHz, +5 MHz offset, CTCSS 186.2 Hz

<p>Club Meeting 3rd Thursday of every month Maple United Methodist Church 342 Capital Avenue NE Battle Creek, MI 49017</p>	<p>SKYWARN Coffee 1st Saturday of every month Immediately after Siren Test Coney Island, N.E. Capital Battle Creek, MI</p>	<p>BLB Luncheon 1st Thursday of every month Coney Island, 962 Capital Ave NE, Battle Creek, MI</p>	<p>SMARS Breakfast 2nd Saturday of every month Coney Island, 962 Capital Ave NE, Battle Creek, MI</p>
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<p>SMARS Nets: Monday—Friday 11:30 AM, 146.66 MHz Sunday Evening 8:00 PM, 146.66 MHz Monday 8:00 PM, 224.24 / 443.95 MHz Wednesday 7:00 PM, 224.24 / 443.95 MHz Wednesday 8:00 PM, 28.365 MHz Saturday 8:00 PM, 224.24 / 443.95 MHz</p> <p>Other Nets: Skywarn Net: Tuesday 7:00 PM, 147.12 MHz</p> <p><i>Please see previous page for offsets and CTCSS tones</i></p>	<p>Upcoming Events:</p> <p>Club Meeting*: November 19 @ 7:00pm BLB Luncheon: November 3rd @ 11:30am Board Meeting*: December 1st @ 5:30pm Club Breakfast: December 12th @ 8:30am</p> <p>*On Air Meeting – W8DF 2 Meter Repeater</p> <p>NOTE: BLB and Club Breakfast might be cancelled if Coney Island cannot allow people to eat inside.</p>
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