



KB8QOI Repeaters  
52.860 MHz  
146.74 MHz  
443.900 MHz

# Big Rapids Area Amateur Radio Club

January 2018

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## Hello From Newsletter Editor Bruce, WB8TVD

It's me again. Can you believe it? I had to put a new year in the header of the newsletter. It's 2018! Where does time go? No, seriously. Where does it go? You use it, waste it, manage it, budget it, save it, but it must go somewhere. Think about it.



Our president had a few things he shared with us last month, but we had no photo of him! Well, here he is, holding sway at the Club Holiday Feast on 7 December. Doesn't he look presidential?

Speaking of the Feast, it was a great time with great food. Frankly, it wasn't as big a gathering as we've had in the past, but the fellowship and food were terrific. The silent auction garnered almost \$100 for the Club account. I personally wasn't sure if I was going to have a food coma or sugar buzz.

Don't miss your opportunity to renew your membership in BRA-ARC with the form on the next-to-last page. Also look for items from the ARRL Letter and a note from our Michigan Section Manager.

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 has changed antennas, so it has omnidirectional coverage.

As always, good or bad, here we go:

### Announcements:

Club breakfast: 30 December, 2017, 9:00am at Sharon's in Roger's Heights

Next meeting: 4 January, 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

### In This Issue:

Pg 1 – Msg from TVD

Pg 1 – Announcements

Pg 2 – Meeting Minutes

Pg 2 – Next Meeting Program

Pg 3 – Ham Radio Helps  
Alzheimer's research

Pg 4 – Changes to "QST"

Pg 5 – Secretary's Pondering

Pg 7 – Section Manager Steps  
Down

Pg 7 – Member Renewal Form

Pg 8 – The Rest of The Story

## Minutes From The Meeting – 7 December 2017

Bruce Werner, WB8TVD, Secretary

Here's what you missed if you were not at the meeting on 7 December 2017

TVD Note: This is always an informal meeting – even more informal than usual – so the minutes, while official and legal, are looser than usual.

President Dan, WA8AEN, opened the meeting about 7:00pm. He welcomed the assembly, which numbered 16 members and guests, then gave a rundown on the evening's events. He also asked each attendee to introduce himself or herself as appropriate, including guests.

Secretary Bruce, WB8TVD, noted that if there was any Club business, notably financial, he and Dan would be available after the meeting to handle that business.

Dan ran down a list of reminders:

The next Club Breakfast will be 30 December at 9am at Sharon's in Rogers Heights.

The next meeting will be on 4 January 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.

Noting that there had been no Silent Keys in 2017, Dan did ask for a few moments of silence in memory of all those who had passed. He gave a blessing over the food and those attending and encouraged all to partake of the feast.

TVD note: There were no reports nor old business. New business consisted of those in attendance attacking and devouring the repast.

There was no 50/50 drawing.

Jim, K4UIH, will be bringing refreshments to the January meeting.

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.

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At the 4 January meeting, Vice President Shila, KD8IAL, will offer a program that presents a simple look at what "outsiders" (or "civilians") think Ham operators are like.

This should be a good one and very interesting!

*From the ARRL Letter*

## **Radio Amateur's Invention to Treat Alzheimer's Patients Going to Clinical Trials**

Inveterate inventor and radio amateur Eric Knight, KB1EHE, may be on the cusp of medical history as a device he developed in collaboration with a prominent Alzheimer's disease researcher enters clinical trials this month. Both are hoping that the device, which essentially saturates the brain with low levels of RF, may prove to be a viable treatment for the dreaded disease affecting millions.

"Sometimes breakthroughs happen in ways that are unexpected," Knight told ARRL.

Knight learned of experiments that world-renowned Alzheimer's researcher Dr. Gary Arendash was carrying out on mice specially bred to have the disease, exposing them to low levels of RF. Knight said the effects were dramatic, sometimes even reversing the disease's effects in the mice. Borrowing some concepts from his early experiments with small rockets and avionics, he set about developing, and later patented, a device that could provide the requisite RF exposure to the human head.

"In the early 2000s, we were trying to figure out then how to make antennas that would wrap around the airframes of the rockets we were designing," he said, noting that the diameter of his group's space vehicle was about the same as that of a human head. Knight learned that Arendash was attempting to extend his investigations in a similar vein, and eventually they collaborated.

"He came at it from mice and science, I came at it from an aerospace and hobby perspective," said Knight, who patented a device based on a bicycle-type helmet. At the same time, Arendash was developing a similar wearable -- a fabric cap resembling an old-time aviator's headgear. Both devices are embedded with small antennas to bathe the brain in electromagnetic radiation in the 900 MHz spectrum set aside for Industrial, Scientific, and Medical (ISM) applications -- some 100 MHz higher than a cell phone's frequency.

"Ironic for sure," Knight said. "Who would imagine that cell phone radio waves could be a potential treatment for Alzheimer's disease?"

Knight, who has no medical background, said the device to be used in the clinical trials consists of the cap plus a palm-sized transmitter and wiring harness worn on the arm. The resulting combination has been dubbed the NeuroEM 1000. Participants will get doses of RF twice a day.

From the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) standpoint, the clinical trials aim primarily to show that the technology is safe, but Knight said he and Arendash are also looking for data that might demonstrate that the device could be beneficial in treating Alzheimer's. The protocol they've developed goes further than what the FDA requires and includes before-and-after baseline data, with cognitive testing, assays of spinal fluid and blood, and PET scans.

"The hope is that there is a tiny bit of efficacy. Then we can work to refine it," Knight said, adding, "No one is expecting a magic cure."

*ARRL members were surprised to see changes to "QST" in the January 2018 issue.  
From the ARRL Letter*

### **January 2018 *QST* Debuts Fresh, New Design**

*QST* magazine is more than a century old, and with the major exception of color printing throughout the magazine starting in December 2000, it's remained mostly unchanged for the past couple of decades. Starting with the January 2018 issue of *QST*, now available to members in digital form, several noticeable changes are being made to the journal's format, design, and size. *QST* Editor and Publications Manager Steve Ford, WB8IMY, said member feedback over the last few years, has hinted at "significant shifts in media preferences within the Amateur Radio community." Extensive research undertaken late last year, "revealed an undeniable mandate for change," Ford said.

"The majority of you told us that the 'look' of *QST* was becoming stale, that it wasn't in step with modern publications," Ford said in editorial remarks in the January 2018 issue. "You also told us that you desired different types of articles that spoke more to the needs of the average amateur. We've heard you - and we are responding."

Ford said that starting with the January 2018 issue, *QST* will sport a modern, eye-catching design, and will be easier to read. The journal has been trimmed slightly to 144 pages per issue (in addition to covers), plus a smaller size to match the 8 × 10.5-inch publishing industry standard. The current *QST* trim size is nonstandard.

"These changes will create significant savings for us in the cost of ink and paper, and will save even more on postage, which is one of our largest expenses," Ford explained, adding that cost savings will fund the development "of more of the types of the articles you've told us you want," as well as to provide more engaging social media content. In addition, fewer pages will let the editorial staff focus greater attention on each issue's content.

Ford said League members have indicated a preference for articles that provide practical, immediately usable information, guide readers to new activities, and tell more about what radio amateurs are doing -- with an emphasis on personal stories that inspire.

"While we will continue to publish *QST* in digital form each month, our research, and the research conducted by other publishers, has shown that a clear majority of readers still prefer books and magazines printed on paper, and so do our advertisers," Ford said. "So, thanks to the support of our advertisers, we will continue to publish *QST* on paper for the foreseeable future."

Ford said additional changes are possible. "As your needs change, we will, too," he concluded.

## Secretary's Ponderings – January 2018

You were probably as surprised as I was to see a new look inside “QST”. I hope ARRL doesn't stop with cosmetic changes. They have a lot to gain with some change in focus, too.

For the past few months I have been formulating a letter to ARRL with some ideas. There has been much discussion about two things: Very few new Hams are getting on the air and using their license privileges; and even fewer are joining ARRL.

I'll paraphrase what I was going to suggest to ARRL, then you see if it in any way fits our local BRA-ARC situation.

While reading an equipment review a few months ago, I was stymied by the term “hot spot”. Being a retired IT professional, it crossed my mind the gear might be in the realm of a wireless router. The more I read, the more confused I became. I gave up on the article and moved on. There were other highly technical subjects covered and I skipped most of those as well. I read my usual favorites about DX, VHF/UHF and Public Service and some of the other short hints and tips articles with a little sharper focus. Those articles also had a more technical leaning, without a lot of background help.

My curiosity was piqued. I started checking the author information following the articles (other than the regular columns). My initial suspicions were confirmed. Most, if not all, the articles were written by experts with IEEE credentials. Several are retired, indicating a career honing and building engineering skills so that the concepts are second nature, and the articles read like it.

How did I start my Ham avocation? I was an SWL for many years, beginning in the early 60s. In my first big deal job, I sold radios at retail and worked with several Hams and others, more experienced than I. The Army got me, saw “radio” on one of my forms, so made me a cook! Seriously, after basic training, the Army, in its infinite wisdom, sent me to electronics school at Fort Monmouth, NJ. I emerged as a tactical microwave operator, evolving over time and training to add “strategic” to my title and changing me from operator to repair. I didn't have much chance at actually repairing anything, since at my rank, I was being trained for a supervisory role.

I left the Army (some would say, “escaped”) to return to college (Eastern Michigan U.) eventually landing in Big Rapids with a new job, a pregnant wife and a desire to earn an Amateur Radio license. With the help of my own Elmer, Bob Carpenter, K8YHJ (SK), and a few others, I studied and earned a Novice ticket.

Everything in the study material was focused on getting on the air using CW on the Novice bands to gain experience and knowledge to earn a General or higher license. Those months on CW as a Novice were invaluable. I studied, increased my code speed and gained on-the-air experience and confidence. George, W8OWN, and I took our Extra and General (respectively) upgrade exams at the local post office, administered by the postmaster. Yes! The postmaster!

We both passed. Full disclosure: I also took and failed the Advanced exam, but I had my General ticket in hand within the month.

Compare that process of study and code practice with today's process: A one-day crash course covering the question pool, then immediately taking the Technician exam. Even upgrades involve memorizing the question pool.

What happens next? It all depends. In some cases, there are plenty of Hams around willing to guide the newcomers into finding a radio and getting on the air. In a rural area like Big Rapids, that's a problem without a cadre of involved, dedicated Hams willing to be Elmers.

I can see a parallel between ARRL and BRA-ARC. Both organizations have “grayed” (or aged, if, like me, your gray hair has fallen out) and the technical expertise is high enough to dazzle and even discourage new (or returning) non-engineering Hams from participating and/or joining.

Solution? “QST” needs to include more information and guidance for new Hams, including equipment selection and operating how-tos. Not dumbing down, but more background and basic information. If someone says it gets repeated, it must! There are constantly new Hams joining our ranks.

Similarly, we, as a Club, need to encourage Hams to get on the air and participate in Club activities (read: Join up!). We all have to remember how it was when we first got our licenses. Our first thought was, “What’s next?” In the old days, we had Elmers, mentors and someone to teach by example. I had been an SWL for a long time, so I knew what receivers, antennas, feedlines, tuners and a lot of other equipment was used for. I started SWL in a vacuum, but there was a lot of print literature (including catalogs from Allied, Burstein-Applebee, Knight, Allied, Lafayette) to help and guide. When I wanted a Ham ticket, I was able to find kindred souls to be Elmers. I had help and guidance on the most basic level.

Today’s new Hams have none of these advantages (oh, the Internet is useful, but not like a good publication or living, breathing Ham). Potential Elmers never meet prospective Hams until a Ham-In-A-Day crash course experience. Then they are thrown right back into the vacuum. What then?

I was looking through some rosters of Hams who went through our course and passed the Tech exam spotting a name I recognized. I am friends with his wife professionally and at church, so I asked her if her husband was a Ham (just to confirm it was the same person) and if he was on the air. She gave me the usual answer, “Oh, he’s just too busy.” Aren’t we all? I’ll have to check further and see if I can’t get him on the air.

Oh, my own upgrade? It took me a few shots at the Advanced exam – including one on M Street in Washington, DC – before I passed. I was working on the Extra technical studies and had coaxed my code speed up to 20 wpm, when work became more complicated and intense with the introduction of PCs, networks, canned software and the concept of doing more with less, also known as economic downsizing. There was also the intrusion of health issues for both my wife and me.

Today, as I try to reestablish myself on HF, I run into many articles and much information about advanced techniques and new modes. There are times it feels as it must have when SSB supplanted AM and the proponents of the new mode were moving on, leaving the AMers by the side of the road. I almost get a feeling of inferiority that I’m not “with it” using new modes, or can’t keep up with new methods of getting on the air. Seeing the situation with the eyes of a “returning” Ham (I’ve continually used 2m FM), I see technology is overwhelming and new equipment is insanely expensive. Elmers are few and far between, especially in a rural area.

What can be done? I am not going into solutions, except that we all need to get back to basics and remember how it felt to be a rookie.

See you at the next meeting.

73

Bruce, WB8TVD

*From Michigan Section News December 2017.*

Greetings to the Hams of Michigan,

This is the 72nd time that I have taken the proverbial pen in hand to write the monthly Section News Column. This column will be my last as I will be passing the torch to my successor, Jim Kvochick, K8JK who is taking the reigns as MI Section Manager on January 1, 2018.

Jim is a very knowledgeable, experienced ham who will do an excellent job of representing and guiding the Michigan section. I am confident that I am leaving the section in good hands and that we as a section will continue to move forward. Please give Jim your full support.

ARRL Michigan Section  
 Section Manager: Larry Camp, WB8R  
 wb8r@arrl.org

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**TIME TO RENEW!**

BRAARC Membership			
<b>Applicant Information</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>Spouse Information if joint membership</b>			
Name:			
Call:	Class:	Email:	
<b>Licensed Children</b>			
Name:	Call:	Class:	
<b>DUES / Donation</b>			
<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>			\$

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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January Hamfests in Michigan (source ARRL):

28 January 2018      HPARC Swap    Madison Heights, MI Hazel Park ARC

Not many 'fests in January. 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!

**January 2018**

**49338**

**PO Box 343 Parts MI**

