



# FEEDBACK

January 2020

Do you have a story, humorous or otherwise, about amateur radio? If so, please contact the newsletter editor ([w8kdb@arrl.net](mailto: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](mailto:w8kdb@arrl.net)

*Vice President*  
Thomas Worthington, KE8GDN  
[tomcworth@aol.com](mailto:tomcworth@aol.com)

*Secretary*  
John Davidson, W8JRD  
[w8jrd@arrl.net](mailto:w8jrd@arrl.net)

*Treasurer*  
Ivan Rhodes, W8IDR  
[idrhodes@aol.com](mailto:idrhodes@aol.com)

*Member At Large*  
Glenn "Smokey" McCray, N5MKY  
[n5mky@arrl.net](mailto:n5mky@arrl.net)

### Inside this issue:

Lead article.....	1
Upcoming Radio Contests.....	2
Supplemental article.....	2
Meeting Minutes .....	4
Upcoming Hamfests & Conventions.....	3
Club Repeaters.....	5
Nets & Upcoming Events.....	6

### Club News

## Battle Creek Ordinance

With the start of 2020, we are also seeing the new distracted drive ordinance going into effect. The ordinance is mainly related to the use of cell phones while driving in the City of Battle Creek. Thanks to local Amateur Radio Operators, we made sure to get Amateur Radio exempt from this rule. Although it seems that people might be thinking that this law includes the use of Amateur Radio since it is a two way device. Below is what the law says is "Distracted Driving":

1. The physical manipulation of any 2-way wireless electronic communication device used for dialing numbers; or scrolling; or typing or entering multiple letters, numbers, symbols, or other text; or the sending, receiving and reading of any non-voice data in the device while the motor vehicle is in motion on any highway or street or place open to the general public within the City of Battle Creek. As used in this subsection, a wireless 2-way communication device does not include a global positioning or navigating system or cellular telephone that is affixed to the motor vehicle or **radio service equipment used by a licensee of the Federal Communications Commission;** and/or
2. The physical manipulation or handling of any wireless entertainment or electronic telephonic communication device for the purpose of speaking into, or listening to voice data, while the motor vehicle is in motion on any highway or street or place open to the general public within the City of Battle Creek.

I have made bold and highlighted the section that excludes Amateur Radio Operators from the law. It is recommend that you keep a copy of your official license in your vehicle just in case. This can be requested from the FCC. For more details, you can read the whole law at the following URL:

[http://library.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/Michigan/battlecreek/partfour-trafficcode?f=templates\\$fn=default.htm\\$3.0\\$vid=amlegal:battlecreek\\_mi\\$sanc=JD\\_410.04](http://library.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/Michigan/battlecreek/partfour-trafficcode?f=templates$fn=default.htm$3.0$vid=amlegal:battlecreek_mi$sanc=JD_410.04)

## Upcoming Radio Contests

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

### January VHF

Bands: 6 Meters

Mode: CW, SSB, Phone, Digital

Date: 01/16 - 01/18/2020

URL: [www.arrl.org/january-vhf](http://www.arrl.org/january-vhf)

### School Club Roundup

Bands: 60, 30, 17, 12 Meters

Mode: CW, Phone, Digital

Date: 02/10 - 02/14/2020

URL: [www.arrl.org/school-club-roundup](http://www.arrl.org/school-club-roundup)

### ARRL DX

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

Mode: CW

Date: 02/15 - 02/16/2020

URL: [www.arrl.org/arrl-dx](http://www.arrl.org/arrl-dx)

### ARRL DX

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

Mode: Phone

Date: 03/07 - 03/08/2020

URL: [www.arrl.org/arrl-dx](http://www.arrl.org/arrl-dx)

\*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>

## Other News

# Norway Experiences Unexpected Ground Current “Shockwave”

[Spaceweather.com](http://Spaceweather.com) reports that on January 6, unexpected electrical currents were detected in the soil of northern Norway starting at around 1930 UTC.

“It seemed to be some kind of shockwave,” said Rob Stammes, who monitors ground currents at the [Polarlightcenter](http://Polarlightcenter) geophysical observatory in Lofoten. “My instruments detected a sudden, strong variation in both ground currents and our local magnetic field. It really was a surprise.”

NASA's ACE spacecraft detected something as well. About 15 minutes before the disturbance in Norway, the near-Earth interplanetary magnetic field abruptly swung around 180 degrees, and the solar wind density jumped more than five-fold. According to [Spaceweather.com](http://Spaceweather.com), Earth may have crossed through a fold in the [heliospheric current sheet](http://heliospheric current sheet), described as “a giant, wavy membrane of electrical current rippling through the solar system.” Such crossings can cause these kind of effects, the [Spaceweather.com](http://Spaceweather.com) report said.

The ground currents were accompanied by spectacular displays of aurora borealis visible in Finland. — *Thanks to Spaceweather.com*

## Operating notes: Wet antenna, electrical noise GONE!, 30m noise

I have been using my [Cobra antenna](http://Cobra antenna) for more than four years now, so you'd have thought I'd have seen everything. Yesterday, though was something different.

One of the things about an antenna that uses ladder line feedline is that the characteristics change when it gets wet. When this happens, re-tuning usually keeps me on the air. Of the three bands that I operate most often—30 meters, 40 meters, and 80 meters—30 meters requires the most retuning, then 80 meters, and 40 meters normally requires the least retuning.

Yesterday was different, though. It began raining late Friday night and continued throughout the day on Saturday, finally turning into freezing rain and snow late Saturday night. When I got on the air Saturday afternoon to make some contacts in the North American QSO Party, I

## Upcoming Hamfests & Conventions

**02/22/2020**

La Porte County Amateur Radio Hamfest

Location: La Porte, IN

Sponsor: La Porte County Amateur Radio Club

<http://lpcarc.org/>

**03/14/2020**

Toledo Hamfest and Great Lakes Division Convention

Location: Perrysburg, OH

Sponsor: Toledo Mobile Radio Association

<http://www.tmrahamradio.org/>

**04/11/2020**

Crossroads Hamfest

Location: Kalamazoo, MI

Sponsor: Southern Michigan Amateur Radio Society

<https://www.w8df.com/>

couldn't get the antenna to tune at all on 40 meters! I did manage to achieve an SWR of 1.5:1 on 80 meters and made a couple of contacts there, but the antenna tuner settings were way different from the normal settings.

I had never experienced such odd behavior before, and honestly thought that something was wrong with the antenna. Today, however, after the antenna had a chance to dry off, it all seems back to normal. And, as a bonus, band conditions weren't too bad.

### **Electrical noise GONE!**

I had never experienced such odd behavior before, and honestly thought that something was wrong with the antenna. Today, however, after the antenna had a chance to dry off, it all seems back to normal. And, as a bonus, band conditions weren't too bad.

I have a ceiling light in my dining room that has given me fits ever since I installed it. It's quite a nice-looking light, but had 20 12 V, 10 W G4 halogen bulbs powered by a supply that put out all kinds of hash. The noise was so bad that I was unable to operate anything except FT8 on the HF bands.

Well, about a month ago, the power supply gave up the ghost. This was certainly annoying, but I took advantage of this opportunity to replace the halogen bulbs with LED bulbs like the one at right. I got both the power supply and the bulbs from Amazon. The trick was finding a power supply that would fit within the fixture, but with a little searching, I was able to do so. I re-installed the light fixture this afternoon, and am much happier now. It's truly a win-win-win situation:

- The fixture consumes much less power than the old one. The halogen bulbs were 10 W bulbs. The new LED bulbs are rated at only 1.5 W.
- Despite the lower power consumption, the LED bulbs are brighter than the halogen bulbs.
- The electrical noise is GONE! Now, I don't have to ask my wife to leave the dining room when I want to operate the radio.

### **30 meter band noise**

Speaking of noise, do any of you have noise on 30 meters like the noise in the screenshot below?

30 meters is the only band where I see noise like this, and I'm wondering if it's something local or more widespread.

## Meeting Minutes 12/19/2019

**Called to Order:** 7:02 PM

**Officers Present:** John W8JRD Smokey N5MKY  
Tom WR8G Jan W8JKG

**Incoming:** Ivan W8IDR Tom W. KE8GDN

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Introductions**

**Greetings to new members:** none this month

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

**Treasurer's Report as distributed at the meeting:**  
Motion Bev KA8CXS Second Tom KE8GDN  
Approved

### Committee Reports:

- Hamfest: Flyers now on social media sites. Physical flyers are ready to be printed.
- ARES/RACES: No net on Christmas Eve. There will be a reading of a Ham Operator's Night Before Christmas. There will be a net on December 31st.
- Field Day: Insurance rider will have to be obtained. Layout last year worked well. Mounting of the butternut will be above the beam, unless storms are predicted. One of the trailers needs screens.
- VE Testing: Next session December 26. Jay met a new ham, Donna KE8NLV, at one of his retiree breakfasts.

### Old Business:

- Christmas Party December 14 had 33 attendees. A good time was had by all.

### New Business:

- Tom KE8GDN has been working on a list of possible topics for presentations in the new year. He has lined up a speaker for April.

**Adjourned:** 7:47 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

John Davidson W8JRD  
SMARS Secretary

## Board Meeting Minutes 01/07/2020

**Called to Order:** 5:31 PM

**Officers Present:** Kyle W8KBD John W8JRD  
Smokey N5MKY Ivan W8IDR Tom W. KE8GDN

**Others:** Tom WR8G Jan W8JKG

### Topics:

- The last VE session had 1 new Tech and 4 upgrades to General. There will be no scheduled session in December, as it falls on Christmas Eve. There are rumblings that Terry N8LN and Mike KQ8N may have a new class starting early in 2020.
- Reservations are coming in for Hamfest. The application for ARRL sanctioning has been received. The word is spreading on social media about the changed date. We still need to get the contract with Wings signed and returned.
- There isn't a date yet for the Skywarn training in Calhoun county.
- Winter Field Day is January 25 and 26. Contact Jim W8JMZ for more details.
- Club banking details need to be transferred from Jan to Ivan. This will happen shortly.
- Field Day this year needs an insurance rider to be obtained. The club will again donate to Custer park. The trailers still need work, waiting on weather, including the interiors and screen doors among other items.
- Smokey again brought up the club purchase of a noise finder. Kyle and Smokey will look for a sample contract, spelling out responsibilities and liabilities for the borrowers of said device.
- Tom KE8GDN has lined up Ed Fong to speak via Skype for the April meeting. Some details remain to be arranged, including media equipment.

**Adjourned:** 6:15 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><b>Club Meeting</b>  3rd Thursday of every month  Maple United Methodist Church  342 Capital Avenue NE  Battle Creek, MI 49017</p>	<p><b>SKYWARN Coffee</b>  1st Saturday of every month  Immediately after Siren Test  Coney Island, N.E. Capital  Battle Creek, MI</p>	<p><b>BLB Luncheon</b>  1st Thursday of every month  Coney Island, 962 Capital  Ave NE, Battle Creek, MI</p>	<p><b>SMARS Breakfast</b>  2nd Saturday of every month  Coney Island, 962 Capital  Ave NE, Battle Creek, MI</p>
---	---	--	---

<p><b>SMARS Nets:</b>  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><b>Other Nets:</b>  Skywarn Net: Tuesday 7:00 PM, 147.12 MHz</p> <p><i>Please see previous page for offsets and CTCSS tones</i></p>	<p><b>Upcoming Events:</b></p> <p>Club Meeting: Jan 16th @ 7:00pm  BLB Luncheon: Feb 6th @ 11:30am  Board Meeting: Feb 4th @ 5:30pm  Club Breakfast: Feb 8th @ 8:30am  VE Session: Feb 27th @ 7:00pm</p>
--	--