

BIG RAPIDS AREA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2004 MAY

THE ANNUAL CLUB DINNER: FRIDAY, JUNE 11, 2004

The club's annual feast and awards banquet is now on the calendar and will take place at the Falcon Head Golf Club at 13120 Northland Drive (Old US 131) just south of Big Rapids.



The restaurant where we have held the banquet the last several years displeased so many members that a change was deemed to be in order. The cost, however, proved to be a major obstacle in finding a site. The Board of Directors asked for suggestions from the membership and scrounged the area for the least expensive site that would offer adequate space and a quality that would be an improvement.

The Board of Directors submitted their suggestions at the April meeting and the members present chose Falcon Head. This facility specializes in banquet events for weddings, large birthday parties and other events and some members have said the food is very good.

The charge per person will be \$13.95 plus 6% sales tax and a 16% gratuities charge as is usual. The room cost was also a reason for choosing this site; the fee at Falcon Head will be \$75 dollars. Most other sites were at \$100 or more. To

lessen the burden for those attending, the club treasury will bear that cost.

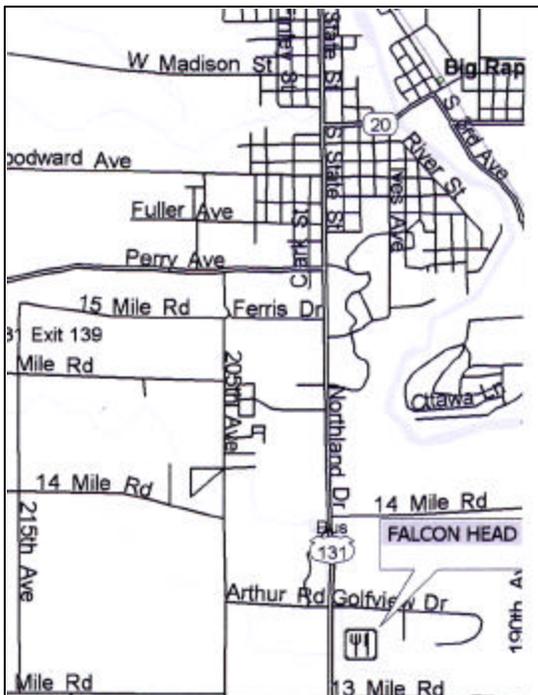
To alert the establishment to the number who may be coming, please tell Fritz Pins, N18E at 592-5251, on a net or in person before June 1st. This is important since the restaurant needs to know how much food, etc. will be needed to serve us well.

CLUB BUFFET MENU

Roast beef in Au Jus
Roast Turkey with
Dressing
Potatoes Au Gratin
Mashed Potatoes with
Gravy
Tossed Salad Bar
Macaroni Salad
Includes Vegetable,
Rolls, Coffee, and Tea.

A cash bar will be available.

You may make more than one trip to the banquet buffet.



FIELD DAY: 2:00PM JUNE 26TH UNTIL 2:00 PM ON THE 27TH THE PLANS ARE BEGINNING TO GEL

At our last club meeting, Co-Chairs Thom Durfee, WI8W and Tom Behler, KB8TYJ discussed this year's Field Day plans as they are beginning to form up. We will be running four stations (4A) at the same site as last year, the area next to the Big Rapids Public Schools Superintendent's Office. Permission has been already granted for its use. An adequate number of generators are available so that each station will have their own, meaning we will be able to spread stations further apart to maintain proper voltages on the rigs. A basic necessity: We will need to order the customary portable potty.

Band Captains, those in charge of setting up each of the four station sites, are Tim Stoecklein, KCOMDC at the 80/10 meter site, Thom Durfee, WI8W at the 40 meter site, Tom Behler, KB8TYJ at the 20 meter site and Matthew Trombley, KC8VJR at the 15 meter site. Band Captains will be in charge of setting up their sites with the help of the rest of the club members. Please be there to help out. It is not a one man job.

As of this point in time it is planned to use as few dipole antennas as we can but no specific antennas have been assigned except for a dipole on 80 meters.

To gather additional points a solar cell station is planned, government officials and the media will be invited and an information booth set up for the public. Other such "point items" may be included as they become possible. Any changes will be noted in the next Newsletter.

HOW ABOUT UPGRADING TO GENERAL CLASS?

A SHORT COURSE TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR THE WRITTEN GENERAL CLASS EXAM WILL BE HELD FRIDAY APRIL 30 FROM 6 P.M. UNTIL 9 P.M., SATURDAY MAY 1 FROM 9 A.M. TO 8 P.M. (BRING A BAG LUNCH) AND SUNDAY MAY 2 FROM 9 A.M. TO 3 P.M. LOCATION IS THE BIG RAPIDS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY. YOU WILL NEED TO DO SOME ADVANCE READING OF THE TEXT TO BE READY FOR THE COURSE. THE LAST SESSION WILL BE FOLLOWED BY A CLOSED SESSION VE EXAM. (CLOSED SESSION MEANS ONLY THOSE TAKING THIS GENERAL COURSE OR ANY STUDENTS IN THE PRESENT TECHNICIAN CLASS WHO HAVE NOT PASSED THEIR TECH. EXAM AT THE END OF THEIR COURSE WILL BE ADMITTED). TO SIGN UP FOR THE COURSE YOU MUST CONTACT FRITZ PINS BEFORE APRIL 26TH, SO CALL HIM AT 231--592-5251 NOW!

Call: _____ Class: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

E-mail Address _____

Dues \$20.00 for 2004 _____ Donation _____

Checks should be made out to the Big Rapids Area Amateur Radio Club.

Mail this form to Sue Behler, KC8IFP, Treasurer, 511 Spring Street, Big Rapids, MI, 49307 or bring your dues to the next meeting.



CONGRATULATIONS TO: Gordon Trute (KC8WFX) who just passed his CW exam and has now upgraded to General. Way to go Gordon!

Now it's on to Extra in the near future?

FCC TO STOP ACCEPTING PRE-DECEMBER 2003 FORM 605

Effective with Monday, May 3, receipts, the FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau will dismiss any applications filed on an FCC Form 605 issued earlier than December 2003. Form 605, Quick-Form Application for Authorization in the Ship, Aircraft, Amateur, Restricted and Commercial Operator, and General Mobile Radio Service, is the hard-copy version of the Amateur Service application. The change does not affect applicants filing on-line with the Universal Licensing System (ULS) at, <http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls/>, said the FCC, which is encouraging on-line filing

ARRL VEC Manager Bart Jahnke, W9JJ, says the Form 605 announcement will affect the way ARRL has been making FCC Form 605 available. He says the League's widely distributed March 2001 Form 605 in a three-sheet ivory/buff-colored package with perforated pages will become obsolete for applications the FCC receives on or after May 3.

In the wake of the FCC's unexpected announcement, the ARRL is developing a replacement package that could require several more pages. It hopes to have it ready in time for Hamvention May 14-16.

The FCC has been accepting both older and current Form 605 applications that included a line (Item 9a) for a Taxpayer Identification Number, a Social Security number for an individual. The FCC would then issue the applicant an FCC Registration Number (FRN) without additional paperwork. All amateur applicants must have and use an FRN when filing an application such as Form 605 with the FCC. Applicants attending VEC test sessions can still supply a Social Security number, which will result in automatic Commission Registration System (CORES) registration.

All amateur applicants must have and use an FRN when filing an application such as Form 605 with the FCC. Under the system going into effect in May, applicants not yet registered in CORES and filing on paper will need to file FCC Form 160, CORES Registration to obtain a FCC Registration Number (FRN). After the FCC has issued an FRN, applicants also might want to file FCC Form 606 to associate the FRN with an individual's license record(s) and call sign(s). CORES registration data and FCC license data are maintained in separate FCC databases.

The completed Form 160 goes to a unique Washington, DC, FCC address to obtain the applicant's FRN. Once the FCC issues an FRN to the applicant, this number must be used when filing FCC Form 605, which goes to the FCC's Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, office. The two forms may not be mailed to Gettysburg together. Applicants need to have obtained an FRN via Form 160 before they can file a Form 605.

ARRL recommends that all amateurs file an on-line or paper Form 606 to associate their FRN with their license record(s) and call sign(s) in the FCC license database. Jahnke says the easiest way is to do this electronically via the ULS, and the process now is fairly straightforward.

The current edition of Form 605, dated December 2003, is available on the FCC forms page, <http://wireless.fcc.gov/feesforms/index.html>.

For more information or assistance, contact the FCC Consumer Center, toll-free, 888-CALLFCC (888-225-5322) and select option 2, or via e-mail at, fccmd@fcc.gov. From ARRL



HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN YOUR FRN NUMBER?

If you have and would like to reclaim it, you can go to the QRZ site (or if you don't compute computers) have someone else look up your call at qrz.com. You will find that it will be there for you and the entire world to see. Life can be so complicatedly simple!

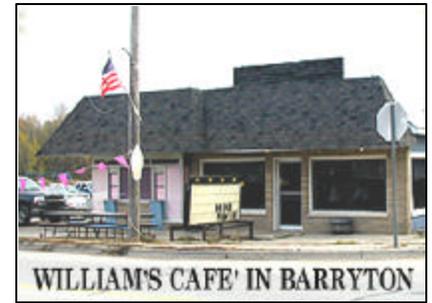
A VERY FRESH HAPPENING: CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER FOR RUSSELL BRITTAIN, KC8WGJ WHO PASSED THE EXTRA CLASS LICENSE EXAM AT OUR RECENT TESTING SESSION. NOW FOR THAT VE APPOINTMENT, RUSS!



NEXT CLUB BREAKFAST: NOTICE THE DATE CHANGE DUE



TO THE CADILLAC
HAMFEST ON MAY 1ST
THE DATE OF THE
BREAKFAST FOR THIS
MONTH ONLY WILL BE



8:30 A.M. SATURDAY, APRIL 24TH. MEET IN THE FINE
VILLAGE OF BARRYTON AT THE WILLIAM'S CAFE WHICH IS
LOCATED DOWNTOWN ON HIGHWAY M 66. HOPE WE SEE
YOU ALL THERE!

IS IT A STROKE?

[Dale Colby, WD8AUL found this interesting item in the "Canadian Lakes Association Newsletter" and thought it might be worth bringing to our members. It might be a life saver if you notice these symptoms while on a tower working on that new antenna installation or doing any other task. Ed.]

This might be a lifesaver if we can remember the three questions! Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke. Now doctors say any bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions:

- *ask the individual to smile
- * ask him or her to raise both arms.
- * ask the person to speak a simple sentence

If he or she has trouble with any of these tasks, call 9-1-1 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher. After discovering that a group of nonmedical volunteers could identify facial weakness, arm weakness and speech problems, researchers urged the general public to learn the three questions. Widespread use of this test could result in prompt diagnosis and treatment of the stroke and prevent brain damage.

GIVE NET CONTROL A TRY

Tom Behler, KB8TYJ, is looking for more net control operators: experience is not a requirement and you can pick the nights and number of times you wish to do your thing. In fact, a net procedure write-up and a trained member of the net control group will be with you on the air until you become comfortable with the process. Now is the time to act; call Tom at 231-592-9854 or Jim Orlowski, N8PUG at 989-352-7128 to discuss it. Besides being of service, the pay is great; a great sense of satisfaction and pleasure!



CLUB SPONSORED VE EXAM WAS APRIL 17TH

Members of BRAARC's VE Team carried out another open session VE exam on Saturday April 17th with 19 candidates in attendance. The impetus for the session was to offer the BRAARC Class students an opportunity to have an exam immediately following the end of their sessions. Several of those students participated as well as other would-be hams from around the area. That included several young students from Lowell, Michigan who had also just completed class sessions and needed a test site.

Some applicants did qualify for the Technician License, one for the General License and one for the Amateur Extra Class license. Several of the applicants did not pass, actually more than the usual number. But those individuals all gained by the opportunity to actually undergo an exam session and to learn where to concentrate their studies. As VE Jeff Barstow told them, "Not passing is also a success because you have already learned much of what you need to know when you study and take the exam again". Good advice since a little more study now might just do the trick. Perhaps at Cadillac on May the first?



Our VE team and other members of the club turned out in good numbers for the event. In the photo from left to right are first, a candidate being informed of his grade by Fritz Pins, NI8E, standing is Jake Spence, KI8CK, below him is Thom Durfee, WI8W, working on the VEC Candidate Roster and next to him is Beverly Callewaert, WD8PFC, then Jon Huhtala, N8ZH. To Jon's left is Jeff Barstow, WD8DLK

and then Tom Behler, KB8TYJ. Not shown are Gary Atteberry, WB8WIA and John McDowell, KC8BAR who were hard at work while the rest took a well earned respite. Behind the camera was George Rouman, W8OWN, the Team Liaison, who spent his time charging about trying to look as important as the title. A special person at the event was Sue Behler, KC8IFP, our club Treasurer, who registered the candidates, took their fees and with another non VE. Matthew Trombley, KC8VJR kept things organized in the outer lobby and thus deserve a fantastic Huzza for their efforts!

FCC PROPOSES WIDE-RANGING CHANGES TO AMATEUR SERVICE RULES

The FCC has released an "omnibus" Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) that seeks comments on a wide range of proposed Amateur Service (Part 97) rule changes. The FCC also denied several petitions for rule making aimed at altering portions of the Amateur Radio regulatory landscape and ordered minor changes in Part 97. The NPRM is a result of a dozen petitions for rule making, all filed more than a year ago and some as long ago as 2001.

Comments on the proposals put forth in WT Docket 04-140 are due by Tuesday, June 15, with reply comments by Wednesday, June 30. Among other changes, the FCC has recommended adopting the ARRL's "Novice reformatting" plan, which can be seen on the web at, <http://www.arrl.org/announce/regulatory/refarm/>.

"Because the ARRL petition addresses the operating privileges of all classes of licensees on these Amateur Service bands, we believe that the ARRL petition provides a basis for a comprehensive restructuring of operating privileges," the FCC said.

The ARRL referenced its Novice reformatting proposal in its recent Petition for Rule Making, RM-10867, which, along with three other petitions remains open for comment until April 23.

The FCC also has proposed essentially eliminating its rules prohibiting manufacture or marketing of Amateur Radio Service power amplifiers capable of operating between 24 and 35 MHz. The current rules "impose unnecessary restrictions on manufacturers of Amateur Radio equipment and are inconsistent with the experimental nature of the Amateur Service," the FCC said.

The FCC proposed amending Section 97.201(b) of the rules to permit auxiliary operation on 2 meters above 144.5 MHz, with the exception of the satellite subband 145.8 to 146.0 MHz, in addition to frequency segments already authorized.

The FCC proposed extending the bands available for spread spectrum experimentation and use to include 222-225 MHz as well as 6 and 2 meters. Current rules limit SS emissions to frequencies above 420 MHz.

Among other things, the FCC also proposed to prohibit acceptance of more than one application per applicant per vanity call sign; permit retransmission of communications between a manned spacecraft and its associated Earth stations, including the International Space Station; allow current amateurs to designate a specific Amateur Radio club to acquire their call sign in memoriam; eliminate Section 97.509(a) of the rules, which requires a public announcement of volunteer examiner test locations and times; and add to Section 97.505(a) to provide Element 1 (5 WPM Morse) credit to any applicant holding a Technician license granted after February 14, 1991, and who can document having passed a telegraphy examination element.

The Commission ordered some changes in Part 97 without requesting comment. It ordered, among others, the revision of the definition of an "amateur operator" in Section 97.3(a)(1) to reflect that entry in the FCC Universal Licensing System (ULS), not a license document, determines whether a person is an Amateur Radio operator.

The FCC adopted a technical change to specify that the mean power of any spurious emission from a new amateur station transmitter or amplifier operating below 30 MHz be at least 43 dB below the mean power of the fundamental emission.

Among other petitions, the FCC turned down a proposal to establish distinct CW and phone segments in the 160-meter band. Also denied were petitions that would have imposed restrictions on the time, length or transmission frequencies of bulletins or informational transmissions directed at the amateur community and a request to add to the special event call sign system certain call sign blocks designating territories and possessions that lack mailing addresses.

The FCC Notice of Proposed Rule Making, on the web at, http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-04-79A1.doc, in WT Docket 04-140, is available on the FCC Web site.

As soon as the document has been posted, comments on the NPRM may be filed via the FCC Electronic Comment Filing System at, <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/>. Click on "Submit a filing." To view filed comments, click on "Search for filed comments." In either case enter the NPRM number in the "Proceeding" field as "04-140" (without the quotation marks).

IOWA AMATEUR GETS BACK LOST, REASSIGNED CALL SIGN

[Isn't it wonderful what you can do with a computer? But isn't it frightening what a computer can do with you? Read this for an unsettling feeling. Ed.]

The Easter Bunny was generous to Bill Sorsby of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Earlier this week, the FCC finally made official the reassignment to him of N5BU, the call sign he'd lost in 2001 as a result of what the FCC has termed "filing errors" in its Universal Licensing System (ULS) <<http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls>>. Not only did the FCC erroneously cancel the ARRL member's call sign, it compounded the mistake by reassigning it two years later to another amateur. When Sorsby realized some four months ago that his ticket was gone, he immediately contacted the FCC to find out what had happened and to get it back.

"I am glad to see that the FCC has acted," said Sorsby, who's held N5BU since 1976. As the FCC tells it, in December 1999 it received requests to modify the contact information for the amateur license from Sorsby to Dwana C. Peters of Aircraft Guaranty Title (AGT), the title holder of an aircraft with the call sign 5BU. In the process, AGT also inadvertently also associated its FCC Registration Number (FRN) with Sorsby's N5BU Amateur Radio Service license.

This appears to have resulted from confusion between the aircraft station call sign and the aircraft's registration marking (or 'N number')," the FCC said in an April 5 Order restoring N5BU to Sorsby.

In July 2001, the aircraft was sold, and AGT had the FCC cancel the license for 5BU (as aircraft are permitted to identify). In a separate action several months later, AGT requested cancellation of N5BU, effectively canceling Sorsby's amateur license. When N5BU became available for reassignment under the vanity system two years later, ARRL member David Willard of Ft Smith, Arkansas, filed for it and was granted the call sign last August. Sorsby blames a "security flaw" in the FCC's ULS software for allowing AGT's Peters to "inadvertently corrupt the database records" for his license. Similar problems have affected a small number of amateurs with N-prefix call signs in the past.

The Iowa amateur is philosophical about the four months he spent getting N5BU returned. "It has been a very time-consuming and frustrating ordeal," he told ARRL. "My consolation for the ordeal is that now I'll have a tall tale to spin for years to come."

To reduce the likelihood of similar problems, ARRL strongly encourages Amateur Service licensees to obtain an FRN via the FCC's Universal Licensing System Web page <<http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls>> (click on "REGISTER CORES/CALL SIGN") and then to associate their Amateur Radio call sign with their FRN. "This prevents other entities from inadvertently making changes to your Amateur Radio license and call sign," said ARRL Regulatory Information Branch Specialist John Hennessee, N1KB.

INDEPENDENT REPEATER ASSOCIATION HAMFEST AND COMPUTER FAIR

SATURDAY JUNE 5, 2004: FROM 8 A.M. UNTIL IT'S OVER. LOCATED AT HUDSONVILLE FAIRGROUNDS 14 MILES WEST OF GRAND RAPIDS AND TWO MILES NORTH OF I-96 EXIT 62. TALK-IN WILL BE ON THE 147.16 LINK SYSTEM REPEATERS.

BESIDES THE TWO LARGE BUILDINGS HOUSING SEVERAL DEALERS' TABLES AND MANY USED EQUIPMENT SALES TABLES THERE WILL BE TRUNK SALES OUTDOORS.

SEE DISPLAYS OF VINTAGE HAM EQUIPMENT, MILITARY RADIOS AND ALTERNATIVE ENERGY EXHIBITS. THE MICHIGAN REPEATER COUNCIL MEETS AT 1 P.M.

A FRIDAY EVENT: THE "ROADKILL-CHILI" POTLUCK AT 7 P.M. BRING A DISH TO PASS.

OUR NEXT MONTHLY MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY THE 6TH OF MAY AT THE BIG RAPIDS PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING, 435 NORTH MICHIGAN AVENUE, AT 7:30 P.M. THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL MEET AT 6:30 P.M.

PROGRAM: TOM VANDERMEL, KB8VEE, DISTRICT 6 EMERGENCY COORDINATOR, WILL PRESENT A SPEECH ON ARES AND RACES AND ANSWER QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE ABOUT THESE SUBJECTS. WHEN TOM SPEAKS ABOUT RADIO AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, YOU CAN COUNT ON A SUPER PROGRAM.



HE IS TAKING HIS OWN TIME DRIVING IN FROM FRUITPORT TO PRESENT THIS PROGRAM SO LET'S ALL BE THERE TO GIVE TOM A BIG WELCOME AND ENJOY A SUPER PROGRAM.

AREA HAM GETS PUBLISHED IN QST

Practically everyone in our area knows Ray (Abe) Abraczinskas, W8HVG. The May issue of QST has an article of his that presents a VHF-UHF antenna capable of 144, 222 and 440 meter operation at an SWR of 1.2:1 with a single coax cable. While it may have no more gain than a dipole, it satisfies many criteria needed for operation on a tall tower where it must withstand many adverse conditions of weather and physical stress. Not only is it an extremely strong design, it can be built from easily available parts at fairly low cost.

Well done, Abe. It will be interesting to see your concoction close up.

ANNUAL DINNER PLANS - PAGE ONE INSIDE



