

# Big Rapids Area Amateur Radio Club

August 2015

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



## Presidents Message

Greetings,

FIELD DAY was held June 27 and 28. We set up two antennas using the equipment that Mike (KD8DIB) has stored for the club. One antenna was a 40-meter dipole and the other was a 20-meter dipole. Mainly our contacts were done on those two bands until late

morning on Sunday. At that time Mike (KD8DIB), discovered an increase in activity on 6 meters so we assembled his yagi and used the vehicle mast to mount the antenna. The band was hopping and Mike made 28 contacts in a very short time.

We had a total 253 contacts. These included:

43 states and 3 provinces

179 on 40 meters, 45 on 20 meters, 1 on 15 meters, and 28 on 6 meters

Mike (KD8DIB) had 87 contacts, Delcy (KC8HVR) had 76 contacts, Rob (KC8JOM) had 44 contacts, and Jeff (KC8HJT) and I (WA8AEN) together had 46 contacts

It was a very successful field day. The sleeping accommodations were quite spartan and the morning temperature was chilly. But that was offset by the great breakfast supplied by KD8GGD.

The 6-meter repeater is still in my basement. Whenever I try it, it seems to work. That is a bit concerning because I haven't fixed anything but if it continues to work we will put it back in service and see how long it lasts.

I would like to thank Patricia (KD8GGD) for the years of service as the newsletter "mail girl". For many years she has worked behind the scenes to get the mailing labels printed, applied to the newsletters, stamps applied, and the whole thing taken to the post office. Thank You Patricia.

So now we need someone located in Big Rapids area that can pick up the newsletters and get them ready to mail. Anyone interested please contact me and we will make it happen.

Thanks,  
Dan (WA8AEN)

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Picture of the group after the initial setup was through.



This is a real operational picture of KC8JOM and KD8DIB working Field day.

## Minutes From The Meeting – 2 July 2015

Bruce Werner, WB8TVD, More-Or-Less Permanent Secretary

Here's what you missed if you were not at the meeting on 2 July 2015:

Dan, WA8AEN, opened the meeting at 7:05 pm with 12 in attendance. (TVD: Low attendance due to 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday.)

Dan started with a couple reminders and an announcement:

Our next breakfast will be 1 August at Sharon's.

Our next meeting will be 6 August at the BRPS meeting room.

Skip Mordue, KA8AXX, passed away on 21 June.

The evening's speaker, Scott Schroeder, was not able to attend. In his place, Jeff, K8OE, Mecosta County Amateur Radio Emergency Coordinator gave a detailed update of ARES/RACES in Mecosta County:

Equipment purchased with grants were installed, programmed and tested. Programming is available for personal equipment to be used for EMCOMM. Jeff notes he has programming for several manufacturers' equipment. The EOC stations are still in need of some office type equipment and supplies.

Radios have been requested under the FY14 year grant for the mobile command trailer, and a Kenwood repeater under FY15 grant.

Jeff also described the capabilities of the EOCs at Paris Dispatch, Mecosta County Sheriff's Office and at the Red Cross.

The ARES/RACES net meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 8:00 pm, on the 2Meter repeater.

There has been an ongoing ARES/RACES Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) with The Red Cross and The Salvation Army.

In order to gain admittance to many of the EOC stations, members must be RACES certified, and have certain training. All of the training is available online. There is a charge for some.

ARES/RACES members also need to be trained to handle formal message traffic and need to be familiar with HF digital modes.

### Club Reports:

The May and June meeting minutes were published in the latest newsletter and were approved as published.

The treasurer's report was accepted as published.

The EC's report was as given as the presentation.

Repeaters: 2M and 440 repeaters seem to be working okay.

The 6M repeater is still down. The repeater itself resides in Dan's basement.

Girls-On-The-Run went well. Jim was NCS at Northend Park.

Bulldog Bike Tour similarly went well. Jeff reports 6-7 people were able to cover the event from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm.

A Field Day station was operated successfully with 9 members participating.

Mentoring: Two of our new members would like to get on the air and would like some advice and help.

There has been no progress on the MARC and SSC documents.

It was noted that the Hungerford Games will be within Newaygo and Mecosta Counties. Newaygo County Emergency Management will oversee the event from safety and communications areas.

It was also noted that election of Club officers will be in September. Bruce noted (TVD: He grumbled) that he might not be available to continue as Secretary. The rest of the attendees laughed.

Mike asked about another Ham-In-A-Day class and noted that he only had one candidate.

Jeff, K8OE, resigned as VEC after about 4 years of service. This position needs to be filled if the club wants to continue doing ham exams.

Richard Osborne, KC8UB, Hersey, has passed away. His wife would like some help identifying and disposing of his radio equipment.

Dan showed an Internet video about GRACE (Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment), which is able to track water from space.

Phil will bring refreshments to the next meeting.

There was no 50/50 drawing.

Phil needs someone to take over the distribution of the newsletter after he has assembled and edited it. The job is delivering the copy to the Copy Center and picking it up, then addressing, stamping and posting. There are 40 printed copies of the newsletter each month.

The meeting was adjourned about 8:35 pm. Only Jens seems to have been lightly wounded in the conduct of business. He should recover.

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## What's an "elevator pitch" and do you have one?



Maybe you've heard the term "[elevator pitch](#)" before and wondered what it was, or maybe it's a familiar tool you already know about and keep at the ready, just in case you need it. The concept is this: Sometimes one needs to explain something to a person who doesn't have a clue, but you don't have a lot of time to talk about it. You need to make a point in a short speech that can be given in the

time it takes to make an elevator trip! Once those elevator doors open at the designated floor, your audience is going to split, and you have either succeeded at explaining your concept or you haven't.

Amateur Radio, or "Ham Radio", as it is more likely known in the general parlance, is one of those terms about which people may have heard but about which they understand very little. When the occasion arises, you may find yourself in need of a short, effective "elevator pitch" to explain the concept of ham radio to someone who simply needs basic information. An example would be a family gathering - let's say during a holiday - when you are catching up on news and events in the lives of your relatives. Job, kids, travel, and hobbies are all likely topics. Aunt Tillie doesn't need to know about which transceiver has the best passband filter, but she will appreciate knowing about your interest in ham radio as a fun hobby activity that lets you use two way radios to talk to your friends on the air and learn about electronics, and perhaps help your community as a volunteer. The idea is to be able to explain what ham radio is about in a minute or two, sharing the most basic - but accurate - information with someone who needs only that much information and no more.

On occasion ham radio will come up as a topic, and you will need to clarify a misunderstanding of what it is about. For example, how often have you heard, "Ham Radio? Isn't that like CB radio?"

That kind of misconception is pretty common and can take other forms:

"Ham Radio? Do they still do that now that we have the internet?"

"Aren't cell phones better?"

"I've heard that you need huge antennas."

"Don't those radios mess up TV reception?"

...and so on. You get the idea. When you hear those kinds of comments, you know that you have to get the correct information out there while being convincing in a short conversation. Let's think a bit about the message that we want to convey:

- Ham Radio is a science and technology themed activity that is available to licensed operators who pass an FCC exam.
- Ham Radio can be a competitive "radiosport" activity.
- Ham Radio is a current technology that incorporates computing and internet capabilities.
- Ham Radio is an activity that can be enjoyed by anyone. There is no age barrier - you can start as soon as you are able to pass the exam, even while in elementary school, and be an active radio operator for a lifetime.
- Technology changes, but Ham Radio incorporates new technologies and is thus part of a lifetime learning process. Ham Radio satellites orbit the Earth, built by "makers" in the Ham Radio community. Some of us also write our own software and build the electronics in our stations.
- Ham Radio technology can work even when cell phones don't. It is an important part of emergency communications. Ham Radio operators assist in communications emergencies and Amateur Radio is considered a vital option in planning for emergencies.

- Ham Radio offers many ways to get on the air, and you don't always need big antennas or costly equipment. Interference to other equipment, like TV sets, is not likely because of the new technologies in both radio and digital television.
- Ham Radio is enjoyed by people with disabilities and sensory impairments. You do not have to be able to see or hear to be a Ham Radio operator.

**You have some 'splainin' to do...**

Now, I realize that this is quite a list of talking points. You won't be using all of them for an "elevator pitch", but you can pick and choose among them depending on the nature of the conversation. If you meet someone and the topic comes up, a short explanation of how Ham Radio is a licensed hobby activity that helps you learn science and technology while talking with others on the air might be all you need.

If the other person looks surprised at that HT you are carrying and you explain that it is a "ham radio", be ready for the oft-heard: "Ham Radio? I didn't know they still did that."

Now you know you have to reach further down into your toolkit of responses to explain that, "Yes, Ham Radio is still a big thing, and we have added digital communications and internet connected radios to our worldwide networks. In fact, we even have satellites orbiting the Earth and Ham Radio is on the International Space Station."

The key is to be ready with a few sentences to explain just a few main points at most. Ham Radio is current, fun for anyone, affordable, and useful for learning as well as public service. The more you do this, explaining what it's about, the better you will get at it. No one is expecting you to be an expert, and you don't have to go into detail about anything. If you are asked about something you can't answer, you can always say that you will get back to them or you can refer them directly to ARRL. Questions are a good thing because they can indicate interest in Amateur Radio by a person who might want to join us in the world's best hobby.

(For Handiham World, this is Pat Tice, WA0TDA.) Submitted by Tom, KB8TYJ

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**HamShield turns an Arduino into a VHF/UHF transceiver**

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

The Arduino seems to be making a big splash in ham radio circles these days. The ARRL has recently published a couple of books about the Arduino and Arduino-based amateur radio projects. And, recently, I purchased a NanoKeyer ([nanokeyer.wordpress.com](http://nanokeyer.wordpress.com)), which is a CW keyer powered by an Arduino Nano.

Now, a couple of enterprising young hams have built the HamShield (<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/749835103/hamshield-for-arduino->



7	4	9	5	6	1	3	8	2
8	2	5	3	7	4	1	9	6
6	1	3	8	9	2	7	4	5
1	7	4	6	2	5	8	3	9
9	8	6	7	1	3	2	5	4
3	5	2	9	4	8	6	1	7
5	3	7	2	8	9	4	6	1
2	9	1	4	3	6	5	7	8
4	6	8	1	5	7	9	2	3

Solution to June's puzzle – hopefully

7	8	5	2	1	4	9	3	6
2	9	3	6	8	5	7	4	1
1	4	6	3	7	9	8	5	2
8	2	1	4	3	6	5	9	7
9	5	4	8	2	7	6	1	3
3	6	7	5	9	1	2	8	4
4	3	8	9	6	2	1	7	5
5	1	2	7	4	8	3	6	9
6	7	9	1	5	3	4	2	8

Solution to July's puzzle

4		7			1	5		3
			9		4			2
1		3		6			9	
6				5				
5					9	2	7	
7				8				5
2			4					1
	6		3	1		8		
	8		2	7	6	9		4

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Announcements:

Saturday, August 1, Breakfast at Sharon's, 9A.M. Come join us.

Thursday, August 6, Regular BRAARC meeting, 7pm, Big Rapids Public Safety Building

**August 2015**  
**PO Box 343 Paris MI 49338**

