

# Big Rapids Area Amateur Radio Club

September 2010

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## President's Corner

September is just around the corner and this means election time. The election committee has some wonderful nominees for club officers.

However, I do think they are still looking to fill the

Secretary position. So, if you are looking for a way to give back to Amateur Radio and BRAARC this might be just the thing for you. Nominations for all positions are open until September 2, 2010 at the club meeting. The final call for nomination will take place at the club meeting at 7:00 PM. You can even nominate yourself if you'd like. I hope you will join us at the meeting, cast your vote or even run for an office.

If you're not the political type, maybe you are the pizza eating and antenna building type. After the elections, the program for the September club meeting is eating pizza and building rollup J-pole antennas. There will be a small material cost for the festivities but your fee can be covered by Ham Bucks. Remember, those members who participate in the weekly nets as "check ins" or as net control earn valuable Ham Bucks as a reward. As I am sure you recall, Ham Bucks were accepted to discount Field Day memorabilia and will cover donations for pizza and antenna this time around.

This will be my last article as President. With increased responsibilities at work and the Big Rapids 4H club, I will not be able to dedicate adequate time to the office of President. I am really bummed about this decision and I know the next President will further the Club's efforts. However, I am especially glad to have had the opportunity to act a President for the club and have enjoyed promoting Amateur Radio and our club. I don't want you to think that I will not longer contribute. It will just be in a smaller role.

Remember, the Big Bad Wolf Adventure Race is Saturday, September 4, 2010 at 8:00 AM. We will be meeting behind the Big Rapids Middle School to help out at this communications event. We still need volunteers for stations along the race course. Jeff, K8OE is the coordinator of the event and will be passing a sign up sheet at the club meeting. Even last minute help is appreciated. This is a large event with three legs consisting of running, biking, and canoeing.

I hope to hear you on the air soon.

Happy Hamming!  
Mike, KD8DIB





We've been experimenting with a power measuring device that does a great job of measuring energy and helping to reduce electric power bills. It's called a "Kill-A-Watt" and depending on the model costs from about \$20 to \$50.

We all find out how much electricity we use over a month when the electric bill arrives. It would be much better if we could find out how much power is being used right now by various items in the house. With this device we can do just that.

The Kill-A-Watt unit plugs into an outlet and the load we want to measure plugs into the Kill-A-Watt. On its screen it can display a number of useful measurements including watts, kilowatt-hours (kWH), voltage, power factor, volts, volt-amps and frequency—handy for checking stand by generators. Easy to use buttons select each of these measurements. In most cases we would like to know watts and, over time, kilowatt-hours.

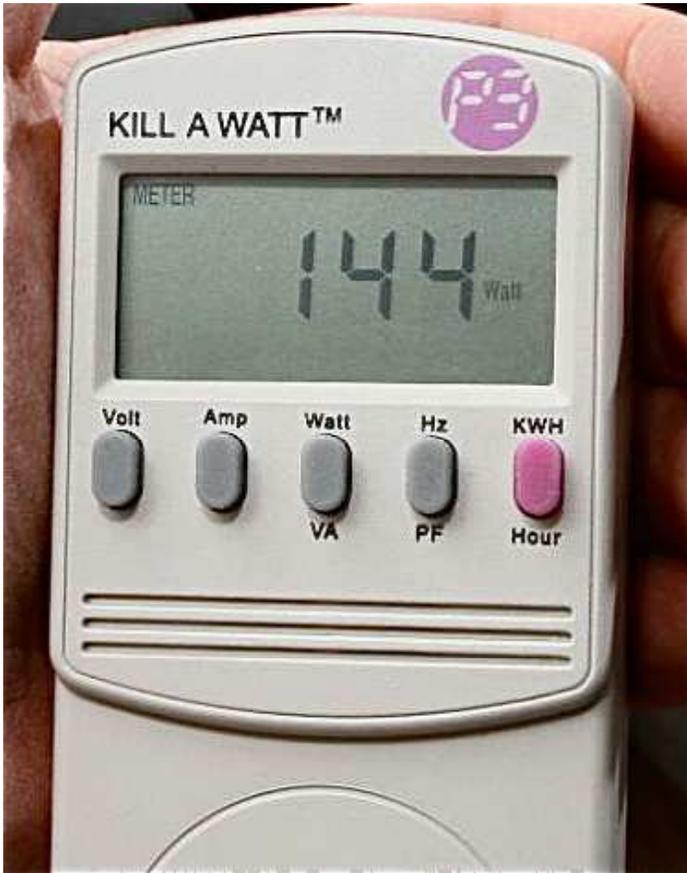
Here are some actual examples. My friend Kevin had a chest freezer that was drawing 120 kWH/month and costing over 13 dollars each month to operate. He measured the kWH consumption with a "Kill-A-Watt and decided to replace the old chest freezer with a new, more efficient freezer. His power consumption dropped and he is now paying five dollars a month for power on the same size freezer. That's a saving of eight dollars a month and his new freezer will pay for itself in less than four years.

Another example is Mike's (KD8DIB) not very old TV set. He was startled to find that original set was drawing 80 watts when it was in standby. That's over six dollars a month when the set was off!

My Astron 35 amp 12 volt converter draws 17 watts when all of my rigs are off; 30 watts listening and 200 watts with the Icom 2350 pumping out 45 watts on two meters. I've learned to shut the whole system down when I'm not hamming.

The government is happy to tell you to conserve energy and also makes moves like regulating away 100 watt incandescent light bulbs next year.

It makes better sense to become aware of where and how much energy you are using so you can make intelligent decisions of your own. The Kill-A-Watt will really help with those decisions. I found mine on Amazon.com.



REMEMBER MEETING THURSDAY, SEPT 2, IS PIZZA NIGHT AND CONSTRUCTION.  
BRING YOUR HAMBUCKS. WILL BE A GREAT TIME FOR ALL.

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