

# Big Rapids Area Amateur Radio Club

February 2011

PO Box 343 Paris MI 49338 Pres. Jim Woolen Web Page: [www.braarc.net](http://www.braarc.net) Editor: Phil – [phildolly@power-net.net](mailto:phildolly@power-net.net)

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## President's Message

As many of you already know, my mother died December 27<sup>th</sup> in Tennessee. On the day of mother's funeral, it was my youngest daughter's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. At the funeral, we celebrated mother's 88 years of life and then later at mother's apartment we celebrated Caitlin's 18 years of continuing life. What a testament to the amazing cycle of life here on our planet. After the funeral we loaded and moved her furniture and meager possessions to Michigan. I do not know how to explain the mother-son-relationship, but not a day goes by without me thinking about mother and wishing she was still here. When my father died in September 2006, it was easier for me because I still had mother to talk with and visit. It seems like the connection to my childhood was broken with her death; however, I know deep down that my sorrow is only temporary and this also shall pass.

Last Friday, my father's "baby" sister died at the age of 87. Unlike my mother this has been expected for some time. Still it is hard to believe that almost all of my aunts and uncles are now deceased. Again, my words are only

meant to remind you that life is fragile and can be ended at any moment; therefore, spend every minute you can with family and friends. We are all facing that reality as we grow older.



I did not know that becoming an amateur radio operator in 1957 was going to give me so many friendships and the opportunities to meet so many wonderful people. Not only do I love my hobby, but I treasure the people that have come into my life during the past 54 years in ham radio. BRAARC is no different in that our members are an awesome group of people. It is also my deepest hope that my youngest son, Gregory, continues the tradition and never lets his license lapse nor becomes inactive. We have a hobby that keeps on giving in every way!

I hope all of you had a great Christmas with your family and friends. While mine was somewhat sad, having my family with me made it bearable. We all need to be reminded now and then that family should be our first priority. Please take time to read the "Golf



## Announcements:

**Breakfast :** Sat, January 29, 9:00am – 10:30am

Sharon's restaurant in Rogers Heights. Talk-in on the 146.740 Big Rapids 2-meter repeater for anyone needing directions.

**Winter Field Day:** Sat, January 29, 12pm – Sun, January 30, 12pm

Where 13837 80th Ave, Mecosta

Join us for some winter fun! We will be on the air from 1pm to 4pm on Saturday. This year operations will take place from K8OE's heated camper. Planned modes include voice, CW, and digital. There will be an opportunity for all to try out a variety of equipment and techniques. Bring your warm clothes and your favorite insulated key to join in on this winter fun!

[www.spar-hams.org/contests/winterfd/index.php?pg=2](http://www.spar-hams.org/contests/winterfd/index.php?pg=2) \*\*\*Please note: restrooms are not available at this site.

**BRAAR Club meeting:** Thu, February 3, 7pm – 9pm

Big Rapids Department Of Public Safety Building, 435 N. Michigan in Big Rapids. Presentation Topic: TBD

**BRAARC Board Meeting:** begins at 5:30pm in the "Green Room" at Vivos, – across the street from VanDries, on State St. You may plan to eat a meal during the meeting or simply have a beverage. All officers and committee chairs are invited to attend. Only 2 minutes from BR Public Safety.

Please Note: The regular BRAARC meetings will be held in the back room of Public Safety for the months of February, March, and April 2011. We will return to the main room at Public Safety in May.

**37<sup>th</sup> Annual Amateur Radio Swap-N-Shop:** Sat, February 12, 8am – 12pm

218 Vine St., Traverse City, Mi

Contact Joe W8TVT (231)947-8555

VE session at 10AM Talk in: 146.86

**VE Testing:** Sat, February 12, 9am – 10am

Description <http://kc8yyp.angelfire.com> See website for information: request pre-registration 7 days in advance for testing. Testing in Canadian lakes. See website for details, maps and contact points.

Thanks N8ERV VEC

**4H Technology Club:** Sat, February 12, 11:00am – 3:30pm

Contact Patricia, KD8GGD - Blinkyies & game of life

**ARES/RACES - Equipment Training:** Sat, February 19, 10pm – 11pm

Description: TBD

**Skywarn Training:** Fri, February 25, 7pm – 9pm

1414 Family Dr, Big Rapids, Mi 49307

Description: National Weather Service basic Skywarn Training at the West Campus Community Center on the campus of Ferris State University. Refresh your training every two years. This is a free training and all are welcome to attend. (see flier included in this newsletter)

**Ham in a Day Class:** Save The Date: BRAARC Ham In A Day Class to be held Saturday: March 26th at a location to be announced shortly!!!!!! Please spread the word to anyone who you think might be interested in getting their amateur radio license!!!! The class will be taught by Dan Romanchik (KB6NU) from the Ann Arbor area. Dan is a veteran instructor, and has prepared an excellent set of study materials for the tech license. With Dan's help and expertise, this promises to be a unique opportunity that any prospective ham will not want to miss! More details will be forthcoming on future nets and in news letters.

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**January Brain Teaser Solution:**

$D1=174 \times T$  Where T is in hours  
 $D2=215 \times T$   
 $D1+D2 =238$  miles

$$174 \times T + 215 \times T = 238$$

$$238 = T (389)$$

$T = 238 / 389 = 0.6118251928020564$  hours or  $0.6118251928020564 \times 60 \text{min/hour} = 36.709511568123418$  minutes

Distance from Chicago =  $0.6118251928020564 \times 215 = 131.5 \dots$  miles

Brain Teaser

Don MacConnel, WA4FRJ

This Month's Brain Teaser

Let's take some time off from puzzle solving and try a little mental exercise that can improve certain types of creative thinking. Close your eyes and try to recreate the following textures.

This exercise helps improve your ability to form concrete visualizations from memory, which is one characteristic of creative people.

1. A tennis ball
2. Sand
3. Concrete
4. Silk
5. Jello
6. Tooth brush

How well did you do at recreating the texture? Try to do better each time you practice this exercise.

# Skywarn



## SKYWARN



# Training



- The National Weather Service (NWS) in Grand Rapids is holding their annual FREE Skywarn training class for all who are interested in learning more about the weather, how to become a "weather spotter" and report your observations to the National Weather Service
- For more information, contact James Buttleman @ 231-592-0158

## FREE CLASS! Friday, February 25 at 7-9 pm

Ferris State University West Campus Community Center 1414 Family Drive Big Rapids, MI

**FREE Skywarn Class!**  
 Friday February 25, 2011 @ 7:00PM  
 FSU West Campus Community Center  
 More Info: James Buttleman 231.592.0158  
<http://www.oh.noaa.gov/grskywarn/>

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Staff Sgt Mike Mathews (KCOLNK)  
Presents  
C.E.R.T. – Community Emergency Response Team



At the regular January meeting of the BRAAR Club Mike Matthews gave a presentation on C.E.R.T. – Community Emergency Response Team.

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.

Mike discussed how the BRAAR Club might assist during an emergency when there are large or massive power outages and radio communications are the only way to keep in contact with authorities or other response teams and the public in general.

The group enjoyed Mike's presentation and hope he will come back, perhaps as a member of the club.

Thanks Mike.

## **BRAARC 2010 Year in Review**

David KC8WGA

2010 was a fun and exciting year for the Big Rapids Area Amateur Radio Club.

January brought us increased youth activity in the club. Not only were the 4H technology kids learning about basic electronics, they were talking to other kids and hams around the country and the world in the Kids Day operating event, January 3<sup>rd</sup>. It was so much fun to watch their eyes light up as they made each new contact.

The club welcomed 8 new hams into the hobby in April. Many of you have probably heard these new faces on the local repeaters. Some of these members this past year have participated in many club activities. Way to go guys!

Every year around May the club has their annual dinner. The club dinner in 2010 was a very special event, with many club members recognized for their service. George, W8OWN was honored with the 2010 BRAARC, VE Team Liaison, Dedicated Service Award. George is a wonderful example of the ham radio spirit. His ultimate service toward amateur radio has helped many receive their license. Thank you George for a job well done!

May was also fox hunting time in 2010. Gregory, KD8NRO, was the victor at the "I'm Not at Dayton" fox hunt. Meanwhile, Don, WA4FRJ and David, KC8WGA, went off toward Mitchell Creek, far away from the transmitter. A fun time was had by all. You certainly fooled us with your stealth set-up, Mike!

Field Day was fun as always in June 2010. The club had 2 transmitters, and made 90 contacts.

July was Freedom Airfest time for the club. A good time was had by all. Those who attended saw a flyover and some interesting fighter and homebuilt planes.

September in the BRAARC is a time to rain in new officers, and 2010 was no different than any other year in that respect. Although it was sad to see the previous administration leave, it was a time for new members to step in.

The club proved itself to be a valuable asset to the community, during the Big Bad Wolf Adventure Race in September, despite the rainy and cold conditions.

National Weather Service Basic Skywarn and Advanced Skywarn classes were offered in the fall of 2010. Who knew weather could be so fascinating and complex?

October brought many club members together. Crop Walk was another success, in spite of the trouble we had with the maps. The club Celebrity Serve was a huge success as well. What could be better than eating good food, and at the same time supporting ham radio?

November was a time for the annual Festival of Lights parade, which the club participated in for the second straight year. A nicely decorated float was paraded down Michigan Avenue.

As you can see, BRAARC had a busy year. I would like to sincerely thank those who helped make 2010 a special year for the club. Here's to an even better year in 2011!

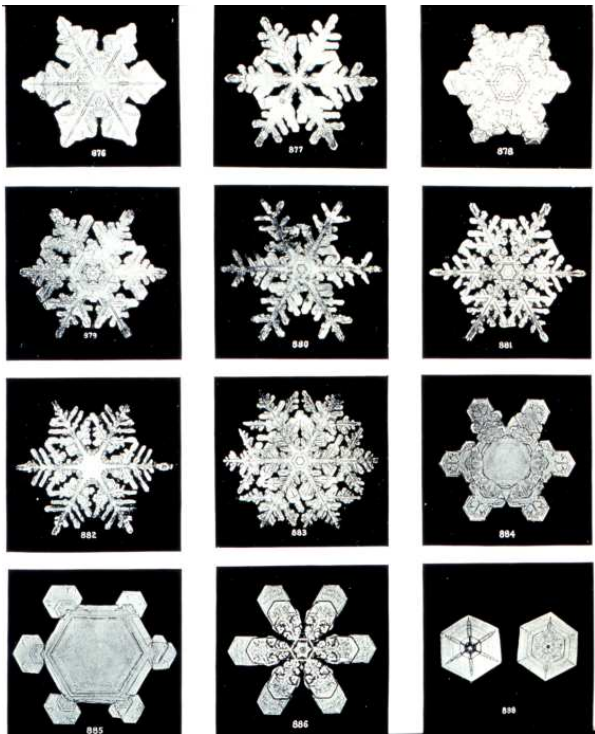
## Weather Words

David KC8WGA

### How Do Snowflakes Form?

#### The Science Behind Snow

How are Snowflakes formed? Snowflakes form when a very cold water droplet freezes onto a pollen or dust particle in the sky. This leads to the creation of an ice crystal. As this crystal falls to the ground, water vapor freezes on the main crystal, making more new crystals. These new crystals form the six arms of the snowflake. This explanation leaves out additional, important information, about snowflake formation. Here is a more complex answer. The ice crystals that aid in the development of snowflakes are patterned; because they project the inside order of the crystal's water molecules, as they assemble themselves in prearranged spaces (called "crystallization"). A six-sided snowflake begins to take shape. In the end, the temperature and humidity of the air, determine the shape of the ice crystal. For example, long needle-like crystals develop at 23 degrees F and flat plate-like crystals at 5 degrees F. The complex shape of an arm of the snowflake is due to the conditions of the atmosphere by the whole falling crystal. The slightest change in surrounding temperature and humidity causes the ice crystal to grow differently every minute, or second. A crystal, and its six arms, may branch off in new directions while maintaining its six sided appearance. Every arm of the snowflake goes through identical atmospheric conditions as well, causing the arms to look the same. So, why are no two snowflakes alike? All snowflakes pursue different paths, as they tumble from the sky to the ground. As these flakes fall, they encounter different atmospheric conditions. For that reason, they all look unique, resembling anything from prisms and needles to the familiar lacy pattern. (Courtesy: NOAA)





## **This Day in Weather History**

### **Groundhog Day February 2nd**

1868. It is a chilly Groundhog Day as Lansing sets their all-time record low with a reading of 37 below zero. (NOAA) Record low for Big Rapids on Groundhog Day, 17 below zero in 1970 (wunderground.com)

1952. The only tropical storm of record to hit the U.S. in February moved out of the Gulf of Mexico and across southern Florida. It produced 60 mph winds, and two to four inches of rain. (The Weather Channel)

### **Valentine's Day February 14<sup>th</sup>**

1899. The record arctic cold wave begins to abate but not before Grand Rapids, MI sets their all-time record low of 24 below zero.

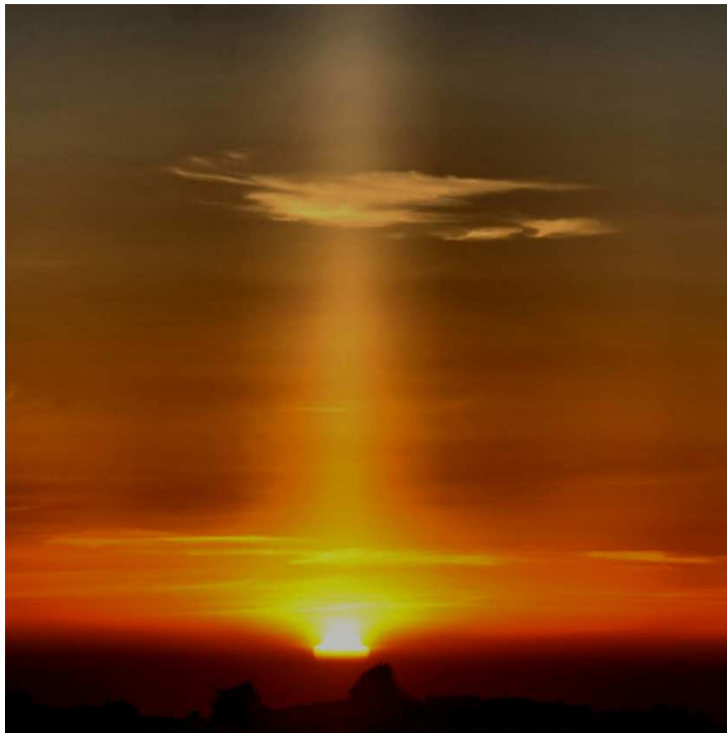
1940. A "Saint Valentine's Day Blizzard" hit the northeastern U.S. Up to a foot and a half of snow blanketed southern New England, and whole gales accompanied the heavy snow stranding many in downtown Boston. (David Ludlum)

## **Ask The Old Farmer**

From the Weather Watcher's 2011 Calendar

### **What Causes Sun pillars?**

A Sun pillar is a red, orange, gold, yellow, or white shaft of light extending above or below the sun. The phenomenon, which usually occurs during sunrise or sunset, is caused by plate, or column-shaped ice crystals reflecting sunlight as they fall from high clouds. Normally, these ice crystals evaporate before reaching the ground.



## A New Year Has Begun!



A distinct line of dark clouds moves out of the Big Rapids area, the morning of January 1, 2011. (Courtesy: David KC8WGA)

<b>BRAARC Membership</b>			
<b><i>Applicant Information</i></b>			
Name:			
Call:	Class:	Phone:	
address:			
City:	State:	ZIP:	Email:
ARRL Member: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Newsletter: <input type="checkbox"/> US Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Website – minimizes postage and printing costs		
<b><i>Spouse Information if joint membership</i></b>			
Name:			
Call:	Class:	Email:	
<b><i>Licensed ChildreN</i></b>			
Name:	Call:	Class:	
<b><i>DUES / Donation</i></b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Member (\$25) <input type="checkbox"/> College Student(\$12.50) <input type="checkbox"/> Youth(free if oldest licensed family member<18 yrs)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Club Patch ____ X \$5 each - The club patch supports the repeater systems operated by the club.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Donation – general support for the club. <input type="checkbox"/> Repeater Donation – supports club repeaters			
<b>Total:</b>			

Membership runs from January 1 to December 31 each year. Please submit dues by the regular February club meeting to prevent accidental removal from club roster.



Breakfast – Saturday, Jan 29  
Sharon's in Rogers Heights  
9am  
Excellent Breakfast Buffet  
Or  
Order from the menu!!!



**February 2011**  
**PO Box 343 Parts MI 49338**

