



# FEEDBACK

September 2014

*Your Story:*

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

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

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## On the Road to W1AW and Teachers Institute 2

In the summer of 2012 I was one of a handful of teachers selected to participate in the the Teachers Institute on Wireless Technology (TI) in Rocklin, California. Funded by the ARRL's Education & Technology Program, the Teachers Institute offers professional development training for elementary through university educators and provides tools and strategies to introduce basic electronics, micro-controllers and basic robotics in their classrooms. As a logical next step in my professional development, this summer I applied for the Teachers Institute on Remote Sensing (TI-2).

After receiving my acceptance letter in May, I excitedly began preparations for my trip to ARRL Headquarters in Connecticut!

With W8JRD along as "relief-driver," we set out for Newington on July 6th. The drive was scenic – one of the most memorable parts was seeing a portion of the original Erie Canal! After a brief stay in Granby, Connecticut with a close friend of John's family, we pulled into Newington on Monday. Once settled at the hotel, we made a short drive to ARRL Headquarters. Prior to departing Battle Creek, I'd contacted Headquarters to arrange for a tour of the facility. As there was another tour just finishing when we arrived, our guide asked if we would like to join them as they were on their way over to W1AW. We eagerly agreed and joined them.

Located on Main Street in front of the headquarters building, W1AW occupies a small brick building flanked by several antennas. The entry foyer has several artifacts, including Hiram Percy Maxim's desk and "Old Betsy," his rotary spark-gap transmitter, which was briefly fired-up for demonstration. The next room contained an operating console to coordinate transmissions, facing it were wall racks of radio equipment. Off this room were the studios – three of them – generously outfitted by manufacturers and donors. At the conclusion of the tour, we asked station manager Joe Carcia, NJ1Q, if we could operate W1AW. After checking our licensing credentials he seated us in one of the studios and we began operating on 20 meters under the special centennial call sign W100AW. John started off, making contact with Jay Jarrett N8ARR. Then it came my turn on the mic. After my second CQ call, I had a pileup. What a rush! I ended up heading over to W1AW three more times during my seminar lunch-break to operate, making contact with with my uncle, Jon Huhtala N8ZH, in Canadian Lakes, Michigan. After operating, John and I reported back to ARRL Headquarters for the rest of the facility tour.

Tuesday morning I met several of my fellow participants and our seminar

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instructor, Mark Spencer WA8SME, in the hotel breakfast room, then headed to ARRL Headquarters to begin the seminar. The focus of TI-2 Remote Sensing is on the basic electronics of sensors (temperature, pressure, position, humidity, etc.), analog to digital conversions, accessing sensors via microcontroller programming, and employing packet radio to send the data to the user. The instructional days spent in the seminar room were intense and concepts challenging, but Mark did an outstanding job of keeping all of us engaged and interested. The last two of days of seminar dealt with buoy systems and their use in conducting environmental studies. Each participant was furnished with a buoy, 2m handheld radio, backup batteries, programming software and module. The buoys were programmed and tagged with our call signs, then deployed in pails of water located in a secured area outside W1AW. For 30-minute increments over a 12-hour period, the buoy systems collected data on the air temperature, water temperature, air pressure, and GPS location of the buoy. This data was then transmitted from the buoy via the 2m handheld radio and an external antenna to [www.aprs.fi](http://www.aprs.fi) from which it was retrieved for analysis. Trends in temperature change in water versus air over a period of time were plotted and discussed as well as the science behind our observations (e.g. the chemical properties that explain why water does not change temperature as rapidly as air).

At the close of the four-day session, we packed up our equipment, said our good-byes, and left the Institute with high hopes of continuing the collaboration we began in our seminar. Towards this end, a couple of the participants set up a group via wiggio.com as a means of exchanging ideas, observations, and also trouble-shooting issues that arose. (One of the more unique problems that has been discussed is how to make the buoy less attractive to turtles that like climbing on it to sun themselves.) For me, it was a very worthwhile four days and supplied me not only with the materials, but also with several ideas as to how I could incorporate this technology in my classroom.

A heartfelt thank-you to Mark Spencer, Debra Johnson, and the ARRL for offering such a unique opportunity to teachers like myself. For more information on the Teachers Institutes, visit their website <http://www.arrl.org/ti-2-remote-sensing-and-data-gathering> .

## Calhoun County SKYWARN Club meeting 08/19/14.

Called to order at 1835. Ken K8QNO presiding.

Financial report – There is about \$811.18 in the checking account. The recent HIAD brought in \$110.00

HIAD – The large group from the east side of the state assumed that the VEs would travel their way so never planned to come west. The session held at BCPD netted a couple upgrades and a couple first time licenses. The next scheduled HIAD will be September 20<sup>th</sup> at the Emmett Township Training Center. Testing begins at 3:00 pm.

Calhoun Co. Fair activities – Dave W8RDX reported that the county fair coverage went well; there were plenty of HAMS to cover the needs and very few problems arose.

The Monday night SKYWARN net is going to be moved to Tuesday nights beginning August 26<sup>th</sup>. It will be held on that night with the exception of the third Tuesday, the night of the club meeting.

Legislative update – Bill HR4969 is working its way through the house at this time. This bill would allow amateur operators the ability to erect antennas in housing developments that currently ban any and all antennas by rules of HOAs or CCRs. A brief presentation will be made at the SMARS regular meeting on 8/21/14.

Memorandum of Agreement – Members can find a copy of this MoA between FEMA and ARRL by doing an internet search using the phrase FEMA & ARRL MOA.

Simulated Emergency Test – Calhoun Co. is planning to have an SET sometime before November 1<sup>st</sup>. Date and time, of course, are unknown. The city of Battle Creek would like to coordinate their own SET during the county's SET. Nothing has been agreed upon as yet. The club has voted to consider holding their own SET while hoping to learn what needs the county and city would have for later tests. More will be discussed at a future meeting.

Jim Zoss reported that the NWS had advised earlier in the year that this coming winter may be slightly less brutal

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**Hamfests**

**Income and Expense Statement**

8/1/14 Through 8/31/14

09/19/2014: W9DXCC Convention

Schaumburg, IL

Northern Illinois DX Association

<http://w9dxcc.com>

09/20/2014: Hancock ARC Hamfest

Greenfield, IN

Hancock Amateur Radio Club of Hancock County

<http://www.w9atg.org>

09/20/2014: Peoria Superfest

Peoria, IL

Peoria Area Amateur Radio Club

<http://www.w9uvi.org>

09/21/2014: OH-KY-IN Amateur Radio Society Hamfest

Cincinnati, OH

OH-KY-IN ARS

<http://www.ohkyin.org>

09/27/2014: ORC Fall Swapfest

Cedarburg, WI

Ozaukee Radio Club

<http://www.ozaukeeradioclub.org>

09/28/2014: CLEVELAND HAMFEST AND COMPUTER SHOW

Berea, OH

Hamfest Association of Cleveland, Inc.

<http://www.hac.org>

10/04/2014: Hoosier Hills Hamfest

Mitchell, IN

Hoosier Hills Ham Club

<http://www.w9qyq.org/hamfest>

10/11/2014: Parkersburg/Wood County Hamfest

Mineral Wells, WV

Wood County Emergency Communications

<http://wc8ec.com>

10/12/2014: SEWFARS SWAPFEST

Hubertus, WI

Southeastern Wisconsin FM Amateur Repeater Society

<http://www.sewfars.com>

10/18/2014: Muskegon Color Tour Hamfest

Muskegon, MI

Muskegon County Emergency Communication Services

<http://www.mcecs.net/Hamfest.htm>

Category Description	8/1/14-8/31/14
<b>INCOME</b>	
Dues:	
2014	5.00
<b>TOTAL Dues</b>	5.00
Interest Inc:	
Checking	0.21
<b>TOTAL Interest Inc</b>	0.21
Sales:	
Equipment	150.00
<b>TOTAL Sales</b>	150.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	155.21
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Administration:	
Corp File	20.00
<b>TOTAL Administration</b>	20.00
Equipment:	
Maintainance	245.70
<b>TOTAL Equipment</b>	245.70
Meetings:	
Refreshments	13.67
Rent	210.00
VE Rent	75.00
<b>TOTAL Meetings</b>	298.67
Utilities:	
Internet	59.00
Telephone	36.32
<b>TOTAL Utilities</b>	95.32
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	659.69
<b>TOTAL INCOME - EXPENSES</b>	-504.48

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

Southern Michigan Amateur Radio Society

2 Meter Repeater 146.660 MHz -600KHz offset, PL 94.8

2 Meter Digital/DStar 146.79/19 (-600KHz Offset)

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.

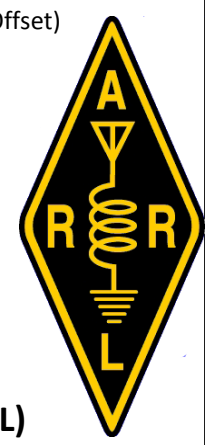
W8DF-5 144.39Mhz Digipeater/Igate  
Find it on [www.aprs.fi](http://www.aprs.fi)

**Other Area Repeaters:**

**Skywarn/ARES/RACES (WX8BTL)**

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

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



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than last year, however at this time they aren't making any forecasts! Other services are betting that it will just as bad as last!! El Nino is not very strong this year but will be stirring up moisture from the southern regions. Get your snowblowers ready!

Other – There was some mention of a foot race that might need communications needs on September 21<sup>st</sup>. Hopefully, more info will be forthcoming.

The Boy Scout Camporee will be 9/26 & 27 at the county fairgrounds. Some help may be needed there, also.

Meeting adjourned at 1929.

Respectfully submitted, Jay N8ARR.

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## Meeting Minutes 08/21/2014

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Introductions

Officers present – Gary N8QC, Doc K8OLY, Don W8RVT, Jay N8ARR, Tom WR8G. 33 members in attendance total!

Secretary's report was tabled as it hadn't been published in Feedback.

Treasurer's report was passed around and later accepted.

Committee reports:

Hamfest 2015 – Jay presented the information to the rest of the membership. The down payment has been made and the contract has been signed. Tom, WR8G, co-chairman, has agreed to take over the ticket printing/distribution. He will also re-instate the pre-sale of tickets, especially to the vendors. We hope that we might encourage vendors who have dropped out to return. Some of those who dropped did so because of reasons that can't be corrected, like death.

SKYWARN – Ken, KC8QNO, reported that the SKYWARN net will be moved to Tuesday nights beginning on August 26th. It will be held on Tuesdays except for the third Tuesday which is the club meeting night.

HIAD – The next HIAD will be held on 9/20 at the Emmett Township Training Room. Testing to start at 3:00 pm.

Christmas Party – We need to begin the planning/reservation process for a party in early December. Since Lou was the usual chair for this, a new chair is needed. Stephanie, W8AEZ, volunteered for this job. Thank you Steph!! We would like to return to the Old Country Buffet and would like to have the separate room reserved. More later.

VE session – The last VE session was held at BCPD and some upgrades were received as well as a couple first licenses. The next session will be held on August 25<sup>th</sup> in the Babcock Room at the Maple Methodist Church. Terry expects two of his students to be there. John will be looking for VEs to help. The next HIAD will be held on July 19<sup>th</sup> at a location to be determined later.

Field Day – No discussion.

Repeater – Don reports that the Echolink problems seem to be fixed. Also, either the last lightning strike or some other damage to the antenna requires a replacement. The board agreed to the purchase of a new antenna and it will be installed the weekend of 8/23, weather and climber availability permitting.

Old Business: We would like to take at least one trailer out for a day's practice. Calling it Field Day in a day, we would like to set up at the Fort Custer chapel on September 6<sup>th</sup>. Set up will start around 11:00 am with a break for the siren test, for those who cover same, and then operate for as long as we can.

New Business: Butch, KD8NKJ, asked for club member's help in signing petitions in support of HR4969 regarding CCR & HOA restrictions on antenna structures. Several members did sign said petitions.

Presentation – Brian, W8BDM, offered a slide show and operating demonstration of his work to create a bridge to D-Star operation using non-iCom equipment. The demonstration worked well and many club members showed keen interest.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jay Jarrett N8ARR, Secretary

## Should QSOs from remote stations be given DXCC credit?

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

In July, the DX Advisory Committee Report recommended several rules changes for the DXCC program ([http://www.arrl.org/files/file/About%20ARRL/Committee%20Reports/2014/July/Doc\\_27.pdf](http://www.arrl.org/files/file/About%20ARRL/Committee%20Reports/2014/July/Doc_27.pdf)). Among them, was a recommendation that rule I.9 be changed such that a QSO is acceptable for DXCC credit only when the remote station and the operator's home station location are no more than 200 km apart.

As with any rule change, this precipitated a lot of comment in the amateur radio community. A thread on the eHam.Net forum (<http://www.eham.net/ehamforum/smf/index.php/topic,98348.30.html>) got quite a few comments. N7NG had a nice blog post (<http://n7ng.wordpress.com/2014/03/05/remote-control-dxing-and-dxcc/>) on this controversy.

Perhaps the most strident post on this topic was written by WW1X (<http://ww1x.com/opinion/2014/08/14/in-defense-of-remote-dxcc.html>). He called these recommendations "uninformed, misguided, and detrimental to the future of our hobby." Detrimental to the future of our hobby? Seriously?

Of course, WW1X has a vested interest in this debate. He's the lead developer for RemoteHamRadio.Com, a company that charges other hams to use the "super stations" that they've set up around the world.

Note that the DX Advisory Committee is not saying that amateur radio operators should not use and enjoy these remote stations. All they're saying is that the QSOs made with them, unless they are located less than 200 km from an amateur's home station, are not eligible for DXCC credit. I'm sure that if you asked any of the members of the committee they would agree with WW1X that the remote stations serve a very useful purpose for amateurs who are not able to set up their own home stations.

WW1X prattles on about how "DXCC is not a contest. It's not a competition. There are no winners or losers. It's a personal achievement award, plain and simple." This is

just silly. Of course it's a competition. As N7NG rightly points out if it's not a competition, why publish the DXCC Honor Roll?

What I think is detrimental to the hobby are hams who use RemoteHamRadio.Com to simply add to their DXCC scores. I see no sense in doing so, and furthermore, where's the personal achievement? Anyone who can afford to pay what they charge—and it's not a small sum of money—can work the rarest DX with one of those stations.

A friend of mine, Mark, W8MP, is a RemoteHamRadio.Com customer, and it's a boon for him. He loves being able to work DX from his home in a development where no outside antennas are allowed. He's not trying to pad his DXCC score. He does this for the pure love of talking to other hams in far-away places.

When the final decision is made, I hope the DX Advisory Committee goes back to first principles as set forth in FCC Part 97.1 and makes their decision on whether or not allowing DXCC credit for remote station QSOs contributes to "the advancement of the radio art" or is an "extension of the amateur's unique ability to enhance international goodwill."

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When he's not writing this column for club newsletters, Dan, KB6NU enjoys working CW on the HF bands and teaching ham radio classes. For more information about his operating activities and his "No-Nonsense" series of amateur radio license study guides, go to KB6NU.Com or e-mail [cwgeek@kb6nu.com](mailto:cwgeek@kb6nu.com).

# SOUTHERN MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY FEEDBACK

## **Club Meeting**

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

## **SKYWARN Coffee**

1st Saturday of every month  
Immediately after Siren Test  
Coney Island, N.E. Capital  
Battle Creek, MI

## **BLB Luncheon**

2nd Thursday of every  
month  
Coney Island, N.E. Capital  
Battle Creek, MI

## **SMARS Breakfast**

2nd Saturday of every month  
Coney Island, N.E. Capital  
Battle Creek, MI

## **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

Please see page 3 for offsets and PL tones

## **Upcoming events:**

**Club meeting: September 18th @ 7:00 PM**

**Siren test: October 4th @ 1:00 PM**

**SKYWARN Coffee: after siren test**

**SMARS Breakfast: October 11th @ 8:30 AM**

**BLB Lunch: October 9th @ 11:30 AM**