

# BIG RAPIDS AREA

November 2006

# AMATEUR RADIO CLUB



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**Notes from November 18, 2006 District 6 meeting—Kent County Sheriff's Department, Grand Rapids, MI from Tom Behler: KB8TYJ, Mecosta County EC/RO**

We heard from Marty Mendelson—Michigan's Section Emergency Co-ordinator. Marty once again re-emphasized the need for folks to be NIMS compliant—IS700 and 100 for this year, and 800 and 200 for next year.

The next speaker was Ray (N8LRF), from our district's packet radio group. Ray emphasizes the importance of our getting acquainted with the DRG group. [www.mi-drg.org](http://www.mi-drg.org)

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The most realistic goal for packet would be to have both internet and RF paths within the community, and at least internet linkages beyond the county level, onto the district or section level. Ray supports Hamgate, rather than Winlink. Hamgate has more features and possibilities.

Use DSL, rather than cable, for digital internet connectivity. This is because cable goes down in a disaster, after a few hours, while DSL stays up because it's run by the phone company.

If you have any information or questions on packet or digital communications, contact Ray at [N8lrf@digitalrealm.net](mailto:N8lrf@digitalrealm.net)

Jeff Nawrot (N8JSN) then talked about CERT and CERT training. CERT is Citizen Emergency Response Team. ARES and RACES members should really get involved with CERT.

Jeff (N8JSN) talked about the importance of everyone in your county having a "go kit". Maybe schedule a "go kit" night for your county.

In your go kit, have a two-meter radio with one or two sources of power. Also, a lighter socket plug. You need some sort of an antenna system. You need pens, pencils, ID cards, drivers license, medications, etc. You should have a flashlight and batteries too. You need to have your go kit prepared in advance, so you can be ready to roll within a half hour in an emergency situation. Go kits can be put together for less than \$50.

[WWW.kcraces.net](http://WWW.kcraces.net) is a good web site for ARES and RACES-related material.

[www.kcest.org](http://www.kcest.org) is a very good Kent County RACES forum web site. Jeff Nawrot has put in a proposal for funding to get every EC in District 6an 800 MHZ radio; he doesn't know how far this will go, but he has given it a try and will keep us posted.

Finally, Tom Behler, and Bill Kelso talked about the possibility of developing a map of agreed-upon 2-meter FM simplex frequencies for each county in the district, with each county having a designated frequency. Bill Kelso and Mark Watkins will work on distributing the proposed color-coded map.

Marty Mendelson also told us not to forget about 146.52—The national simplex call

## NOVEMBER Meeting Minutes by Mike McKay, KD8DIB

**Call to order:** 7:05 PM by Bob, AB8NC

**Guests:** None

**Reports:** by Tom, KB8TYJ

1. SET Exercise: Simulated state wide repeater failure. Communications conducted via simplex and messages passed to State EOC Successful.
2. CROP Walk: 77 walkers and asked to return next year. 440 repeater worked out fine.
3. Region 6 Exercise: Asked to pass and receive messages - 30 messages from 11:30a to 2pm. Central Dispatch expressed positive comments.

**Secretary's report:** October minutes read by Mike, KD8DIB and approved

**Treasurer's report:** November, 2006 Financial Report read by Sue, KC8IFP and approved.

**Announcements:** Tom, KB8TYJ - We need Net Controls for 2 Meter and 440 Nets

Emergency committee meeting - November 9<sup>th</sup> @ Central Dispatch 7pm

Scrap book donation by Bev, WD8PFC

Kevin, KC8ZRT - Resigns Vice Presidents Office due to his job search.

**Old Business:**

1. Club Name Tags delivered and distributed at meeting.
2. Club CD renewal complete
3. Fundraisers - Auction suggested and commented to be a lot of work.
4. Mini Swap - Don, WA4FRJ offered lodge
5. New Ham Class - Email to go to member ship looking for instructors.
6. High School Ham Club: Two student members. Advisor from school needed.
7. Newsletter - Editor Needed
  - Articles: Classified Ad's, Don, WA4FRJ to provide monthly article, Photo's, current events suggested.
  - Newsletter committee assigned to determine direction - Members: Don WA4FRJ, Bob CroakerWB8YPG, GeorgeW8OWN, Tom Bray WB8COX, Bev WD8PFC, Meeting at Don's house 11/9/2006 Delivery: TBD

**New Business:**

1. Repeater Committee meeting: Several issues need to be addressed - Possible meeting on 11/9/06.
2. Board Meeting - to be scheduled in December 2006
3. Winter Potluck: January, 2007 - Supported with proper advertising
4. Replacement of VP: Nomination of Tom Bray WB8COX. To be review at Board meeting
5. 2007 Dues \$25 regular member - College \$15, High School \$0 Students to be discussed at Board Meeting
6. 2007 Dues are being accepted

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## Upcoming Events

Do you have an event that needs to be listed here? There are a multitude of activities one can take part in. However, to have people attend your event they need to know about it. This section is devoted to the pursuit of fun and interesting stuff to do. Who knows, one may even learn something new by participating. Contact Mike McKay, KD8DIB at the next club meeting or by email to have your event included.

### **BRAARC Club Breakfast**

December 2, 2006 - Wild Rose Café, Big Rapids at 8:30 am.  
Talk-in on the 146.740 2-meter repeater for anyone needing directions.

### **SKYWARN Recognition Day**

December 2, 2006 from 0000 to 2400 UTC. <http://hamradio.noaa.gov>  
Contact Tom Behler, KB8TYJ for more information

### **“The Nutcracker” Grand Rapids Ballet Company in Big Rapids**

December 2, 2006 at 7 p.m. FSU, Williams Auditorium (Students \$10, Adults \$24)  
(231)591-5600 for tickets or more information.

### **Club Meeting**

Next BRAARC monthly club meeting Thursday: December 7 at 7 p.m. at the classroom in the Department Of Public Safety building, 435 North Michigan Ave in Big Rapids.

### **Local Hamfests**

Amateur Radio Group of Youth in Lowell - December 16, 2006. [www.argyl.org](http://www.argyl.org)  
9 a.m. to noon at Lowell High School (k-12 Students free, Adults \$5)

### **The Sociology of Disasters and Emergency Preparedness**

Enroll now in this “Special Topics” course at Ferris State University.  
Contact Tom Behler, KB8TYJ for more info about Sociology 390

### **Winter Field Day**

January 13, 2007: start time 12 noon.  
<http://www.spar-hams.org/contests/winterfd/index.php>

### **Net Control**

We would like to hear you as net control soon! If you would like to serve as net control for one or more of the BRAARC 2-meter or 440 nets, contact Tom Behler: KB8TYJ

## Classified Ads

List your Amateur Radio and non-amateur related items here for free. Submit your classified ad to Mike McKay, KD8DIB at the next club meeting or by email. Submissions may be edited for length and content.

### **Local Honey**

Honey Bears \$2, 3lbs jars \$6 Call 527-1688

### **Ham Equipment for Sale / Trade / Free**

List your spare equipment here.

### **Coax**

### **Antennas**

# A Note From The President ✕

## NOVEMBER 2006

Here we are over half-way through November. Thanksgiving is coming fast. The year has steamed through extremely fast, or so it seems. As I write this short piece, I am sitting in a deer blind in the late afternoon. It is a beautiful day.

By the time that this newsletter is published and out we will have celebrated Thanksgiving. What are you thankful for this year? I am thankful for health, family, friends, and ham radio. Odd combination you say? Not really, because we need each of those things to help us round out our lives. But really, have you taken the time to think about what you are thankful for? I hope that you had a wonderful Thanksgiving and enjoyed time with your families.

Now we can turn our thoughts to Christmas. I know that I am behind, because a lot of stores have been pushing the Christmas theme for quite some time. They are trying to capture your attention and money. This is a time to get our wish list together. What are you wishing for?

I wish for peace. I wish for freedom for all people everywhere. I wish for an end to terrorist active all over the world. I wish for strength and guidance for our country's leaders. I wish for a good vertical antenna for the hf bands. I wish for a "new" hf rig, or least an amplifier.

Most of all I wish for health, happiness, and prosperity for all of you. may those of our group who travel to warmer places have a good winter and return to the area next spring.

Looking forward to seeing you all at the next club meeting. Please let me know if there any items that need to be on the agenda for that meeting. Until then,

73's

Bob Moody, AB8NC

### Great thing to do for our troops:

If you go to the Web site <<http://www.letsaythanks.com>>, you can pick out a thank you card. Xerox Corporation will print it, and it will be sent (at no charge) to a soldier currently serving in Iraq. You can't pick who gets it, but it will go to a member of the armed services. -- tnx Coy Day, N5OK

# Michigan Winter Hazards Awareness

For more information on winter storms, see  
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/brochures/winterstorm.pdf>.

For All-Hazards NOAA Weather Radio information, including a station near you, see the NOAA Weather Radio page on the Internet at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr> or contact your National Weather Service office.

## What are the various winter weather warnings and advisories?

- A **winter storm watch** indicates that severe winter weather conditions may affect your area in the next 12 to 48 hours.
- A **winter storm warning** indicates that severe winter conditions are imminent. There are a variety of winter storm warnings including **heavy snow warning**, **ice storm warning** and **lake effect snow warning**.
- A **winter storm warning** for heavy snow indicates snowfalls of at least 6 inches in 12 hours or 8 inches in a 24-hour period are expected. In the Upper Peninsula, it indicates 8 or more inches in 12 hours and 10 or more inches in a 24-hour period.
- **Blizzard warnings** are issued when sustained wind speeds or frequent gusts of at least 35 miles per hour are accompanied by considerable falling and/or blowing snow. Visibility is greatly reduced to near zero during a blizzard.
- **Snow advisories** are issued when snowfalls of 4 to 5 inches are expected in a 12-hour period for the average of the forecast range (or 4 to 7 inches within 12 hours in the U.P.).



## Brain Teaser— The Busy Bee WA4FRJ

Two trains are headed toward each other —(On different tracks of course.) Each train is going 30 miles per hour and they are initially 60 miles apart on straight tracks.

A bee starts at one train and flies directly to the other train. It immediately turns around and flies directly back to the original train. It keeps this up, flying back and forth between the two trains, until the trains pass each other. If the bee (this is a really fast bee) flies a constant 40 miles per hour, how far does the bee fly?

Hint: This is easier than it looks; just think about time, distance and speeds. (We are happy to report that at the end of the bee's flight it got a fine night's sleep and was good as new.)

## Board of Directors List

Bob Moody AB8NC President

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Kevin Streiter KC8ZRT Vice President

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Michael McKay KD8DIB Secretary

[michaelMcKay@ferris.edu](mailto:michaelMcKay@ferris.edu)

Sue Behler KC8IFP Treasurer and  
Publicity Committee Chair

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Tom Behler - past president,  
EC/RO Mecosta County

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George Rouman, Past president

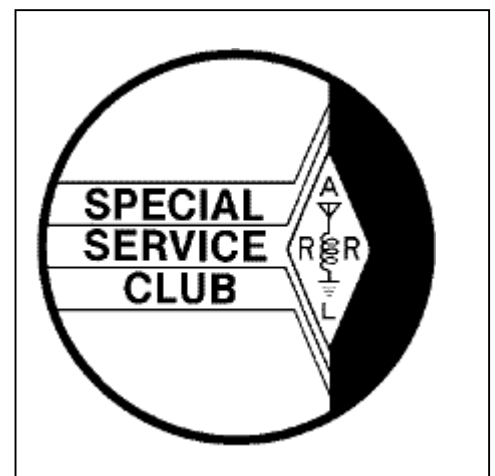
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## ***D-Star Information***

In case you haven't gotten word of this, the 147.32 Holton repeater system in the Muskegon area has been converted to a D-Star repeater. Actually, this is the first repeater system in the entire State to go D-star.

What this means is that those of us who have normal HT's that operate in analog FM voice mode won't be able to access this repeater any longer. The only way you'll now be able to access it is with a D-Star capable radio.

If you want to know more about D-Star, Tom Bray (WB8COX) has a D-star radio, and has actually gotten into the new 147.32 machine. You may recall that he demonstrated D-star operation at one of our club

- WD8MKGDC 147.320 + Dup I/O = C

For IC 2200H users please remember to include the C at the end of the repeater callsign. This is Michigan's first DStar repeater.

- Check out the updated web page which should occur this afternoon with photos of the unit and the Ham's that made it happen.

Web page: [www.wd8mkg.com](http://www.wd8mkg.com) Jim, K8COP

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This short cut takes you to the Illinois Digital Ham group. It has a lot of information on D STAR:  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/illinoisdigitalham> Jim, K8COP

## **WHAT THE ELECTIONS CHANGED FOR AMATEUR RADIO**

ARRL Great Lakes Division Director: James Weaver, K8JE [k8je@arrl.org](mailto:k8je@arrl.org)

Not much. Let me explain.

Let me point also that Federal agencies such as the US Food & Drug Administration, the US Consumer Product Safety Commission . . . and the US FCC . . . are managed by appointees made by the President, not Congress. With possible exception, the appointed committees or boards have Republican majorities. Of specific interest to us, the FCC will continue to be controlled by the same, pre-election, Republican-appointed majority until one or more Commissioner leaves the Commission. Until there is a change in control of the White House, any new appointees to the FCC can be expected to be made so that Republican control of the Commission continues.

## **LEGISLATIVE ACTION PROGRAM**

You've seen my appeals for help with this Program. We still need help A number of members have stepped forward to volunteer and have been appointed to very important, although not highly demanding, positions. We still need additional to join the fight to preserve Amateur Radio. Please read [www.arrl.org/govrelations/laprog.faq.html](http://www.arrl.org/govrelations/laprog.faq.html) for brief questions and answers about the Program. If you are interested in learning more or volunteering to help in your own Congressional District, please contact :

Val Rose, N8EXV at [n8exv@arrl.net](mailto:n8exv@arrl.net) or me

([k8je@arrl.org](mailto:k8je@arrl.org)). Val is the Division Legislative Action Chair (DLAC) for the Great Lakes Division.



## What's All This Noise? Don MacConnel—WA4FRJ

If you are looking for QRM you can find it right on State Street in Big Rapids. Going down State, almost any mobile ham radio periodically goes crazy and opens its squelch to admit strange and unpleasant noises. Worse yet, State Street doesn't isn't the only place to find odd R.F. noise. Neighborhood streets also have little hot spots of annoying hash. What's going on? We might also might also ask what's not going on.

I loaded a spectrum analyzer into the car and drove around town looking for noise.

The first noisy place was the Admiral station on the north end of State. Wow, this place sounds like it's trying to jam all communications. It's not of course, but something has changed, it didn't used to be that noisy. The noisemakers are their relatively new, "pay at the pump," gas pumps. Loaded with digital electronics these money grabbers are all radiating broadband noise as they sit there. Not just when they're being used, but all the time.

At the gas station the spectrum analyzer showed strong broadband signals including 146.740 MHz. That's amazing, they are right on our two meter repeater output. (I want to go back to the days when the gas pumps were mostly mechanical and had a bell that rang for every gallon.) The noise didn't just hit two meters; there were bursts of wideband noise right up in the 900 MHz bands.

Next we traveled to State and Woodward where MDOT has installed LED traffic lights.

Actually the new LED lights are all over the place but State and Woodward seems extra noisy. Here again the noise was broadband but had signal on two meters and beyond. Other noisy spots are at State and Maple and Michigan and Maple.

Driving north on Bjornsen we picked up fairly strong two-meter noise by one particular house. Nothing special about the house, it just radiated noise. It was getting dark and time to head home. As I pulled into the driveway the spectrum analyzer showed a pretty good hump on two meters and a bunch of little stuff on 400 MHz. This time I knew what it was. One of the PC's in the house has a network card that thinks it's a radio station. That and my router make the majority of R.F. noise around my place. The satellite TV receiver is also noisy.

It's hard to tell if FCC part 15 rules for interference are being met by all of the local noisemakers. In talking to a design customer I learned that they send items to China to be built and have them send back a sample lot to be tested for part 15 compliance. When the item passes the test it gets an FCC compliance code. Here's the problem: Once the item goes into production there don't seem to be any controls that assure that part 15 is being met. Since an incredible amount of electronics is being built in China it is likely that our local noise generating electronics were manufactured there.

Here's a last thought. Digital electronics generate loads of noise because the circuits switch very quickly and generate harmonics. When digital information is transmitted it frequently occupies larger bandwidths. Because the signals are not continuous, i.e. they are like impulses, it is easier for them to pass the letter of Part 15 testing but they may not meet the intent, which is to limit harmful interference.

With increasing desire to have the world both digital and wireless our future looks very convenient but not very quiet.

### David's Propagation Report: David Huhtala—KC8WGA

This is the monthly propagation report for the month of December. Propagation on 20 meters has gone down due to its yearly downfall during the winter months. 40 meter propagation has gone up with the colder weather. 15 meters has made a comeback these last months, which is a sign that the bad propagation cycle we are in is getting much better.

#### David's pick of the month:

40 meters is the band to be on these next months. See you on the air.

**BRAARC Web Site**

The secure web page for members only is [bigrapidsarc.net](http://bigrapidsarc.net)

Jake Spence in the new Webmaster for our web page.

. You may use this page to view/read/print future newsletters online. 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 him at : [jakeaspence@charter.net](mailto: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 at : [gordon-kc8wfx@usa.net](mailto:gordon-kc8wfx@usa.net)

**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@arrr.net](mailto:kb8tyj@arrr.net) or phone 231-592-9854

**The first Winter Field Day** will be held from 12:00 noon on Saturday January 13, 2007 to 12:00 noon on Sunday January 14, 2007 local time. The object of the event is to set up emergency-style communications and make as many contacts as possible during the 24 hour period. The rules encourage as many contacts on as many bands and modes as possible, because during a real emergency, the most important factor is the ability to communicate, regardless of band, mode or distance.

<http://www.spar-hams.org/contests/winterfd/index.php>

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



**ARES/RACES Training** – go to <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWep/IS/is22.asp>

**Next Emergency committee meeting** 8 February 2007.

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

