



KB8QOI Repeaters  
 52.860 MHz  
 146.74 MHz  
 443.900 MHz

# Big Rapids Area Amateur Radio Club

December 2017

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## Hello From Newsletter Editor Bruce, WB8TVD

It's me again. Bruce is running the newsletter. What?? No, really! Phil asked me to take the reins. Hesitantly, I accepted, but with a proviso: Phil will be to me as Perry White of the *Daily Planet* is to Clark Kent. Well, I do wear glasses! I will try to make Phil proud of me. Where's Lois Lane when you need her?



This month I ponder getting on the air on HF and contacting school clubs. Then I'll give you some information about the December meeting & potluck. We'll have the usual food, fellowship, white elephant auction and a brief meeting, which generally consists of running down the list of reminders for upcoming events. A great time for all. Note the time change for

this event only!

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Our new president has a few things he would like to share, and I hope to have some additional information to bring to the table (there's that food reference again). Don't miss your opportunity to renew your membership in BRA-ARC with the form on the next-to-last page.

Remember to listen for, or try, the 6-meter repeater on 52.860 MHz. It's in test mode and located south of Big Rapids. Dan will be changing antennas soon, so it will have omnidirectional coverage.

As always, good or bad, here we go:

## Announcements:

Club breakfast: 2 December, 2017, 9:00am at Sharon's in Roger's Heights

Next meeting: 7 December, 2017, 6:00pm at the BR Dept. of Public Safety, this will be our Winter/Holidays potluck (and meeting).

Club nets: Sunday, 7:30pm, 440 repeater

Tuesday, 9:00pm, 146 repeater

ARES net: First Tuesday, 8:00pm, 146 repeater

*Our Brave New President has kindly accepted my invitation to say a few words.*

Greetings,

As we prepare for the December Christmas potluck, silent auction, and food drive we can reflect on the year that has passed. Many changes have occurred, and the club has participated in several events. The Michigan parks on the air was a recent event that saw a turn out of four club members making a total of only 9 contacts. This is a sign of the existing solar cycle and the difficulty in making contacts during the afternoons. Last weekend was the ARRL November Sweeps and it also was characterized by difficult contacts Saturday afternoon but very good conditions on Sunday morning.

The six-meter repeater has been on the air for a couple months now but no contacts have been verified. The antenna is a 6-element yagi pointed south from my location. That should be rectified over the next couple weeks. Plans are to change the antenna to a disk-cone. That will not relieve the hill that exists between here and Big Rapids but should improve the overall pattern to cover more of the county with an acceptable RF level.

We are also welcoming Shila (KD8IAL) as our vice president. She has many ideas of what newbies are looking for and how to get them interested.

The club is in need of a treasurer. This office requires a couple hours of work each month spent checking bank balances and paying a couple bills each month. Not very exhausting but addition and subtraction needs to be accurate.

The Christmas Party will be December 7 starting at 6:00PM at our normal location. This is one hour earlier than our normal meetings. This provides time to set up the food and the silent auction. All are welcome and we are hoping to have a good turnout. You do not have to be a ham to attend or even a club member. Anyone with an interest in radio or electronics should find it interesting.

Happy Holidays,  
Dan (WA8AEN)

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### What's Going On?

Hi All,

In the minutes, you will notice that there are several instances of more formal language and last names, which are usually omitted in the name of informality. In order to officially add Dan, WA8AEN, and me as signers of the bank account, we had to submit a copy of the minutes to the bank so they have a record of official approval by the membership. That having been done, the bank approved our insertion as custodians of the BRA-ARC bank account. Don't let that fool you, though. We still don't have a treasurer! Please consider holding this important Club office!

For those who come forward, I thank you! One more time: If you haven't considered holding an office, think it over. There will be no railroading. I will bet my conductor's hat on it!

See you at the meeting!

Bruce Werner, WB8TVD  
Secretary

## Minutes From The Meeting – 2 November 2017

Bruce Werner, WB8TVD, Secretary

Here's what you missed if you were not at the meeting on 2 November 2017

Subbing for Josh Afton, KE8EKC, Dan Astleford, WA8AEN, opened the meeting at 7:06 pm with 12 members in attendance. Dan explained that he was only subbing for Josh, and an explanation would be forthcoming in the reports.

As the secretary passed around sheets to sign up for attendance and net control, each attendee introduced himself or herself as appropriate

A few reminders:

The next Club Breakfast will be 2 December at 9am at Sharon's in Rogers Heights.

The next meeting will be on 7 December at 6 pm at the BRDPS. Please note the time change and that this will be our annual Holiday pot-luck and white elephant auction get-together.

Our nets are Sunday 7:30pm on the 440 repeater and Tuesday 9pm on 2 meters.

Secretary Report: Bruce Werner, WB8TVD: The minutes for the meeting on 5 October were published in the November newsletter. There have been no comments or corrections to those minutes. The minutes were accepted by consensus.

Treasurer Report: In lieu of a treasurer's report – as a treasurer has not yet been elected – Secretary Bruce offered an explanation of the circumstances for the absence of newly elected President Josh Afton, KE8EKC: For those who had not received the Club newsletter yet, Josh had been elected president at the October meeting, leaving the post of treasurer officially empty, but maintained by Josh until a treasurer is elected. The day after the meeting, Bruce received an e-mail from Josh noting that he would be moving out of town due to family matters and would no longer be able to be president or treasurer. Bruce asked Josh to meet with him to transfer any Club material, including financial records and other files he may have. Bruce also contacted the one remaining officer, Vice President Shila Kiander, KD8IAL; the one remaining board member and a few of the most active, involved club members for advice. Later in the week, Bruce met with Josh to receive all the club material he had, including treasurer's material – which included checkbooks, debit card and other records. Bruce also contacted Casey Byrnes at Chemical bank to find out what steps we, as a club, need to take to transfer names and signatures.

EC Report: Jeff Sell, K8OE: The 22 October ARES exercise went very well. Jeff was at the EOC in Paris and Bruce was mobile with a handheld transceiver with digital capability. Jeff and Bruce established both voice and data links, then Bruce set out to test the digital data link from various points some distance from the EOC (TVD: Big Rapids city and points north and east of Paris). The exercise went well, but distances were not as Jeff had expected. (TVD: Later investigation by Bruce led to a possible glitch in his reading of the power level of the HT.)

Jeff also attended AuxComm training in Muskegon. It was two all-day sessions on Saturday and Sunday. Emergency Coordinators, Emergency Managers and others in emergency communications from 13 Michigan counties attended. Training included how each member fit into the EOC and various systems, how to fill out a myriad of forms and what is expected of each person or group. The RACES organization will eventually be replaced with an AuxComm structure.

Repeater: Mike McKay, KD8DIB: Both repeaters seem to be functioning well.

Dan and Mike got together to install a filter on the receive line of the 440-repeater, and it seems to be working quite well filtering out all the random RF signals – including cell service, police, maintenance and others – within the shelter where the repeater resides. Dan put together the filter

from a design he researched.

The 2-meter repeater is working well also. Phil, KC8QOV, noted that he has been able to both receive and transmit through the repeater quite well lately.

The 6-meter repeater is still in test mode at Dan's place and seems to be working, but he has not gotten a lot of reports yet. Bill, N8MZB, notes that he still has not heard the repeater. Dan says that he only has a beam antenna for now and it is pointing south, away from Bill. Jeff offered to loan Dan a discone omnidirectional antenna. Dan will pick it up soon.

Elections: Dan revisited the election process, noting the problems we have been having finding officers, referring to the explanation by Secretary Bruce and asking if there was anyone who either had a nomination or was willing to step into the position of president or treasurer. After several moments of silence, Bruce asked Dan if he would consider returning to the position. (TVD: Dan has previously held the office.) Bruce noted that one of Dan's concerns would be taken care of since Shila, KD8IAL, had been elected vice president at the last meeting and would be covering the task of working up programs for the meetings. Bruce also noted that in his correspondence since the last meeting, he had not presumed to "elevate" the VP to president without Club consensus, to which Shila noted, "Thank you." After a few minutes of pondering and light discussion by the assembly, Dan accepted the mantle of president.

In the matter of treasurer, Mike ran through some of the tasks needed for the position, including bills and payments, keeping track of Club insurance and some other "accounting" type tasks. With no one answering the call at that point, Bruce asked if any spouses might be willing to take the position, which would imply becoming a member, not necessarily a Ham. There was a lot of head shaking, coming to the conclusion that asking a spouse might not be the best solution.

After further light discussion, a motion was made by Mike McKay, KD8DIB, to elect Dan Astleford, WA8AEN, president. The motion was seconded by Jim Woolen, K4UIH. There being no further discussion, a voice vote was called, and the motion carried unanimously.

There being no offers to take on the treasurer's roll, a discussion ensued about how to handle the Club's financial affairs, including a needed audit. The assembly talked about steps we need to take to perform an audit, which was due. Mike McKay, KD8DIB, and VP Shila Kiander, KD8IAL, offered that they would perform the audit, but could not then be signers on the account. After much discussion and some confusion, Bruce and Dan agreed that they would be signers, hopefully only in a custodial role, not as the defacto treasurer.

A motion was made by Mike McKay, KD8DIB, that Dan Astleford, WA8AEN, and Bruce Werner, WB8TVD, be appointed as signers for the Big Rapids Area Amateur Radio Club bank account at Chemical Bank. The motion was seconded by Jim Woolen, K4UIH. After brief further discussion, a voice vote was called, and the motion was carried unanimously.

In answer to a suggestion by Mike, Secretary Bruce will write up the minutes and prepare a copy for Chemical Bank for when we need to request new signers.

Bruce noted that there still was no treasurer, in case that fact had been lost in the excitement.

In order to reserve the BRDPS conference room for our meetings, Dan had sent a list of our proposed meeting dates to April of the BRDPS office, who had been taking care of scheduling. He had not heard back yet. He will call again the day after the meeting.

Mike has received a notice from State of Michigan to renew our non-profit corporate filing. He will look into it and respond as needed.

Bruce did a “public unveiling” of the files that he got from Josh. They included a large folder of treasurer and financial material and several file folders of what appear to be more archival membership data. There is also a pack of Club patches, which are for sale, but will be dealt with later. He turned over the file box and material to Mike.

Mike notes that it is time to renew our Club web hosting service. The cost is \$230 for one year. We need to decide soon. Once the bank signing is taken care of, a check can be written.

Tech Corner: Dan had noticed lots of noise and interference from other services on the 440-repeater. He designed and built an RF filter for the receive line. He showed how he came to the factors for parts and assembly by using a computer program called RF Toolbox. He came up with a Chebychev filter, but was unable to get the program to show his design calculations at the meeting. The filter, however, is working quite well.

Bruce had a 10-minute video garnered from “Incredible Inventions” on The American Heroes Channel (formerly The Military Channel). The video shows design and assembly of a commercial handheld radio from manufacturer Entel, at their factory in the Philippines. Although different in function, the assembly should be very close to that of Amateur Radio HTs.

Shila noted that she and Patricia, KD8GGD, will be orchestrating the December meeting potluck. Each attendee will need to bring a dish to pass, place setting, an optional white elephant auction item and a non-perishable food item to donate to a food bank. Per a generous offer from a member, a ham will be provided as the main course.

The 50/50 drawing was won by Jan, N8NSE.

Everyone will be bringing refreshments to the December meeting.

President Dan adjourned the meeting about 8:40 pm. No Hams or guests were harmed in the conduct of business. We all went home. Well, mostly.

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## Secretary’s Ponderings – December 2017

Well, I did it. After our activation of the White Pine Trail for the Michigan State Parks On The Air, I made a contact on my own rig, from my own station! I was trying out my Icom 735 (somewhat elderly) on 20 meters, where there didn’t seem to be much happening, when I heard another Texas station, K5LBJ. The operator, Ayush, was running a mini pileup. When I sensed a break in the clutch of stations calling, I made my call. He didn’t hear me the first time, so I called again, and he came back to me! I kept my cool and gave him my information and a signal report, confirming his information. After he asked for a couple clarifications, we had a full-on QSO. What a good feeling to actually make contact and finally know that my Icom is still working.

Despite the callsign, this was not the LBJ, but a school station in Round Rock, a northern suburb of Austin. The school is the Liberal Arts & Science Academy High School. My delight brought back memories of working many other school and college stations.

Later, I flipped through my QSLs to see what schools I had worked. They include Purdue, U. North Dakota, Rutgers, Murray State in Kentucky, Brown U. in Rhode Island and John Brown U. in Arkansas. I found cards from other clubs and events including the Pentagon ARC, Camp Emerson

in Mass., Johnson Space Center, the Smithsonian Institution Museum of History and one from the 1982 Knoxville World's Fair special event station.

All those and many more schools (and club/event stations) are breeding grounds for new Hams and provide an outlet for those new Hams to get on the air without having to build a station while concentrating on getting a degree or, as in the case of my K5LBJ friend, a high school diploma. In some cases, the radio club station at a school might be tied to classwork. What a pleasure to make contact with the future of our hobby. On my end, I feel like I helped those operators move along in Ham Radio. Each and every contact builds the students' confidence and ability while I am working my way back to being an active HF operator.

See you at the next meeting!

73

Bruce, WB8TVD

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# Christmas

# Banquet

**Thursday, December 7**

**6pm - ???**



See the note on the next page!



FOOD!!! I'm sure that is a familiar phrase to all BRA-ARC members.

Mark your calendars for 7 December, 6:00pm. The December meeting and holiday potluck will be that evening. It will include a fabulous table of treats supplied by each attendee, from appetizers to main course items to dessert. This year a ham is being generously donated by one of our members!

As always, we are asking for a donation of a canned or boxed food item (or make it more than one) to be donated to a local food pantry.

As if the food were not enough, anyone and everyone can bring one or more items to donate to a white elephant silent auction. At the close of festivities, the winning bidder for each item will be determined.



We ask each attendee to bring a dish to pass and table service. As an elder retired person, I will provide the drinks, consisting of a variety of half-liter bottles of bubbly stuff, or if I get a better (read: lazier) idea, I will substitute that. No telling what will happen there!

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**TIME TO RENEW!**

**BRAARC Membership**

**Applicant Information**

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		

**Spouse Information if joint membership**

Name:		
Call:	Class:	Email:

**Licensed Children**

Name:	Call:	Class:

**DUES / Donation**

<input type="checkbox"/> Member (\$30) <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 Fund <input type="checkbox"/> Repeater Committee Donation <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Committee Donation	\$
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$</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. Mail to: **BRAARC, PO Box 343, Paris, Mi 49338**

**Club Membership Renewal form should be filled out and submitted with payment, so we can track who has paid and if you want the newsletter by email or mail.**

## BITS & PIECES OF THIS & THAT

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December Hamfests in Michigan (source ARRL):

3 December 2017      LCARC Swap/Hamfest              Madison Heights, MI

Rather sparse again this month. Use that time to get on the air. Check the Contest Corral and Special Events activities in "QST" and on the ARRL website to find things to do instead of attending a Hamfest. Get on and operate! Earn some wallpaper!

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If you would rather receive an e-mail version of the newsletter, let the secretary know!

**December 2017**

**49338**

**PO Box 343 Parts MI**

