



# FEEDBACK

February 2014

**Your Story:**

Do you have a story, humorous or otherwise about amateur radio? If so, please contact the newsletter editor (wr8g@arrl.net) and get it published in FEEDBACK.

You don't have to be a professional writer, or even a writer at all. If you're comfortable with writing, great! If not, relate the story in the fashion that you are comfortable with and let the editor do the rest.

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

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## Note from the VEEP

Greetings All,

Crossroads Hamfest is right around the corner, and it's time to consider your role in the festivities. The club depends on your help in setup, tear down, ticket sales and more. Think about your role in making the 2014 Crossroads Hamfest a great success!

We need all the help we can get for this to be a good year. This activity is what helps finance the club activities for the year and keep dues low for the members. We will begin setup at the Marshall Activity Center about 2:00PM on Friday, March 14<sup>th</sup>. Teardown will begin about 12:00PM on Saturday and we have just a few hours to complete this.

A signup sheet will be passed around at the next club meeting on February 20<sup>th</sup>, so please make every effort to be there to signup. Walk ins for help will be greatly appreciated if you cannot get the meeting.

Folks, we can't do this without your help, so please get involved and keep the Southern Michigan Amateur Radio Society the success it has been for many years.  
73,  
Doc, K8OLY  
Crossroads Hamfest Chairman

## W8DF/R 146.79/19

Yup, the headline is correct. With surprisingly quick action, MARC granted provisional coordination for a digital/D-Star repeater on this frequency. The provisional status will be removed if there are no interference issues within one year.

At this writing, all components for the repeater, except the transmitter/receiver assembly, are assembled and operating at a temporary location. Something like spring weather is required to install the antenna and feedline for a permanent installation. Seems Icom is having a problem coordinating the final shipment.

This repeater operates in the DIGITAL emission mode and does not require CTCSS for access. It is also a GATEWAY for the D-Star system. All this seems like a good topic for a club meeting program!

*(Continued on page 2)*



### Board of Directors

#### President

Gary Williams, N8QC  
n8qc@arrl.net

#### Vice President

Dave "Doc" Ashbolt, K8OLY

#### Secretary

Jay Jarrett, N8ARR  
n8arr@hughes.net

#### Treasurer

Don Larkin, W8RVT  
w8rvt@arrl.net

#### Member At Large

Tom Goodson, WR8G  
wr8g@arrl.net

### Club Meeting

3rd Thursday of every month  
Maple United Methodist Church  
342 Capital Avenue NE  
Battle Creek, MI 49017

### Next Meeting

February 20th @ 7 PM

### SKYWARN Coffee

1st Saturday of every month  
Immediately after Siren Test  
Coney Island, N.E. Capital  
Battle Creek, MI

### Next Meeting

March 1st

### BLB Luncheon

2nd Thursday of every month  
Coney Island, N.E. Capital  
Battle Creek, MI

### Next meeting

March 13th @ 11:30 AM

### SMARS Breakfast

2nd Saturday of every month  
Coney Island, N.E. Capital  
Battle Creek, MI

### Next Meeting

March 8th @ 8:30 AM

(Continued from page 1)

The transmitter/receiver assembly is expected to arrive to make it possible the repeater will be on the air by club meeting. Expect updates then.

Don-W8RVT

## Ham Cram: Good for amateur radio or no?

I've been teaching one-day Tech classes, often referred to as "ham cram" classes for several years now. As a result, a couple hundred people now have amateur radio licenses. I'm proud of that, but sometimes a doubt or two creeps in. The doubts come from whether or not I'm teaching the students enough.

I also sometimes think about whether or not, my No-Nonsense study guides ([www.kb6nu.com/tech-manual](http://www.kb6nu.com/tech-manual)) should have more technical content. Recently on my blog ([www.kb6nu.com](http://www.kb6nu.com)), I've been posting sections of the next edition of my No-Nonsense, Technician Class License Study Guide. One comment reads,

"Oh my, now I see why my beloved USA is falling behind in math/technology/university on the world stage. Lack of rigor brings down real world knowledge and this sad trend plagues our country at every level. Your book helps students pass the exam but not learn proper physics."

The commenter is right about my study guides not trying to teach students about math or physics. There are many other books out there that do that. I disagree, though, that my study guides and my one-day classes are part of a "sad trend."

For one thing, an amateur radio license is not a degree in electrical engineering. Not only that, the Technician Class license is the very first rung on the amateur radio ladder. So, the question is how much knowledge should we require of someone just starting out in our hobby/service?

Secondly, I always stress that an amateur radio license is really a license to learn, and getting a Tech license is only the first step in a lifelong learning journey. I've been a ham a long time, and I'm constantly learning new things. And, I'm learning them because I have an amateur radio license. Without the privileges that my license gives me, I wouldn't be able to do the things I'm doing to learn them.

I sometimes regret that I can't teach people more during my one-day classes, but when you get right down to it, there's only so much you can expect. I know that a lot of my students have gone on to get General Class and Extra Class licenses and have turned in to great amateur radio operators. Presumably, they've learned a lot in the process.

(Continued on page 4)

**Hamfests**

02/22/2014: Cabin Fever Hamfest  
LaPorte, IN  
LaPorte County Amateur Radio Club  
<http://lpcarc.org>

02/22/2014: Dugger Hamfest 2014  
Dugger, IN  
Dugger Amateur Radio Club  
<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=547776311973696&set=gm.676795929007493&type=1&theater>

02/22/2014: Third Annual Brownsburg Hamfest  
Brownsburg, IN  
Hendricks County Amateur Radio Society  
<http://www.hcars.org/>

03/02/2014: Sterling-Rock Falls ARS's Hamfest  
Sterling, IL  
Sterling-Rock Falls Amateur Radio Society  
<http://w9mep.org>

03/08/2014: Terre Haute Hamfest & Computer Expo  
Terre Haute, IN  
Wabash Valley ARA  
<http://www.w9uuu.org>

**03/15/2014: Crossroads Hamfest**  
**Marshall, MI**  
**Southern Michigan Amateur Radio Society**  
<http://www.w8df.com>

03/16/2014: HAMFEST 2014  
Jefferson, WI  
Tri-County ARC (W9MQB)  
<http://www.w9mqb.org>

03/16/2014: TMRA Hamfest & Computer Fair  
Perrysburg, OH  
Toledo Mobile Radio Association  
<http://www.tmrahamradio.org>

03/22/2014: MOVARC's Hamfest  
Gallipolis, OH  
Mid-Ohio Valley Amateur Radio Club  
<https://sites.google.com/site/midohiovalleyarc/>

03/29/2014: 31st Annual Columbus ARC Hamfest  
Columbus, IN  
Columbus Amateur Radio Club  
<http://www.carcnet.org>

04/05/2014: Portsmouth Radio Club Hamfest  
Portsmouth, OH  
Portsmouth Radio Club  
<http://www.portsmouthradioclub.org>

04/12/2014: Cuyahoga Falls ARC's 60th Annual Hamfest  
Cuyahoga Falls, OH  
Cuyahoga Falls Amateur Radio Club  
<http://www.cfarc.org/hamfest2014.php>

**FOR SALE**

Kenwood TM241 \$85  
Kenwood TM231 \$75  
Kenwood TM231 \$75

All three include Mic and mounting bracket and function according to spec

KDK FM2030 \$35  
Kenwood TR7800 \$35

These transceivers are great for APRS They both include an interface cable to plug into a TinyTrak3 or TinyTrak4. Also included is a Mic. The radios do not produce a CTCSS tone which is not used for APRS.

W8RVT Don on any SMARS repeater or [w8rvt@arri.net](mailto:w8rvt@arri.net) or (ugh) 269 963-7797.

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

Southern Michigan Amateur Radio Society  
2 Meter Repeater 146.660 MHz  
-600KHz offset, PL 94.8

70cm Repeater 443.950 MHz  
+5MHz offset, PL 94.8

1.25 Meter Repeater 224.240 MHz  
-1.6MHz offset

70cm and 1.25 meter repeaters are linked.  
Also available via echolink.

W8DF-5 144.39Mhz Digipeater/Igate  
Find it on [www.aprs.fi](http://www.aprs.fi)

**Other Area Repeaters:**

**Skywarn/ARES/RACES (WX8BTL)**

2 Meter: 147.12, +600KHz offset, PL 186.2  
70cm: 442.350, +5MHz offset, PL 94.8



Having said all that, I'm curious as to what you think about this? Are ham cram classes good for amateur radio? If not, what else should we be doing to help people get involved and enjoy amateur radio?

=====

When he's not teaching class, Dan, KB6NU enjoys working CW on the HF bands and building kits. For more information about his operating activities and his "No-Nonsense" series of amateur radio license study guides, go to KB6NU.Com or e-mail [cwgeek@kb6nu.com](mailto:cwgeek@kb6nu.com).

## Board Meeting 02/04/2014

Attendees: Gary N8QC, Doc K8OLY, Don W8RVT, Jay KD8OXR, Tom WR8G, Stephanie W8AEZ, John W8JRD.

Treasurer's report was passed around. Report is pending a statement from the credit union.

Hamfest 2014 – Tom has the floor plan for table setup ready. We have 57 tables reserved, including 5 for SMARS, ARRL, MARS, etc. We will have to check on the condition of the MAC parking lot/field area early in March to decide if we will need to hire someone with a skip loader to clear a parking area. We hope we won't have to but with the snow piled up so far this season, there is certainly a chance of a problem. Also, we will meet at Doc's QTH on the Saturday preceding the Hamfest to empty his storage area of items that are hoped to be sold at the SMARS table. That particular Saturday is also the breakfast morning, which is convenient. It was agreed that a maximum of \$150 can be spent for door prizes and Tom will make the purchases.

Digital repeater –The controller is on hand. Frequency coordination is done, with 146.7919 as our W8DF frequency.

Field Day 2014 – Wondering if there is anything we need for FD that could be found at HF. There is quite a bit of work needed on the trailers before FD. New extinguishers have to be installed, world maps placed, inventory completed as well as general checkout, like tires, etc.

Meeting adjourned at 1740.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jay Jarrett, N8ARR, Secretary

## Meeting Minutes 12/19/2013

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Introductions

Officers present – Gary N8QC, Doc K8OLY, Don W8RVT, Jay N8ARR, Tom WR8G. 17 members in attendance total.

Secretary's report accepted.

Treasurer's report accepted.

Committee reports:

Hamfest 2014 – Doc has tickets and the Hamfest has been sanctioned by the ARRL.

RACES – No report; no one in attendance.

SKYWARN – No report; no one in attendance.

Ham In A Day – The next will be the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday in January (24<sup>th</sup>). It will be held at the Bedford Township Hall/ Fire station.

Field Day 2014 – No discussion this meeting.

VE session – Scheduled for December 26th at the Maple Methodist Church in the Babcock Room. There will be another February 27<sup>th</sup> with a special during the Hamfest.

Old Business: A drawing for the remaining 50/50 monies must be held. Particulars will be discussed at the next board meeting.

New Business: A D-Star repeater has been offered up by several volunteers. Frequency co-ordination needs to be handled and, when weather permits, an antenna needs to be erected at the repeater location. More information will be forthcoming, most likely at future meetings. The interested should attend!

Election of officers – All standing officers were re-elected to their respective posts. John W8JRD accepted the position of "Ticket Master" for the 50/50 drawings. Tom WR8G was appointed Member at Large.

Meeting adjourned at 1940.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jay Jarrett N8ARR, Secretary

# Meeting Minutes 01/16/2014

Meeting adjourned at 1950.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jay Jarrett N8ARR, Secretary

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Introductions

Officers present – Doc K8OLY (Acting President), Don W8RVT, Jay N8ARR, Tom WR8G. 28 members in attendance total.

Secretary’s report could not be accepted because the Secretary had not submitted it!

Treasurer’s report accepted.

Committee reports:

Hamfest 2014 – Everything is going along very well. There are reservations from approximately 20 vendors.

RACES – No report; no one in attendance.

SKYWARN – The next meeting will be held January 21<sup>st</sup> at the Bedford Township Hall.

Ham In A Day – The next will be the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday in January (24<sup>th</sup>). It will be held at the Bedford Township Hall/Fire station.

A Ham101 class is scheduled for February 8<sup>th</sup>, also at the Bedford Township Hall/Fire station.

Field Day 2014 – No discussion this meeting.

VE session – The session on December 26th saw 6 new Technician licenses earned along with one upgrade to Extra. Congratulations to all the new Hams. It should be noted that 4 of the new Hams were at this meeting!

Old Business: A drawing for the remaining 50/50 monies was held. Six tickets from the past year’s entrants were drawn. Don KB9IAR, Jay N8ARR, Mike W8MTX, Dave K8DEF, Bryan K8BRY and Mike KD8SDX were the lucky winners. We hope they spend their \$37.00 wisely!

New Business: W1AW is running portable stations throughout the country, two states at a time, to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ARRL. Information is listed on the ARRL website.

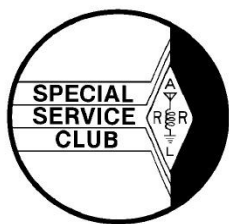
Presentation: Scott KD8UFG presented information and a demonstration of the Raspberry Pi Single Board Computer. This is a very interesting device that has many possibilities for Amateur Radio and is only \$45.00 and comes with all software embedded and is Ethernet capable. All a purchaser has to provide is a keyboard and video device.

## Income and Expense Statement 1/1/14 Through 1/31/14

Category Description	1/1/14-1/31/14
<b>INCOME</b>	
Dues: 2014	30.00
<b>TOTAL Dues</b>	30.00
Hamfest Inc: Tables	110.00
<b>TOTAL Hamfest Inc</b>	110.00
Interest Inc	0.23
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	140.23
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
50 50 Payout	111.00
5050 Payout	37.00
Hamfest: Facility	600.00
<b>TOTAL Hamfest</b>	600.00
Meetings: Refreshments	10.00
Rent	210.00
VE Rent	75.00
<b>TOTAL Meetings</b>	295.00
Utilities: Telephone	84.12
<b>TOTAL Utilities</b>	84.12
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	1,127.12
<b>TOTAL INCOME - EXPENSES</b>	-986.89

# SOUTHERN MICHIGAN AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

## FEEDBACK



SMARS

P.O. Box 934

Battle Creek, MI 49016

## FIRST CLASS MAIL



### SMARS NETS

Before Lunch Bunch  
Monday—Friday 11:30 AM, 146.66

Sunday Evening 8:00 PM, 146.66  
Monday 7:00 PM, 147.12 (Skywarn)  
Monday 8:00 PM, 224.24 / 443.95  
Wednesday 7:00 PM, 224.24 / 443.95  
Wednesday 8:00 PM, 28.365  
Saturday 8:00 PM, 224.24 / 443.95

Please see page 3 for offsets and PL tones

### Upcoming events:

**Club meeting: February 20th @ 7:00 PM**

**VE Testing: February 27th @ 7:00 PM**

**Siren test: March 1st @ 1:00 PM**

**SKYWARN Coffee: after siren test**

**BLB Lunch: March 13th @ 11:30 AM**

**SMARS Breakfast: March 8th @ 8:30 AM**