

BIG RAPIDS AREA

August 2006

AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

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Another 2-meter CW Class To Begin Soon! From Tom Behler: KB8TYJ

I am happy to announce that there is sufficient interest in my offering yet another 2-meter CW class. However, unlike the CW classes over the past few years, this one will not be held in conjunction with our Technician license class which typically is held during the Winter and early Spring. Instead, our next class will be held this fall. More specifically, the class will be held every Monday evening at 8 p.m. on our 146.74 repeater, and will run from Monday: September 18 through Monday: December 4.

I have decided to try this new format for a number of reasons. First, offering the class separately will allow interested students to concentrate solely on mastering the code, rather than having to worry about mastering both the code and technician-level theory material prior to the next available VE exam. In addition, the new course format will give us a full 12 class sessions, as opposed to the 8 sessions which constituted previous classes. This will give us more time to concentrate on those letters, numbers, and pro-signs that seem to be the most troublesome. It will also give us lots more time to work on call signs, and QSO segments, similar to what would be found on the usual VE license exam.

If you want to become acquainted with the Morse code so you can pursue a license upgrade at some point, this just might be the means to get you started. Or, if you already have passed the 5 WPM code requirement, and just want to brush up on your mastery of the code, you are welcome too.

The important thing to keep in mind here is that I will assume no prior knowledge of the code. We will start with the simplest of the letter groupings, and work our way through the rest of the characters you need for the code test as the weeks progress. I will provide frequent reviews of characters already learned through random letter groupings, word groupings, sentences, call signs, and, ultimately, the all-important QSO segments.

As I do the class, I'll try to keep things informal, and even get input from those listening to see how everyone is doing. This not only livens things up, but also reinforces the idea that everyone is in it together.

Please keep in mind that the code will be presented and taught using the Farnsworth method. This involves a character speed of approximately 15 words per minute, and a sending speed of 5 words per minute, which is in line with the code sending specifications for all ARRL VE exams. (continued on page 3)

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CLUB NETS

440 NET Sundays at 7:30 PM

2 Meter Net Tuesdays at 9:00 PM

ARES/RACES Net 2nd and 4th Wednesday at 9:00 PM on the 2 Meter repeater.

If you want to be the net control station, for 2 meter or 440 nets, contact Tom Behler KB8TYJ email: kb8tyj@arrl.net or phone 231-592-9854

There is a new 440 repeater in the area. It is located in White Cloud, The frequency is 444.975 With a +offset. eventually it will have a pl of 94.8. It is owned and maintained by KB8IFE, Jim Maike.

Breakfast will be at the CHECKERBOARD in Mecosta (used to be Grandma's Kitchen) Saturday, September 2nd 8:30 am.

ARRL 2006 Simulated Emergency Test "SET"

The ARRL Simulated Emergency Test is a nationwide exercise in emergency communications, conducted by ARRL Section, District and local Emergency Coordinators, and by Net Managers. Both Amateur Radio Emergency Service(r) (ARES (r)) and the National Traffic System (NTS) are involved. The SET weekend gives communicators the opportunity to focus on the emergency-communications capability within your community while interacting with NTS nets. The main SET weekend to focus on this year is October 7 -8, 2006.

Also, remember that the SET exercise itself will be conducted throughout Michigan on Saturday: October 7 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

You can download a copy of the 2006 SET reporting forms and read the SET Guidelines on the ARRL Web Page. See <http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/setguide.html> for appropriate links.

The reporting forms (Forms A, B, and C) are found at this specific address in Adobe PDF and Rich Text RTF formats: http://www.arrl.org/FandES/field/forms/#ec_set

Purpose of SET

1. To find out the strengths and weaknesses of ARES and NTS, the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) and other groups in providing emergency communications.
2. To provide a public demonstration--to served agencies such as Red Cross, Civil Preparedness, and through the news media--of the value to the public that Amateur Radio provides, particularly in time of need.
3. To help radio amateurs gain experience in communications using standard procedures and a variety of modes under simulated-emergency conditions.

Tom Behler: KB8TYJ, Mecosta County EC/RO

August Meeting Minutes by Jim Orlowski N8PUG

Meeting called to order by Sue KC8IFP at 7pm at the BRPS classroom. Guests: Ken Howe KB8YPY.

Secretary's Report was read by JIM N8PUG, and approved. Treasurer's report was given by John KC8BAR, and approved. 440 Repeater is back on the air.

Request from Gordon KC8WFX, Please let him know if you wish to receive the newsletter by mail or on the members only link, on the web site.

An order sheet for club name tags was passed around order will be sent in after the October meeting. A CW Class will be starting in the fall more details elsewhere in this news latter.

Nominations for club officers for 2006-2007: President Bob Moody AB8NC. ViCE Presidenr Kevin Strieter KC8ZRT, Secretary Michael McKay KD8DIB, Treasurer Sue Behler.

Club Breakfast Saturday 09-02-2006 at the Checkerboard in Mecosta (formerly Grandma's Kitchen)

50/50 winner was Phil Tighe. Program: a video of a Tv Progran Produced by KC8ZRT, on amateur radio featuring KD8CXQ Justin and KC8WGA David.

Meeting adjourned at 8:43 pm

CLUB ELECTION IN SEPTEMBER

VOTE



That's right --- it's that time again. Time to elect new club officers - and it looks like we may be getting quite a change. At the current time we are looking at the following slate of officers:

President : Bob Moody AB8NC
 Vice President: Kevin Strieter KC8ZRT
 Secretary: Mike McKay KD8DIB
 Treasurer: Sue Behler KC8IFP

The nominations stay open until the election at the September 7th meeting. Please consider running for office if you have the desire. Just let Don MacConnel or Gary Atteberry know of your interest. Hope to see you at the September meeting to welcome our new officers, and to kick off another productive club year.

CW Class continued:

If you'd like to get an idea of what the Farnsworth method sounds like, check-out a current code generation computer program. Many such programs are available as free shareware downloads, or can be obtained very inexpensively from most vendors of amateur radio products.

As always, I look forward to this next CW class, and the learning opportunities it will involve. A number of successful license upgrades have occurred from previous classes, and every effort will be made to continue our string of success.

Finally, I would like to point out one other special feature of our upcoming CW class. I will be dedicating the entire class to one very special ham, and lover of CW who we will all miss—namely, Lillian Spence (KC8OMJ). Those who were involved in previous CW classes are keenly aware of her true dedication to mastering the code. Lillian was the kind of student a teacher always hopes to have—one interested in learning something for the pure sake of learning. She struggled valiantly through a number of code tests before succeeding, but, instead of giving up the code after passing her 5 WPM test, she moved on, and tried to master things even better in hopes of someday joining the ranks of experienced CW ops. I am truly saddened that Lillian will never make it to the ranks of those who can send and copy code at a blistering 30 WPM speed, but at the same time, I know full well that she eventually would have gotten there, had she been with us longer. May you rest in peace, Lillian; we will never forget you.

Board of Directors List

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Local Woman Receives National Recognition

Congratulations are in order for Osceola County Emergency Management employee Diane Bush who has been selected as a recipient of this year's Mark Trail Award. The Annual Mark Trail Awards are awarded to people who go above and beyond their normal duties in support of the NOAA All Hazards-Weather Radio program. Diane's selection is due to the extra effort she undertook in ensuring the New "NOAA All Hazards Weather Radio" transmitter was installed near Wolf Lake in Lake County. Diane will travel to Washington D.C. to receive the award.

Ernie Belanger the Armstrong Transmitters contractor who installed the NOAA All Hazards-Weather Radio had this to say about Diane's effort. "Over the years I have met many cooperators who were involved in getting NOAA sites on the air as part of their job, but I truly have never encountered someone who took the NOAA All Hazard mission so deeply to heart that they gave so much of their personal time, at great sacrifice, to see a project through from start to finish as Diane has." Kudos to Diane for her efforts.



A Note From The President August 2006

This is a time of good byes. This is my last letter to you as President of the Big Rapids Area Amateur Radio Club. I would like to thank you for allowing me this time to serve you and to say that, for the most part, it was an enjoyable experience. Yes, there were joys, concerns, accomplishments, and frustrations. The roller coaster of life - we are all very familiar with it. I hope that I have left this club a little better than I found it. That was my desire upon taking over the position. I wanted to make a little difference that would go a long way toward advancing our wonderful club. That was my platform and I hope I accomplished it. We do have a wonderful club - such fantastic people, such great potential. It is a volunteer club, though, and sometimes that can be frustrating. We do not require anyone to participate for a certain number of hours or a certain number of events. We take people's participation and dedication in whatever form they choose. I had hoped to encourage people to put forth that little effort that would go a long way in supporting this club. Don't know if I accomplished that - but, don't forget, I'm a teacher. I am very familiar with planting a seed that I might never get to see grow into a beautiful tree. A little bit goes a long way - seen or unseen.

I welcome our new officers and hope that they will feel a sense of accomplishment and fun with this club as well. There is still much to be done and they will be counting on your support too. Please come out to our September meeting and place your vote for our next officers. Please also show them that you value their efforts and support them as they work toward the betterment of our club.

One final comment. I guess it is customary to look back and review the past year. I know I have done that often as the year progressed, but at this present time I can't seem to get past a recent event. So I will end with that. I, like all of you, were deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Lillian Spence, KC8OMJ. I loved Lillian. She was a wonderful woman, friend, and fellow ham. She will be terribly missed. We were lucky to have had her in our midst and I am truly grateful to have known her. The one event of my past year as President that stands out in my mind right now is the evening of our Annual Club Dinner. I was fortunate enough to present Lillian that evening with an INSPIRATION AWARD - for being a true inspiration of the spirit of Amateur Radio to the many members of this club.

Lillian truly was an inspiration to the hobby of ham radio and to all of us. I am glad I did that - if that is all I did in the way of accomplishments in this club - then I am happy. Goodbye Lillian. We will miss you.

As I leave my position
as President I thank you
for the opportunity to serve.

Sue Behler KC8IFP





Lillian, oh Lillian. We are really going to miss you. It really hasn't sunk in yet that our own Lillian Spence KC8OMJ is now a silent key. We received word from Jake Spence KI8CK that his mom passed away on Wednesday, August 16th. She had been struggling the last couple months with some internal complications, although the hope was that she would be able to build up her strength to go through a procedure to help her. Unfortunately, that was not the case, and Lillian succumbed to the difficulties. A viewing was held for her on Friday evening, and a funeral service on Saturday morning. A number of club members turned out to express their sympathy to Lillian's family and to bid farewell to Lillian. What a difficult thing to do. I have so many fond memories of Lillian. I know that the future of this hobby lies with the youth, but Lillian was a wonderful example of the philosophy that you are never too old to learn something new. Lillian was such an inspiration with her desire to get her ham license, to learn morse code, and to get her general class ticket. Lillian constantly tried to learn more and do more. She was a voice of reason in many club discussions. She was a helping hand at field day, at potlucks, and at picnics. I used to love listening in when Jake and Lillian touched base with each other as Jake traveled for his job. It was always a pleasure and inspiration to see Lillian at club meetings and license

classes. I always thought- if Lillian can come all the way from Barryton on a dark, winter night - I don't want to hear excuses from anyone. Whether checking in to a net, chatting with Jake or Billie Jo, or reading back her morse code copy I always loved to hear her voice. I will deeply miss you, Lillian. We all will. You made our lives and our club a brighter place with your presence.

Lillian Spence, KC8OMJ SK Rest in peace.

Sue Behler KC8IFP





BIG BOY FUNDRAISER - A DELICIOUS EVENT

“What are the orange vests for?” That was the common question on Wednesday, August 9th at the Big Boy Restaurant in Big Rapids. Our 2nd annual Big Boy Fundraiser took place that evening and was a success all around. A huge thank you to the members who showed up to work. The following members served food, cleaned tables, acted as host/hostess, sold pie raffle tickets, greeted guests, took pictures of the event and generally supported the effort. THANK YOU - Don MacConnel WA4FRJ, Kevin Strieter KC8ZRT, Jerry Buskirk KC8CII, Jim Orlowski N8PUG, Bev Callewaert WD8PFC, Sue Behler KC8IFP, Tom Behler KB8TYJ, Phil Marcotte KC8QOV, and Gordon Trute KC8WFX. Another big thank you goes to the spouse of a member - Jan Bray. Jan volunteered to help that evening and was a super efficient and friendly waitress. She zipped around the tables pouring drinks, taking orders, and serving food. As we said before, working the event is very important. Also of importance was coming to eat and supporting the club. Thank you to John McDowell KC8BAR, Bill Stankey N8MZB and Elizabeth, Steve Cowan KD8DHZ and his wife, Helen Popovitch, Larry Bell KD8DIE and his wife, Bev’s friend Nancy, Mike Foster KC8PZA and Evelyn, and Tom Bray WB8COX. Hope I haven’t forgotten to mention anyone. A fun time was had by all. We even were able to arrange to have an employee serenade Larry and Deb Bell for their 25th wedding anniversary. What fun!! That evening we were able to take home the proceeds from the pie raffle as well as the tips. That amount totaled \$ 151.68. We need to wait until we receive a check from Big Boy headquarters for a percentage of the day’s profits. Initially it looks like we will make around \$350. That amount is close to what we earned last year - and is a fantastic amount for 3 hours of work by our club members. Again - THANK YOU to all who came and worked. THANK YOU to all who came and ate. If this year’s event didn’t fit into your plans - please keep it in mind for next year. It is a lot of fun - and very profitable to our club.



Did I mention - the pies were delicious!!



ARES/RACES Update from Tom Behler: KB8TYJ, Mecosta County EC/RO

Our recent Emergency Committee meeting on Thursday, August 10 had two main purposes. The first was to receive a tour of the newly-built Osceola County EOC, just as we had done for the Mecosta County EOC in November of 2005. The new Osceola County facility is a very impressive accomplishment, and the ARES/RACES set-up is coming along nicely as well, thanks to the grant funds obtained by Mark Watkins (Osceola County EMD), and thanks to the efforts of Gary Atteberry, Bob Croaker, and Walt Nalezty. If you didn't make it to the meeting, and want to see the facility, contact Mark Watkins, and he'll try to accommodate you. The accompanying photos should give you at least some idea of the facility and its various features.

If you have a RACES card that has been issued within the past several years, that card will no longer be valid as of December 31, 2006. New RACES cards are now available, and will only be issued to those who meet the new RACES requirements.

Although the matter of NIMS compliance for RACES certification has been handled individually up to this point via "on line" course completions, some opportunities for collective NIMS courses in a group setting have recently become available, courtesy of Mark Watkins (KC8CBX)—Osceola County EMD. All classes will be held at the new Osceola County EOC facility in Reed City.

Specifically, Mark will be teaching the FEMA IS700 and IS800 courses in three separate four-hour sessions on Tuesday, August 29 from 8 - 12 noon, 1 - 5 p.m., and 6 - 10 p.m. These courses are open to a variety of "served agency" personnel, including local RACES operators. Mark also will be offering the IS700 and IS800 courses for RACES members on Wednesday, September 13, and again on Wednesday, September 27 from 6 - 10 p.m. During any of these course sessions, students will be given the opportunity to take the "on line" final exams via computers that will be set up for this purpose.

In addition, on Thursday, August 31 from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., Mark will be offering a general Unified Incident Command (UIC) course. Space is limited, so please contact Mark directly at 832-6172 if you are interested. Please also be prepared to verify that you have successfully completed at least the FEMA IS700

Mark also wants us to know that other NIMS and Unified Incident Command courses will be offered by the Osceola County EMD office in the months ahead, so check out their web site for more details

[:http://www.osceolacountyemd.org/index.htm](http://www.osceolacountyemd.org/index.htm)

If you have any questions on ARES, RACES, and where you stand with regard to your ARES or RACES membership status, please contact either Gary Atteberry (Osceola County EC/RO), or me, your Mecosta County EC/RO. Let's work together to become the best local ARES/RACES organization we can be.



BRAARC Web Site

The secure web page for members only is bigrapidsarc.net

Jake Spence in the new Webmaster for our web page.

This will have color pictures and will be easy to read. Your user name will be your call sign. Please send Jake Spence KI8CK, the password that you want to use so that he can add you to the list. Contact : jakeaspence@charter.net

Those who no longer wish to receive a paper copy should let the Editor know and provide him with an email address so he can send out a reminder when the newsletter is posted to the website. Contact: gordon-kc8wfx@usa.net



Hamfests Michigan -
GRAHamfest 2006 9 September
 Grand Rapids Amateur Radio Association
<http://www.w8dc.org/swap.htm>
 at Lowell MI , Kent County Fairgrounds

Next BRAARC monthly meeting
 Thursday September 7 at 7 p.m.
 In the classroom of the Dept.
 Of Public Safety building
 435 North Michigan Ave in
 down town Big Rapids.



BRAARC CLUB PIN SALE

The picture of my pin shows you the detail. The cost for the pin is \$6.00 plus any donation you might want to make to the club. This is a ONE TIME offer which must be ordered by the October 5th club meeting. Please place your order at either the September or October club meeting OR by calling Sue Behler, 592-9854. All pins must be paid for before the order is placed. You will need to stipulate whether you want first name only, last name and first name, and your call sign. Also indicate which type of back you prefer - strong magnet, standard pin, or collar clip on style. The pin is approximately a 2 inch square. Once this order is placed, we will not order pins again until next year. So get them while you can.

ARES/RACES Training – go to <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWep/IS/crslist.asp>

HF test net – This is statewide, on the 2nd Tuesday each month at 7pm on 3.932 MHZ on LSB.

