

Big Rapids Area Amateur Radio Club

June 2016

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President's Message

Greetings,
The club activities for June include "Girls on the Run" on June 4, and "Field Day" on June 25-26.

Having more members at the Girls on the Run event would be helpful. Presently we have four members signed up. This is a short event and in a fairly confined area. Never volunteered for a net? This is a good one to get your feet wet.

The new two-meter repeater was installed on Friday May 7. This repeater has the same settings for squelch and all other parameters except frequency. The reports have been mixed. At times it seems a large improvement over the last one and other times there are problems. Signal quality seems to be the biggest issue with some listeners reporting very good signal reports and others with very poor audio quality.

What's happening? Don't know at this time. If

you get a chance check into one of the nets and maybe a new set of ears will help define the problem.

BRAARC is still searching for a treasurer. Jens doesn't have Internet and feels that he can't handle the function without it. If anyone is at all interested please let me know. We have a couple of volunteers that will not be able to make it to the summer meetings and maybe we can figure out how to make that work. Any ideas?

There seems to be a lot of activity with retirements, selling homes, moving away from Big Rapids, and snowbirds. Maybe there are some summer campers that are looking for our club activities so keep your ears open.

Happy Hamming
Dan (WA8AEN)

In This Issue:

- Pg 1 – President's Message
- Pg 2 – May Meeting Min.
- Pg 3 – Announcements
- Pg 3 – KB6NU article
- Pg 4 – Technical Question



THINK SUMMER – It is finally starting to warm up!!!!

Minutes From The Meeting – 5 May 2016

Bruce Werner, WB8TVD, Secretary

Here's what you missed if you were not at the meeting on 5 May 2016:

Dan, WA8AEN, opened the meeting at 7:10pm with 29 members and guests in attendance.

Sheets for attendance and net control were passed around, along with a sign-up for Girls On The Run.

Dan notes that so far, only two people had signed up for Girls On The Run.

A few reminders:

Please sign up for net control of our two nets.

The next club breakfast will be 28 May, 9:00 am at Sharon's.

The next BRAARC meeting will be 2 June, 7:00 pm at BRDPS.

Dan is sad to announce the passing of long-time member, Bob Carpenter, K8YHJ.

Secretary report: The minutes from the meeting in April were published in the May newsletter and were approved by consensus.

Treasurer report: Jens noted that the new "Prudent Reserve Fund" had been set up with an initial total of \$1500.

He also gave a summary of the rest of the Club finances and his report was accepted by consensus.

Mike, KD8DIB, noted that he and Sue had audited the Club account books. Only one problematic situation was noticed: They recommended better recording of cash handling.

Repeaters: Mike, KD8DIB, notes that the 6 meter repeater was still being tested.

The 440 repeater RF section was replaced, and there have been some other issues that were resolved.

The new 2 meter repeater is awaiting installation of its new RF section and some audio problems had been discovered: Notably, after the ARES net on the previous Tuesday, 3 May, audio output had fallen considerably before the regular Tuesday evening general net. Mike will try to diagnose the problem, and would appreciate any insights to progression of symptoms.

Tom gave updated information about the state-wide link system. He had a conversation with Wayne, AB8UG, who wants to work with us to resolve some issues with the link machine on The Hill.

Bruce asked if the dirt/sand track in from the main road was the only way into the hill, suggesting there might be an easier way in from the west. Those who have checked confirm that there is only one way in and that is from the north, leading to the two tracks on either side of the actual gravel pit.

The assembly took a break for a presentation about the trip taken by Jim, K8JH, Mike, KB8KB, and wives. The trip was to the island of Bermuda for a "hamcation". They rented a fully-ham-equipped apartment from VP9GE and were able to squeeze in a spot of DX operating between sightseeing and in general enjoying the tropical paradise. Jim and Mike took their own radio, rather than using the provided radio, but used power and antenna on site. According to Jim's tally, they racked up over 1000 contacts between them in 5 days of operating. (TVD: The slide show was truly enticing)

Jeff has to back out of both NPOTA events. The 4 June event will then be cancelled, but the 6 August event is still on.

Field Day: We have permission to use Northend Park for our operation.

We still need volunteers for the Bike Tour on 17-18 June. There are three courses with optional segments up to 100 miles, meaning a lot of volunteers will be required.

The Red Cross is moving soon. We will need help setting up the new N8OE packet station. We also need to move the antennas. Bruce asked about a tower being in back of the current location and if it can be retrieved. Nobody was certain the tower was still there. He also mentioned that long ago, the Club had donated a Rohn steel tower to the old airport. It may still reside next to the terminal and unused. Ditto the uncertainty whether that tower still exists.

Dan received word from KX8XX that the Cadillac and Big Rapids 2 meter nets are at the same time and wonders how that can be resolved. The assembly had no immediate answer, wondering when the issue had come up.

Delcy gave a summary of the Ham-In-A-Day session held on 16 April: 10 took the full class, of which 7 passed the exam. 3 took an upgrade exam, 2 passed.

Jens notes that the position of Treasurer is still open.

Jeff, Mecosta County EC: He had a work session at the EOC on 17 April. They erected a temporary antenna.

Radios in the new communications trailer include Icom D-Star. That raised a few questions about D-Star and its possible uses in this area.

Tech Corner: Dan demonstrated a couple methods for measuring unknown lengths of coax using an oscilloscope. He was also able to locate coax that was shorted or open. Part of his demonstration showed the use of a time-delay reflectometer.

Nancy offered to bring treats to the next meeting.

Delcy won the 50/50 drawing and donated her half back to the general fund.

The meeting was adjourned about 8:33 pm. No Hams or guests were harmed in the conduct of the meeting. We all went home. Well, mostly.

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Announcements:

Saturday, May 28, Club Breakfast at Sharon's in Rogers Heights, 9A.M.

Thursday, June 2, Regular BRAARC meeting at Big Rapids Public Safety Building, 7P.M.

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I'm EXTRA Ignorant

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

On Sunday, I received the following e-mail from a reader:

"Just wanted to let you know I passed the General exam using your study guide. It was very helpful. I am now generally ignorant whereas before I was only technically ignorant. Ha!"

My reply to him was:

"Well, if you're generally ignorant, I guess that makes me EXTRA ignorant!"

This isn't just a joke--being ignorant is part of the hobby. Amateur radio operators will always be ignorant about something or other. Even if you could master every facet of the hobby at some point in

time, your mastery would be short-lived as the technology continued to advance.

Over the course of my amateur radio career, we've gone from equipment that primarily used vacuum tubes, to solid-state gear that first used discrete transistors and then integrated circuits, to software-defined radios. I could have, at some point, simply given up on the new technology and still enjoyed amateur radio. Some guys do that, and that's OK. It is only a hobby after all.

I'm not one of those guys, though, and if you're not one of those guys, then you have to resign yourself to being ignorant. But, that's a good thing, as long as you realize that you're ignorant. Realizing that you're ignorant will spur you on to learn new things and accept new challenges.

Recently, I realized that I'm mostly ignorant about satellite operation. I know some of the basics from having read articles and writing about the topic in my study guides, but I have never made a contact using a satellite. I think that might be one of my next challenges. With the advent of CubeSat, there are many new satellites up in the air and many more opportunities to have interesting contacts.

So, what are you ignorant about? By that I mean, of course, what's going to be your next challenge in amateur radio?

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When he's not challenging himself with new things, Dan falls back on something he knows pretty well--operating CW. You'll find him mainly on the 80m, 40m, and 30m bands. Dan is the author of the "No Nonsense" amateur radio license study guides, and blogs about amateur radio at KB6NU.Com, and you can contact him by e-mailing cwgeek@kb6nu.com.

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Last Month's Technical Question

The complete inductance of two different coils, one 0.5 henry and the other 0.5 henry, connected in series and both receiving a mutual inductance of 0.1 henry would be:

- | | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| a. 1.1 henry | d. 1.2 henry |
| b. 0.9 henry | e. 1.1 milli-henry |
| c. 0.8 henry | |

Ans: d.

This Month's Technical Question

If the power output from a modulator is reduced from 50 watts to a 0.5 watts, the power loss will be:

- | | |
|---------|----------|
| a. 5db | d. 50db |
| b. 10db | e. 100db |
| c. 20db | |

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

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

Solution to last month's puzzle

June 2016
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