



KB8QOI Repeaters
52.860 MHz
146.74 MHz
443.900 MHz

Big Rapids Area Amateur Radio Club

August 2018

PO Box 343, Paris MI 49338

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Hello From Newsletter Editor Bruce, WB8TVD

It's me again. Here we are in the Dog Days of Summer, which has nothing to do with real dogs, but the time of year when Sirius the Dog Star rises in the morning. Go figure!

Poor August. There are no major holidays or big celebrations and, even though they are still on Summer vacation, kids are dreading the end of the month. Back-To-School ads are showing up on TV and the slow readers are in a bind to get those reading lists pared down. I still have a



few from my Jr. High School list that need reading. Oh well, I'm old enough to excuse for a little procrastination.

Here's one more sobering thought for you. The typical college freshman is 18 on entering. This year's typical freshman was born in the year 2000. They have not

seen any part of the 20th Century. I saw over half.

Other than that, how is your Summer (or simmer) going? Have you done a lot of Ham things and taken lots of pictures? Are you working on your "what you did last Summer" presentation?

Time to start trolling the Hamfests (or online catalogs) for that equipment to take you through Fall and Winter. How are your antennas?

As always, good or bad, here we go:

Announcements:

Club breakfast: 28 July 2018, 9:00am at Sharon's in Roger's Heights

Next meeting: 2 August 2018, 7:00pm at the BR Dept. of Public Safety.

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

Tuesday, 9:00pm, 146 repeater

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

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Minutes From The Meeting – 5 July 2018

Bruce Werner, WB8TVD, Secretary

Here's what you missed if you were not at the meeting on 5 July 2018:

President Dan, WA8AEN, opened the meeting about 7:07pm with 11 members and guests in attendance. Everyone introduced himself or herself as appropriate.

Dan passed out an attendance sheet then ran down a list of reminders:

The next Club Breakfast will be 28 July at 9:00 am at Sharon's in Rogers Heights.
The next meeting will be on 2 August 2018 at 7:00 pm at the BRDPS.
Our nets are Sunday 7:30 pm on the 440 repeater and Tuesday 9:00 pm on 2 meters.
The next ARES net will be 7 August at 8:00 pm, prior to the Club net on 2 meters.

Dan also noted that at the August meeting, Jim Hessler, K8JH, from Rockford, will present the "radio van" he has put together. As Dan understands, it is part of the Lowell ARC ARES organization.

Secretary Report: Bruce, WB8TVD, noted that the minutes for the June meeting were published in the July Newsletter. He had received no corrections or comments. The minutes for June were accepted by consensus.

He notes our current member count is 25, including licensed family members. Since we are an ARRL Special Services Club, more than 50% of the members need to be ARRL members. It is close, but he needs several confirmations and passed out a list of those who had not indicated ARRL affiliation. (TVD: All who were missing the information are ARRL members.) Bruce also asked if everyone in attendance was receiving their e-mail copy of the newsletter. Everyone is.

He had also wondered about using Skype to include those who could not be physically at the meeting. As an Emeritus, he has access to Skype through the College. Mike confirmed the Skype connection at Ferris was being eliminated for another product. End of that possibility for now.

Treasury Report: Bruce, WB8TVD, as temporary custodian, noted that the Club still does not have an elected treasurer.

Bruce gave a summary of activity in the account at Chemical Bank, passing out a sheet listing those items mentioned in his report.

As he was going through the summary, he noted there were two dates he had gotten wrong on the summary and promised to correct those for the file copy of the summary. (TVD: Has been done.)

EC Report: Jeff, K8OE: Jeff was not at the meeting.

Repeater Report: Mike, KD8DIB: The 2-meter repeater has been up and down. Stan had heard it in Rockford, mobile with his HT.

Stan had a question about 6-meters. Mike explained about the 6-meter repeater and that it was off-air while looking for a new home and an antenna. For a time it was at Dan's using either a small beam or a discone.

Old Business:

Dan notes that election of officers is due September, with nominations at the August meeting. We still have an open treasurer's office and Dan will be retiring from the president's position. (TVD: We still need one more board member as well.)

Bruce offered an insight: The officers in place today were not elected to their posts by traditional nomination and election. Each stepped in when there was nobody else willing to fill the position. They were officially and legally voted on by the assembly at the time, so that the posts are filled properly by vote.

Dan asked if we should consider operating the club differently and to what extent meetings should be all or mostly business. Perhaps the club should have a different purpose or outlook?

A discussion ensued about what the club is and the purpose of the meetings.

Bruce noted that this "problem" has occurred several times since the founding of the Club in 1973. It has survived all the differences of opinion. BRA-ARC has been a public service club for several decades.

Shila, KD8IAL, noted that she hoped she would be able to pick up some of the lingo and operating procedures, but has been unable to decipher much of what has been discussed at the meetings.

Dan also notes that there are different approaches to different types of clubs. Bruce notes that in most cases, there are considerably more members and higher percentage of active members. BRA-ARC has survived surprisingly well for 45 years in spite of having such a small constituency of Hams in its primary area.

The conclusion is that we need people, and we need a bigger percentage of those people to step up and lead.

New Business

Because there is a conflict for our meeting room in November, the meeting on 1 November will be a dinner meeting at The Rock. We will have further details at the next few meetings leading up to November. (TVD: The following meeting in December will be the annual pot-luck and white elephant auction.)

Jeriel, KC8MMF, brings greetings from Bev, WD8PFC. She will eventually have a 2-meter HT.

Tom, KB8TYJ, sends greetings and would like to hear Big Rapids represented on the IRA link Noon net, Monday, Wednesday and Friday. He also reminds us of the after-work Dinner Net at 6:00pm, Tuesday and Thursday.

In response to a question from Bruce, Jeriel says that Bev has been getting the newsletter.

Tech Corner

Stan, KE8FZB, and Dan helped Jeriel program his new Baofeng HT using the Baofeng software.

The 50/50 drawing was won by Bill, N8MZB, who donated the proceeds back to the Club general fund.

Refreshments to the next meeting were not discussed.

President Dan adjourned the meeting about 8:30 pm. No Hams or guests were harmed in the conduct of business. We all went home. Well, mostly.

Secretary's Ponderings – August 2018

Talking about receivers and the invention of radio (See April's Ponder) brought to mind some of my old receivers and how much different things are today. As I mentioned, my very first shortwave was a Knight Ocean Hopper that I assembled from a kit in 1963. My latest is a very small SDR that I assembled using my credit card and an online catalog from Ham Radio Outlet.

The SDR connects to a computer with a USB cable, and needs only an antenna to receive. That's it. No power supplies, no jumble of wires, no heat or glow from tubes. Worst of all, no glow from the dial lamps. Sighhhhh. It seems so nostalgic and a bit comforting to think about sitting in front of a Hallicrafters or National receiver, twisting a dial in a darkened room, washed in the soft light from dials, meters and tubes, if there were cooling holes in the case.



While in the Army, I scored a couple beauties from base thrift shops. First was a Hallicrafters S-20R. It was a substantial, but lightweight radio tuning BCB through 30 mc. (Remember megacycles?) It was painted white, including the speaker grill. The original color had been battleship gray, and the white was a little garish for me. I took it apart and spray painted it a beautiful Kelly green, leaving the speaker grill white. If I recall, I swapped out the knobs. I also found a press-on lettering kit in one of the many electronic catalogs, to mark the function of each control. A while after that, I found a National NC-57 in a thrift shop on another base. I'm not sure what color I found on it, but it ended up a vivid blue with the original knobs and new lettering.



I managed to string an antenna out my bedroom window (I had an off-base apartment) to some point on a garage in the back. Those radios worked well, and I spent many off hours chasing down DX and lots of local stations. Each had a BFO, so I could copy CW and sideband signals when I finally discovered Ham Radio. I remember late-night sessions with the lights off, the room bathed in the light of the radios.

When I left Europe, the radios were bundled up with my household goods for shipment Stateside. Since I had no permanent address in the States, they went to storage while I went back to college. They came out a few years later, when I was married and had an actual job. I'm not certain, but I think they went with me to Cadillac, and ended up in new homes. By that time, I had another, bigger receiver, and a Ham license.

While in school, I spotted a note on the bulletin board at Purchase Radio (there's a whole ponder alone!) in Ann Arbor that a fellow had a Hallicrafters SX-42 receiver and speaker for sale. It was \$50 and I asked my wife (a professional bookkeeper at the time) if we had enough cash to get it. She was already aware of my radio addiction, so she wasn't surprised, and agreed. That receiver lasted many years as I finished college, earned a Novice ticket and



then my General. I am still nostalgic about the glow from the tuning dials and meter of that radio, even though it had a position in the corner of our living room, and I didn't have many chances to operate in the dark. It was a warm and fuzzy feeling. (It was paired with a Heath DX-60B transmitter) Eventually, it went to a good home after a sale at Cadillac. As I recall, it ended up in Traverse City.

The little SDR, connected to a computer, does not have quite the same feeling. The glow from the computer screen does not give me the same warm fuzzies as any of those old tube radios. There is still a feeling of adventure tuning the on-screen "dial" even if seeing the whole band segment on a waterfall display takes away just an edge from the unknown of the ether. You just never knew what was going to pop in with the next turn of the frequency tuning knob.

See you at the next meeting.

73

Bruce, WB8TVD

From the ARRL Contest Update:

Are you as guilty as I am?

OPERATING TIP

Core Strength

A lack of core strength can cause your body to want to slouch at the operating position. Slouching at the operating position is bad for your back, shoulders, and neck, and causes pain. Pain can hinder your operating enjoyment and limit your operating time. Too much pain, and your body will start to compensate by trying to use other muscles to sit in other bad positions -- which can cause other parts of your body to have pain. Avoid entering this vicious cycle by keeping your core strong. While there are plenty of how-to's for core strengthening, none of the good ones are performed while sitting in a chair.

Here's another tidbit from the ARRL Contest Update:

The sun has more than just the 11-year cycle for sunspots. According to a short article by *Scientific American*, other cycles of length 88, 200, and 2400 years have been noted. The 11-year cycle that we're most attuned to is called the Schwabe cycle, discovered in 1843 by German astronomer Samuel Schwabe. The longer-duration solar cycles were discovered from isotope information recovered from cores drilled from ice built up over the last 9,000 years.

From the ARRL DX Letter:

TIMOR-LESTE, 4W. Gordon, K7TRB is QRV as 4W6VA from Dili, IOTA OC-148, until the middle of September 2018. Activity is on 20, 17 and 6 meters. QSL to home call.

CAPE VERDE, D4. Christian, MOUPL will be QRV as D44EK from Sal Island, AF-086, from July 23 to August 7. Activity will be on the HF bands using only SSB. QSL to home call.

SARDINIA, IS0. Massimo, I0PNM is QRV as IM0/I0PNM from San Pietro Island, IOTA EU-165, until August 20. Activity is on 40, 20, 15 and 10 meters using SSB. This includes being an entry in the upcoming RSGB IOTA contest. QSL direct to home call.

MINAMI TORISHIMA, JD1. Operator JG1RHN is QRV as JG1RHN/JD1 from Marcus Island, IOTA OC-073, until August 15. Activity is on the HF bands. QSL via bureau.

SVALBARD, JW. Members of Amateur Radio Club SP3PET are QRV as JW100PUT from Petuniabukta, Spitsbergen, IOTA EU-026, until July 31 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Academic Ham Radio Club of the Poznan University of Technology. Activity is on 80, 40 and 20 meters, as well as 2 meters and 70 centimeters, using SSB and FM. QSL via SP3PET.

MICRONESIA, V6. Members of the Nara DX Association Japan are QRV as V6J from Ta Island, IOTA OC-254, until July 31. Activity is on 40 to 15 meters, including 6 meters, using CW, SSB, RTTY and FT8 with three stations active. QSL direct to JP3AYQ.

CANADA, VE. Mike, K11U will be QRV as VE9IU from Grand Manan Island, IOTA NA-014, from July 21 to 28. Activity will be on the HF bands using CW and FT8, with some activity on 6 meters and various satellites. QSL to home call.

CAMBODIA, XU. Chapli, BG4HRM is QRV as XU7AKL from Phnom Penh. Activity is mostly on 80 to 10 meters using CW. QSL to home call.

From the ARRL ARES E-Letter:

Use of Drones Gains Traction in CERT Program; Is ARES Next?

Ridgefield is a small town in southwestern Connecticut, and faces common hazards such as hurricanes, thunderstorms, blizzards, and the flooding that often follows. Ridgefield has an active Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), prepared to meet these challenges, and has stepped up its game recently with its use of drones to collect information for responders on the ground. The Emergency Manager and CERT Coordinator had a successful first deployment during a recent major thunderstorm.

The team has trained over 150 residents in preparedness and disaster response. Of these, 40 members belong to the Incident Management Team (IMT), meaning they have received additional, specialized training to support Ridgefield's Emergency Operations Center (EOC). IMT members, including radio amateurs, are trained in skills such as public information, damage assessment, logistics, sheltering, and Amateur Radio operation.

Ridgefield's team used drones to perform damage assessment -- they give a bird's eye view, which provides a much better picture of the scope of damage than a ground-level survey. For example, several trees, power poles and lines could come down on a twisting road, with emergency responders having no idea what's happening beyond the first fallen tree. The drones help the team see conditions beyond the tangled mass of trees and wires and report to responders on the ground.

Drones were first tested when Ridgefield was hit by a storm with winds as high as 135 MPH. The information collected was then shared with the local power company so that utility crews could better respond to power outages. The drones succeeded in giving CERT members, and the power company a peek beyond major road blockages. The National Weather Service was also able to make use of the drone footage for its own assessments.

There is rapidly-changing regulation of drones. The key is to operate them within the regulations and to operate them safely. The CERT Coordinator is a certified drone pilot. The Ridgefield CERT program also holds an FAA Public Safety Certificate of Authorization. The team currently has four drone pilots and four visual observers (who assist the pilots with navigation). - *adapted from FEMA's June 27 CERT eBrief*

[Partners ARRL and FEMA have enjoyed a longstanding memorandum of agreement (MoA), renewed most recently in 2014. In June 2003, ARRL became an official affiliate program of Citizen Corps, an initiative within the US Department of Homeland Security. The Statement of Affiliation makes ARRL an affiliate under the four charter Citizen Corps programs--Neighborhood Watch, Volunteers in Police Service, Community Emergency Response Teams and Medical Reserve Corps.--ed.]

Bits & Pieces Of This & That

August in Michigan (source ARRL):

4 August 2018	U.P. Hamfest 2018	Escanaba, MI
12 August 2018	Seaway Trunk Swap	Port Huron, MI
8 September 2018	GRAHamfest	Wyoming, MI

The GRAHamfest is just too close to let slip until next month. It's the last biggy for our area. Since there are just a couple 'fests this month, and it's the Dog Days, it may be a good time to get on VHF/UHF and see what's brewing. Lots of surprise openings and meteor showers occur in August. Good hunting!! At the Hamfests and on the air!

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

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