



FEEDBACK

JANUARY 2009



BPL REPORT

As has been noted previously, the Congressional Committee reported that the FCC had not behaved correctly with regard to information submitted to the FCC. A really scary point was made when they were invited to testify to the committee, Chairman Martin, his Chief of Staff Daniel Gonzalez and Chief of Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau Derek Poarch ignored the invitation to testify. Evidently these people thought they didn't need to pay any attention to Congress.

The report said that "in an investigation of this nature," the Committee would usually hold hearings "to receive testimony from witnesses and to further examine the issues." But due to what the Committee called "the climate of fear that currently pervades the FCC," the report said the Committee found that key witnesses "were unwilling to testify or even have their names become known." For that reason, they issued a report in place of a hearing "to protect the many honest people who came forward under a promise of protection or anonymity."

CHU FREQUENCIES

As of Jan 1, 2009, CHU has changed the mid frequency of 7335 MHz to 7850 MHz. The 3330 MHz and 14670 MHz frequencies have not changed. The change was the result of an ITU change that resulted in more interference on 7335 MHz.

DUES

Have you forgotten about your dues? No more reminders!

Dues run from Jan 1 to Dec 31. Dues are super critical in covering the expenses of operation. Rental of places to meet and to conduct tests, costs of activities such as Field Day, insurance for both club members and equipment, maintenance of equipment all count up. The swapfest almost covers the costs of operating a club. That almost remains to be found in the dues members pay. No more snail mail issues without renewal.

TRIPLE PLAY

Triple Play season to open

It has nothing to do with the "hot stove league" or "fantasy baseball" or even "Tinker to Evers to Chance," but it should prove to be a lot of fun. What is it? It is the new Triple Play WAS Award that has just been unveiled by the ARRL. It refers to a new form of Worked All States (WAS) that begins January 1 and requires working three new WASs -- one each on phone, CW and RTTY/digital. QSOs for the Triple Play award must be submitted through Logbook of the World (LoTW) to receive credit. Paper QSLs are not accepted for this award.

QSOs for the award must be dated no earlier than January 1, 2009. Three sets of confirmed QSOs with each of the 50 US states must be presented via LoTW for the award. All bands available to US amateurs may be used for the Triple Play with the exception of 60 M.

Further details on the new award may be found at <http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2008/12/05/10490/?nc=1/>

One added major point is that US applicants for the Triple Play award must be members of ARRL.



COMMENTS

We've raided the web for ideas this month and found several items of interest. The TAK-antenna has been constructed by a couple of members of SMARS and shown at club meetings. You will find a discussion of this antenna by someone who conducted experiments on one.

Dan KB6NU, who has been working for the Michigan ARRL Section as Club Coordinator states a series of wishes for the coming year and in another article describes how to use a CB SWR meter for VHF usage.

Several pictures are describing activities SMARS hams have been involved in over the past year, sometimes hands on and sometimes financially as in AMSAT.

Don's efforts towards increasing the use of the 220 repeater through Echolink are gradually paying off. Members can now work this band without owning a 220 rig and it is very easy. Real DX in the VHF spectrum is fun.

Of course some humor must appear, thus the article on pi from mathematics was picked from snopes.com. Yes it is a rumor! If you are not familiar with snopes.com, get with it! People believe almost anything and this is a library of items that have been passed as truths.

de WA8MFL

THIS MONTH

Today I received a call from Bob Lumbert, KB8ZES, the Chief Engineer for the PBS station WGVU in Grand Rapids. He has agreed to present a program about digital and high definition television at this month's club meeting barring inclement weather.

I sincerely hope many members will attend the meeting. It should be quite interesting. With new system going on line the 17th of February, the presentation will be very appropriately timed.

Ned/WB4BKO
SMARS VEEP

COMING EVENTS

We had a demonstration of early radios not too long ago and several members have expressed interest in having more. Joe Metzger will be demonstrating spark gap communication in February. Only a month or so away.

A few years ago, wind power and solar power were used by a local individual in operating a small machine shop. We plan on having him back.

If anyone has an idea for entertainment at a club meeting, check it with Ned WB4BKO.

SILVER ANNIVERSARY

The Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) team is currently celebrating the silver anniversary -- 25 years -- of Amateur Radio operations from space.

A special certificate is being developed for those who communicate with the ISS from November 30, 2008 to January 15, 2009. This certificate will be awarded to those who have had two-way communications with the ISS on voice, packet (APRS) or through the voice repeater. Those who hear the ISS from space in any of the ARISS operations modes -- voice, SSTV, school contact, voice repeater or digital - will also be eligible to receive a certificate.

To receive the certificate, Bauer said to note the ARISS mode of operation (such as SSTV, voice or school) on your QSL and whether the contact was one-way (receive only) or two-way. "You should send your self-addressed, stamped envelope to the normal ARISS QSL volunteer distributor in your area of the world," he explained. "On the outside of the QSL envelope, please include the words '25th Anniversary Certificate.' Make sure your envelope is big enough to accept an 8.5 x 11 inch certificate and includes the proper postage."

If you do not know where to send your QSL, check the ARISS Web site to find the one that serves your part of the world.

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ANTENNA OR DUMMY LOAD

Augie Hansen

...
Tell us, please, about your experiment and observation showing that TAK-tenna 'clearly is a feed-line radiator'.

After establishing a ground connection to the K2 transceiver, I found a clear frequency near the top of the 40 meter band, which was where I was able to get near a resonant condition on the TAK-tenna. Applying 3 watts of power I measured the RF current (common mode) flowing on the outside of the coax with an MFJ-854 RF Current Meter. If the shield were "cold" there should have been no detectable current. But I measured ~150 mA, indicating that the coax was radiating.

For comparison I measured the feed line current on one of my magnetic loops being powered at 500 watts and could not detect any feed line shield current while the copper loop conductor was carrying an estimated 30 amps (0.492 radiation resistance + .092 loss resistance). The loop is inherently balanced and is driven by a properly balanced primary loop.

If a dipole is properly balanced in construction and not adversely affected by nearby objects, the RF current magnitude on the dipole halves should be equal. However, a coax feed line provides what is effectively a third wire in which current can flow. The half of the dipole connected to the center lead of the coax sees some value of current at its terminal, the magnitude by the power being fed to the antenna.

The other half of the dipole sees that same amount of current MINUS any current that flows on the outside of the shield. The magnitude of the shield current is determined by a number of factors, with the cable length in relation to the signal wavelength being dominant. If that outside shield current flow is not precluded by some means, the feed line will radiate and the dipole pattern will be distorted. Typically a current (a.k.a., "choke") balun can be used for this purpose.

This topic has been discussed at length on this reflector, and it is covered in detail in various publications, such as Low-Band DXing by ON4UN, and on W8JI's web site, among others.

By the way, you can make a very effective little RF current meter with just a few parts. See the following item:

http://www.w8ji.com/building_a_current_meter.htm

Cheers,
Gus Hansen
KB0YH

WISHES FROM A HAM

Here's what I've come up with so far. In no particular order, I want:

- MORE SUNSPOTS!

- the median age for ham radio operators to actually decrease this year. This means not only recruiting kids, but also younger adults.

- the pessimists who are continually talking down ham radio to find new joy in the hobby and begin working to make it great.

- the FCC to appoint someone as effective as Riley Hollingsworth to take over as the enforcer of the amateur radio service regulations.

- the FCC to pay a little more attention to amateur radio regulations and not treat them as an afterthought.

- the silliness on 75m phone and 14.275 MHz to go QRT.

- the ARRL to work harder on making itself truly the "national association for amateur radio" and on increasing the percentage of licensed hams that are ARRL members.

- to be able to brag about all of ham radio's "purposes," not only providing emergency and public service communications. According to Part 97, these are:

- * advancing the state of the radio art;
- * improving our technical and operating skills;
- * expanding the number of trained operators, technicians, and electronics experts; and
- * enhancing international goodwill.

- ham radio clubs to grow and thrive even in these tough economic times.

When I asked this question on Twitter, I got a couple of answers that were versions of a couple of wishes above, but I also got a few more:

- WORMT wants "all of us to get on the air more and act as good ambassadors for the hobby," and
- NT7S wants the hearts of ham grinchies to grow a couple of sizes.
- N1WBV wants redesigns for most ham radio websites.

I pretty much agree with all three. Happy New Year!

Dan KB6NU

HINT

No VHF SWR Meter? No Problem.

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

I subscribe to a lot of amateur radio mailing lists. One of the most interesting is the HamRadioHelpGroup mailing list (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HamRadioHelpGroup>).

Recently, a ham asked: Will a CB SWR meter work on a 2 meter ham radio??

Mark, K5LXP, replied:

"Yes and no. I use a CB SWR meter to check 2M antennas all the time. There is a trick to it however."

"If all you want to do is check SWR on your 2M antenna, you don't necessarily have to buy a dedicated VHF/UHF SWR meter. What I keep in my tool bag for that is a cheapie \$5 hamfest special CB SWR meter. They really don't work well on 2M but there's a trick you can do that will net a reasonably accurate SWR reading on 2M with one of these meters. What you do is connect up the meter as usual, key the rig with the switch in the forward power position, set the adjustment for full scale. Now, without touching anything, swap the coax connections so that the rig is connected to the ANT' side of the meter, and the antenna is connected to the 'XCVR' side. The reading you see on the meter will be very close to your real SWR.

The closer to 1:1 your SWR is, the more accurate it will be. It would be more convenient to have a real SWR me-

ter or antenna analyzer if you do a lot of testing, but for a quick antenna check after a mobile install or whatever, the \$5 CB meters work OK."

"The theory is relatively simple."

"A basic SWR bridge is comprised of two couplers, each of which consist of a stripline or a pickup loop, and a detector diode. One coupler is used to detect forward power, the other reflected."

"At 27 MHz, the precision of the components required isn't too stringent. Just about any diode will work, and minor imperfections in the stripline or pickup coils won't impact the accuracy that much."

"But at 2M suddenly minor differences between the striplines, stray capacitance, and type of diode starts to matter. By using just one of the couplers for both the forward and reverse readings any error that exists in that coupler is the same for both readings and thus cancels out. It's unlikely it'll work at 440 however, it's just too much to ask to expect a true 50 ohm network and zero bias or hot carrier diode in a cheap CB meter."

"The absolute reading on 2M may still be somewhat inaccurate, especially at high SWR but odds are you don't care about that. All you're interested in is 1:1 or as close to it as you can get, and for that the \$5 meters will be good enough."

When I asked his permission to use this, Mark said, "I don't get the credit, I picked it up from an old-timer years ago." Well, Mark, you might not get the credit for thinking this up, but you certainly get the credit for passing it on. Thanks!

ECHOLINKS

W8DF-R experienced 132 connections in December. As usual, a fair number of those were "testing", but there were others of interest. The one that stands out occurred at the club meeting when Tracy, the guest that demonstrated Origami got involved. When she asked about amateur radio and what it can do, she was offered the opportunity to speak to someone in Japan using a hand-held. That is when W8DF-R was connected to JA2WSM-R in Tokyo. She had quite a conversation-in Japanese. We may have recruited a new amateur!

Bruce-WB8ZSK is now on echolink. It took less than an hour with him on the 440 repeater to get echolink loaded, set up and connected to W8DF-R.

I was able to join the 220 repeater net while in Sacramento, CA. Net control, WA8LRB, said it sounded as if I were here in town. Thanks to Echolink.

The December CallLog can be found at W8DF.COM. Take a look at it.

Don-W8RVT

MORE ECHOLINK

Seven of the ten call areas appeared to use the W8DF Echolink engine, as well as Italy, Finland, several Japanese and an unidentified call. (Anyone know where IR6UAE could be found?)

Year in review via pictures



*Field Day
CW*



VE Sessions
New YL



Hams go to Space
AMSAT



BSA Jamboree



*Christmas and
FOOD*

ARES / RACES Report for December in Calhoun County
RACES / Skywarn Nets and Training
5 Skywarn Training Nets 1hr each @ 76 People = 76hrs

Public Service Events
Total Public Service Events, 0 People 0hrs
Administration Hours, Total for Dec. Total = 15hrs
Emergency Operations Total=0hrs
Travel Hours for Dec. Total = 5hrs
Expenses- Out of Pocket Total = \$100.00
Travel Miles for Dec. Total 100 Miles
members 34

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

Emergency:
an event requiring quick action to
avoid serious consequences.

Disaster:
a catastrophic event that exceeds the
ability of the community to cope.
("Community" may be anything from a
household to a planet; disasters can
occur on different scales.)

HAMFEST CALENDAR

Jan 18 Hazel Park, MI
43rd Annual Hamfest
Hazel Park Amateur Radio Club
Hazel Park High School
23400 Hughes
Talk-In 146.640 (PL100)
<http://www.hparc.org>
Contact: wd8s@comcast.net

Feb 14 Traverse City, MI
36th Annual Swap and Shop
Cherryland Amateur Radio Club
Immaculate Conception Elementary School
218 Vine St
Talk-In 146.86
<http://www.carc.tc>
Contact: jjnovak@charter.net

Feb 15 Livonia, MI
Swap-N-Shop
Livonia Amateur Radio Club
Civic Park Seniors Center
15218 Farmington Rd
Talk-In 145.35(PL100)
<http://www.livoniaarc.com>
Contact w8qkh@arrl.net

SMARS Club Meeting

December 18, 2008

Called To Order: 7:01pm

Officers Present: Ned WB4BKO Bill KD8CDS John KC8WMM Rene KC8SLI

Secretary's Report: approved as published in Feedback

Treasurer's Report: approved as published in Feedback

Committee Reports:

Hamfest. So far, 17 tables and 8 chairs reserved with \$204 paid.

Field Day. Nothing new.

ARES/RACES. A 32' trailer was purchased with a FEMA grant. It will be fitted out when the weather improves. Several radios, including a digital radio are to be installed.

VE Testing. No test in December.

Technical Engineer. Everything working OK.

Old Business:

Jim KG8GG is looking for the key for Maple Methodist. Lou most likely still has it. Lou is having problems and didn't make the club meeting.

The Christmas Party was held December 13. The grand prize was won by a new ham KD8JBU Sharon Matthewson.

New Business:

ARRL is asking local hams to help educate the public about the change to digital TV. 2 sites were mentioned to hold demos, Burnham Brook and First United Methodist. Don W8RVT will act as the co-ordinator.

Gary W8USU had mentioned the possibility of using the Masonic Lodge for the VE Testing sessions. The chance to save some money makes the change attractive. Bob mentions that Lakeview employees can use the school at reduced cost. He will look into actual costs.

The January Club meeting will meet in the conference room at Westlake, the regular room is needed for a large group.

The new Board was elected by acclamation after no new nominees were named. The new officers are:

President: Jerry W8FOK
Vice-President: Ned WB4BKO
Treasurer: Don W8RVT
Secretary: John KC8WMM

Presentation:

Tracy Miller gave a short talk about life in Japan and brought some oragami projects for the members.

Adjourned: 8:55pm

Respectfully Submitted,

John Davidson KC8WMM
SMARS Secretary

Profit and Expense Statement

12/01/08 through 12/31/08

SMARS Board Meeting

January 4, 2009

Called To Order: 7:09pm

Officers Present: Jerry W8FOK Ned WB4BKO Don W8RVT John KC8WMM

Others Present: Marion WA8MFL Stephanie W8AEZ

Secretary's Report: no changes

Treasurer's Report: Don passed out a report as of Dec 31

Topics Discussed:

Hamfest. Stephanie now has 20 tables and 8 chairs reserved. She expects January and February to be busy months. Ned will help as Stephanie will miss club meetings due to classes. Lou has reserved tables and chair with Grand Rental Station. Stephanie has had little communication from Marshall. A different club at Marshall might be more interested in helping out. Ned will help as Stephanie will miss club meetings due to classes. Don will change the Echolink message and the repeater when the hamfest is closer.

Field Day. It was suggested that a co-chair might be appointed to help Bob. Several names were discussed who might be interested.

VE Testing. The meeting place might be changed if the Masonic Temple is less expensive. There was also concern about the key situation for Maple Methodist. Jerry is also a Mason, and will check with the Lodge and Gary W8USU.

Programs. As of today, Ned has not lined up anybody for this month. The speaker that was going to be this month's had to cancel. The engineer from WGUV will be in March. Ned mentioned that his ideas are running out. Marion suggested that the guy from Hastings that powers his station with wind/solar might be willing. Also, there is someone that might give a talk on lecher lines. Joe Metzger might do a spark gap talk in February.

Christmas Party. The 2009 grand prize will be smaller and split 3 ways, \$100 and 2 \$50 prizes. You will need to be present to win the big prize.

Appointments to other positions. Marion will contact Bill KD8CDS to see if he will be able to fill the Past President post. Jerry will contact Russ N8UU and Dave AB8HK to see if they will continue to serve as Trustee and Technical Engineer. Marion will continue as Feedback Editor.

Projects. Marion brought up the idea of having some simple projects for club members, such as SWR meters or keyers in Altoid tins. The club might also have a show and tell about members' new radios or equipment. Other clubs do this, and it might spark some interest.

Membership cards. Don has only 2 left and needs to know where to get more. Lou WB8WXS ordered the last batch. Don stated he would like the club logo to be on the cards.

Insurance. Don presented a bill from Marsh Insurance, due by the end of the month. He wants to know why SMARS should continue to pay on a policy that no one knows what is covered. Ned will attempt to get a list from the insurance company. The amount of coverage is low enough that the trailers are most likely not covered.

440 Repeater. Don stated that SMARS pays rent to use the feed line and antenna at the 440 site and is not compensated for the use of half of the antenna by IRA. He also said there wasn't any compensation for the work done by SMARS last summer, namely mowing and trimming.

Adjourned: 8:09pm
Respectfully Submitted,

John Davidson KC8WMM
SMARS Secretary

Category Description	12/1/08-12/31/08
INCOME	
50 50	119.00
Dues	295.00
Hamfest Inc:	
Chairs	8.00
Tables	136.00
Tickets	60.00
TOTAL Hamfest Inc	204.00
Sales:	
Equipment	30.00
TOTAL Sales	30.00
TOTAL INCOME	648.00
EXPENSES	
Door Prizes:	
Christmas Dinner	300.00
TOTAL Door Prizes	300.00
Feedback:	
Postage	-5.04
Printing	151.22
TOTAL Feedback	146.18
Hamfest:	
Flyers	201.51
TOTAL Hamfest	201.51
Meetings:	
Refreshments	15.57
TOTAL Meetings	15.57
TOTAL EXPENSES	663.26
TOTAL INCOME - EXPENSES	-15.26

Balance Sheet
As of 1/5/09

Acct	1/5/09 Balance
ASSETS	
Cash and Bank Accounts	
Checking	1,068.60
TOTAL Cash and Bank Accounts	1,068.60
Other Assets	
PettyCash	0.00
S1 Primary Share	12.90
TOTAL Other Assets	12.90
TOTAL ASSETS	1,081.50
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
LIABILITIES	0.00
EQUITY	1,081.50
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	1,081.50

SOUTHERN MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

FEEDBACK



JANUARY 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 JAN 15

HAMFEST HAZEL PARK JAN 18

SMARS BOARD FEB 2

SMARS BREAKFAST FEB 7

B4LUNCH BUNCH LUNCH FEB 12

HAMFEST TRAVERSE CITY FEB 14

HAMFEST LIVONIA FEB 15

NEXT MONTH SMARS CLUB MEETING FEB 19