



FEEDBACK

April 2026

Do you have a story, humorous or otherwise, about amateur radio? If so, please contact the newsletter editor (w8kdb@arrl.net) and get it published in **FEEDBACK!**

If you would like to place a classified ad to sell, purchase or swap amateur radio related items, please contact the editor.

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Inside this issue:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Lead article..... | 1 |
| Supplemental article..... | 1 |
| Upcoming Radio Contests..... | 2 |
| Upcoming Hamfests & Conventions..... | 3 |
| Meeting Minutes..... | 4 |
| Board Meeting Minutes..... | 5 |
| Club Repeaters..... | 6 |
| Nets & Upcoming Events..... | 6 |

Club News

Membership Renewals

Just a friendly reminder that Membership Dues are due. These can be paid at a Club Meeting (on the 3rd Thursday of every month) or sent in to the Club's PO Box. The amount has increased a little this year. For 1 year it is \$20, for 5 years it is \$75, for 10 years it is \$145, for 20 years it is \$280, and for Lifetime it is \$500. For the 1 year, each additional Family Member is an additional \$5. Dues are due January 1st of each year. Newly licensed members get a year free. Donations to the club can also be sent into the PO Box or taken care of at the Club Meeting.

SMARS
P.O. Box 934
Battle Creek, MI 49016

Other News

ARISS Outlines Opportunities for Space Station Contacts in 2027

The Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) program is seeking formal and informal educational institutions and organizations, individually or working together, to host an amateur radio contact with a crew member on board the ISS.

Crew members will participate in scheduled amateur radio contacts. These radio contacts are approximately 10 minutes in length and allow students to interact with the astronauts through a question-and-answer session.

ARISS anticipates that the contact would be held between January 1 and June 30, 2027. Crew scheduling and ISS orbits will determine the exact contact dates. To maximize these radio contact opportunities, ARISS is looking for organizations that will draw large numbers of participants and integrate the contact into a well-developed education plan.

The deadline to submit a proposal is May 22, 2026, 11:59 PM Pacific Time. Proposal information and necessary details are at ariss-usa.org/proposal-overview/.

Upcoming Radio Contests

Looking for a little action on the airwaves? You might want to check out these upcoming contests!

Rookie Roundup

Bands: 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 Meters
Mode: SSB
Date: 04/19
URL: www.arrl.org/rookie-roundup

Intl Digital Contest

Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10, and 6 Meters
Mode: Digital (excluding RTTY)
Date: 06/06 – 06/07
URL: www.arrl.org/arrl-digital-contest

June VHF

Bands: Above 50 MHz
Mode: Digital, Phone, SSB, CW
Date: 06/13 – 06/15
URL: www.arrl.org/june-vhf

Kids Day

Bands: 80, 40, 20, 17, 15, 12, and 10 Meters
Mode: Phone
Date: 06/20
URL: www.arrl.org/kids-day

Field Day

Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 Meters and 50 MHz and above
Mode: Digital, Phone, SSB CW
Date: 06/27 – 06/28
URL: www.arrl.org/field-day

IARU HF World Championship

Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 Meters
Mode: Phone and CW
Date: 07/11 – 07/12
URL: www.arrl.org/iaru-hf-world-championship

**A more thorough listing of upcoming Contests can be found on the ARRL's web page [ContestCalendar](http://www.arrl.org/contest-calendar), <http://www.arrl.org/contest-calendar>*

An ARISS Introductory Webinar session will be held April 30 at 8 PM ET. The Zoom link to sign up is:

[us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/3yid9dxzRkmYfVroIP0nWA](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/3yid9dxzRkmYfVroIP0nWA).

An ARISS contact is a voice-only communication opportunity via amateur radio between astronauts and cosmonauts aboard the space station and classrooms and communities. ARISS contacts afford education audiences the opportunity to learn firsthand from astronauts what it is like to live and work in space and to learn about space research conducted on the ISS. Students also will have an opportunity to learn about satellite communication, wireless technology, and radio science. Because of the nature of human spaceflight and the complexity of scheduling activities aboard the ISS, organizations must demonstrate flexibility to accommodate changes in dates and times of the radio contact.

Amateur radio organizations around the world, with the support of NASA and space agencies in Russia, Canada, Japan, and Europe present educational organizations with this opportunity. The ham radio organizations' volunteer efforts provide the equipment and operational support to enable communication between crew on the ISS and students around the world using amateur radio. Please direct any questions to education@ariss-usa.org.

Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) is a cooperative venture of international amateur radio societies and the space agencies that support the International Space Station (ISS). In the United States, sponsors are ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio, Amateur Radio Digital Communications (ARDC), Radio Amateur Satellite Corporation (AMSAT), NASA's Space Communications and Navigation program (SCaN) and the ISS National Lab—Space Station Explorers.

Article courtesy of <http://www.arrl.org/news/ariss-outlines-opportunities-for-space-station-contacts-in-2027>

Exciting news for Michigan POTA ops!

Julie, WT8J, the Michigan Parks on the Air Map Rep, just dropped some exciting news on me. She writes:

We've added [Iron Belle State Trail](#) to Parks On The Air bringing activation opportunities much closer to urban centers in Southeast Michigan and beyond. According to Michigan.gov, "The Iron Belle Trail is the longest state-designated trail in the U.S., spanning over 2,000 miles from the western Upper Peninsula to Belle Isle in Detroit. The trail is currently more than 70% complete and connects



Upcoming Hamfests & Conventions

04/18/2026

SJCARC Hamfest
Location: Centreville, MI
Sponsor: SJCMIARC

05/02/2026

Crossroads Hamfest
Location: Marshall, MI
Sponsor: Southern Michigan
Amateur Radio Society
Site: <http://www.w8df.com>

05/02/2026

Lucas County ARES Hamfest
Location: Toledo, OH
Sponsor: Lucas County Amateur
Radio Emergency Service, Inc.
Site: <http://www.lucasares.org>

06/06/2026

FCARC SummerFest
Location: Delta, OH
Sponsor: Fulton County Amateur
Radio Club
Site: <https://k8bxq.org/hamfest>

06/06/2026

IRA Hamfest
Location: Hudsonville, MI
Sponsor: Independent Repeater
Association
Site: <https://w8ira.org/hudsonville-hamfest>

06/20/2026

Midland Amateur Radio Club Swap
Location: Midland, MI
Sponsor: Midland Amateur Radio
Club Inc
Site: <http://www.w8kea.org>

06/21/2026

Monroe Hamfest
Location: Monroe, MI
Sponsor: Monroe County Radio
Communications Association
Site: <http://mcrca.org>

Silent Keys

Glenn "Smokey" McCray – N5MKY
Donald Larkin – W8RVT

over half of Michigan's counties." The Trail's POTA designator is [US-13184](https://www.us-13184.com).

A map of the Iron Belle Trail.

The Iron Belle Trail is the longest state-designated trail in the U.S., spanning over 2,000 miles from the western Upper Peninsula to Belle Isle in Detroit.

This unique trail features two distinct routes: a biking route and a hiking route. The biking route travels along the eastern side of the state, using existing bike paths, lanes, and designated routes. Meanwhile, the hiking route follows the western side of the Lower Peninsula, incorporating sidewalks, trails and a significant portion of the North Country National Scenic Trail."

The Iron Belle overlaps with several existing municipal trails, such as the Border to Border here in Washtenaw, the Downriver Linked Greenways, and the Detroit Riverwalk.

The trail also traverses many downtown city parks, including Riverside in Flint, Ojibway Island in Saginaw, and Defoe in Bay City. Additionally, it passes through several parks in Ann Arbor, such as Gallup, Fuller, and Bandemer. This means these municipal parks are now valid locations for Parks On The Air activations, provided you are within 100 feet of the trail.

Headed west out of Washtenaw, through downtown Jackson it picks up the MLK Equality Walk and continues down the Falling Waters Trail to Concord. Here starts the patchwork of proposed and complete pathways until it hits the Calhoun County Trailway that takes it right through the heart of Battle Creek.

All this and that's just a portion of this Parks On The Air reference. I think that eventually this will be the most activated reference in Michigan! 2-meter pedestrian portable activations are now entirely possible in several communities. And I just think that's neat.

A map of the Belle Iron Trail as it passes through Ann Arbor.

The Belle Iron Trail passes through Ann Arbor less than a mile from my house.

As a reminder, the activation rules include that you must be on public land and within 100' of the trail. Good operator etiquette is a smaller footprint in urban areas for any portable station.

73 & POTA ON!

Julie WT8J

Michigan Parks On The Air Map Rep

This is really exciting for me as I live less than a mile from the Iron Belle State Trail. (On the map at right, I live very close to the left edge of the map.) If I was really ambitious, I could even hike over to Bandemer Park and activate there.

I'd be over there right now, if the weather was a little more accommodating today. Unfortunately, it's overcast and 45°F, and while I hate to admit it, I'm pretty much a fair-weather POTA op. Be listening for me this summer, though, from US-13184.

Article courtesy of <https://www.kb6nu.com/exciting-news-for-michigan-pota-ops/>

Meeting Minutes 03/19/2026

Meeting Called to order at 1900

16 members in attendance.

Secretary's Report: Motion made to accept, Motion was passed.

Treasurer's Report: Motion made to accept, Motion was passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Hamfest – Calhoun County Fairgrounds goat, and sheep barn across from the Comfort Center, May 2nd. May 1st set up at 3 PM. Doors open for vendors at 5 PM set up. Michigan storm chasers will have a table at Ham fest as long as weather is good.
- Skywarn – Update from Bret from Skywarn. March 6th tornado outbreak update helped with damage assessment working with city on sirens still waiting on Washington and I 94 to get replaced. State EEOC was activated on March 6th as well to coordinators helped with assessment of damage. State simulator test May 2nd same day as ham fest. CERT training April 17th, April 18th and April 25th. NWS April 18 Kalamazoo 2 PM spotter training see Bret for more information. HIAD not yet set maybe May 16. Also, April 18, looking for help with Barry County bike race ROUBIAX cancer ride.
- Field Day – Last weekend in June backside of the fairgrounds, Calhoun County.
- Repeaters – Repeater update reset clocks. Digi-Peater not connected to Internet still.
- VE – Last months, the VE session one past for Extra and one pass for Technician.
- POTA – POTA only 83 contacts last weekend. Bands were not so good, but did hit Australia and Bermuda. POTA meets on Saturday at 8 AM at Café TAL for breakfast and then off to Fort Custer Whitford Lake for set up in contacts.

OLD BUSINESS:

- None discussed.

NEW BUSINESS:

- First note of business members dues are past due. There are still several that need to pay. Please get those in. Thank you.

PRESENTATION:

- None

Meeting Adjourned around 2000 hours.

Respectfully Submitted,
Melanie Lake, KE8TPQ
SMARS Secretary

Board Meeting Minutes 04/02/2026

FINANCES:

- Checking \$733.71
- Savings \$1,005.12
- Cash on hand \$85.00
- Total \$1,823.83

Significant changes include:

- Rent paid for Fairgrounds for HamFest \$2,090.00
- AT&T Bill Increase for internet at the repeaters + \$20.56.

Board meeting is held at the American Legion on 20th St., Post 298 on the first Thursday of the month and member is more than welcome to join. Meeting is at 6:30.

In attendance tonight, Dan Pesch at large Kevin, Hoyt, vice president Dan Whipple, treasurer and Melanie Lake secretary.

Raffle tickets license is in route so we should have raffle within the next two weeks.

Ham fest will be at the Calhoun County fairgrounds May 2nd, 2026 set up will start May 1st around 3 PM. Vendors will be allowed to start set up at 5 PM doors open at 8 AM. We will need volunteers for set up. We will need volunteers for the door raffle. Please let us know if you can help.

The venue has been paid for and fingers crossed. We have a good revenue this year.

Also would like to mention the sad passing of two of our SMARS family. Don Larkin W8RVT and Smokey N5MKY.

Respectfully Submitted,
Melanie Lake, KE8TPQ
SMARS Secretary

Silent Key Details:

Information provided by George, K8GG:

Don Larkin's Burial is at Fort Custer on Monday 11:30 AM. I did find the obituary for Don, and it sounds like the service was the past Saturday.

https://www.farleyestesdowdle.com/obituaries/donald-larkin?ttm_pid=211202308&ttm_affiliate=legacypro&ttm_affiliatetype=standard&ttm_campaign=legacy

I was not provided or able to find any information on Smokey's obituary.

SOUTHERN MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY FEEDBACK

S.M.A.R.S. W8DF Club Repeaters

2m Repeater 146.66MHz, -600KHz offset, CTCSS 94.8Hz

2m DStar 146.79 MHz, -600 KHz offset

*1.25m Repeater 224.240 MHz, -1.6 MHz offset, CTCSS 94.8 Hz

APRS Digipeater/Igate, 144.39 MHz

*70cm Repeater 443.950 MHz, +5 MHz offset, CTCSS 94.8 Hz

70cm DStar Repeater 442.7625 MHz, +5 MHz offset

***Note:** 70cm & 1.25 meter repeaters are linked.

All repeaters are available via EchoLink (70cm and 1.25m are W8DF-R; 2m is W8DF-L)

Other Repeaters

2m Repeater 147.120 MHz, +600 KHz offset, CTCSS 186.2 Hz

70cm Repeater 442.350 MHz, +5 MHz offset, CTCSS 186.2 Hz

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| Club Meeting 3rd Thursday of every month Maple United Methodist Church 342 Capital Avenue NE Battle Creek, MI 49017 | SKYWARN Coffee 1st Saturday of every month Immediately after Siren Test Coney Island, N.E. Capital Battle Creek, MI | BLB Luncheon 1st Thursday of every month Coney Island, 962 Capital Ave NE, Battle Creek, MI | SMARS Breakfast 2nd Saturday of every month Coney Island, 962 Capital Ave NE, Battle Creek, MI |
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|---|--|
| SMARS Nets: Monday—Friday 11:30 AM, 146.66 MHz Sunday Evening 8:00 PM, 146.66 MHz Monday 8:00 PM, 224.24 / 443.95 MHz Wednesday 7:00 PM, 224.24 /443.95 MHz Wednesday 8:00 PM, 28.365 MHz Saturday 8:00 PM, 224.24 / 443.95 MHz Other Nets: Skywarn Net: Tuesday 7:00 PM, 147.12 MHz <i>Please see previous page for offsets and CTCSS tones</i> | Upcoming Events: Club Meeting: April 16th @ 7:00pm BLB Luncheon: May 7th @ 11:30am Board Meeting: May 7th @ 6:30pm Club Breakfast: May 9th @ 8:30am VE Session: April 23rd @ 7:00pm Hamfest Setup: May 1st @ 3:00pm Hamfest: May 2nd @ 8:00am Hamfest VE Session: May 2nd @ 10:00am |
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