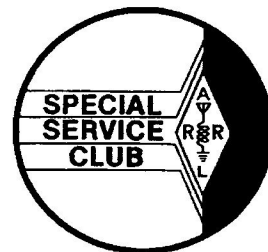


FEEDBACK

JUNE 2009



COMMENTS

This month SMARS will be active in the annual Field Day exercise. The plan is to use all three trailers with the Georges on CW, a trailer primary phone on 20 and up frequency, with the third devoted to the vhf spectrum. The NA program that the club has used for the last several years will be used as the record keeper.

One of the difficulties in previous operations has been confusion with time. Make certain that your computer is set on UMT. If this is not done and a power outage occurs or the computer is shut down for any reason, when the computer is next fired up it likely will show local time with consequent confusion.

Don't worry about dupes. Go ahead and enter them as they may have not been completed earlier. One of the stations may not have made a complete contact and the other one might not need a second try. This kind of problem will be solved later during the preparing of data for submission. This happens quite often!

A listing of helpful hints rates a column in today's Feedback. Read it for clues. Also within this Feedback you will find further discussion of HB 2160 and the Michigan attempt to get legislation in support of PRB-1. At least 26 states have created legislation in this area. These do require your ACTIVE support. Some of you were around when hams lost the 27 MHz band. There was a lot of belly aching. But, we've been told only 7 letters were sent in by hams to object. Not too long ago, half of the 220 band was ripped off for commercial usage. Business wants our frequencies!

WA8MFL

W8DF-5 DIGIGATE

Actually, it is Digi/Igate, but digigate takes two fewer characters to write (or send) and one less syllable to speak.

The W8DF-5 digigate came to full life on May 23. Jason-KD8DAK climbed 120 feet up the tower, mounted a pair of old Cushcraft two-meter dipoles and secured 150 feet of LMR400 feedline on the way down. The feedline is attached to an elderly Kenwood TR7730 transmitting 30 watts of digital data and is interfaced to a TNC-X. The TNC-X has an internal USB adapter which works nicely as a serial RS232 port.

This whole mess is run by UIView32 and SV2AGW's PacketEngine. Southern Michigan is already served well by digipeaters and another one isn't really necessary but comes as part of a digigate. The primary goal of this digigate is to receive digipeated data packets and gate them to the internet as well as receive packets from the internet and transmit them on RF to stations capable of receiving data addressed to them.

Does it work? I think so. I have seen data packets from N8TJG, NK8X, K8BRC, KB8ZGL and W8FSM digi's routinely placed on the internet. I have even seen packets digi'ed from central Wisconsin gated to the internet by W8DF-5 as well as countless others.

I have experimented sending and receiving text messages via APRS. I have been able to exchange text with N8TJG while he was driving his pickup through town. KD8DAK received a message on his Yaesu VX8R. The response from KD8KRS in Beulah, MI was (via e-mail) How did you do that? when the message was displayed on a VX8R.

All this stuff is running on a computer and DSL shared with Echolink. All indications are they get along just fine.

Don-W8RVT



ARRL FIELD DAY TIPS AND TECHNIQUES THAT EVERYONE CAN USE

Many amateurs treat ARRL Field Day (June 27-28) as a contest, even though it isn't one <<http://www.arrl.org/fieldday>>. But if your idea of Field Day fun is to go for the highest score possible, ARRL Contest Branch Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X, offered the following suggestions at the ARRL Field Day Forum at the 2009 Dayton Hamvention.

1) You will get many more stations in your log by calling CQ than by tuning the dial and answering CQs; however, if you're calling CQ and not getting any replies, keep calling. Most major contesters call CQ for several minutes at a time before giving up. Giving up after three or four CQs is giving up too soon.

2) Keep your CQs short and to the point: "CQ Field Day, CQ Field Day, Whiskey-One-Alfa-Whiskey, Field Day." Wait about 5 seconds between CQs -- this gives stations enough time to answer you.

3) Use standard phonetics. "Cute" phonetics don't always get through and they can confuse newer operators.

4) When working a station, you should give your exchange information only once and keep it simple. "Whiskey-One-Alfa-Whiskey, copy three Foxtrot Connecticut, QSL?" If they didn't get all of the exchange, they will ask for a repeat.

5) If you are running a pileup: Once you have pulled a call out of the pileup, give your exchange information first. Here's an example: "Whiskey-One-Alfa-Whiskey, copy 3F Connecticut, QSL?" Don't ask for the calling station's information first -- this will reduce any sense of rhythm and timing in the pileup.

6) If you get a pileup of stations and can't make out an entire call, listen for one letter and ask for it specifically: "The station with Delta only, go ahead."

7) When you get the other station's information, keep your acknowledgment simple. "QSL, thanks, QRZ Field Day from Whiskey-One-Alfa-Whiskey."

8) Find a comfortable pace for you and maintain that pace. You will tire quickly if you are screaming into the microphone or trying to work stations too quickly. This leads to inefficiency.

9) Use a headset with a boom microphone and a foot switch -- this frees up your hands to log QSOs. Writing or typing with a mike in your hand slows you down.

10) Go for as many bonus points as you possibly can. Numerous opportunities exist, from copying the Field Day message to ending traffic to using natural power for QSOs.

These tips should help maximize your score on Field Day. Remember: No matter how you choose to enjoy Field Day, maximize your fun, however you define it.

AN EXPLANATION

A diplexer allows radios on different bands to use the same antenna - as opposed to a duplexer that enables a receiver and transmitter on the same band to share the antenna.

Using a diplexer can be mighty handy on the VHF bands where a log-periodic or discone can easily cover 6 meters through 70 cm (and beyond). George WB2VNV recommends the Austin Antenna diplexers - actually a misnomer, since they make di-, tri-, and even pentaplexers that cover five different bands (28-50, 144, 220, 440 MHz, and 1.2 GHz). One -plexer at each end of a feed line would allow multiple radios to use multiple monoband antennas, too. Just the savings on feed line is substantial.

A duplexer has a different use. It allows the use of one antenna for both the transmitter and the receiver such as in repeaters.

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W?

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ARRL SEEKS MEMBER SUPPORT FOR HR 2160

To support HR 2160 -- The Amateur Radio Emergency Communications 2009 -- the ARRL is asking its membership to contact their members of the US House of Representatives with a request to become co-sponsors of this significant piece of legislation <http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_cong_bill_s&docid=f:h2160ih.txt.pdf>.

"Getting a bill successfully through Congress is a formidable task -- one that is going to require the involvement of every ARRL member," said ARRL Regulatory Information Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND. "Working with our Washington consulting firm Chwat & Co, we are laying a dynamic approach that will allow us to make our case most effectively. We have developed a strategy to maximize our impact when dealing with each member of Congress."

Since the anthrax scare that followed the 9/11 attacks, all incoming mail to Congress is delayed anywhere from four to six weeks while it is screened. This means using normal US Mail is no longer an effective method of letting Congress hear your voice. While e-mail is convenient, it is also not effective, due to the large volume of e-mail that each Congressional office receives.

"To ensure that ARRL members' letters are quickly and expediently received by Congress, our strategy is to ask ARRL members send their letters directly to Chwat & Co," said Henderson. "Chwat's staff will sort the letters by Congressional district and hand-deliver them to the appropriate House offices, providing a direct point of contact with the Congressman and their staff. This personal contact gives us the chance to provide not only letters from constituents, but information from the ARRL on why this legislation is important."

The ARRL has provided a sample letter for League members to personalize and send to their Congressional representative <<http://www.arrl.org/news/files/DearMemberOfCongressHR2160.doc>>.

"Personalized letters make a better impression than a standard form letter or petition," Henderson explained. You can find the name and address for your member of Congress on the ARRL Members Only Web page <<http://www.arrl.org/members-only/>>.

Once it has been personalized, ARRL members should send their letter to Chwat & Co using one of three methods: * As a signed attachment to an e-mail arrl@chwatco.com>

* As a signed fax to 703-684-7594

* As a regular letter to John Chwat, Chwat & Co, 625 Slaters Ln, Suite 103, Alexandria, VA 22314

If you choose to e-mail your letter, please send it as an attachment to the e-mail instead of having it be the text of the e-mail. This allows the letter to be easily printed and delivered. Should you decide to draft your own letter sup-

porting HR 2160 instead of editing the sample, Henderson asked that you please remember a couple of things: * Identify the bill by number and title: HR 2160 -- The Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Enhancement Act of 2009
* Keep the letter brief and on topic -- one page at the most
* Ask your congressional representative to consider becoming a cosponsor * Thank them for their consideration

"Simple is better when making this kind of request to a representative," said Henderson. "They and their staff are looking to gauge interest and support for the bill. A lengthy letter that strays off-topic can detract from the focus of asking for support for the legislation."

Should you decide not to send your letter to Chwat & Co but directly to your Representative, it is still important to send a copy of your correspondence to Chwat & Co. This allows Chwat to discuss accurately with the Congressman and their staff the amount of support for the bill in each individual district. "There is strength in numbers," Henderson added.

Aside from bill sponsor Representative Sheila Jackson-Lee (TX-18), the ARRL is fortunate to already have six additional members of Congress who have signed on as co-sponsors of HR 2160 -- Madeleine Bordallo (Guam), Brett Guthrie (KY-2), Mary Jo Kilroy (OH-15), Zoe Lofgren (CA-16), Blaine Luetkemeyer, (MO-9) and Bennie Thompson (MS-2).

"We congratulate ARRL Great Lakes Division Director Jim Weaver, K8JE, and his grassroots legislative action team in Kentucky for securing the support of Representative Guthrie -- the first new co-sponsor of the bill," Henderson said. "It shows that our grassroots effort can work!"

You may be asking yourself "What should I do if my Representative has already signed on as a co-sponsor for HR 2160?" The answer is simple: Thank them for their support. If your Congressman is one of those listed as a co-sponsor, please send them a letter thanking them for their support. Use the same contact information for Chwat & Co. "It is important to convey your appreciation to your Representative when they sign on as a co-sponsor or support the bill," Henderson explained. "That simple 'thank you' may help open the door the next time their help is needed."

Once you have prepared and sent your letter supporting HR 2160, your job is not over: Feedback is an important part of the process. "What your Congressman has to say in regards to your contact can provide the ARRL with important information as we try to push our bill forward," Henderson noted. "This feedback can possibly help us identify potential new support for the bill or a weakness in the legislation we may need to address."

When you receive a response from your Congressman, please forward a copy to the Regulatory Information Office at ARRL Headquarters via e-mail <reginfo@arrl.org> or hard copy to Regulatory Information, ARRL, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111.

"HR 2160 presents the Amateur Radio Service with a unique opportunity -- but also carries with it the important responsibil-

ity of making your voice heard," Henderson summarized. "HR 2160 stands as the first step in trying to address the long standing problem of extending the protections afforded Amateur Radio operators under PRB-1 to deed restrictions and covenants <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/regulations/PRB-1_Pkg/prb-1.pdf>. To be clear, passing HR 2160 is not going to achieve that goal right away. But it will help lay the ground work by assessing the impact such restrictions have on our ability to train for and respond to disasters and other emergencies."

Sample letter to Your Michigan State Representative:
Michigan Emergency Communications Preservation Act.
(rewrite this to be your letter)

The Honorable [First and Last name of congressman or senator]
Michigan State Capitol [House of Representatives or Senate]
[Room #]
124 North Capitol
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Re: Michigan Emergency Communications Preservation Act

Dear [Representative or Senator Last name]:

As your constituent, I am writing to urge you to cosponsor House Bill xxxx, the Michigan Emergency Communications Preservation Act.

The recent proliferation of cell phone towers has motivated county and municipal governments to become increasingly aggressive in restricting the erection of communication structures. Recognizing this issue, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued a ruling in 1985 entitled PRB-1, which states that local authorities must "reasonably accommodate" residential amateur radio station installations. Unfortunately, local planners and zoning officials do not typically consider federal rulings and generally focus on state laws. Currently, twenty-seven other states, including Kansas, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Virginia have addressed this issue by codifying the provisions of PRB-1, (Amateur Radio Preemption, 101 FCC 2d 952), into state statutes. At this time PRB-1 has not been codified into Michigan state statute.

Your support for House Bill xxxx will address this issue in the State of Michigan, ensuring that in times of need amateur radio operators will be able to communicate effectively. On May 4th 2007 Greensburg, KS was destroyed by an EF-5 tornado. 11 people died, hundreds

were left homeless. The survivors had no way to communicate with loved ones, indeed the very infrastructure was simply gone. On May 5th teams of "Ham" radio operators, along with emergency response organizations arrived and began constructing a communication network from the ground up. For almost 100 years, Amateur Radio has provided emergency communications to the public in times of natural and other disasters. All of our time, equipment, and effort during such times are gladly donated by Amateur Radio volunteers. It is completely free. Help us to ensure that this critical method of communications is available when it is most needed.

I ask you seriously to consider the Michigan Emergency Communications Preservation Act for the following reasons:

[Insert one or two of your favorite reasons to support HB xxxx.

For example:] The Michigan Emergency Communications Preservation Act is not an attempt to set new legal precedent or give Michigan hams privileges not already supported by FCC regulations. This bill simply assures that Michigan state law reflects the federal rules regarding Amateur Radio Stations. Consequently, any local county, city or other municipal government creating ordinances regarding antenna restrictions, radio frequency power limits or regulating amateur radio stations will be made aware that a federal rule exists. These entities can then use this rule as a guide without specific or additional restrictions being placed upon them.

Your leadership is imperative and is respectfully requested on this important issue. To learn more about the Michigan Emergency Communications Preservation Act through "Hams for Michigan", you may visit the following website: <http://www.HamsforMichigan.org>.

Please support this commonsense legislation and let me know your opinion on this important issue. Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

With sincere appreciation,

[Name]
[Address]
[City, State ZIP]
[Phone number]

PBR-1 IN MICHIGAN

Here are excerpts from a special announcement Diane WI8K has sent to all Michigan ARRL Affiliated Clubs:

I am writing on behalf of your ARRL Michigan Section leadership and its newly formed ARRL Michigan PRB1 Committee. Our purpose is to pass the Michigan Emergency Communications Preservation Act. If enacted, this legislation would require zoning boards and other state and local authorities to incorporate the federal preemption under PRB-1 into any ordinances regulating antennas. We would be the 28th state to pass such a law.

For background information on PRB-1 and an explanation of the benefits to Michigan's citizens of enacting this legislation, please see the attached handout. At this time, the bill is still in the draft stage. But there are several steps you can take now to support our efforts and gain the knowledge you will need when the time comes to make the Michigan Emergency Communications Preservation Act a reality.

1. Regularly visit the ARRL Michigan PRB-1 Committee web site at www.prb1michigan.org. Here you will find links to the actual text of PRB-1, an explanation of the benefits of the legislation in question and answer format, and contact information for members of the committee. We will constantly update the site as the project evolves.

2. While visiting the site, we urge you to become part of our mailing list. This is how we will notify you when it is time to contact your state senators and representatives about passing the PRB-1 legislation. We also urge you to be certain that your contact information on the ARRL website is up-to-date, as well as that of your newsletter editors and public information people.

3. We want to notify as many Michigan amateurs as possible about our efforts and their importance. You can help us by publishing the attached handout and other materials we may provide in the future in your newsletter, on your web site and on your email reflector. Please discuss the project on your nets and at your meetings. Members of the committee will be happy to meet with you to explain what we are doing and answer any questions you may have.

4. We strongly encourage you and your members to pass a resolution stating that your organization supports the Michigan Amateur Communications Preservation Act. It will be much easier to gain support for the bill if enough amateurs say they want and need this legislation. We are attaching a resolution template that you can use as is or modify as appropriate. Please forward all adopted resolutions to the committee at info@prb1michigan.org.

5. While visiting our web site, please check out the explanation and flowchart detailing how a bill becomes law in Michigan. You will find it to be a complex and time-consuming process.

Stay tuned for further details concerning the Michigan Amateur Communications Preservation Act. We will keep you abreast of milestones as they occur. Eventually, we will be counting on you and your members to contact your state legislators to enlist their help in sponsoring and passing this legislation. We look forward to working with you and thank you in advance for any assistance you can provide.

73,
Diane Scalzi, WI8K
Club Liaison Relationship Manager,
ARRL Michigan PRB-1 Committee

(Check the website - www.prb1michigan.org)

FCC RESUMES ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS

On May 13, the FCC posted the first list of enforcement actions <http://www.fcc.gov/eb/AmateurActions/Welcome.html> since Laura Smith took over as FCC Special Counsel. The 11 RFI-related letters to energy providers were sent between February 18 and April 1, 2009, and the 7 warning letters to individuals were sent between February 18 and March 30, 2009.

ARES / RACES Report for May 2009 in Calhoun County

RACES / Skywarn Nets and Training

8 Skywarn Training Nets 1hr each @ 122 People = 122hrs
122hrs Total

Public Service Events

Siren Test 10 People @ 1hrs each= 10 hrs
10 hrs Total

Administration Hours, 30hrs Total

Emergency Operations 12 People @ 3hrs Each= 36hrs Total

Equipment Hours 3 People @ 60 hrs Each=180hrs Total

Travel Hours 3hrs Total

Expenses- Out of Pocket \$160.00 Total

Travel Miles 105 Miles Total

Members 34

Dave Smith
KC8COT
E-12
City of Battle Creek and Calhoun County
RACES, Emergency Coordinator

INVERTER OR CONVERTER

Q: What is an inverter?

A: An inverter takes DC power (battery or solar, for example) and converts it into AC "household" power for running electronic equipment and appliances.

Q: How is an inverter different than a UPS?

A: A UPS typically includes the battery and battery charger in one stand alone unit. However, there are UPSs that use external batteries, and PowerStream makes inverters with battery chargers, so the differences blurr as features proliferate.

UPSs also can have communication with the equipment that it is powering letting the equipment know that it is operating on standby, giving it shutdown warning, or communicating with the human in the loop. Inverters typically don't have this communication.

Q: Why are they called inverters?

A: Originally converters were large rotating electromechanical devices. Essentially they combined a synchronous ac motor with a commutator so that the commutator reversed its connections to the ac line exactly twice per cycle. The results is ac-in dc-out. If you invert the connections to a converter you put dc in and get ac out. Hence an inverter is an inverted converter.

all-battery.com

MORE OF MY MOTHER'S TEACHINGS

13. My mother taught me the
CIRCLE OF LIFE .
'I brought you into this world, and I can take you out.'

14. My mother taught me about
BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION.
'Stop acting like your father!'

15. My mother taught me about
ENVY.
'There are millions of less fortunate children in this world who don't have wonderful parents like you do.'

16. My mother taught me about
ANTICIPATION.
'Just wait until we get home.'

17. My mother taught me about
RECEIVING .
'You are going to get it when you get home!'

18. My mother taught me
MEDICAL SCIENCE.
'If you don't stop crossing your eyes, they are going to freeze that way.'

19. My mother taught me
ESP.
'Put your sweater on; don't you think I know when you are cold?'

20. My mother taught me
HUMOR.
'When that lawn mower cuts off your toes, don't come running to me.'

21. My mother taught me
HOW TO BECOME AN ADULT .
'If you don't eat your vegetables, you'll never grow up.'

22. My mother taught me
GENETICS.
'You're just like your father.'

23. My mother taught me about my
ROOTS.
'Shut that door behind you. Do you think you were born in a barn?'

24. My mother taught me
WISDOM.
'When you get to be my age, you'll understand.'

25. And my favorite: My mother taught me about
JUSTICE
'One day you'll have kids, and I hope they turn out just like you.'

SMARS Board Meeting
June 1, 2009

As only 2 board members were able to attend, there was no board meeting this month. Next board meeting is June 29.

Respectfully Submitted,
John Davidson KC8WMM
SMARS Secretary

HAMFESTS

20 June Midland MI
Midland Amateur Radio Club
<http://www.qsl.net/w8kea>
Salvation Army Building
330 Waldo Road
Midland, MI
Talk-In 147.00 +
Contact: Pat Mullet KC8RTW
989-828-6657
pat.mullet@yahoo.com

21 June Monroe MI
Monroe County Radio Communications Association
<http://www.mcrca.org/hamfest.htm>
Monroe County Fairgrounds
3775 South Custer Road
Monroe MI
Talk-In 146.72/12
Contact: Fred VanDaele KA8EBI
734-242-9487
ka8ebi@yahoo.com

SMARS Club Meeting
May 21, 2009

Called To Order: 7:01 PM

Officers Present: Jerry W8FOK Ned WB4BKO Don W8RVT
John KC8WMM Russ N8UU

Pledge of Allegiance

Introductions

Secretary's Report: approved as published in Feedback.
Treasurer's Report: approved as reported at the Club Meeting.

Committee Reports:

Field Day: Setup starting at 3 PM on Friday June 26. Bob and Lou will coordinate about the food. Lou will bring the Mousemobile again this year.

Hamfest: A Chairperson is needed for 2010.

ARES/RACES: March of Dimes event went well. 2 weather events occurred with approximately 13 people participating in each.

VE Testing: 1 new Tech at the April session. Next session is June 25, right before Field Day.

Repeaters: Working normally.

Old Business:

Contesting added to the Club's wish list.

The digipeater/I-Gate is functioning and all needed pieces have been ordered.

The Club trailers were pulled out and the equipment sorted.

The generators were started.

The proposed trip to Spring Arbor has not gotten a date yet.

New Business:

KC8HET has a new radio and antenna and needs some help in setting it up.

A new bill HR 2160 needs the support of all hams.

Jerry W8FOK resigned as Club President due to health issues. A call for a volunteer to assume the position had no takers.

A DSP 59+ was donated to the Club by Charley Dewey W0CD to give away as a door prize or to raffle off. The Board will decide.

Drawing: Won by Walt K8AEM

Adjourned: 8:10 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
John Davidson KC8WMM
SMARS Secretary

SOUTHERN MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

FEEDBACK



JUNE 2009



SMARS
P.O. BOX 934
BATTLE CREEK MI 49016

FIRST CLASS MAIL



SMARS NETS

Before Lunch Bunch
Monday-Friday 11:30 A.M.
146.66
Sunday Evening 8:00 P.M.
146.66
Monday 7:30 P.M.
224.24
Wednesday 7:00 P.M.
443.95
Wednesday 8:00 P.M.
28.365
Saturday 8:00 P.M.
443.95

ARES/RACES/SKYWARN.NET
Monday 7:00 P.M. 147.12

ACTIVITY CALENDAR

THIS MONTH SMARS CLUB MEETING JUNE 18
HAMFEST MIDLAND JUNE 20
HAMFEST MONROE JUNE 21
FIELD DAY JUNE 27-28
NEXT SMARS BOARD JUNE 29
NEXT SMARS BREAKFAST JULY 4
NEXT B4LUNCH BUNCH LUNCH JULY 9
NEXT MONTH SMARS CLUB MEETING JULY 16