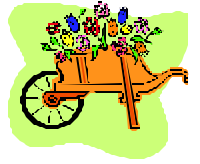




# BIG RAPIDS AREA AMATEUR RADIO CLUB NEWSLETTER



MAY 2004 JUNE

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## HURRY TO GET ON BOARD FOR THE ANNUAL CLUB DINNER, FRIDAY JUNE 11

AS WAS DESCRIBED IN THE APRIL/MAY NEWSLETTER, THE CLUB DINNER WILL BE AT THE FALCON HEAD GOLF CLUB JUST SOUTH OF BIG RAPIDS. YOU DO NOT PAY FOR DINNER IN ADVANCE BUT THE DINNER COMMITTEE ASKS THAT YOU CALL EITHER TOM BEHLER, KB8TYJ AT 231-592-9854 OR TIM STOECKLEIN, KC0MDC AT

231-796-1360 BY JUNE THE 1<sup>ST</sup> TO LET THE COMMITTEE KNOW IF YOU PLAN TO BE PRESENT. BE AWARE THAT NO RESERVATIONS WILL BE TAKEN AFTER JUNE THE 1ST. DO NOTE THAT THE DINING ROOM COST IS BEING BORNE BY THE CLUB TREASURY TO KEEP DOWN THE COST PER PERSON.



**FALCON HEAD**

THIS FACILITY IS HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE

DO ATTEND AND BRING YOUR WIFE, PARTNER OR FRIEND TO MAKE THE 2004 BANQUET THE FINEST YET! SNOWBIRDS: TELEPHONE OR SEND TOM BEHLER A NOTE ASAP. ADDRESS: 511 SPRING STREET, BIG RAPIDS, MI 49307.

NOT ONLY HAS RUSS BRITTAIN PASSED HIS EXTRA CLASS EXAM AS NOTED IN LAST MONTH'S NEWSLETTER, BUT NOW HE HAS BEEN ASSIGNED A NEW CALL: AB8TA, A QUICK CW CALL, RUSS. PERHAPS WE WILL HEAR IT ON THE BOTTOM OF THE BANDS SOON?



# ARES AND RACES NEWS

## TOM BEHLER, KB8TYJ: MECOSTA COUNTY EC/RO



Our local ARES/RACES group has continued to be active since the publication of my last BRAARC News Letter article, and we anticipate even greater levels of activity in the months ahead. I'll take a few paragraphs here to explain some of the highlights of what we have been doing, and plan to do in the near future.

On Thursday: May 13 at 7 p.m., Bev Callewaert (our Emergency Committee Chair) conducted the quarterly meeting of our "Emergency Committee" at the Meceola 911 Central Dispatch Facility. A number of ARES and RACES members were in attendance, and our special guest for the evening was Dan Dowdy, Mecosta County's Emergency Management Director.

After quickly taking care of some general "house-keeping" items, an announcement was made concerning the re-scheduling of Tom Vandermel's visit and club program presentation. The visit was originally scheduled to occur on Thursday: May 6, and has been re-scheduled for Thursday: August 5, in order to resolve a scheduling conflict that arose for Tom at the last minute. For those of you who do not recognize Tom's name, Tom is the District Emergency Coordinator for District 6 of the ARRL Michigan Section, which includes 13 counties in West and West/Central Lower Michigan. During his August visit, Tom will be very interested in addressing any concerns about ARES or RACES-related issues both within the Michigan ARRL Section and beyond, so please come prepared with questions to make his trip worthwhile.

Our next topic for discussion was a review of the "Hazardous Materials Awareness" training course, which had been offered by Captain Randy Bell (a trained "Hazmat" instructor) from the Big Rapids Fire Division. The course was given highly favorable reviews by virtually everyone in attendance. KB8TYJ also reminded everyone that videotapes of both the Hazmat training, and Introduction to Disaster Telecommunications courses are available on loan from him for those needing these courses to ensure their compliance with the current recommended standards for RACES certification.

Our attention then turned to a number of issues pertaining to "Skywarn" net activations, and our "Emergency Services" calling tree. Most importantly, it was decided that our new verbal "weather net" messages would be implemented on our 2-meter repeater only in "condition yellow" or "condition red" situations. KB8TYJ also noted that Laurie Smalla of Meceola Central Dispatch has been given a list of possible net controls, or other designated individuals, who might call Central Dispatch to alert them to impending weather threats that we become aware of.

The third major focus of our May 13th meeting centered on the future. After a considerable amount of discussion, it was decided that a meeting will be held on Wednesday: June 2 at 7 p.m. in the conference room of the County Services Building on south State Street in Big Rapids in order to plan some ARES drills and exercises for the upcoming Summer and Fall months. The exercises will involve a number of communications modes, and frequency bands, and all ARES/RACES members will be invited to participate. In addition, Dan Dowdy talked at length about his visions for our involvement in a number of county-wide emergency exercises, which are slated to occur in the July through October time frame. Finally, KB8TYJ reviewed some basic details about the Michigander Bike Tour. The tour will be coming through the Big Rapids area on the week-end of July 17-18, and the organizers of the tour have requested our assistance in terms of providing both non-emergency and possible emergency communications for the event.

In summary, as you can see, life in the world of ARES and RACES continues to be quite busy. We have a variety of events and activities to look forward to. We also have the ongoing possibility of "Skywarn" nets for severe weather situations over the next few months. With all of this in mind, it goes without saying that we could use any help that anyone could provide, so as to make all of these events a success. Therefore, if you are interested in any of these activities, please contact either me (Mecosta County EC/RO), or Gary Atteberry (Osceola County EC/RO). Furthermore, if you have any questions regarding any ARES or RACES-related issues, please get in touch with us as well. Yet another available forum for the exchange of ARES and RACES-related topics consists of our local ARES/RACES net, which meets every other Wednesday evening at 9 p.m. on the Big Rapids 146.740 2-meter repeater.

# NOTE THESE MONDAY EVENING 2-METER CW NET CHANGES

## TOM BEHLER: KB8TYJ

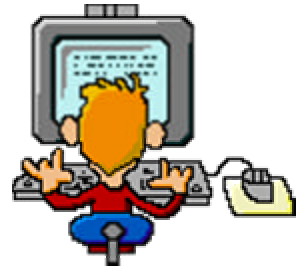
As some of you already may know, a format change recently has been adopted for our Monday evening 2-meter CW practice net. The net meets every Monday evening at 8 p.m. on the Big Rapids 146.740 2-meter repeater.

In keeping with the idea that part of becoming comfortable with the code involves sending, as well as copying those dots and dashes, we have shifted to a more "net-like" structure, where folks can actually check into the net via CW. So, why not get that old key and oscillator out, and join us? Even if you don't have a commercially-made key and oscillator, there are lots of ideas floating around out there for making a simple "home brew" unit out of scraps and other "junk" that just might happen to be lying around in your shack or garage. All we ask is that you keep your sending speed slow (i.e. preferably around 5 WPM), and that you be tolerant of those who may be new to sending code.

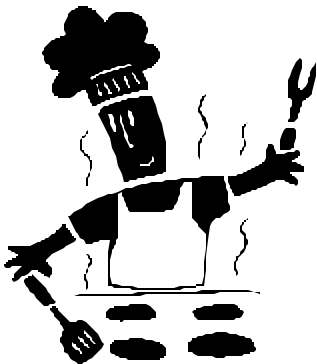
The code is sent via modulated CW, so once you get the key and oscillator, all you have to do is put the speaker next to whatever microphone you have, and you're good to go. Let's do what we can to continue spreading the joy, and promoting the legacy of CW in amateur radio.

## WE'RE ON THE TV 9 & 10 CHANNEL WEBSITE MEETING LIST

John McDowell, KC8BAR has succeeded in getting our meeting notices on the [9and10news.com](http://9and10news.com) website. Check it out. Once into their site, look on the left side of the screen for "WHAT'S HAPPENING" and click on it. You will get "COMMUNITY CALENDAR". Type in "RADIO" and there we are! John says "One other radio club is also displayed: The "Top of Michigan" club. They have their field day listed, and I will do that for our club as soon as possible".



## NEXT CLUB BREAKFAST:



A NEW SITE FOR OUR MAY 29TH EVENT! WE MEET AT 8:30 A.M. (SOONER OR LATER IF YOU WISH) AT THE "MAIN JUNCTION RESTAURANT" LOCATED AT THE CORNER OF M-66 AND US-10 ACROSS THE ROAD FROM THE LARGE FLEA MARKET SITE.

AS YOU MAY OR MAY NOT KNOW, AT EACH MONTHLY CLUB MEETING THE LOCATION FOR THE NEXT MONTH'S BREAKFAST IS DRAWN FROM A HAT. IF DRAWN, THE NAME IS DISCARDED SO EVENTFULLY EACH RESTAURANT IS VISITED. WHILE THIS SITE IS NEW, SEVERAL MEMBERS SAY IT IS A GREAT BREAKFAST SPOT. IF ALL AGREE, IT BECOMES A PERMANENT MEMBER OF THE FULL BREAKFAST LIST TO BE DRAWN DURING THE NEXT SERIES.

# GRADE SCHOOL GIRLS 5K RUN/WALK SERVICE PROJECT

Several club members have volunteered to provide communications during an event being provided by several sponsors in conjunction with the Big Rapids local schools. If you can be free to help the group, call Sue Behler, KC8IFP at 231-592-9854. The duty involves providing assistance to any walkers who may need it and possibly maintaining a record of the participants who complete the route. It will be held on May 27th starting at 5:00 p.m. The 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders will start at PT Plus and go north to Woodward and then west on Woodward to 230<sup>th</sup>. They will then return to PT Plus to finish their trip.



1. Matthew Trombley, KC8VJR has taken the big step and upgraded to Extra Class.
2. Jodi Harper, KC8ZRR is starting on the path of advancement by becoming a Technician.

Our ranks grow as we promote our hobby. Ham radio is meant to be fun and public service but it is a learning experience we can give others as well. Take a step to bring in new hams. Be an Elmer to someone soon. What can happen, when our youth become involved in the "hobby," is illustrated by what Chris Fisher has accomplished. Read below:

## BRAARC's SCHOLARSHIP AWARD IS WON BY A BRAARC MEMBER



The club's John East memorial scholarship was presented recently at the Big Rapids High School awards program to Chris Fisher, KC8MRS, the stepson of Fritz Pins, NI8E by club president Tim KC0MDC. He will be attending Western Michigan University in the fall and will be concentrating on the computer sciences.

Club members: Congratulate Chris and wish him well in his chosen field. And from the editor, may I say for all "Good work Chris and keep in touch".

## NEXT MEETING:

THURSDAY JUNE 3, 2004 AT THE BIG RAPIDS PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING, 435 NORTH MICHIGAN AVENUE IN DOWNTOWN BIG RAPIDS AT 7:00 P.M. THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL MEET AT 6:30 P.M. BEFORE THE MEETING.



AFTER THE BUSINESS MEETING, TIME WILL BE DEVOTED TO SETTING UP THE FINAL DESIGN AND PLANS FOR FIELD DAY. COME PARTICIPATE IN THE DISCUSSION AND LEND YOUR THOUGHTS TO THE PLANNING GROUP. FIELD DAY A IS JOINT EFFORT OF THE MANY TO COME UP WITH A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME. YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED!

# ARRL E-MAIL FORWARDING SERVICE CHANGES AIM TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW

The ARRL E-Mail Forwarding Service <<http://www.arrl.org/members-only/emailfwd.html>> has instituted several changes to reduce the overall volume of unwanted e-mail traffic while evening out the flow of desired correspondence. One outcome--at least in the short term--has been a reduction in undesired and unsolicited e-mail ("spam") via @arrl.net e-mail addresses. Several Forwarding Service participants have even e-mailed ARRL Headquarters to remark on the improvement. ARRL Chief Financial Officer Barry Shelley, N1VXY, says daily volume on the free-to-ARRL-members service and the number of users--63,000 and rising--have grown dramatically, requiring some mitigation. Volume was averaging 500,000 messages per day, and on some days, traffic reached nearly one million.

"Changes had to be made, as this volume threatened to overwhelm the resources of the servers that maintain and process the e-mail for the ARRL E-Mail Forwarding Service," Shelley said. "In addition, because of the volume of spam, Internet service providers (ISPs) would periodically refuse to accept messages originating from @arrl.net addresses, mistakenly identifying the Forwarding Service as a spam source."

"We're trying to keep the Forwarding Service viable and at no cost to members," he said. Among other changes, the Forwarding Service vendor updated its Realtime Black Lists to include many more targeted spam sources. "This should help to somewhat reduce the amount of spam," Shelley explained. He predicted, however, that as spammers figure out how to circumvent the changes, spam levels are likely to rise again.

The Forwarding Service also reduced the amount of time a message remains in a queue on the @arrl.net servers before the sender receives a delivery failure message. Although the vendor adjusted the number of recipients the Forwarding Service server will process at any one time, there is no limit on the number of addressees.

"What it means is that the sending server may have to deliver a given message more than once to reach all intended recipients," he explained. "The idea is to smooth out the flow of messages through the system, reducing the number of messages in the queues as well as eliminating or minimizing delays resulting from a high volume of traffic."

Members can help reduce their vulnerability to spam by not posting their @arrl.net e-mail addresses on public Web sites, Shelley says. But, he adds, as long as spamming continues to be a moneymaker, nothing will eliminate it entirely.

## UPCOMING CLUB AND AREA EVENTS

☞ FIVE K RUN: MAY 27 CLUB PUBLIC SERVICE EVENT

☞ CLUB BREAKFAST MAY 29 MAIN JUNCTION RESTAURANT

☞ ARES/RACES DRILL PLANNING SESSION JUNE 2 ALL ARE INVITED. COME TO LISTEN OR PARTICIPATE

☞ BRAARC CLUB MEETING JUNE 3 FIELD DAY PLANNING

IRA HAMFEST JUNE 5 BIGGEST WEST MICHIGAN HAMFEST

☞ ANNUAL CLUB DINNER JUNE 11 CONTACT TOM BEHLER ASAP

BRAARC CLUB MEETING JULY 1 JOE TURNER HISTORY OF AMATEUR RADIO

☞ FIELD DAY JUNE 26 & 27 COME AND HAVE FUN

BRAARC CLUB MEETING AUGUST 5 SPEAKER WILL BE TOM VANDERMEL, KB8VEE

MICHIGANDER BICYCLE TOUR JULY 17 AND 18 HELP IF YOU CAN

MIDLAND HAMFEST JUNE 19 AT MICHIGAN ARMY NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY TALK-IN: 147:000MHz.

☞ MORE INFORMATION IS INCLUDED IN THIS NEWSLETTER.?

## AMATEUR ENFORCEMENT CASES DECLINING

The number of Amateur Radio enforcement cases has continued to drop since a five-year peak of 350 in 2001. FCC Special Counsel for Enforcement Riley Hollingsworth told the Dayton Hamvention 2004 FCC Forum May 15 that 240 ham radio enforcement cases crossed his desk last year. As his tenure in amateur enforcement enters its sixth year, he's estimating only 175 cases in 2004.

"Two years ago at Dayton, I said that I hoped the day would come soon when enforcement would not be an issue in the Amateur Service," Hollingsworth said. While he doesn't believe amateur enforcement is in "maintenance mode" yet, it's well on its way, he said. But he urged his audience not to become complacent just because there's active FCC Amateur Service enforcement. Although the percentage of "hard-core" cases is very small and rapidly declining, the remaining cases include "some real nasty ones," he said.

Hollingsworth said his main worry remains inappropriate or illegal on-the-air behavior and the sometimes-negative image it can present to decision makers at a time of broadband over power line (BPL) and other threats to amateur spectrum. He proposed that amateurs concentrate on improving how they conduct themselves on the air while letting him deal with the remaining bad apples that require his attention.

"No enforcement program in the world can save certain people from themselves or from being an embarrassment to the entire service," he said--reiterating a refrain that's now almost become his mantra. "If anything is the downfall of Amateur Radio, it will probably be the microphone. You have to focus on your image--what you sound like--all the time."

Hollingsworth also told the forum he's convinced that further Amateur Service restructuring is a necessity. He also suggested that amateurs be less concerned about any perceived "dumbing down" of the licensing requirements, because ham radio will continue to thrive in any event. "It's not really what you do to get into Amateur Radio that counts. It's what you do once you get on the air," he said.

VIA THE ARRL NEWSLETTER

Call: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

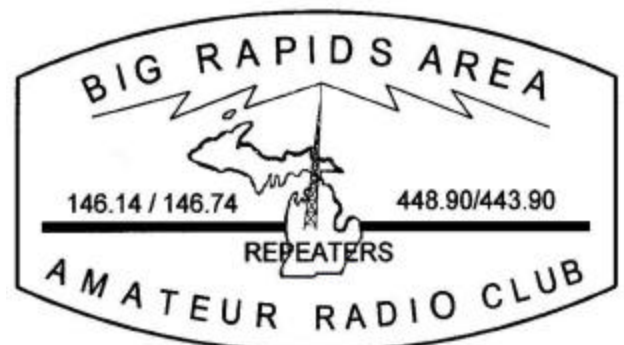
E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

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.

# ATTEND THE ANNUAL CLUB DINNER! SEE PAGE ONE!



P.O. BOX 343, PARIS, MI 49338