



FEEDBACK

December 2012

Your Story:

Do you have a story, humorous or otherwise about amateur radio? If so, please contact the newsletter editor (wr8g@omega-link.com) and get it published in FEEDBACK.

You don't have to be a professional writer, or even a writer at all. If you're comfortable with writing, great! If not, relate the story in the fashion that you are comfortable with and let the editor do the rest.

Christmas party pictures are on page 4.

Club Elections are this month, please be sure to attend.

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IRA Battle Creek Linked Repeater Repair Project

The Battle Creek link to the Independent Repeater Association repeater system has been down for some time. I began asking local hams about it and was told it had been down over a year. For any of you who are not familiar with the IRA, it is a system of repeaters from Mackinaw City down to St. Joe/Benton Harbor and Battle Creek. The repeaters are linked together and cover a large portion of the state. Keep in mind that transmitting on any of the repeaters is broadcast to all repeaters in the link system.

I made contact with the current President of the IRA and inquired what was needed to get our link up. He informed me, they needed a tower climb to repair an antenna and fed line as well as work on the repeater itself. He estimated they would need \$300.00.

I began sharing this information on the radio with local hams. I was surprised how many folks I had never spoken to, contacted me and pledged their support.

I brought this information to the next SMARS club meeting and shared it with the group. I requested that if everyone could pitch in \$10.00 each, we could get the ball rolling. Holy smoke was I surprised as club members started throwing money at me as fast as I could record their call signs. I left the club meeting with \$470.00. I had additional support from folks that had not attended the meeting. The following day, my wife and I drove to Grand Rapids and delivered a check for \$500.00. Since then I have provided them an additional \$25.00 check that came in the mail to the IRA.

The folks who administer the IRA were very surprised and pleased that we had raised the money so quickly. They scheduled a tower climber and crew for the Friday after Thanksgiving however there was too much wind to work that Friday. It was rescheduled for the next day Saturday, November 24th 2012.

On Saturday, a crew from Battle Creek met the crew from Grand Rapids at the tower site. The local crew consisted of myself (KD8TCE), **Mike Russell (W8MGR)**, **Don Larkin (W8RVT)** and **Dave Smith (W8RDX)**.

The Grand Rapids Crew were **Tom Workema (KA8YSM)**, **Charles Nowak (AJ8W)**, **Richard Corey (W8IMA)** and the tower climber **Pieter Helder (W8PD)**.

Pieter put his gear on and went up to inspect the condition of the existing an-

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Board of Directors

President

Gary Williams, N8QC
n8qc@arrl.net

Vice President

Dave Ashbolt, K8OLY
k8oly@arrl.net

Secretary

John Davidson, W8JRD
w8jrd@arrl.net

Treasurer

Don Larkin, W8RVT
w8rvt@arrl.net

Past President

Bob Kingsbury, AC8GL
kings-boo@yahoo.com

Club Meeting

3rd Thursday of every month
Maple United Methodist Church
342 Capital Avenue NE
Battle Creek, MI 49017

Next Meeting

December 20th, 2012 @ 7 PM

BLB Luncheon

2nd Thursday of every month
Mancino's
1791 W. Columbia Avenue
Battle Creek, MI 49015

Next meeting

January 10th @ 11:30 AM

SMARS Breakfast

1st Saturday of every month
Homespun, 210 E. Columbia Av
Battle Creek, MI

Next Meeting

January 5th @ 8:30 AM

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tenna and feed lines. Richard, Chuck and Don went to work on the repeater hardware.

Pieter ended up replacing a UHF Yagi antenna (uplink to GR) and the feed line at approximately 100 ft. He also straightened and secured another UHF antenna that had come loose and was pointed down to the ground.

The boys in the repeater shack determined that the 220 and 440 radio equipment was working fine with a few adjustments. The VHF radio was the only thing left to get working. The tech fellows worked on the VHF exciter board but could not get any indication of tuning on any stage beyond the 1st stage (I am paraphrasing from their notes). They worked on this component for about 2 hours with no improvement. The defective component and channel element was given to Don Larkin who took it to his bench for further diagnosis.

The crew buttoned up the new feed line feed line and terminated it with an N connector. The repeater was powered off for the time being to give Don time to work. The crews left the site in the late afternoon.

I am not trying to under simplify what happened next (because I do not know the details) but the end result was Don located and replaced a defective final transistor on the exciter board. We met with **Michael Smith (KC8WJA)** from the IRA at the Tower Site the following Wednesday. Don replaced the exciter board and they performed some tweaking on the VHF radio and the repeater was back up in operation.

I would like to personally thanks all the people who made financial or time contributions in order to get this link back up. A special debt of gratitude to Don who repaired the exciter and worked with the Grand Rapids crew to get this done. I know they have recognized Don's skill set as they have requested that he be the local tech contact for this site. Thanks everyone!

Terry, KD8TCE

(Editor's note, please see the pictures from this project on page 3)

Humor

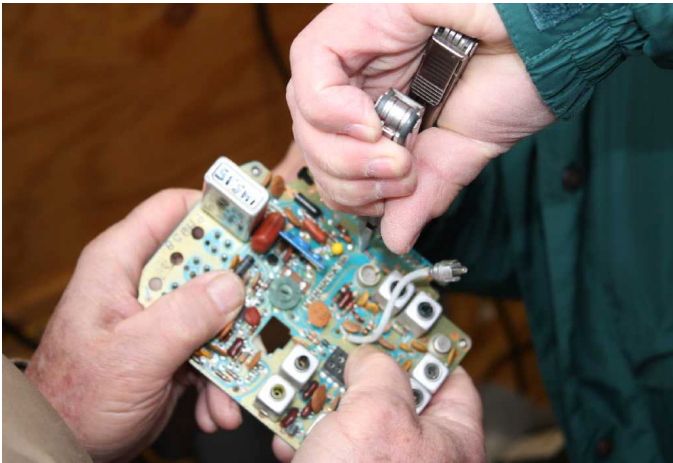
The Fall Thru Index

The Fall Thru Index (TFI) was developed after several years of study and should be included with weather reports and forecasts. This is very important as it directly affects public safety. The index ranges from zero to ten with zero being very safe and ten very dangerous.

We here in Michigan are quite fortunate as the index is normally very low, usually zero. Residents in desert climates are at the other extreme.

How does it work? Clouds are designed to prevent humans from falling thru the space above. The danger increases when clouds develop holes, or worse, become

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Meeting Minutes 11/15/2012

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Officers present – Gary N8QC, Don W8RVT, Doc K8OLY.

Pledge of allegiance.

Introductions.

Minutes from last meeting accepted.

Treasurer's report accepted.

Committee reports:

- Hamfest – Doc reports that tickets are being printed. Don reports that MAC center is on line but no paperwork has yet been received. First order for table space has been received.
- RACES – Ham in a Day went well with 14 people attempting to be licensed. 10 successful Technicians and 2 upgrades. No plans exist for a December HIAD.
- The Simulated Emergency Test was cancelled due to work and illness. Another SET may be held in December after the club breakfast. There may also be a siren test that morning if word can be received since some receivers are being reprogrammed. If word is received, it will be sent to Doc who will forward the members (BLB/nets).
- Field Day – No committee formed yet. The new board will have to select. A discussion was held concerning whether to run 5W stations. A motion was made to run 5W and was approved unanimously. Solar/wind sources will have to be thought out as well as the idea of wood fired steam for power generation.
- VE Session – None in November as it would coincide with Thanksgiving. A session is planned for December 27th, if VEs can be lined up.
- Flyer – Tom has worked out a sample but his printer needs to be repaired to get printed. Kelly suggested ideas regarding extra handouts to new Technicians

Old Business:

- Christmas Party – December 8th at Old Country Buffet at 6:00 p.m. Gift exchange is optional with a suggested limit of \$10.00.
- Breakfast – December 1st at Homespun Restaurant at 8:30 a.m. Attendance has been up for the last several get-togethers, a nice trend.

New Business:

- Terry sent around an envelope for donations to get the IRA/Link repeater in Battle Creek repaired. The "owners" of the repeater estimate \$300 should do it. Several donations were submitted, and the \$300 was met due to one large donation.
- Kelly suggested that a class be organized for new Technicians, perhaps once per week, for six weeks, two hours each, to explain new HAM information to new Techs. Idea was taken under advisement.
- New officers – a request was made for volunteers for board positions. Jay Jarrett volunteered his name as Secretary. No other names were presented.
- Bryan thanked all the help in removing the two towers on Sunday afternoon.

Presentation: None.

Meeting adjourned at 7:56

Respectfully submitted,
Jay Jarrett KD8OXR

In the News

- In a notice of proposed rule making, the FCC has proposed a secondary amateur allocation for the frequency range of 135.7 to 137.8KHz. No word on power limits or allowed operating modes. In addition, the NPR would grant amateur radio primary status on band segment of 1900 to 2000KHz.
- CQ Magazine was featured on a segment of the late night show "Conan" You can view the segment at: <http://bit.ly/RsXRpV>
- The ARRL has filed a Petition for Rulemaking with the FCC to create a new MF band at 472 to 479KHz. This would be a secondary allocation with the usual rules about not interfering with the primary user. Power will be limited to 5W EIRP or 1W EIRP depending on location.
- The ARRL is in the process of updating the hardware that is used by Logbook of The World (LoTW). The new hardware is expected to be online in 6-8 weeks.
- The local node of the IRA repeater network (a statewide network) is back on-line thanks to the efforts spearheaded by Terry Tassos, KD8TCE. Terry was able to collect more than \$500 in donations to get the repairs completed.

Hamfests

01/05/2013: 41st Annual Midwinter Swapfest
Waukesha, WI
West Allis Radio Amateur Club
<http://www.warac.org>

01/20/2013: SCARF's 17th Annual Hamfest
Nelsonville , OH
Sunday Creek Amateur Radio Federation

01/20/2013: Hazel Park ARC's 47th Annual Hamfest
Hazel Park, MI
Hazel Park Amateur Radio Club
<http://www.hparc.org>

01/20/2013: WCRA Mid-Winter Hamfest
St. Charles, IL
Wheaton Community Radio Amateurs
<http://www.w9ccu.org>

01/27/2013: Tusco ARC Hamfest
Strasburg, OH
Tusco Amateur Radio Club
<http://www.tuscoarc.org>

02/03/2013: Winter Hamfest at NEW LOCATION!
Elyria, OH
Northern Ohio Amateur Radio Society
<http://www.NOARS.net>

02/09/2013: The Capital City Hamfest
Fitchburg, WI
New Era Repeater Technocrats
<http://www.wd8das.net/hamfest.html>

02/16/2013: Mid-Winter Interclub SwapFest
Brookfield, WI
Milwaukee Radio Amateurs Club & Milwaukee Area Amateur Radio Society
<http://www.w9rh.org>

02/16/2013: Brownsburg, Indiana Hamfest
Brownsburg, IN
Hendricks County Amateur Radio Society
<http://www.hcars.org>

02/16/2013: Mid-Winter Interclub SwapFest
Brookfield, WI
Milwaukee Radio Amateurs Club & Milwaukee Area Amateur Radio Society
<http://www.w9rh.org>

02/17/2013: Livonia ARC's 42nd Annual Swap & Shop
Livonia, MI
Livonia Amateur Radio Club
<http://www.livoniaarc.com/swap.htm>

02/17/2013: Mansfield Mid Winter Hamfest
Mansfield, OH
InterCity Amateur Radio Club
<http://www.w8we.org>

02/23/2013: CABIN FEVER HAMFEST
LaPorte, IN
LaPorte County Amateur Radio Club
<http://lpcarc.org>

02/23/2013: IBRO Hamfest & Computer Show
Brookville, OH
International Brotherhood of Radio Operators
<http://www.kd8knx.org>

03/03/2013: SRFARS Hamfest
Sterling, IL
Sterling Rock-Falls ARS
<http://w9mep.org>

**03/16/2013: 2013 Crossroads Hamfest
Marshall, MI
Southern Michigan Amateur Radio Society
<http://www.w8df.com/>**

03/23/2013: MOVARC HamFest
Location: Gallipolis, OH
Mid-Ohio Valley Amateur Radio Club
<http://sites.google.com/site/midohiovalleyarc>

04/13/2013: Columbus Hamfest
Columbus, IN
Columbus Amateur Radio Club
<http://www.carcnet.org>

04/13/2013: Madison Hamfest
Stoughton, WI
Madison Area Repeater Association
<http://www.qsl.net/mara/swapfest.html>

Do you know of a amateur radio related event that isn't listed in this news letter? If so, please contact the news-letter editor (WR8G, Thomas Goodson, wr8g@omega-link.com, 269-962-8007) with details and I'll try to get it into the next edition of Feedback.

SMARS Board Meeting December 3, 2012

Called to Order: 4:50 PM

Officers Present: **Gary N8QC John W8JRD Don W8RVT**

Others Present: **Stephanie W8AEZ Terry KD8TCE Chris Williams**

Topics:

- Door prizes at the December 8 Christmas Party will include dividing the 50/50 proceeds and out of those proceeds a Baofeng HT.
- **Don W8RVT** ordered the parts to repair the Mosley beam from WA8LRB. The antenna is now in the club trailer.
- Room assignment at the Hamfest was discussed, with TASYL not attending, but adding a QSO card checker.
- This month's program will be antennas.
- SAR is sponsoring another Ham in a Day class with testing at 3pm on January 12.
- The Kalamazoo clubs are wrapping up a tech/general class with testing at 2:30pm at the Kalamazoo Red Cross on December 8.

Adjourned: 6:08 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
John Davidson W8JRD
 SMARS Secretary

(Fall Thru, Continued from page 2)

non-existent. Should one of these holes be over a human, that person may fall thru the hole to be never seen again. Just think of people you haven't seen for some time. They possibly were victims of fall thru.

The safe way to prevent this tragedy is simply hold on to something. This can be a lawn mower, a golf club, the hand of a significant other or the dog's leash. One important thing to watch for is when you think it is safe outside; wind can blow a hole in the clouds. Should that hole pass overhead, a person can fall thru instantly if they are bare handed.

It is rather simple to determine the index. As are most days, if NO blue is visible, the index is zero and very safe. If NO clouds are visible, the index is ten and very dangerous. Should half the blue be covered by clouds, the index is five. The Fall Thru Index is determined by the percentage of blue covered by clouds.

Don-W8RVT is waiting for the Nobel Prize.

Income and Expense Statement

11/1/12 Through 11/30/12

Category Description	11/1/12-11/30/12
INCOME	
Donations	40.00
Dues:	
2013	80.00
TOTAL Dues	80.00
Hamfest Inc:	
Tables	40.00
Tickets	10.00
TOTAL Hamfest Inc	50.00
Interest Inc:	
Checking	0.61
TOTAL Interest Inc	0.61
TOTAL INCOME	170.61
EXPENSES	
Equipment:	
Maintainance	66.10
TOTAL Equipment	66.10
Meetings:	
Refreshments	5.56
TOTAL Meetings	5.56
Utilities:	
Telephone	69.18
TOTAL Utilities	69.18
Uncategorized Expenses	0.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	140.84
TOTAL INCOME - EXPENSES	29.77

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

Southern Michigan Amateur Radio Society

2 Meter Repeater 146.660 MHz

-600KHz offset, PL 94.8

70cm Repeater 443.950 MHz

+5MHz offset, PL 94.8

1.25 Meter Repeater 224.240 MHz

-1.6MHz offset

70cm and 1.25 meter repeaters are linked.

Also available via echolink.

W8DF-5 144.39Mhz Digipeater/Igate

Find it on www.aprs.fi

Other Area Repeaters:

Skywarn/ARES/RACES

2 Meter: 147.12, +600KHz offset, PL 186.2

70cm: 442.350, +5MHz offset, PL 94.8



SOUTHERN MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

FEEDBACK



SMARS

P.O. Box 934

Battle Creek, MI 49016

FIRST CLASS MAIL



SMARS NETS

Before Lunch Bunch

Monday—Friday 11:30 AM, 146.66

Sunday Evening 8:00 PM, 146.66

Monday 7:00 PM, 147.12 (Skywarn)

Monday 8:00 PM, 224.24 / 443.95

Wednesday 7:00 PM, 224.24 / 443.95

Wednesday 8:00 PM, 28.365

Saturday 8:00 PM, 224.24 / 443.95

Upcoming events:

Christmas Party: December 8th @ 6:00 PM

Club meeting: December 20th @ 7:00 PM

VE Session: December 27th @ 7:00 PM

SMARS Breakfast: January 5th @ 8:30 AM

BLB Luncheon: January 10th @ 11:30 AM